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TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS AN ETHNIC DIVIDE: PERUVIAN PARENTS
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TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS AN ETHNIC DIVIDE: PERUVIAN PARENTS AND A JAPANESE SCHOOL

This article presents a case study of relations between Japanese teachers and Peruvian parents at a public elementary school in central Japan. Using interviews and participant observation, this critical account reveals how some teachers, frustrated by the challenges of teaching an increasingly foreign student body, blame problems at the school on Peruvian parents' limited language skills and cultural differences. Amid these complaints, various structural factors hinder the efforts of Peruvian parents and children, including poor language support and ineffective remedial language instruction. This account also examines the ways parents' class position and immigrant status influence their acquisition of the social and cultural capital necessary for the parents to more effectively participate in their children's education in Japan.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS AN ETHNIC DIVIDE: PERUVIAN PARENTS AND A JAPANESE SCHOOL

My fieldwork at Shiroyamaⁱ⁾ public elementary school began dramatically, as Mr. Nakamura, a Japanese teacher in his fifties, explained his views on Latino cultures. “‘*Hasta mañana*’ *tte wakaru*,” he asked me. (“Do you know ‘*hasta mañana*’ [until tomorrow]?”)ⁱⁱ⁾ “*Perū-jin mo burajiru-jin mo, ratenjin dakara, shigoto shinai shi, jikan mo mamorani. Itsumo ‘hasta mañana’ da*” (“Peruvians and Brazilians are Latino, so they don’t work, and they don’t value time. It’s always *hasta mañana*.”) “*Raten-kei dakara*,” he explained. (“It’s because they’re Latino.”)

Amid national and local public policy discussions of developing Japan into a multicultural society, the difficulties of communicating with foreign parents who speak little to no Japanese often frustrate Japanese public school teachers. As frustrations mount, teachers also complain that these parents are not acquiring Japanese language and culture quickly enough and are remaining too foreign. In contrast, foreign parents complain about the structural constraints that limit their ability to effectively interact with the school, despite their desire to be more involved.

Based on ongoing research, this case study uses examples from parent-teacher interactions, including each side’s expressed concerns about the other, to explore the often-tense relationship between Peruvian parents and Japanese teachers. This approach challenges some teachers’ “definition of the situation” (Thomas 1923), and highlights structural factors that place the parents in a disadvantageous position when interacting with the school, including poor language support, ineffective remedial language instruction, and the view that parents’ cultural difference is a source of problems at the school. This article also describes Peruvians’ settlement in Shiroyama, and examines the ways that parents’ class and immigrant status are

influencing their ability to gain the social and cultural capital necessary for them to more effectively participate in their children's education.

SHIROYAMA

Located in a city of 75,000 people in central Japan, Shiroyama is a predominantly working class, residential neighborhood. Part of a thriving industrial economy, its auto parts and electronics factories employ many local residents. Its foreign population of roughly 700 people is concentrated in public housing located on the edge of the neighborhood. The 450 small apartments in these grey, weathered concrete blocks house over 1,200 people, one-third of whom are foreign. About 60 percent of Shiroyama's foreign residents live in these apartments, including all but two of the foreign families at the elementary school, with the remaining foreign residents scattered around the neighborhood in private apartments and houses.

This foreign population is largely Peruvian, with smaller numbers of Brazilians, Bolivians, and Chineseⁱⁱⁱ⁾. Given the Peruvians' predominance in the local foreign population and in the elementary school, this study focuses primarily on the Peruvian parents. In part, this is shaped by this researcher's ability to speak Spanish and Japanese, but not Portuguese or Mandarin. However, the structural factors influencing these Peruvians' interactions with the school are similar to those facing other foreign parents in Shiroyama, and in Japan overall. Just as Mr. Nakamura's comments reflect on Latinos in general, and not Peruvians in particular, teachers at the school often forget which country the Latino children come from, and whether their parents speak Spanish or Portuguese. Key for the teachers is not the parents' specific country of origin, but the fact that the parents are foreign and have limited Japanese language and cultural skills. Whispering quietly to me, one teacher even asked where Peru and Bolivia were located. "Are they countries?" she asked, embarrassed by her question^{iv)}.

Many of the Peruvians of Shiroyama are the third- and fourth-generation descendants of Japanese emigrants, often from Okinawa, whose parents and grandparents married other

descendientes (people of Japanese ancestry)^{v)}. In Peru, some attended Japanese community schools and participated in Japanese hometown association activities, although they spoke only rudimentary Japanese. Others came with no connection to Japan, other than that acquired through marriage to a Japanese-Peruvian spouse, or through the distant ancestry of a single Japanese-Peruvian grandparent. Despite their extended sojourns in Japan, they often remain functionally illiterate in Japanese, and have minimal to moderate Japanese-speaking skills.

In Peru, this population was largely working class, with few having attended college or engaged in professional work. In Japan, they are all working class, occupying the position of low-status, foreign factory workers. Many work 10 to 12 hours a day, five to six days a week, in alternating day and night shifts. The factory workplace presents parents with few opportunities to speak Japanese, and after work parents have little time for language classes. Unlike white-collar, “salary man” employment, where socializing after work is common and often expected, the factory workplace provides no occupational incentives for foreign workers to socialize with their Japanese coworkers. Lacking this pressure to socialize, Peruvians’ social lives revolve solely around family and coethnics (See Lareau 2000:173).

Many Peruvian parents have lived in Japan for 15 to 16 years, with only three arriving within the last two to three years. Most indicate that they plan on remaining with their children in Japan for the foreseeable future, and those who say they plan on returning to Peru often cannot say when they will do so, beyond vague references to some point in the next five to ten years. As the children’s Spanish language skills decline, and Japanese becomes their primary language, parents are often unsure how and when they might return to Peru.

The children speak conversational Japanese quite well, however they are often not at grade level in terms of *kanji* (Chinese ideographs) and more complex language skills. As Ōta (2000) notes, this oral proficiency is not enough for foreign children to fully understand the content of their school lessons. The children’s Spanish skills are more limited, as they often understand simple spoken Spanish, but have very rudimentary reading and writing skills. At

home, communication between parents and children is limited, as the parents speak to their children in Spanish but the children often answer in Japanese. There are no private Spanish-language ethnic schools in the greater Shiroyama area, however some local Brazilian parents send their children to private Brazilian schools in neighboring cities.

Shiroyama's Peruvians are not a racially homogeneous group. Phenotypically, some are indistinguishable from native-born Japanese, and others have Latino facial features that clearly mark them as foreign. While some Peruvians may visually pass as Japanese, their non-native accents reveal them as *gaijin* (outsiders) as soon as they speak. The combination of having a Japanese face and being Peruvian complicates Peruvians' social interactions, as Japanese often expect those who look Japanese to be able to speak, read, and write the language. Conversely, those who do not look Japanese are not expected to know the language. This discrepancy leads Peruvians to complain that store clerks provide more assistance to those who do not look Japanese, including giving more detailed explanations and offering to fill out forms for them.

In interviews, Japanese-Peruvian parents frequently express concerns about their ethnic identity. Parents say they were called "*chinos*" (Chinese) in Peru because of their Asian facial features (See Takenaka 2004). In Japan, despite their Japanese ancestry, they are *gaijin*. As one mother put it, "*Mi sangre es pura japonesa, pero aquí soy gaijin.*" (My blood is pure Japanese, but here I am a *gaijin*.)") Current notions of Japanese identity prevent Japanese Peruvians from effectively claiming a Japanese identity. These notions present the people of Japan as racially and ethnically homogeneous, and the sole heirs of a Japanese identity passed on by blood and by culture (Lie 2001; Oguma 2002; Weiner 1997). Following this perspective, Peruvians often hear the popular litany that all Japanese are racially and ethnically the same, and non-Japanese, regardless of race or ethnicity, cannot become Japanese. Instead, Peruvians' foreign status, like a racial status, is ascriptive and permanent.

Despite variations in racial phenotype and in experiences, Peruvians uniformly talk about suffering discrimination as foreigners in Japan. Repeated experiences with

discrimination have led parents to now see their Peruvian identities as most salient, at the expense of the Japanese identities they brought with them from Peru. Parents also pass on this lesson to their children by reminding them that they are Peruvian, and not Japanese. As one Japanese-Peruvian mother says about her Japan-born son:

Y él siempre habla de otros niños, él habla “perūjin, perūjin.” Pero le digo, ... “tú también eres perūjin.” Pero él, desde niño, se ha visto en el espejo, y sus apellidos, los dos apellidos son [japoneses], pues él vivía pensando que era japonés. Pero, “tú no eres japonés,” le digo, “tú no eres nihonjin.”

He always calls other kids, “*perūjin, perūjin*” [‘Peruvian, Peruvian’]. But I tell him, ... “you’re also *perūjin*.” But he, since he was a baby, he’s seen his face in the mirror, and his last names, both his last names are Japanese, so he thought he was Japanese. But, “You’re not Japanese,” I tell him, “you’re not “*nihonjin*” [‘Japanese’].

Japanese law does not automatically confer citizenship to those born in Japan, and passes on a resident alien status to children born in Japan to foreign parents. This legal status is reflected in the Japanese language, as Japanese refer broadly to non-Japanese as *gaikokujin* (foreigner) or *gaijin*. Within the school setting, teachers often refer to foreign children as *gaikokuseki jidō* (children of foreign nationality), lumping the children together based upon their non-Japanese nationality and without regard to their place of birth or variations in their acculturation to Japanese society.

Shiroyama Elementary School

Shiroyama Elementary School is among the largest in the region, with more than 800 students in 27 classes. 48 students have foreign nationality or other foreign ties, with 34 Peruvian students, five Bolivians, five Brazilians, three Chinese, and one Filipino. Of these, three children possess Japanese citizenship from birth. In two cases, one or both of the parents were second-generation emigrants whose parents were Japanese citizens and passed on this citizenship to their children. In the third case, the child of a Filipino mother obtained her citizenship from her Japanese father. Of these 48 students, 36 were born in Japan and all but seven have exclusively attended Japanese schools. 23 students leave their regular classes to

attend remedial Japanese classes, on average three 45-minute class periods per week, most often during their classes' language arts lessons. Relative to schools in neighboring cities that also have large populations of foreign children, Shiroyama has fewer resources for foreign children and their parents, with fewer remedial language teachers, less translation support for materials sent home, and no volunteers in the remedial classroom.

For more than a year, this researcher has been volunteering full-time in the school, translating handouts to parents into Spanish and providing Spanish-Japanese interpreting. In addition to observing daily life at the school, I have also been conducting intensive interviews with Peruvian parents, and more informal interviews with Japanese teachers. Filling these roles has placed me in the middle of the conflicts between parents and teachers, as both sides have sought my language assistance.

In the face of growing numbers of foreign children, teachers at Shiroyama have followed other schools in Japan in focusing on teaching the Japanese language and school norms to the non-Japanese children, to the neglect of the children's native language skills (Ōta 2000, 2005). Teachers treat students' native language and culture as "either nonexistent, inconsequential, or a block to assimilation," and expect the foreign children to learn to think and act like the Japanese children as quickly as possible (Ōta 2000:10, 7). From this perspective, cultural diversity is a problem that interferes with the smooth operation of the school. Equating problems such as tardiness, missed homework, and roughhousing with acting Peruvian, teachers instruct parents that if they plan on permanently residing in Japan, they need to raise their children to act according to Japanese social norms.

While teachers praise the Latino children's bilingual abilities, teachers rarely make efforts in the classroom to sustain the children's native language skills or to include this linguistic resource in school activities. One recent exception is the school's new "*Supeingo Taimu*" (Spanish Time) lunchtime broadcasts, in which a Peruvian child gives a 5-minute Spanish lesson, once a week, teaching basic words and phrases while students eat lunch. These

broadcasts indicate that, in spite of the dominance of teachers' complaints about Peruvians, there are dissenting views among the teaching staff.

The need for interpreting and translating has been exacerbated by the irregular presence and poor performance of the school district's full-time language counselor (*gogaku-shidō-in*) who rotates between several schools in the area. Much to the dismay of many at the school, this Japanese man regularly misses work for various, often unexplained or unsatisfactory, reasons, and, when at work, often produces confusing Spanish and Portuguese translations that contain numerous grammatical and spelling mistakes. In interviews and in informal conversations, parents often discuss how they have struggled to understand these translations, and, as a result, have missed school events or sent their children to school without the needed school supplies.

TEACHERS' AND PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS

Teachers' Expectations

Japanese teachers describe a desirable family-school relationship as one that is based on trust, deference, partnership, and cooperation. From this perspective, the school is not a place for parents to openly criticize teachers (See Lareau and Horvat 1999). Teachers praise Peruvian parents who comply with this norm, expressing empathy with the difficulties these *majime* (dedicated) and *nesshin* (earnest) parents face in learning Japanese and living far from their home countries. When parents have openly criticized teachers, teachers have responded by rebuffing the parents' concerns, denying any criticisms and changing the subject of discussion. Teachers later cited those concerns as evidence that the parents had not yet adapted to life in Japan. In one case, Ms. Gonzalez, a Peruvian mother who has lived in Japan for 10 years, has had several difficult meetings with teachers and the language counselor, at times including yelling that could be heard in classrooms down the hall. Since her last difficult meeting, when Ms. Gonzalez now contacts the school, teachers and staff often respond with rolled eyes and quiet comments about "*Perū no okāsan*" (Peruvian mothers) being *mendokusai* (bothersome) and *taihen* (difficult).

In another case, Ms. Higa, a Peruvian mother who has lived in Japan for eight years, requested a meeting with her daughter's teacher to address the child's two-week depression. The girl had been coming home from school in tears, refusing to go back to school and complaining that she wanted to die because of poor treatment by her teacher and classmates. Armed with accusations of discrimination, and in a moment of heated exchanges, the mother boldly asks, "*Sensei, gaikokujin ga kirai desu ka?*" ("Teacher, do you hate foreigners?") The accusations stunned the teacher, and in the days and weeks after the meeting, the teacher complained to her colleagues about the bluntness of the mother's accusation and the directness of her complaints. She also bemoaned that foreign parents are not adapting to life in Japan and how scary they become when they get angry.

While teachers value trust, deference, and partnership, members of a minority group who are conscious of discrimination are more likely to approach the school with suspicion and criticism, particularly when problems arise (Lareau and Horvat 1999). In Japan, Japanese parents are members of the dominant group, and as such are able to develop relationships with the school without concerns about racial discrimination. However, this is not the case for Peruvian parents, as they are concerned about whether their children are being treated poorly specifically because they are not Japanese. This suspicion is evident in parents' complaints about the school, as they inevitably ask if they are having problems because they are foreigners. Even in an instance in which a child has a history of no major problems with teachers or students, when she does have a problem, the parent asks "*¿Es porque somos extranjeros?*" ("Is it because we're foreigners?") Given the problems I have noted at the school, and parents' own experiences of discrimination in Japan, there is some validity to the parents' concerns. It is also hard for parents to avoid asking about discrimination, given the daily reminders they receive of their permanent foreign status, from the challenges they face in reading Japanese, to the looks of concern they report receiving from clerks when they enter a store, to the mistreatment they report receiving at work.

While teachers frame their complaints about the school's language counselor as individual critiques of his personality and performance, they do not afford foreign parents same the luxury of individuality. Rather, teachers often frame their complaints as broad critiques about Peruvians, Latinos, or foreigners, arguing that the parents place a lesser value on education, that they operate on "*Perū taimu*" (Peruvian time) which runs late, and otherwise do not act *kichinto* (properly) even though they live in a very *kichinto shita* (proper) country. They also express frustration with the slow pace of parents' Japanese language learning. It is difficult to estimate how well these complaints represent the views of the teaching staff as a whole, as many teachers voice neither praise nor complaints. Some teachers report having good relationships with parents, and occasionally share positive comments. However, such praise is rare, as the dominant discussion regarding Peruvian parents within the school is one of complaint.

That teachers make these critiques in my presence, and at times to me directly, reflects the different statuses afforded Americans and Peruvians in Japan. My relatively *erai* (high) status as a white, American graduate student who can speak and read Japanese, albeit with the aid of a dictionary, ranks more highly than that of the *kawaisō* (pitiful) Peruvian parents, who left an impoverished country to engage in low-status factory work in Japan (Roth 2002; Tsuda 1998).

At times, teachers openly acknowledge the difficulties foreign parents face in helping their children with their homework, however they also often claim that parents do not need to help their children. Arguing that some Japanese parents also cannot read the *kanji* used in higher elementary classes, teachers claim that foreign children can obtain help in the remedial language class and from regular teachers during recess periods. When parents ask for additional help, teachers recommend that parents need only to verbally encourage their children and tell them to please keep working. The teachers' intent is to alleviate parents of the burden of helping with work the parents might not understand, and to provide all children in

the class with similar instruction. However, ineffective instruction in the remedial class limits the success of this approach, as students are able to obtain only limited assistance with their work. Moreover, this approach often keeps parents uninformed of problems with their children's academic work, as teachers wait before informing parents and attempt to address the problems themselves. Importantly, teachers' piecemeal strategy to mitigating the wide array of factors facing foreign children and their parents sidesteps a broader critique of the school's curriculum for foreign students.

Parents' Expectations

Parents bring a variety of issues with them to the school, including a distrust of the Japanese school system as lacking discipline and not giving the children enough work. They argue that the Japanese practice of passing children from one grade to the next, whether or not the children have mastered the academic material, prevents those Peruvian children who start off behind their classmates from ever reaching grade level. In conversations with family and friends, parents share stories of their school experiences, talking about teachers and children they like and dislike, and those whom they see as prejudiced against foreigners. Parents are also aware of the school's limited resources for foreign families.

Parents are likewise critical of the school's poor remedial language instruction, complaining that students just play in the remedial class and are not progressing fast enough. As parents accurately note, remedial lessons mostly involve students passively completing *kanji* worksheets with little supervision. Students enjoy this free time, taking frequent breaks to talk and play with their friends. Remedial classes are also disconnected from the school's curriculum, as teachers in the regular classes know little about the specific content of the remedial lessons and remedial teachers do not attend parent-teacher conferences.

Keenly aware of their role in their children's school preparedness, some parents describe themselves as having been actively involved in their children's education in Peru, volunteering in the classroom and regularly meeting with the teachers. However, in Japan, their

involvement has become much more limited, as no foreign parents volunteer at the school or participate in the school's Parent Teacher Association. Parents' limited Japanese language skills are relevant here, as the PTA publishes materials only in Japanese. Peruvian parents' social networks in Japan are also made up almost exclusively of other foreign parents, and thus provide little information about the Japanese educational system. This information would aid parents in preparing children for high school entrance exams, let parents know to whom at the school to direct their concerns, and what extracurricular resources may be available.

When they enter the school, Peruvian parents are also conscious that they are in unfamiliar territory. Like many Japanese parents, Peruvian parents only visit the school for formal school events. However, unlike the Japanese parents, they silently watch the school events and interact very little with the parents around them. In parent-teacher meetings, Peruvian parents often appear uncomfortable, fidgeting in their seats, speaking little, seemingly expecting bad news even when the child is doing well. This distance from Japanese social networks and from Japanese schools often frustrates parents, who turn to me during parent-teacher conferences to complain they are unable to effectively communicate with the teachers. Charging that the school is letting their children fail, parents repeatedly ask, in extreme frustration, "*¿Así es el colegio aquí?*" ("Is this what [Japanese] schools are like here?") However, the anger and shock expressed in parents' direct criticisms further contributes to teachers' complaints that foreign parents remain too foreign, and teachers respond by dismissing parents' complaints.

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

In studies of working-class parents' relationships with schools in the United States, Sennett and Cobb (1972) and Lareau (2000, 2003) note how, for working-class families, the academic realm of the school often exists independently of the private realm of the home. Working-class parents voice support for their children's academic pursuits, however they often feel out of place in the social world of teachers and the school. For Peruvian parents in Japan,

this divide between school and home is widened by families' immigrant status. Relative to native-born, working-class families, Peruvian parents face the additional burden of being social and cultural outsiders. Effectively intervening in the school requires them to acquire new social and cultural capital specific to the Japanese setting, however parents' social circles provide them with few resources which might facilitate their interactions with the school.

To navigate the maze of school materials and information, Peruvian parents often rely on their children, including having the children try to read school handouts to them. Parents also call on coethnics for help in preparing children's school materials and in reading the *renrakuchō*, a daily notebook of class information written by the children in Japanese. Parents' long work hours make receiving this coethnic support difficult, as parents have little time to interact with their children and with other parents. Support from coethnics and from the school is important, as whether or not children are prepared for school directly impacts in-class activities and dynamics. After repeated instances of some foreign children coming to class lacking school supplies and completed homework, Japanese teachers and students alike have become less willing to locate and share materials, and instead often dismiss the students' problems as *muri* (impossible to solve).

The structure of the parent-teacher conferences further limit parents' efforts to be more involved, as the conferences provide parents with few opportunities to speak. In the brief, 10- to 15-minute sessions, with no extra time allowed for interpreting, teachers leave little time for parents to ask questions. When parents discover problems with their children's school performance, and want to continue discussing the issue, they often must continue to press their concerns while ignoring teachers' attempts to end the meeting. Also, interpreting is only sporadically available and is of poor quality, further hindering communication. In this regard, this researcher's presence at the school has provided parents with an additional resource in interacting with teachers, and perhaps thus enabled more parent-teacher discussions than would have occurred otherwise.

In addition to the regular parent-teacher conferences, once a year the school holds informal meetings for Latino parents, to enable parents to ask general questions and obtain assistance with children's extensive vacation homework. However, at the meetings held during my fieldwork, nearly 20 parents waited for over two hours while the school's language counselor failed to appear. Parents eventually left without getting any assistance and the meetings were not rescheduled.

In contrast to some teachers' critiques of parents as not valuing education, parents routinely express hope that their children will pursue higher education and will obtain more professional employment. As one Peruvian mother noted:

Yo estudié en universidad, no terminé, y ahora me arrepiento por no terminar, y no, y no sé hacer nada, otras cosas. [Para que mi hija pensara, le dije] '¿Y vas a ser como mamá y trabajar un trabajo pesado, y vas a trabajar así?' ... Siempre le hablo a mi hija, 'Estudia, es para tu bien, estudia, para que puedas trabajar un trabajo suave, fácil.'

I studied at the university, but I didn't finish, and now I regret not finishing, and I don't know how to do anything, other things. [To make my daughter think, I told her] "And you're going to be like your mom and work at a difficult job, you're going to work like that?" ... I always tell my daughter, "Study, it's for your own good, study, so you can get a nice, easy job."

Parents express a desire to be more involved in their children's education, yet they feel that they cannot effectively do so. Unable to read much of their children's work, parents are often able to help only with the math assignments. However even in math, which parents expected would be taught the same everywhere, parents find themselves unable to understand how the material is taught in Japan and often avoid participating, explaining "I don't want to confuse my child." With few community resources available, beyond paying for Kumon and private tutors, parents rely heavily on the school for the education of their children. In turn, teachers often interpret the parents' lack of direct participation as evidence of a hands-off approach to child-rearing and of a low cultural value placed on education.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Nakamura, the Japanese teacher who spoke at the beginning of this article, was partly correct in blaming school problems on parents' Latino ancestry. Peruvian parents' limited involvement in the elementary school, their tardiness in returning school forms, and the instances of their children not coming to school with the necessary materials can be explained, in part, by parents being Latino, and not Japanese. However, Latino culture is not the culprit here. Rather, Latino parents face numerous barriers in interacting with teachers and participating in the Japanese school system. Parents' social circles of the factory, the family, and coethnics are poor sources of the social and cultural capital parents need to more effectively participate in their children's education.

In turn, parents rely heavily on the school for assistance, yet Shiroyama Elementary School struggles to provide the interpreting and translation services that could facilitate parents' involvement. While teachers tell parents to verbally encourage their children, the school fails to support the children and parents with effective remedial instruction and foreign language support. This approach has also fulfilled some teachers' low expectations of the children's performance, as those teachers bemoan the parents' poor language skills and proffer critiques of Latino cultures.

Absent a reform of the structural barriers facing Peruvian families, parents will likely continue to remain distant from Japanese schools, and students will likely continue to come to school unprepared, impacting both Peruvian families and Japanese teachers. To move toward a reform of these structural barriers, teachers would do well to heed the concerns of Peruvian parents, as the parents' position as an "outsider within" Japanese society (Collins 1986) offers teachers a new vantage point for analyzing the Japanese school system. This perspective identifies many structural flaws, while also revealing parents' strong desire for their children's educational success.

NOTES

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- i) All names in this paper are pseudonyms.
- ii) All translations in this article are my own.
- iii) City population statistics list the total number of foreigners, by country of origin, in the city, but do not list the numbers by country of origin in each neighborhood. Citywide statistics show 400 Peruvians, 320 Brazilians, 140 Chinese, and 35 Bolivians.
- iv) Interestingly, the Chinese students' ethnic difference is relatively invisible at the school, as teachers' discussions of "foreign students" rarely include any reference to the Chinese. It is possible that teachers see the Chinese students as more assimilated than the Peruvians, and thus needing less support from the school. The Chinese students were born in Japan, speak Japanese well, and use the Japanese readings of the characters in their names, rather than the Chinese readings. Also, the overwhelming presence of 44 Latino children, compared to only three Chinese students, may further explain this invisibility.
- v) The Immigration Control Law of 1990 made long-term resident visas available to up to third-generation Japanese descendants and their spouses. Some parents are fourth-generation descendants, however, legally these parents are in the third-generation, as their Peru-born grandparents possessed Japanese citizenship.

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日本の学校とペルー人保護者-ある公立小学校における参与観察から-

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本稿は、中部地方のある公立小学校における参与観察とインタビュー調査にもとづいて、日本人教師とペルー人保護者との関係を考察したものである。日本人教師は、増加を続ける外国人児童の指導に困惑し、また、言語や文化が異なるペルー人保護者の態度を非難する。このような日本人教師の不満の中で、様々な構造的要因、たとえば、不十分な言語支援や効果的ではない日本語指導などが、ペルー人保護者やペルー人の子どもたちの努力を妨げている。本論は、また、外国人としての社会的地位と階層が、日本での子どもの教育に関わるのに必要な社会的・文化的資源の獲得をいかに妨げているかも考察している