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School To Work Transition in Japan:

An Ethnographic Study

A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree

of Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy)
in Education
at Massey University

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the school to work transition at two Japanese vocationally oriented senior high schools. It focuses on the process of differentiation among non-university bound students making employment-related decisions and obtaining jobs. The ethnographic data collected over one year show that these students create their own trajectories by activating school-based and family-based resources. The thesis argues that the variation within the modal trajectory of this group is due to different perceptions and uses of different categories of these available resources. School resources are extensively made available to all students; they take the form of educational, social, symbolic and cultural resources provided under the job referral practice, which offers a wide-range of employment-related activities and information based on the schools' accumulated data about companies and their ex-students.

Differences in the use of school resources in the transition process can be observed at three levels. Firstly, available resources exist in an "objective" sense both in the family and at school. Secondly, habitus generates a selective perception of the available resources, and some students do not perceive that the resources will help them. Thirdly, habitus activates the resources in a particular way: based on their perceptions, students adjust their wishes to what they see as probable, and some consequently conduct "self-elimination" from seeking positions which they consider they cannot obtain. In this process influential people around students, both in the family and at school, can provide directed resources for immediate personal use; they can intervene in the students' perception and activation of resources and consequently can have an important impact on the final outcome. As a product of one's past experiences and material conditions, habitus acts as a carrier of social inequality and contributes to the reproduction of that inequality. Only school-based resources has any potential to counterbalance the trend towards reproduction in the transition process.

The thesis argues that students who hold positive family resources, like the elites in Bourdieu's study, try to convert these resources into a job which will in turn generate positive social and economic resources. Students without positive family resources, or those with negative family resources have to adopt a different strategy: namely, to convert a combination of the school-based resources into a job for their "life-after-school" by appropriating *shared* resources for their own *individual, private* use. For these students, the school-based resource substitutes for family resources. Hence, although the major differentiation takes place across institutions at the age of 16, the highly organised job referral practice at vocationally oriented high schools, rather than the school system as a whole, softens the determinism of reproduction *within* the non-elite school and job hierarchy. The practice provides an insight into the way the determining relationship between family background and job placement can be loosened. The extensive provision of school-based resources illuminates the process of, and extends the possibilities for, utilising school resources for obtaining jobs.

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GLOSSARY

3CA (or 3CB, 3CC): Third year Commerce course home room class A (or B, C) at Sasaki High.

3D: Third year Data-processing home room class at Sasaki High.

3I: Third year Interior Furnishing home room class at Imai Tech High.

3LA (or 3LB, 3LC, 3LD): Third year academic (Liberal Arts) course home room class A (or B, C, D) at Sasaki High.

3MA (or 3MB, 3MC): Third year Machinery home room class A (or B, C) at Imai Tech High.

academic high school: A senior high school which offers only a general (i.e., academic) course.

Ainu: A native tribe who live in the Hokkaido Island of Japan.

amaeru: Yielding to temptation of ease or pleasure.

arubaito: Casual part-time work.

Australasia: Australia and New Zealand

boshi-katei: Solo-mother family.

buana-shikou: An inclination to choose a safer path.

buraku: The *buraku* people are descendants of an outcaste population. Although the institutionalised caste system was abolished in the mid-19th century, the *buraku* people have remained and still face discrimination. Saki-city where the two schools were located has over 40 *buraku* communities. See the following for details: De Vos, G. and Wagatsuma, H. (1966). Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in culture and personality. Berkeley, University of California Press. Ogbu, J. (1978). *The Buraku Outcastes of Japan*. In Ogbu, J. (Ed.) Minority Education and Caste (pp307-320). New York, Academic Press.

class rep: Class representatives (*gakkyuu-iin*) are elected in each home room class, and are in charge of conveying messages and organising activities.

comprehensive high school: A senior high school which offers both general and vocational courses.

daisotsu: University graduates.

DGLAS: Department of Guidance for Life After School the role of which is to guide and advise students seeking employment or further education.

Douyuukai: The name of a nation-wide association of medium to small size companies.

education board: Local government body which administers schools in a given area. Prefectural education boards administer only senior high schools, while municipal boards are responsible for primary, junior high and senior high schools.

enko: Its literal meaning is "connection". When used in the context of job acquisition where employment is gained through some kind of personal connection, such as a family member or relative. *Enko* can be an alternative to going through school channels to find a job.

furiitaa: A short form of *furii-abubaitaa*.

furii-arubaitaa: Those who derive their main income from casual part-time work and who do not hold a permanent job.

futsuu-kyouka: "Academic subjects" (as opposed to "specialised subjects") like Maths, English, History, etc.

gaiseki: A short form of *gaikokuseki*. The term is used at school to refer to Korean and Chinese resident in Japan, most of whom are second generation. The literal meaning is "foreign national", but the term is not used in reference to Europeans residing in Japan.

gakugyou-fushin: Poor academic performance and low motivation.

gakunen: A group of home room teachers in charge of the same year. It comprises home room teachers, the dean and the sub-dean(s) of each grade.

gakurekishakai: A society based on academic achievement. Japanese society is characterised as such.

general course: Senior high school course based on academic curriculum.

gijutsu-shoku: Technical employment positions. (as opposed to *ginou-shoku* and *senmon-shoku*).

ginou-shoku: Skilled and semi-skilled employment positions. (as opposed to *gijutsu-shoku* and *senmon-shoku*).

habitus: It is an acquired system of generative schema which engenders perceptions, thoughts, expressions and actions (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72,85,95), and is a product of an individual's past experiences and their material conditions (Ibid., p.72). Habitus includes transportable dispositions such as way of thinking, values, and patterns of interpretation.

HOD: Head of department.

home room class: The class unit at school. It is the equivalent of the New Zealand form class, but exhibits greater solidarity.

home room teacher: The teacher in charge of each home room class.

ijime: Bullying.

ikigai: One's aim in life, reason for being.

judaku-sho: A formal letter of acceptance of employment.

kanji: Chinese characters.

keigo: Japanese honorific language. Adults are required to be proficient in *keigo* as its use facilitates social interaction in Japan.

kesson-katei: "Broken family"; single parent or non-parent family.

kinshin: Suspension from school for a fixed period as a punishment.

kousotsu: Senior high school graduates.

maruhi: Confidential.

meishi: Business name cards.

negative resources: Negative resources refer to resources which have a detrimental effect in obtaining "better" employment in the employment market as defined by the dominant group and consequently in improving one's social position. Negative resources refer to resources which adversely affect a person promoting his/her social position given a specific purpose in a specific setting. Also see "resources".

nemawashi: Groundwork which one conducts before an event so that the event will go smoothly, like lobbying.

nengajou: New Year's cards.

neutral resources: Neutral resources have neither a facilitative nor detrimental effect on a person obtaining "better" employment in the employment market as defined by the dominant group. Neutral resources are resources which work neither positively nor negatively for a person promoting his/her social position for a specific purpose in a specific setting.

PESO: The Public Employment Security Office.

positive resources: Positive resources refer to resources which help a person obtain "better" employment in the employment market as defined by the dominant group and consequently improve his/her social position. Positive resources refer to resources which help a person promoting his/her social position given a specific purpose in a specific setting. Also see "resources".

raku: Comfortable and easy.

RC(s): Recruitment card(s).

reijou: A thank you letter.

resources: Possession of tangibles and intangibles of any description. There are four types: economic resources (money and material assets, etc.), social resources (social and personal network, etc.), symbolic resources (prestige and reputation, etc.) and cultural resources (language patterns, taste, consumption patterns, educational achievement, etc.). A particular resource can qualify as a positive resource, a negative resource, or a neutral resource, given a specific purpose in a specific setting.

rounin: Those who failed to gain entrance to a university and spend an extra year (or more) preparing for the following year's entrance examination.

sake: Rice wine.

-san: Used after a name when addressing a person of either sex, like Okano-san. This equates to Mr, Ms, Miss, Mrs in English).

seken-no-me: Its literal meaning is "the society's eye", and is used to refer to social pressure.

senmon-kyouka: "Specialised subjects". Non-academic (vocational) subjects such as machinery, data-processing etc.

senmon-shoku: Professional employment positions. (as opposed to *gijutsu-shoku* and *ginou-shoku*).

senmongakkou: Post-secondary private professional schools which offer "practical" vocational-type courses such as tourism, computer programming, English conversation etc.

-sensei: An honorific suffix used when addressing one's teacher and those engaged in teaching, (eg. *Okano-sensei*).

shakai-jin: The literal translation is "society person". It means a responsible member of society, who has a job and income. Students are not *shakai-jin*.

shindoi: Demanding.

shitamachi: An old quarter of an urban city where small houses and shops are crammed together and which exhibits a strong sense of social solidarity.

shoku-shu: The kind of job which covers *senmon-shoku*, *gijutsu-shoku*, *ginou-shoku*, sales positions, etc. However, the distinctions are blurred.

specialised subjects (*senmon kyouka*): Subjects which are offered in vocational courses, such as electronics, machinery, interior design etc, as opposed to pure academic subjects.

student council: Student body consisting of about 10 elected members.

suisen-nyuugaku: *Suisen-nyuugaku* refers to the practice whereby students sit a special university entrance examination held about three months prior to the open competition examinations. Candidates need to be specifically recommended by their headmaster and therefore must have a reasonable academic record. It is generally acknowledged, however, that the *suisen-nyuugaku* examination are less difficult than those held during the open competition phase.

taigaku(-sha): (those who) leave school before completing a diploma and without graduating. Early school leavers.

teigaku: Suspension from school.

the three-party meeting: An official meeting organised by the school in which the student, his/her parents and the home room teacher discuss the student's school life and, in particular, his/her life-after-school plan. Both Imai Tech High and Sasaki High conduct these meetings in June of a students' final year. In addition, Imai Tech High conducts a further series of meetings in mid August for those who require further consultation. Parent's attendance is almost 100 %.

vocational course: A senior high school course which includes a vocational curriculum (referred to as "specialised curriculum") which represents from 1/3 to 1/2 of the total number of subjects in the course.

vocational high school: A senior high school which offers only vocational courses.

zainichi: Foreign nationals living in Japan, primarily Koreans and Chinese.

zangyo: Overtime work.

INTRODUCTION

The central focus of this study is to chart the differentiation among students at the moment of school to work transition in two vocationally oriented high schools in Japan. Those students who enter the workforce immediately after completing high school become the "mass" of contemporary Japanese society. They are not, however, a uniform group. In this crucial transition period, these students create a variety of personal trajectories by activating school and family resources.

This study examines the process by which these students make decisions about and obtain employment through a state institutional arrangement called "the job referral system". The job referral system is operated by three parties: the school, employers and the Public Employment Security Office (a government agency). Simply put, schools receive recruitment cards for available positions from employers, process this employment data and then make it available to the students, thus providing job opportunities equally to all students regardless of their family backgrounds. The majority of students get jobs through this school channel, although a small number of them use family social networks.

The Statement of the Problem

The thesis argues that those students with family resources obtained jobs through family social networks and did not need to use the school's social network with companies; those without positive family resources depended on the school's institutionalised social network with companies to get jobs; those with negative family resources, such as a minority background, were provided with extra school resources to compensate for their disadvantage. Among those in the first group who used family resources, the majority obtained "desirable" jobs at big companies. A few of them, however, overvalued their family resource, and consequently limited their opportunity to advance their social position. Of the students in the second group, who used school resources, some made the maximum use of the given school resources for obtaining employment, while others activated them less effectively. Among those in the third group, with negative family resources, many exploited the school's provision of resources for their benefit. In short, differences were observed in the way in which school resources were utilised by the students according to their individual circumstances.

What was taking place in the above-mentioned process was conversion of resources from one form to another, and from one generation to the next. The conversion centred on the participants' strategy to estimate the value, and the volume, of different kinds of resources. Failure to estimate them correctly often led to ineffective, or even detrimental use of resources. Bourdieu (1984, p.135-137) presented the capital reconversion strategies among the elites: one converts a form of one's own capital into another form in order to maintain and promote one's social position. This strategy is possible only for those who possess legitimate capital (i.e., positive resources). Those who do not possess positive resources in the first place, like many of the students in my study, are not able to

adopt such a strategy in the field of job acquisition, and have to look to external sources to provide them with a "stake" in the job market. I argue that members of the first group, holders of positive family resources, tried to convert these resources into a permanent job (which will generate social and economic resources). The second group, those without positive family resources had to adopt a different strategy. The most successful and widespread strategy of resource conversion employed by these students was to convert one, or a combination of, the school-based resources into a job for their "life-after-school". These various school-based resources can be categorised as follows: social resources, covering the social network the school maintains with companies; educational resources, which describes the skills, language and knowledge a student has learned at school; symbolic resources, incorporating sports club and student council involvement; and cultural resources such as the advice given by teachers. The strategy was to appropriate *public* or *shared* resources for their own *individual, private* use. For this group, the school resource acts as a substitute for family social resources. The third group with negative resources is able to adopt this last strategy most effectively, since the school made more resources available to them in the form of affirmative actions and the provision of specific advice and a social network, in an attempt to protect the human rights of students who belonged to minority groups.

Given the potential to adopt the strategy to convert the school's resource into a job, however, not all students made use of this strategy in the most effective way. In fact, some did not use it at all, and ended up with a job which they did not want or even failed to get employment until the last moment. I propose two explanations for this. Firstly, their habitus screened what they perceived, and therefore some students saw the available resources but not as ones which would help them, that is, they "misrecognised" the available resources. Secondly, their perception of resources and consequent actions were also subject to direct intervention by family members and the school itself, with each party trying to influence the student. Having perceived both family-based and school-based resources, students compared them and weighed up the positive and negative benefits of each to arrive at a decision about which resources would be useful to them, and in which combinations they should be employed, in order to obtain employment.

The analysis presented here examines what took place at school during the last year of high schooling. The distinguishing feature of the job referral system as practised, is the great extent of the school's provision of employment-related services to students including the maintenance of a social network with companies, intensive preparation for recruitment examinations, and detailed guidance and suggestions. The intent of employment acquisition guidance was to minimise "failures" in the employment examinations. The system, as practised, projects itself to outsiders (in particular, those with a Western background) as *paternalistic*, in that school treats students as small children, deprives

them of their independence and autonomy, and controls their decisions by giving over-explicit directions. The insiders' accounts, however, suggest that the system was in fact *maternalistic*, in that the "caring" and "protection" the system imparted was the more dominant theme than the "control" it exerted.

The study also demonstrates the capacity of the school, teachers and students to act on their own, that is, to take "resistant" and autonomous actions under the external constraints of the job referral practice. The school was not simply an agent through which employers could sort and select new recruits, but sometimes took actions contrary to the demands from the employers and the state, although only to a limited degree. Teachers' interpretation of school policy was diverse: some teachers even took actions which challenged the school's collective decisions. Each student interpreted, and responded, on an individual basis to the school messages. Students were not passively sorted by the school, but created their own trajectories of transition from school to work, using a variety of resources.

Method

The nature of my research topic and concerns led me to adopt ethnographic methods. My concerns were: to examine how the job referral system is *practised* at the micro-level; to understand how students and teachers make sense of the system; and to explore the process of cultural reproduction through individual students' habitus. To achieve this it was vital to become close to the people involved and to elicit their perceptions of the process of transition. This is a form of ethnographic research in that my data and the interpretation of it was a product of my reflexivity and of a close and trusting relationship gradually developed with the actors in the field over a considerable period of time.

The study exploits the bicultural and bilingual skills, and reflexivity of the researcher. It examines the process of transition from school to work by observing what took place at school every day during the last year of the students' high schooling. The process is examined as I saw it; as teachers interpreted it; and as students experienced it. I attempt to interpret these actors' accounts (which are the actors' theories about the transition process) and to reconstruct the transition process, or more specifically, the process of differentiation, with reference to other relevant sources. A basic assumption is that no description is complete; it always involves selection and summary through the observers' perception. All perception is theory-ridden. It was, therefore, not my aim to gather "pure"/"unbiased" data but to discover the correct manner of interpreting the data that I had obtained.

My ethnographic fieldwork took place at two senior high schools predominantly oriented to providing vocational courses: Sasaki High and Imai Tech High in Saki-city, Japan. All place names, school names, and personal names have been changed to protect the privacy of participants. Saki-city is an urban industrial city with a population of 1.5 million. Both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High are

municipal vocationally oriented schools and rank at the bottom of the government school hierarchy. The students in the vocational courses in these two schools occupied the bottom half of the academic achievement distribution of their age group at the time of entry, and come from relatively disadvantaged family backgrounds. Over 90 percent of the vocational course students entered the workforce directly after high school.

I entered the field as a research student in the Department of Guidance for Life After School (DGLAS) at each school, and spent the whole academic year with students and teachers. I focused on three particular classes: 3I (the interior furnishing third year home room class) and 3MA (the machinery A third year home room class A) at Imai Tech High, and 3D (the data processing third year home room class) at Sasaki High.

Origin of the Study

My interest in the present research altered over the three years I have been engaged in it. Four major sources of influence which formed and guided this study are: my bilingual and bicultural background; my secondary school teaching experience; difficulties experienced by youth in the school to work transition in Anglophone societies; and the most important, the fieldwork.

I was born into a middle-class family in a small Japanese city. After completing compulsory education at government schools, I went to a government academic senior high school (from where almost all graduates went on to universities), and then on to a national university. During my undergraduate period I studied a combination of social science, humanities and natural science subjects with an emphasis on the first two, and was also introduced to anthropology, sociology and education. My first cross-cultural experience took place while I was still an undergraduate and involved a visit to the US as a delegate of the Japan-America Student Conference to discuss social issues with American university students. I later spent one year at Auckland University as an exchange student, which provided me with the opportunity to develop my confidence in using the English language and in adapting to different lifestyles. The year spent away from my "homeland" had a significant impact on me, particularly since it was a formative period of my personal development. On the completion of my undergraduate degree, I chose to prolong my "moratorium", deferring my entry to the conformist *shakai-jin* ("society person") world, with perhaps much the same feelings of wanting to remain a student that some of the actors in this study expressed. Accordingly, in 1983 I entered Sydney University to study for a MA degree in comparative education, and later entered teaching.

At the time I was contemplating a PhD research topic I had been a high school teacher in Australasia for 3 years. This affected the research in two ways. Firstly, I decided to work with high school students, since I thought that I was more familiar with that age group than with any others, and was personally curious about how students experience high schooling, as opposed to the way I experienced it as a teacher. Secondly, as a result of my first-hand teaching experience--being in the

midst of the interaction of the schooling process--I was particularly interested in examining the everyday functioning of the school at the classroom level, rather than at other levels.

During my time as a high school teacher, I was made conscious of certain aspects of classroom interaction which had not previously occurred to me in my student days. All teachers must experience this sort of realisation as a result of actually being in the classroom. Besides the initial challenging exercise of classroom management, two matters struck me. Firstly, I became aware that my intended messages, both in verbalised form and otherwise, were not necessarily conveyed to students: students interpreted the messages variously and sometimes unexpectedly. I did not necessarily interpret my students' messages as they had expected either. I used to attribute this to our "culture (ethnic)" difference--Japanese versus Anglo-Australasian--and decided to consciously observe how my Anglo-Australasian colleagues communicated with students and reflect on the way in which I did, so that I could learn from them. I later learned that my Anglo-Australasian colleagues also experienced a similar "miscommunication", although perhaps to a lesser degree. This experience heightened my awareness of the cross-cultural differences (both ethnic and sub-cultural) experienced at an interpersonal communication level at school. Secondly, I realised that the school and my colleagues interpreted education policies quite differently from my expectations, and selectively implemented these policies to suit their needs, resisting or even simply ignoring some of them. This was particularly interesting coming as it did after a lengthy study of education policy from the maker's point of view, that is, their intentions, aims and decision-making processes. I became interested in how a particular policy or a system of policies is *practised* by the actors in the school.

At that time, the New Zealand media gave extensive coverage to the difficulties experienced by youth making the school to work transition. Many studies had been conducted on the topic and were available in English, and I took great interest in reading these accounts. They aroused my interest in the Japanese experience in relation to the school to work transition which I knew little about. This is not unusual since after graduating from an academic high school I went directly on to university which is the normal progression for an academically-oriented student in Japan.

When I started seriously considering the transition from school to work as a research topic, I had a type of comparative education research in mind. As my reading proceeded, I learned that Japanese high school students experience a "smooth", "systematic" and "efficient" transition from school into the workforce and at the same time into the "*shakai-jin* world" (in terms of economic and social loss, and the use of human resources) under the job referral system, as compared to their British, Australian and New Zealand counterparts. My early interest was in this "efficiency" and "equity" aspect of the transition practice. I was interested in examining these aspects in a culturally specific setting, in exploring the collective assumptions involved, and in relating them to a wider cultural and social context. I carried this out in the field: I examined the "efficient" and "equitable" aspect of the transition practice and found that the practice *as a whole* was *maternalistic*. As the fieldwork progressed, however, my interest shifted, or extended, to the process of differentiation

among the subject group of students, who possessed relatively homogeneous academic achievements and family backgrounds.

Rationale

The study contributes to the existing pool of theories in several ways. Firstly, it develops a theory of resource conversion strategies among the underprivileged, who do not possess positive resources for obtaining employment. This complements Bourdieu's theory of capital conversion among the elites.

Secondly, the suggestion that different employment decisions were due to students' different perceptions and uses of family-based and school-based resources gives an account of the processes occurring within the "black box" of schooling. It offers an explanation of reproduction and production through schooling, and contributes to the existing reproduction/production theories.

Thirdly, an examination of the transition from school to work through the job referral practice provides features of a culturally specific nature. This gives a fresh insight into, and even challenges, theories and practices about the school to work transition developed in Anglophone societies. The theories and practices are based on some of the following assumptions: the introduction of certain elements of "work" into the curriculum (e.g., vocationalism and social skills) and the encouragement of a certain kind of socialisation will facilitate efficient transition; schools are expected to be responsible for the students' smooth transition; and employment-related decision-making, and the actual acquisition of a job are considered to rest with the *individual* student without the school taking direct responsibilities.

Fourthly, the study contributes to Japanese Studies in two different ways. The qualitative study based on ethnographic fieldwork will complement existing quantitative research on Japanese schooling; the focus on low achievers will help provide a more balanced picture of Japanese schooling since such groups have been overlooked in existing research.

The Structure of the Study

The thesis is structured in the following way. Chapter 1 reviews the existing literature on three areas: transition from school to work, Japanese education, and theories of reproduction through schooling. Gaps in the existing studies are identified. Chapter 2 presents the method of the present study. In it I discuss my methodological assumptions and the ethnographic method, and describe my fieldwork at the two high schools as well as the process of data analysis.

Chapter 3 presents an overview of Saki-city and the two schools where the fieldwork was conducted, and I detail the characteristics of the students under study. Chapter 4 presents a description of the job referral system as *practised* at the two schools, and as experienced by the teachers. I show this complex process in eight critical phases, explore the assumptions underneath the system, and then relate them to the culturally specific nature of the system. Chapter 5 describes how the transition process was variously interpreted and *experienced* by different students in each phase. Chapter 6 examines how students differ in their perception of the respective resources at school and in the family, and their use of them in obtaining employment. I will discuss this in relation to differentiation among these students, and with reference to reproduction theories.

CHAPTER 1 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews existing studies in the related fields, identifies gaps in them, and places the present study in the context of the existing literature. My review covers three specific areas: school to work transition, Japanese schooling, and versions of reproduction theories.

Transition From School To Work

Concept of "Work"

The diversity of discussions on school to work transition derives, in part, from the different concepts of work adopted. Below is a brief review of various concepts of work, and the underlying assumptions behind them as discussed in the existing literature.

Why do people work? They work to earn income to live on, to develop and maintain healthy human relations, to obtain social status and recognition, and to gain opportunity for self-expression (Super, 1957, p.3-14). In modern society almost all work has the potential to offer an intrinsic value and be an end on its own, through worker self-satisfaction, both physiological (Chomsky, 1988, p.19-20) and psychological (D. Anderson, 1981, p.7-8; Entwistle, 1970, p.22). Liberal ideology maintains that:

...idleness is not the same as want, but a separate evil, which men do not escape by having an income. They must also have the chance of rendering useful service and feeling that they are doing so (Beveridge, 1944, p.20).

Without an intrinsic value, "work" becomes only a commodity to sell in exchange for income, and covers a limited range of activities, that is, paid employment. Work in this case, Corson (1985, p.284) argues, is "a means to an end". Economic literature, for instance, generally refers to "work/labour" as paid employment, and assumes that workers are motivated to work in return for income.

People's views of work seem to be somewhere between the two poles: work as offering an intrinsic value and work as a means to obtain income (referred to as workers' instrumental value). People often do not separately experience the intrinsic satisfaction of the work activity and the extrinsic reward of income (Marsden, 1982, p.193, 207). Why do some people see more value in work itself rather than in their material income as reward for work done? I see two contributing factors, possibly interacting with each other. Firstly, physical working conditions influence the extent to which an intrinsic value is experienced. Some occupations involve more external constraints than others, which limit workers' freedom in relation to their work. Such constraints include kinds of work activities, duration of work, start and finish times, intensity of work, and the colleagues with whom

one works (Corson, 1988, p.14). A factory worker, for instance, is likely to face more external constraints than a writer. Although optimists have speculated that technological development will reduce these external constraints and improve working conditions (Entwistle, 1970, p.7), this is yet to be seen. Apple (1982b, p.252), on the contrary, argues that workers are deskilled by highly sophisticated machinery which removes their decision-making capacity for even the simplest task.

The second factor is more complex, and probably is more significant in terms of education and the present study. Why is it that individuals often experience differing degrees of satisfaction from an identical work activity? A case in point is provided by Rohlen (1988b, p.131) who describes the responses from recruits who participated in an exercise in begging strangers for work, which formed part of a Japanese bank's training programme:

the recruits generally agreed that the enjoyment of work has more to do with a person's attitude toward his task than with the kind of work performed. We had learned our lesson: work is intrinsically neither good nor bad, satisfying nor unsatisfying, appropriate nor inappropriate. Whether a job will be a joy or a drudgery depends on one's outlook. Since the bank must assign dull, methodical tasks to many of its employees, it finds this lesson of significant value.

The differing attitudes to work are discussed elsewhere as "work orientation", for instance, instrumental versus terminal orientation (Brannan, 1975, p.117), and white-collar orientation versus instrumental orientation (Thomas and Wetherell, 1974, p.126-129). Thus, people *perceive* work in different ways.

Perception patterns seem to be affected by individual dispositions, which are shaped by past life experiences and include age, educational level, social class, gender, ethnicity and family situation. The meaning of work varies for youth depending on age, educational level, gender and family background. Younger school leavers tend to seek more immediate gratification from work, such as an escape from school and home and the ability to earn money. Older youth (20-24 years old) see work more in relation to longer term social goals and roles (D. Anderson, 1981, p.5). The tendency is for the more educated youth to look for intrinsic rewards whereas the less educated favour instrumental rewards (i.e., the income derived from work) rather than the satisfaction of work itself (Catherwood, 1985, p.5).

If more importance is attached to the intrinsic value in work than to its material return, the popular view of work as paid employment may be different. Watts, for instance, gradually expands his definition of "work" to unpaid voluntary work; to "any application of productive effort on behalf of others"; to "any application of productive effort" (Watts, 1983b, p.189). Watts (1987, p.8) is forward-looking in suggesting that the present unemployment crisis could/should be turned into an opportunity for releasing work from its association with subservient and market-oriented employment, and for enabling it to take more "sane, humane and ecological forms".

Transition From Secondary School To Work

The school to work transition process involves many changes: the immediate place of belonging (from school to work place); the roles the participant is expected to play in organisations (from a student to an employee/ wage earner) (Bazalgette, 1978, p.116-117); the stages in human development (from childhood through adolescence to adulthood); from dependence to independence and autonomy (Ibid., p.49); and from school to the real world. The "real world" differs across societies and sub-cultures, and thus the transition processes are diverse.

There are tangible changes. Children grow up physiologically, experience puberty, and acquire cognitive skills and physical strength. Youth are granted certain legal rights and obligations, including the right to vote, to earn adult wages, and to drive, and in some societies the obligation for military service. D. Anderson (1981, p.4) claims that in Australia adult status is awarded at 18 years of age. In New Zealand one may obtain a driver's licence or marry at 16, may vote and drink alcohol in a public place at 18, and gain full adult status at 20. In Japan, legal recognition of adulthood comes relatively later: voting at 20, driving at 18, and university entrance at 18. Cross-cultural differences in accepted length of dependence have been reported in Wong-Fillmore's study of Asians, Hispanics and Blacks in the US (1988, p.12). The present study will refer to how a relatively longer length of dependence among Japanese youth affects the transition process.

There are intangible changes. Youths acquire economic independence from their parents through obtaining income from wages or grants, or by receiving the unemployment benefit. Work, whether paid or unpaid, represents a break from childhood in that it provides a definite productive role in society, as well as income (Anderson, 1981, p.4-5; Catherwood, 1985, p.6). Economic independence and work, however, do not always mean an abrupt transition, since many secondary school students engage in part-time work while they are still at school.

The act of leaving secondary school, whether to take up employment or to enter tertiary institutions, has a special significance in Australasia. This is due to the fact that at the point of transition from school to work, industrial societies often grant societal recognition in ways analogous to the "rite of passage" in non-industrial societies. In the Australasian context the first wage can be treated with a certain ritual significance as seen in the practice of voluntarily handing over one's first pay packet to the family (D. Anderson, 1981, p.4), and, in Japan, of giving presents to one's parents as a sign of economic independence. In Australasia the point of leaving school typically has a symbolic significance associated with it, marked by "breaking-up" parties, graduation balls, and celebrating successful examination results.

Japanese society considers that securing a permanent position in the workforce, not necessarily leaving school itself, is a pre-requisite for a youth (male or female), to become a *shakai-jin* (society person). Japanese university students are not yet *shakai-jin* since they are financially supported by their parents. They hold a "moratorium" status, occupying a distinctive stage between that of being a school pupil and full adulthood: they have learned personal dispositions associated with

"successful adulthood" but have not yet secured permanent employment. According to Shimahara (1979), the exceptional intensity of preparation for the university entrance examinations is the modern version of a "rite of passage", since it requires self-discipline, patience, endurance and self-sacrifice, the dispositions which are considered necessary for "successful" adult life. The present study explores what constitutes the equivalent "rite of passage" in the case of non-university-bound students who go directly from school into the workforce.

Given the extrinsic and intrinsic reward of work, lack of employment and unsatisfactory employment means a deprivation of these rewards. The existing research (i.e. Furnham, 1988), however, has not been able to establish causal relationships, only stating the temporal priority of unemployment to the decay of morale. Given the research, we need to ask why difficult transition is a problem or even if it is a problem at all.

At the individual level, people face social isolation/ rejection and subsequent damage to their self-esteem (Jahoda, 1979, p.310; Gorman, 1977, p.67). Unemployed people however are not homogeneous, just like any other group of people. Orwell (1933, p.148), for instance, describes a wide range of "plongeur" (homeless unemployed people), the large majority of whom were in a demoralised state but which included those who had consciously chosen that way of life after cynically rejecting mainstream lifestyles. At the collective level, society suffers, since dissatisfaction among the populace has a negative impact on law and order, and on economic well-being as a result of unemployed resources and the need to increase welfare expenditure.

Problems associated with transition also include youths' dissatisfaction with work, work-maladjustment traumas, confusion about expected roles and frequent change of employment. What are perceived as "difficulties", however, is a relative issue. Frequency of job changes, once considered an index of job-dissatisfaction and maladjustment, can be interpreted in a positive way (Cherry, 1976). The experience of unemployment and unsatisfactory employment varies with the context, such as length of unemployment, the individual's educational level, gender (girls are more adversely affected), and ethnic minority (members of these groups tend to regard themselves as victims of an unjust society).

Three Approaches in Explaining Transition Issues

Although it is not possible to present a neat classification, I see three major disciplinary orientations in the existing literature on the school to work transition. They are economic, psychological, and sociological. These three orientations see the issue quite differently. Within a particular disciplinary approach diverse theories are observed.

Economists' Approaches

Economists' studies on school to work transition present tables of statistics on economic growth, the labour market, available employment and demography. A distinctive feature of this approach is that individuals are seen as being bearers of capital and labour who act to combine these factors in a way which will maximise profit.

There are roughly three views. One is to attribute the problem of the transition largely to cyclical recession and the resultant lack of job vacancies, and to suggest the application of Keynesian expansionist policies (Cameron and Livingstone, 1979). Another is more pessimistic: youth unemployment is endemic to the structure of industrial society (Husen, 1979). A segmentally organised labour market works against school leavers gaining employment in times of economic restructuring (Khan, 1986, p.35-36), since the juvenile labour market has traditionally experienced skill imbalances, with a consequent concentration in the semi-skilled, unskilled and clerical categories (Sheehan, 1977, p.H8-H9). Thirdly, non-cyclical factors were also suggested: youth wage structures in a competitive market economy (NZ Council for Educational Research, 1979, p.1; Sheehan 1977, p.H14-H17); other types of labour (especially married women) returning to the workforce (NZ Council for Educational Research, 1979, p.1; Sheehan, 1977, p.H17-H18); the increased real value of unemployment benefits affecting the work-seeking behaviour of youth (Sheehan, 1979, p.H22); and the demographic factor (NZ, Labour and Employment Gazette June 1984, p.5).

Various suggestions have been made of ways to expand job opportunities for youth, such as by providing direct/indirect subsidies to private firms (Koditz, 1985, p.77). Another is "an institutionalized commitment to full employment", of which Therborn (1986, p.23) argues, Japan is a successful example. Rohlen (1988c, p.141-143) describes a further Japanese approach to maintaining employment in what he calls "taxpayer-subsidized permanent employment". This involves finding as many ad-hoc and temporary adjustment measures as possible to cut costs without challenging the principle of permanent employment until "natural attrition" and economic recovery close the gap between employment and production (Ibid.).

Psychological/ Humanistic Approaches

Psychologists explain the transition "problem" in terms of individual dispositions (such as intelligence, academic achievement, interests, motivation and personality attributes). These dispositions, they argue, affect development of an individual's self-esteem and aspirations, and consequently have a bearing on vocational choice (D. Anderson, 1981, p.8; Holland, 1985, p.1-14). Characteristics which youth typically display are often considered undesirable in the context of the job market: low self-esteem, present-oriented perspective, lack of motivation, technical and social skills. Because of this, Catherwood (1985, p.3) claims, "the young are the first to be disadvantaged in a tight labour market."

Consequently, proposed solutions stemming from research by psychologists stresses improving guidance and counselling so that youth can make appropriate decisions (Holland, 1985, p.1-2). Another solution involves various "vocational education" or "career education" programmes whereby school

leavers are expected to become "employable". Because the latter attempt involves changes within schools and firms, the examination of such methods is covered in the later section on sociological approaches.

Critics argue that the psychologists' accounts are inadequate. Firstly, insufficient notice is taken of structural factors, and this has led to development of explanations which focus on "blaming the victim". This type of explanation has in the past been adopted by the New Zealand government in reference to youth unemployment (Korndorffer, 1986, p.135). It has also been argued that such reasoning diverts attention from the "real structural problem" (Clark and Willis, 1984, p.2-3).

Secondly, it has been questioned whether youths at risk do lack basic social and life skills, since most adjust fairly easily to working life, and those who were alienated from school tend to do so even more successfully (Moore, 1984, p.67-68; Willis, 1977; Ashton, 1973; Carter, 1962). Why, then, is there a lack of continuity between performance at school and that at work? There have been attempts to address this question. Social skills required at work are primarily developed in the home and community, and not at school (Moore, 1984, p. 67-68). Different kinds of jobs require different dispositions, and those valued by the dominant school culture may not be suited to certain kinds of work. For instance, the "lads" in Willis's study (1977) experienced a smooth transition, since the counter-culture which they had created at school prepared them for the shop-floor culture. However, conformists who had accepted the school's dominant culture faced difficulties in adjusting to shop-floor culture. Those who acquire certain frames of reference but cannot carry those on into employment have difficulty in the transition (Ashton, 1973; Carter, 1962). If this is the case, it is irrelevant and even unfair to blame individual school leavers for not possessing certain dispositions.

Individual dispositions are acquired through socialisation. Where, when and how are they acquired? Interest has been shown in the external *structural* factors, which may exert an influence on the acquisition of different types of individual dispositions. This is the point sociologists take up.

Sociological Approaches

Psychologists argued that the transition process is determined by individual dispositions. The point was raised then that many of these dispositions are the products of external conditions and structural factors. The following is an examination of the societal, structural and cultural accounts of transition which have been proposed by sociologists.

Structural-functionalist accounts.

This view assumes that society consists of parts, each of which contributes to the overall societal structure, and is interested in each part's function in maintaining the whole. In this regard the structural-functionalist approach is conservative, since it assumes that the basic societal structure is capable of functioning smoothly. Occasional "problems" are due to one or more malfunctioning part(s), but the society can recover its healthy operation through appropriate adjustments. The function of education and training is mainly seen in terms of economic performance (productivity, economic growth and income shares), both at the personal level and at societal level (NZ Vocational Training

Council, 1986, p.5; Catherwood, 1985, p.2). Employers tend to adopt this argument to support the use of educational qualifications as a screening device, although Berg's empirical study (1970, p.17) questions the appropriateness of this, claiming that education can raise one's employment expectations unduly and therefore can be an important factor in accounting for dissatisfaction among workers.

According to the structural-functionalist view, the transition "problem" results from some dysfunction in the constituent parts of society, such as individuals, school, and employers. This leads on to an examination of the school, employers and the continuity between the two.

School has been most frequently attacked for causing the transition "problem". The popular criticism that school does not equip students with "appropriate" skills for employment has been reinforced by the media (NZ Council for Educational Research, 1979, p.5), and has been accepted by the general public, who believe, at a commonsensical level, that school performs a significant role in forming the individual dispositions of young people (West and Newton, 1982, p.189), and that a trained youth benefits the country's economy (NZ Vocational Training Council, 1986, p.5; Catherwood, 1985, p.2). The organisation and ethos of school influences students' attitudes to work (West and Newton, 1983, p.173-175). The "developmental approach" practised by many career guidance teachers (as opposed to the "traditional approach" which emphasises finding jobs and placing students in work) aggravates the adjustment difficulties by raising youth's expectations (Ibid., p.183).

The 1989 OECD report Pathways for Learning (1989, p.118) suggests that more systematic information and guidance should be offered to this age group since this stage of education concentrates educational choice, and that "front-line" teachers and supervisors need to be trained in that guidance role since students may find it easier to discuss such issues with people with whom they already have a teaching-learning relationship. It further suggests that students need a professional and systematic service which ranges beyond the "local knowledge" that teachers typically have (Ibid.). As will be shown later, the Japanese job referral system seems to accommodate these suggestions made by the OECD report.

Employers have been blamed for making little effort in assisting new employees to settle at work, by means of appropriate induction procedures (Clarke, 1980, p.7). Although employers recognised that their young employees might be unreliable, rude and inefficient, they felt that schools were responsible for their human development (Bazalgette, 1978, p.53-54). Bazalgette suggests that the personal development of young people should take place both in schools and in firms (1978, p.122).

Differences in the expectations of the school and of the work place are noticed. School encourages a dependency in pupils, and all assessment is conducted by teachers (Bazalgette, 1978, p.52; Husen, 1979, p.128-129). "Work" is an individual activity at school, whereas in the workforce it is a collaborative activity involving colleagues and supervisors (Bazalgette, 1978, p.117). In school "working" implies repetitive rote-learning and academic work rather than reliability, a capacity to be trusted, and a sense of responsibility to one's colleagues and those in authority (Ibid., p.108). Organisational structures also differ. At school students work in large, unstable and constantly shifting

groups (due to subject options), while at work, in contrast, employees work in small and stable groups based on a cooperative working relationship (Bazalgette, 1978, p.121; Husen, 1979, p.129). Because of this gap, young people entering employment were often confused and lost in their new surroundings, and felt negative about those in authority (Ibid., p.53).

Neither the expectations of employers nor those of schools are homogeneous. But it appears that "adults" as a collective, such as teachers, employers and supervisors, and parents, are able to care for and assist young people in making a smooth transition.

Marxist accounts.

Marxists see the issue of the school to work transition quite differently. Social relations are seen as being based on "domination" rather than harmony. The economic base is seen to play a pivotal role in the maintenance of the social structure. The existing social structure is preserved, it is argued, as a result of the penetration of the dominant culture and knowledge through all levels of society. Education plays its part in reproducing inequality (Freeman-Moir, 1984, p.249). Schooling contributes to maintaining the existing social structure in three ways: by dividing people into groups by level of education; by transmitting the dominant values; and by legitimating the hierarchy on the grounds that the hierarchy is determined by individual "merits" which accord with the dominant values.

Difficulties experienced in transition from school to work, according to this account, are caused by the very social structure which provides unequal opportunities to certain groups (Roberts, 1984, p.8). Some inevitably end up with less rewarding jobs or no jobs at all, and due to the low quality of such employment they often experience difficulties in the transition. It is assumed that youth are particular victims in an unequal job market (Catherwood, 1985, p.3; Roberts, 1984, p.9). Reubens (1983), however, showed that this was not always the case in his study on youth employment in industrial countries:

In customary usage, "youth labor market" is a somewhat pejorative term, but when applied to Germany and Japan, the term can be affirmative, describing a nurturing, protective situation in which competition with other age groups is severely limited. (p.320)

It would be interesting to see who are disadvantaged in the labour market in those countries, since, Marxists say, the production mode provides unequal chances to some groups of people.

This account openly dismisses the state's interventionist strategies in the form of transition programmes, since the cause of transition-related problems is believed to be structural (Nash, 1983, p.25). Khan (1986, p.36) argues that transition programmes are "a means to effect social control". Korndorffer (1985a, p.27) sees in transition programmes "the problem being transferred from the economic to the educational in such a way that the solution to the problem can be posed only within the educational". The underlying assumption is that the state has primary responsibility for the interests and legitimation of the capitalist economy and the society which is based on it (Khan, 1986, p.36).

Others argue that despite the state's interventionist strategies the employment market still remains competitive (D. Anderson, 1981, p.10). Not all those who reach pre-determined standards are able to enter the limited number of positions available at a particular level in the job market.

While various versions of Marxist explanations offer useful insights, many of them remain pessimistic about the future. These accounts are deterministic in that the economic base is considered to be the eventual determining factor. Such theories can be mechanistic in that they assume a simple *two way* relationship between the economic base and the societal structure. Further, it is simplistic to assume that the state or the state's agencies (including schooling) always operate for the benefit of the capitalist economy/ society.

Responses to the "Problem"

Various responses to the transition "problem" have been observed, both at national and institutional levels. These responses have been diverse in their purpose, form and content. The most frequently observed are "vocational education" programmes. They are conducted within secondary schools, and post-secondary institutions or in the general community in a variety of formats; for mainstream students or students at risk; as a separate course or across the curriculum; as a short term unit or throughout the year. Vocational education curricula place emphasis on one or more of the following areas: "social life skills" (such as good manners and appearance), "technical skills" and "the world of work".

Schools have attempted interesting forms of vocational education, ranging from work simulation games to work observation (Watts, 1983a, p.11-12; Gibson, 1983). The extensiveness of in-school transition programmes in New Zealand has been documented (NZ Government Transition Education Committee, 1985, p.12; Hermansson, 1981). State agencies have taken initiatives in offering vocational education in schools. In the UK, attempts were made to adapt the school curriculum to suit the industrial society or the "real world" through the Industry Project (Jamieson and Lightfoot, 1982, p.58) and the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (Dale, 1985, p.44). The former, in addition to innovations in the curriculum, tried to develop innovative relations between the school and the "real world", by involving unions in the development of the project, and by inviting people from outside the school to teach work skills and give presentations related to employment in particular fields (Jamieson and Lightfoot, 1982, p.102-124). The school's links with the "real world" were encouraged through contact not only with employers but also with former students (D.S. Anderson, 1986, p.317).

State agencies have also attempted to meet the needs of school leavers and young unemployed outside the secondary school system. The UK saw the institution of Unified Vocational Preparation in 1976, the Youth Opportunities Programme in 1977, the New Training Initiative in 1981, and the Youth Training Scheme in 1983 (Farley, 1985). New Zealand saw similar attempts: the Young Persons Training Programme in 1978 (Korndorffer, 1985b, p.60); the School Leavers Training and Employment Scheme (NZ Government Transition Education Committee, 1985, p.13-14), and the ACCESS programme.

While we see such a variety of vocational education programmes in response to the transition "problem", they have evoked a good deal of criticism. Firstly, such programmes are directed at practical or technical rather than intellectual development, and as a result have been described as "short-sighted and misguided" (Cole, 1982, p.4-5) and as being too "instrumental" (Cathcart and Esland, 1985, p.185). The value of technical skills itself was questioned in terms of their contribution to economic and societal gains (Wellington, 1987, p.39). Bowman (1988, p.151-152) argues that the hallmark of successful schooling is the creation of portable skills and efficiency in future learning and that "general" elements are critical. The case for broadly-based education is supported by Musgrave's (1967) historical study of the relationship between education and industry in Britain and Germany, and by Gleeson in his paper on vocationalism (1985, p.70).

Secondly, vocational education programmes are claimed to be divisive. Programmes such as the Youth Training Scheme and the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative force young people to settle on vocational training and employment issues too early (Gleeson, 1985, p. 70), which narrows future options (Musgrave, 1977, p.F6). These courses are taken mainly by non-academic students, and therefore promote differentiation between academic and non-academic students, and consequently, divisions within the labour market (Holt, 1987, p.166; Gleeson, 1983, p.2, McMahon, 1988, p.191; McCulloch, 1988, p.111-116).

Thirdly, vocational education programmes, it is argued, function as social control mechanisms (Gleeson, 1983, p.2; Bernstein, 1971a, p.58). The hidden agenda of the new vocationalism is "inculcation of social discipline" and the dominant ideology (Cohen, 1984, p.105, 114). Post-secondary schemes remove young people from the collective bargaining process and place them in a dependent status (Finn, 1985, p.112). Further, contradictions inherent in these programmes are identified. Cole (1982, p.4), for instance, points out a contradiction between the aims and activities of a programme he studied: while the aim was to increase the students' self-esteem, the programme tended to highlight their inadequacies. Korndorffer's study of a New Zealand transition programme (1985b, p.60) identified similar contradictions.

In summary, critics argue that: vocationalism is instrumental and does not offer what employers want in the long run; such programmes divide students and the labour market, and are a means of social control; post-secondary programmes serve to keep youth in a vulnerable position.

Given these doubts about vocationalism, why is it that vocationalism has been so widely implemented in recent years? Holt (1987, p.2) contends that vocationalism has served to divert attention from the root economic causes of unemployment and that this has contributed to its popularity. Vocational education could be a substitute for employment (Gleeson, 1984, p.98). The provision of "skills" legitimates what constitutes "competence" and is not a technical question but one of power and interest (Simon, 1983, p.243). The ways skills are taught in these programmes, often by practitioners, legitimates intervention by industrialists (Cathcart and Esland, 1985, p.190). Thus, vocational education could be regarded as the state's attempt to legitimate the status quo (i.e., youth

unemployment) that is a feature of the capitalist economy. Those views are critical but not necessarily constructively critical, since feasible alternative measures were not proposed to "improve" the situation. Nevertheless this group of writers scrutinises every state attempt, presents an alternative analysis of the issue in a Marxist framework, and thus contributes to a better understanding of the problem. In this capacity they play an important role.

More recent qualitative and close-focused ethnographic studies on the school to work transition revealed the *process* by which individual students make job decisions and experience the transition: in the UK (Willis, 1977; Coffield et al., 1986; Aggleton, 1987), in Australia (Connell et al., 1982; Dwyer et al., 1984; Fensham et al., 1986; Walker, 1988) and in New Zealand (Jones, 1986; Sultana, 1987). These studies described students' transition experiences, which were dynamic and complex: students both accepted and resisted the school's dominant messages, and created their own trajectories. These studies examined, variously, how the students' individual trajectories related to the external society, and have contributed to theory building. The present study tries to take a similar approach.

Studies On Japanese Education

Interest in Japanese education was initially concerned with its contribution to "successful" modernisation. Consequently, English language literature on Japanese education tends to take a functionalist approach, and typically concentrates on mainstream students. A useful bibliography covering Japanese education has been presented by Beauchamp and Rubinger (1989). Interest areas covered by the existing literature are somewhat limited, as discussed below.

Interest Areas in Japanese Education

Comprehensive descriptions of the Japanese education system are provided from the comparative education perspective (T. Kobayashi, 1975; Simmons, 1990), and more recently there has been an emphasis on "lessons for America" (Leestma et al, 1987). Historical studies are available from the Tokugawa feudal era (Dore, 1965; Passin, 1965, p.13-49), through the pre-war imperial government era (Lauwerys, 1975; Aso and Amano, 1972; OECD, 1973, p.101-160) and into the post-war period (V. Kobayashi, 1978; Aso and Amano, 1972; OECD, 1973), all stressing the state's emphasis on education as a means of achieving modernisation and economic growth.

The high quality of Japanese schooling is often stressed. Referring to high average achievement coupled with low variation in Japanese children's performance in international mathematics and science achievement surveys, many studies tried to find the reasons for such success (Cummings, 1980, 1982, p.17-25; Lynn, 1988, p.121-144; Rohlen, 1988a, p.25-26; Simmons and Wade, 1988; Duke 1986). The "egalitarian nature" of Japanese education has also been discussed (Vogel, 1979, p.158-183; Cummings, 1982, p.17-25).

The competitive nature of university entrance examinations was widely examined (Reischauer, 1977, p.167-173; Shimahara, 1979). Some see it as a "functional process" of socialisation into the adult role (Shimahara, 1979; Rohlen, 1983, p.109), while others emphasised its detrimental aspect in relation to the development of individual potential (White, 1987, p.133). Often, the competitive nature of schooling is attributed to its "meritocratic" character. Japan, it is argued, has more "equality of educational opportunity" than other industrial nations and maintains a "meritocracy" based on educational qualifications (Cummings, 1980, p.218; Rohlen, 1988a, p.25). These terms, "meritocracy" and "equality of opportunity", however, have to be treated with caution, since in these studies they refer specifically to the fact that academic achievement is the sole criterion for selection.

The socialisation of Japanese children is studied at pre-school level (Tobin et al., 1987; Hendry, 1986), primary school level (Lewis, 1988; Cummings, 1980), secondary level (Shimahara, 1979; Rohlen, 1983), and in general (White, 1987). These studies tend to examine a group of students "as a whole", from a psychological or cultural anthropological perspective, and try to explain the socialisation process in terms of Japanese uniqueness. The role of sub-cultures in the socialisation process is not attended to by the majority of researchers. Exceptions are Rohlen's study on high school students (1983) and Wagatsuma and De Vos on delinquent youth (1984).

The dominance of functionalist approaches in Japanese Studies, where the society is examined according to stereotypical formulations, was challenged by Mouer and Sugimoto (1986), who proposed a "conflict view". Their argument emphasises the state's attempt to "control" people through education. The impression they convey is that state control has been successful, that Japanese teachers have been ideologically screened out, and that students passively accepted the dominant culture (Sugimoto, 1986, p.70-72). While contributing to a more balanced picture of Japan, they, like many structural-Marxists, underestimate the "resistance" or the relative autonomy of the actors concerned.

Literature on the Transition from School to Work in Japan

Studies on non-university bound high school students are rare, in contrast to the amount of research on those involved in the university entrance examinations. This is not to say that the latter group form the majority. Approximately 28 % of all high school graduates (including those who later decide to become *rounin*) experience the 4-year university entrance examinations, and about 13 % the 2-year junior college entrance examinations (Japan Statistical Yearbook, 1989, p.656-657, 660, 663). (*Rounin* are those who failed to gain entrance to a university and spend an extra year or more preparing for the following year's entrance examination.) Others enter the work force directly or undertake study at other non-university institutions (which will be referred to later in the text), to which admission is relatively easily obtained. Further, many mediocre students secure a place at less prestigious private universities through *suisen-nyuugaku* (entry by recommendation, which will also be

referred to later). In other words, those who enter the well-publicised open competition for university places are the "elite", and it seems that they have been pictured wrongly as the average Japanese high school student. There is therefore a need to redress this popular view.

Rohlen's study of five high schools (1983) made a significant contribution towards rectifying this uninformed image. He portrayed the differing educational experiences of students at each of the schools, which occupied different strata in the school hierarchy. Information on vocational high schools is limited to brief comments in previous studies. Vocational high schools are at the bottom of the school hierarchy (Stocking and Curry, 1986); are looked down upon (Umetani, 1985, p.5); and provide the terminal education for many students (Taira and Levin, 1986, p.21). Dore and Sako (1989) provide an overview of the curricula of vocational streams of senior high schools. Lack of research on such groups of students has been identified. Stocking and Curry (1986, p.12), for instance, suggest a need to examine the experiences of mediocre students and of the recruitment of young people in each country into unskilled jobs, while Cole (1979, p.4) suggests a need for research involving disadvantaged members of the Japanese labour force.

The non-vocational nature of the secondary curriculum has been recognised (Umetani, 1980, p.24; Cantor, 1985, p.71; White, 1987, p.152). McCormick (1988) examines why this should be the case. A recent British attempt to introduce more "vocationalism" to schools is criticised with reference to the lack of it in Japanese schooling which seemingly operates a smooth school to work transition (Wellington, 1987, p.39; Linklater, 1987, p.6).

Institutional features of the job referral system for high school leavers are provided by Taira and Levin (1986, p.11-12), Horvath (1986), Umetani (1985, p.19-26) and Rosenbaum and Kariya (1989, p.1338-1355). Horvath's work (1986) provides the most extensive primary data (from surveys and interviews), but does not develop discussions. Others use secondary sources for description. Favourable comments have been presented regarding the job referral system (Evans, 1986, p.24). Reubens's study (1977, p.ix) supports the Japanese system as a model for closer and more effective relations between the school and employment services. White (1987, p.70) cites the job referral system as an example, to support her contention that "the healthy development of the young person is more diffusely shared by family, school and work place" in Japan than in the West.

There are two major survey results available (questionnaires and standard interviews) relating to the job referral system and students' occupational hopes and decisions. One was conducted by the Sociology of Education Department, Tokyo University from 1981 to 1984, and the other by *Koyou Shokugyou Sougou Kenkyuusho* (the Employment Research Institute) in 1985. These surveys provide information on nationwide trends in job referral practice.

The 1981-1984 survey shows that the majority of students decide on a job from recruitment cards (Amano et al., 1983, p.55); that about 85% of schools conduct internal selection (Amano et al., 1983, p.65); and that schools use students' academic achievement as the most important criterion in selection within the school (Amano et al., 1983, p.66,74; Kariya, 1988, p.156). Amano et al. derived

the last claim from teachers' answers to questionnaires, while Kariya inferred the same claim from the correlation between students' academic achievement and those who got "desirable jobs". Hida (1983, p.186), referring to interviews with companies and seven high schools, states that companies expect schools to have the most reliable information about new employees (i.e., students) and to be an agent for recruiting in order to avoid cost and risks, and that *jisseki-kankei* (a long-term, close relationship between school and company) largely determines the way the school conducts career guidance. Amano et al., using questionnaires in a survey which involved over 1000 high schools, asserts that about a half of the graduating students get jobs at companies that maintain *jisseki-kankei* with the school (1983, p.48). They conclude that the most important determinant in relation to high school graduates' job opportunities is the status of the school in the institutionalised labour market (which is dependent on the academic achievement level required for entry and on the school's history), rather than the students' individual qualities (1983, p.74). These claims need examination.

Using the same survey, Rousenbaum and Kariya (1989, p.1358) argued that the institutional linkage between company and school makes academic achievement a crucial factor in high school leavers' job attainment, creates incentives for achievement and enables smooth and stable transition. The system provides "more durable matches" and "productivity" (Ibid., p.1338-1340). These are comments about how the *system* is expected to function, not about the *practice* as experienced and perceived by the actors concerned. The process was seen as "the job referral system" rather than as "students' decision-making", and it remains a "black box", since the micro-level practice at school is not examined. Students are seen as passive beings to be "sorted and assigned a job". Little interest has been shown in what students are experiencing and in how they interpret the process of transition. This is a serious omission, since the most important actors in the system are the students. One of the main aims of this study is to rectify this omission.

Reproduction Through Japanese Schooling

Statistical analysis of surveys has indicated that intergenerational social mobility has been relatively high in Japan (Tominaga, 1973), although Rohlen (1988a, p.29-30), using data on university students, states that social mobility is much less now than before. Statistical analyses of family influence on students' postsecondary plans are documented by Stocking and Curry (1986). These statistical analyses suggest possible cause-and-effect relationships but do not explain "how". Rohlen (1983) went further, by showing that the privileged concentrate at the most prestigious schools and the disadvantaged at vocational or lower rank high schools. He comments (1988a, p.30-31) that school extends and elaborates the difference (in family background) through the creation of distinct, stratified school sub-cultures.

Disadvantages which minority groups in Japan experience in relation to achieving social mobility have been referred to: Umetani and Reubens (1983, p.199) on Koreans, Chinese and *buraku* people (ex-outcaste); Ogbu (1978) on *buraku* people; Peng (1978) and Baba (1980) on Ainu (a native

tribe who live in the Hokkaido island); Shinotsuka (1982), Cook, et al. (1980) and Fujii (1982) on females. Although not specifically addressing the issue of education's contribution to the reproduction of inequality, close-focused research in Japanese Studies most frequently focuses on minority communities: De Vos and Wagatsuma (1966) and Shimahara (1971) on *buraku* communities; Mitchell (1967) on the Korean community; and Wagatsuma and De Vos (1984) on delinquent youth in a poor urban working class community.

Rosenbaum and Kariya's study (1989, p.1349) on the transition from school to work claims that parents' socio-economic status has little effect on students' job attainment, and excludes this factor from those which determine job attainment. They argue that the students in their study who had all been at school for the same duration and had the prospect of immediate employment, were "homogeneous" (1989, p.1349). It is simplistic to assume that this group of non-university bound students was homogeneous. The present research is interested in the differentiation *within* non-university bound students, and, in particular, in the process of differentiation as experienced by them.

Japanese academics, it is claimed, are aloof to the people they study. Mouer and Sugimoto in their review of methods in Japanese Studies (1986, p.159) suggest a need for ethnographic studies (1986, p.78). Other than the examples of ethnographic research related to minority communities mentioned above, Cole (1971) conducted an anthropological study of Japanese blue collar workers, Vogel (1971) on white collar workers, Rohlen (1974) on a bank, and Bestor (1989) on a small neighbourhood community. In school settings, Hendry (1986) did her fieldwork on a pre-school institution; Cummings (1980, p.105-132) and Duke (1986, p.25-50) on a primary school; Singleton (1967) on a junior high school; and Rohlen (1983) on five senior high schools in a city. Many of these ethnographic studies take a cultural anthropology approach in their attempt to describe and interpret the chosen organisation as a whole. Rohlen (1983) relates his observation of the five schools to a larger societal structure, hierarchical in nature. The present study focuses on one type of Rohlen's five schools, namely vocationally oriented day high schools, and examines differentiation within each school.

Reproduction and Production through Schooling

There are patterns of inequality in the outcome of schooling. Despite the official claim that schooling equalises future opportunities for youth, extensive research has shown that the advantages and disadvantages of family background are carried on to the children's school performance and career patterns. Early studies *described* such unequal outcomes, using a variety of statistical data (such as

father's occupation, income and educational level and their children's school performance and eventual occupation), but the actual process of reproduction and production occurring in schools has remained a "black box". Interest has now shifted to providing an *explanation* of how schools actually reproduce social inequality. The following is a summary of two main schools of thought pertaining to reproduction: one based on meritocratic explanations and the other taking a Marxist approach.

Meritocratic Views

"Meritocratic" views see unequal school outcomes as resulting from individual variables such as talent, merit and ambition. Students achieve according to their individual talent and are able to overcome inherited disadvantages through schooling. The occasional success of disadvantaged children moving up the social ladder through the benefits of schooling confirms this to the general public: If disadvantages are not overcome through schooling, this is seen as the individual's fault. The view has its roots in a structuralist-functionalist analysis of social relations, and in the consensus theory of society. One problem regarding this approach is that "merit" is treated as a given product at one point in time, instead of as an accumulation of past conditions (including family upbringing). Furthermore, what qualifies as "merit" is not questioned--who decides what is merit, for what purpose, and with what consequence? It is fair to say that this explanation no longer receives wide support, at least among sociologists, and has been superseded by various forms of Marxist approach.

Marxist Analyses

Marxist approaches regarding differentiation emphasise collective factors such as an individual's location in the social relations of dominance, and argues that schools *reproduce* unequal social relations. A diversity of reproduction theories are rooted in a Marxist analysis of social relations, and in "conflict theory".

Bowles and Gintis's seminal work (1976) summarises school's contribution to reproduction as "legitimation" and "socialisation". School legitimates an unequal social structure by transmitting the meritocratic belief that success depends on the possession of ability and skills or education. School prepares/ socialises young people for their places in the unequal society by creating qualifications and developing self-concepts, beliefs and values through the social relations of the school. Bowles and Gintis emphasised the "correspondence" between the social relations of education and those of work, and argued that the socialisation takes place through the social relations of the school (Ibid., p.11-20). The importance of forms in education, rather than its content, was stressed. Althusser (1971, p.141-148), while agreeing with the reproductive function of schooling, differs in his emphasis (over-emphasis) on the role of the state, seeing education as a "*State Ideological Apparatus* [Italics added]" which disseminates the ruling ideology.

Sociologists who stress the reproductive function of schooling differ in their views on the intentions of the dominant group members to maintain their privileges. The members' "active" attempts are recognised by some (Miliband 1969, p.239-240), whilst structural Marxists like Althusser (1971) argue that education is shaped by the overall *logic* of the structures of the society. That is to say, reproduction takes place as a result of the operation of objective economic forces, not as a consequence of the actions of individuals. Individuals are seen as the "bearers of social relations", who carry out their assigned functions and thereby achieve successful reproduction. They consequently see no reason for examining the actions of individual teachers and students. This has been criticised as "structural determinism" by resistance theorists.

These reproduction theories were further elaborated into ones which acknowledge and stress, to differing degrees, the existence of *resistance* to the reproduction of unequal social relations. I see resistance theories not as an antithesis to the previous reproduction theories but as revised (or refined) versions of them. Apple (1982a, p.8) and Bowles and Gintis (1986), for instance, both shifted their positions from the direct reproduction theories to one which stressed contradictions in the process of reproduction. The existence of such resistance in education, it is argued, indicates that neither the reproduction nor the control of education by the dominant class is complete, and thus schools have *relative autonomy* (Giroux 1983, p.259-260). Detailed empirical studies of schools by ethnographers (D. Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey, 1970; Willis, 1977; McRobbie, 1978; Corrigan, 1979) have provided ground and support for the development of resistance theories, and later studies further led to their refinement (Aggleton, 1987; Walker, 1988).

Contestation, resistance and contradiction exist in the school. The "hidden curriculum" is not absorbed directly, but is first screened by the class culture of the students. Willis (1977, p.75) argues that "social agents are not passive bearers of ideology, but active appropriators who reproduce existing structures only through struggle, contestation and a partial penetration of those structures". School, it is argued, as a whole has *some independence* from the capitalist system, often finding itself at odds with the needs of the dominant society.

How, then, does reproduction take place at the level of actors' interaction? Attention has been paid to the family, the community, the school, and the relations among them.

Family material conditions in the form of disposable income, housing, family size and the health conditions of its members directly affect children's schooling (Douglas, 1964, p.60-67; Davie et al., 1972, p.48-58; Fogelman, 1975, p.49-54). Favourable conditions enable post-compulsory schooling and provide facilitative conditions for home study. Material conditions also have an indirect influence on children's schooling since the family's values and culture are a product of its material conditions (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72). I extend Bourdieu's account below.

Parental attitudes towards child rearing and its actual practice affect school performance (Newson and Newson, 1968, p.454; 1977). Parents' interest in education, the support and encouragement of their children and parents' participation in school affairs are positively related to

their children's school performance. Working class parents have much less information about the school system from which to give relevant advice in comparison with middle class parents (Midwinter, 1977, p.14). The general values and "culture" created by the home environment advantages middle class children. The home values and culture of the middle class are similar to those of the school, and enable students with the "right" values to take better advantage of the school system (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Working class students are thus culturally disadvantaged, even before they enter school.

Cultural difference is manifested in the language differences between children. Bernstein suggested the class differences in language in his discussion on "restricted code versus elaborated code", and related such language difference to educational achievement, and to the social structure (1971, p.176-177). Bourdieu and Passeron (1977, p.72-73) also suggest the importance of one's language patterns in relation to school performance, and in recognition of this refer to the possession of the dominant language patterns as "linguistic capital". Corson's study (1985b) suggested that adolescents differ in their use of high status vocabulary and that an individual's proficiency in this high status vocabulary has a bearing on their academic achievement.

That different families produce different children is not an issue. That working class families as a collective produce children with certain dispositions, values and language is not an issue, either. What is in question is that working class children with such dispositions, as a collective, are sanctioned against and "learn to lose out" (in not attaining social mobility) through schooling. The question to be answered is "how" this takes place.

Studies have examined what school does to promote the differentiation of students. The existence of independent schools, many of which are boarding schools, divides students across schools. Within a school, ability streaming performs the same divisive function: students in a streamed group not only take classes together but also, more importantly, form social peer groups (Lacey, 1970, p.78-82; Ball, 1981, p.107).

Less formal and often unintended actions can be seen in teachers' responses to students. Teachers form expectations about students' behaviour, attitudes, interests and performance, based on their categorisation of the students. Group difference is one of the bases of categorisation, manifesting itself in social class (Nash, 1973, p.36-38; Delamont, 1976, p.53-54), gender and ethnicity (Green, 1985, p.53). Teachers indirectly communicate their categorisation and expectations to the students, which affects the students' self-expectations. Individual differences in achievement, physical appearance, speech patterns and personality also affect a teacher's categorisation of their students.

Schools conduct differential preparation for adult roles, while students face and learn social relations at school. First, students are assessed, sorted and eventually tracked into particular occupational routes. Secondly, through the sorting process, which is based on a presumably "neutral"

and "objective" assessment, students come to have different kinds of expectations of themselves and learn compliance to authority (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). Thirdly, schools teach the dominant ideology or values to students.

Bourdieu elaborates the differentiation process by focusing on the processes through which cultural knowledge and values operate as carriers of social inequality, what he calls "cultural reproduction". The *habitus* is the central concept: it is an acquired system of generative schema which engenders perceptions, thoughts, expressions and actions (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72,85,95), and is a product of an individual's past experiences and their material conditions (Ibid., p.72). Habitus includes transportable dispositions such as way of thinking, values, and patterns of interpretation. One's habitus operates at two levels: it determines what and how one perceives, and also what expressions and actions one generates, and in what manner. For instance, only those with a certain habitus may utilise a given resource in a certain way for their own benefit. This is why different people use their economic resources in different ways. Habitus is not an individual phenomenon but is mainly "a family, group and especially class phenomenon, a logic derived from a common set of material conditions of existence" (Garnham and Williams, 1980). Bourdieu's concept of habitus as an "acquired system" which "engenders perceptions ... and actions" seems to parallel Spradley's definition of culture as "the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behaviour" (1980, p.6-8).

Certain kinds of habitus, that possessed by the dominant class and the kind used to promote or maintain one's social position, qualify as *cultural capital*. Bourdieu uses the term cultural capital at two levels: at a specific level of fine art appreciation and at a more general level. My interpretation is that the former is a sub-set of the latter. At the specific fine art appreciation level, when Bourdieu discusses differences in class participation in French "legitimate culture", such as museum visiting, he uses cultural capital to refer to the possession of "cultural goods" (dominant or legitimate culture) and to the possession of the means to decipher and appreciate these cultural goods (Bourdieu, 1973, p.73). What qualifies as "legitimate culture" is arbitrary in theory, since a form of culture becomes "legitimate" simply when the dominant group signifies it as such. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977, p.5) call this "symbolic violence": the capacity to institutionalize the standards of a specific group as "legitimate" and "universal". When Bourdieu uses cultural capital in other contexts, such as schooling, it has a wider meaning, that is, the possession of dominant or legitimate knowledge, values and culture.

Underprivileged students fail at school, Bourdieu argues, because schools operate with the dominant culture and assume that all students possess the cultural capital to decipher and appropriate what school offers (such as certain linguistic and cultural competence) (1973, p.80). He continues:

...by treating all pupils, however unequal they may be in reality, as equal in rights and duties, the educational system is led to give its de facto sanction to initial cultural inequalities. The formal equality which governs pedagogical practice is in fact a cloak for and a justification of indifference to the real inequalities with regard to the body of knowledge taught or rather demanded. (1976, p.113)

How do those without cultural capital get disadvantaged at school? These students are overselected in that they are subject to the same type of assessment (which favours those who have cultural capital) as the privileged students and have to perform equally well despite the cultural handicap (Bourdieu, 1979, p.14). As mentioned above, this is because school operates with the dominant culture, takes it for granted, and treats all children "equally" as if they all possessed the dominant habitus. Thus children without the dominant habitus are at a disadvantage from the outset of schooling.

Given equal academic achievement, a greater proportion of privileged class students go on to further education than others (Bourdieu, 1976, p.110, 112). This is because people adjust their hopes and aspirations to their perceived objective chances (Bourdieu, 1976, p.111; 1984, p.379), and conduct self-selection or self-elimination, often claiming "I'm not good enough for that" or "That's not for the likes of us". Students from underprivileged families must, therefore, achieve correspondingly greater success at school for their family and their teachers to consider encouraging further study (Bourdieu, 1976, p.112). For some groups, "success" in school and career can lead to people's exclusion from their primary group. Due to "a sense of one's place", potentially successful candidates may end up excluding themselves from places and jobs that they feel their group is excluded from (Bourdieu, 1984, p.471).

Lack of information relating to the education system and of strategies to effectively use the system lead to premature and often ill-informed decisions (Bourdieu, 1979, p.14). Premature initial choices (of school and subject department) may be irreversible and impact unfavourably on the student's academic career (Bourdieu, 1976, p.112). Under-privileged students, not knowing any better, tend to be satisfied with less desirable positions than they deserve with their educational resource. These choices may be due to a family opting for known "security", which for many families is a synonym for success (Harker, 1990, p.91). Thus, disadvantages are cumulative, and social disadvantages are gradually transformed into educational disadvantages.

Besides cultural capital (which includes linguistic and educational capital), Bourdieu presents other types of *capital*. They are economic capital (money and material assets), social capital (social and personal network), and symbolic capital (prestige, reputation) (1985, p.724). These different types of capital are convertible from one form to another, and capital reconversion is often adopted as a strategy to maintain and promote one's social position (Bourdieu, 1984, p.137). For example, parents can use their economic capital to buy expensive private schooling for their children, which may provide not only a better chance of getting to university (educational capital) but also a social network with other influential people (social capital) and social grace and manners (cultural capital).

A position in the stratified society, according to Bourdieu (1984, p.114), is determined by volume of capital and its composition (for instance, a white collar worker has relatively more cultural capital and less economic capital than a shop owner), and any change in these properties in relation to a given place and time. Occupational prestige hierarchies are not universal across different societies.

Individuals try to increase the volume of resources they hold to maintain or upgrade their position by adopting diverse investment strategies depending on how much and on what kind of capital they have, and on their habitus. Since the respective habitus of two individuals are never identical, their strategies will be diverse as well. In this respect, Bourdieu is not deterministic about class reproduction. Bourdieu (1984, p.101) presents a formula: $(\text{Habitus} \times \text{Capital}) + \text{Field} = \text{Practice}$. He argues that an individual's habitus and their capital simultaneously activate each other. This interaction takes place within a given field of society (social space), such as education, sport, or consumption, and leads to a resultant practice.

That a person's habitus determines his/her perception and actions is important in respect of the present study which examines students making a "choice". Only possible options are perceived as "options" by students. An individual student's habitus determines how he/she utilises the various resources (cultural, economic, symbolic, social) available to them. The succession of students' and parents' decision-making at all levels of schooling therefore involves the activation of available resources by the decision-makers' habitus.

This study is interested in micro-level interactions where individual students perceive their resources through their habitus, and activate them in the process of making employment-related decisions. The process centred on students' perceptions of what those around them (including family and school) say and do in relation to their transition. This study attempts to reveal the social processes through which the habitus helps individuals to improve their social position, and through which individuals exclude themselves from achieving social mobility.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the existing studies relating to three specific areas: school to work transition, schooling in Japan, and reproduction/ production theories in education. Here I draw together the gaps in the reviewed literature which I consider are relevant to the present study.

Studies on school to work transition have been conducted at two levels. On the one hand, there has been research into transition issues at policy level (both school and state), that is, the policy makers' response to the transition "problem", an example of which is vocationalism. Close focused ethnographic studies, on the other hand, have examined the process by which individual students experienced the transition. This type of work revealed that individual students often held differing interpretations of the school's messages, and that their respective transition trajectories were strongly influenced by their family and the sub-cultures within which they existed. These studies contributed to the elaboration of various versions of reproduction/ production theories. A major gap in school to work transition research and literature is the absence of studies which go beyond the context of the Western, and in particular, Anglophone societies. The existing studies share some of the following assumptions relating to transition: Job decision and acquisition is understood to be a student's *individual* action.

The introduction of "work" elements (such as vocationalism) and social skills training into the curriculum is aimed at achieving a smooth transition. Further, there is an expectation that the school will assume the major responsibility for ensuring efficient transition, and policies and programmes are designed and implemented on that basis.

The Japanese job referral system offers an alternative approach that challenges these assumptions. Three parties (school, employers and a state agency) collaborate closely on the school to work transition process. Students obtain jobs through the school-based resources (social networks and information available to all). The decision-making and job acquisition process is shared by students, teachers and parents. The existing literature emphasises features of the Japanese system which are overtly different from those in the West and suggests that the Japanese approach is "efficient" (in a narrow societal and economic sense). The present study is interested not only in the system but also in its practice, and explores both the assumptions behind this practice, and its *culturally specific nature*.

The major interest of the present study, however, lies in the process of differentiation *within* groups of non-university bound students in that culturally specific context. Some of the reproductive and productive mechanisms of schooling observed elsewhere may be shared, or operate in modified ways. I question the existing literature which argues that the differentiation is strongly based on "merit" (academic achievement).

In the field of Japanese Studies, the present study fills in several gaps. Contrary to the large amount of research concerning relatively "successful" students, this study focuses on mediocre to low achievers who immediately enter the workforce and become the "mass" of Japanese society. This will help redress the popular picture of Japanese society which tends to reflect largely only its "successful" elements. Secondly, the study relates an examination of ethnographic data (actors' relations and interactions) to the forces and structure of Japanese society. This will contribute to bridging a gap between cultural anthropological study and structural-Marxist arguments relating to control in Japanese schooling, through the study of individual "trajectories" (within a broader "modal trajectory") and the interrelationship between habitus and the various forms of capital (resources).

CHAPTER 2
METHODS:
FIELDWORK AT TWO URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS

This chapter presents the methodology of the present study, that is, a particular version of the ethnographic method. Firstly, the ethnographic method is discussed in relation to my commitment to a particular version of "knowing the social world", since that influences the research procedure. Secondly, the fieldwork and data analysis process will be described: how actors involved in this research were selected; how my fieldwork among them was carried out; and how the data was analysed.

Methodology: the Ethnographic Method

Ethnography is a form of social research, and the principal form of anthropological research, which is often used to study a small community or group. Ethnography draws on a wide range of sources of information through participant observation. The researcher participates in the community for an extended period of time, observing what takes place, listening to what is said, and collecting whatever data relates to his/her research concerns. The way in which an ethnographic researcher collects data and interprets it is similar to the usual ways in which a lay-person makes sense of everyday life. Some see the ethnographic researcher's way of collecting data as a disadvantage, claiming that their data are not "scientific", while I (with others) see it as an advantage, because data are collected in a "natural" setting. By employing a participatory method, the researcher is able to collect more detailed and relevant data than could otherwise be obtained from surveys or other non-participatory methods.

The development of observational research, which involves a relationship between the researcher and those who are researched, has been led by challenges from within social science to the positivist research tradition. The positivist research tradition is observed in correlational and experimental research design. It is often modeled on a certain type of natural science, seeks universal laws, tests a causal hypothesis, sees a distinction between "scientific knowledge" and common sense, and places the researcher's activities and concepts over those of the actors. In gathering data elaborate attempts are made to eliminate the potential "bias" or effect of the observer: by developing an explicit, standardised set of experimental or interview procedures and the use of statistical data analysis, which allows replication by others.

Observational research methods on the other hand are variously called "qualitative research" (Miles and Huberman, 1984; Strauss, 1987; Atkinson, Delamont and Hammersley, 1988; Hopkins, Bollington and Hewett, 1989), "ethnography" (Wolcott, 1975; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983) and

"case study" (Stenhouse, 1984; Fensham et al., 1986). Correspondingly a variety of definitions exist to explain the nature of observational research methods. The diversity within qualitative research on education was emphasised in Jacob's review of the American literature (1987), which Atkinson, Delamont and Hammersley (1988) complemented and contrasted with their review of the British research. The present study contains elements from each of the above approaches: it is a "case study" of two schools in one particular Japanese city; a form of "qualitative research" in that data is collected, analysed and presented in language rather than numbers; and a form of "ethnographic research" in that my data and interpretation of it were products of my reflexivity and of a close and long-term relationship developed with the actors in the field.

Interpretative research, from which different versions of ethnography derive, concerns the ways in which actors construct their social world through their interpretation. These researchers, therefore, propose that the social world be studied in its "natural" state, and regard social phenomena as distinct in character from natural phenomena, in that human actions are based on social meanings (intentions, motives, attitudes, and beliefs). As a participant observer one can learn about the culture or subculture of the people being studied, and as a result come to interpret the world in the same way as they do. It is a natural process similar to the one experienced by any stranger learning the culture of an unfamiliar group.

Ethnography in school settings, a subset of qualitative research, varies in its approach and its goals. There is, in particular, a distinctive difference between the approaches and goals in the US and those in Britain (Delamont and Atkinson, 1980). A brief examination of these various approaches in ethnographic research in school settings will allow me to discuss the methods upon which this study is based.

American "school ethnography" (Spindler, 1982, p.iv) has strong roots in cultural anthropology and is called "educational anthropology", such research having been conducted by applied anthropologists (Spindler and Spindler, 1987, p.xi). Ethnography, for them, is an orderly report of how natives behave and how they explain their behaviour (Spindler and Spindler, 1987, p.17); an attempt to describe the culture of the group of people (Spradley, 1980, p.13); "to combine the view of an insider with that of an outsider to describe social setting" (Wilcox, 1982, p.462); and "to describe and interpret cultural behavior" (Wolcott, 1987, p.43). Ethnography is termed "the science of cultural description" (Wolcott, 1975, p.112) and "thick description" (Geertz, 1973, p.6). Educational ethnographers see education as "cultural transmission" (Spindler and Spindler, 1987, p.3) and conduct research in a wide range of settings--schools outside the US, within the US (from a remote Indian village school to an urban slum school). Their concern tends to be in *ethnic* cultural variation both across societies and within American society: the "problem" groups who fail in schooling, *ethnic* "culture clash" between the pupils' culture and that of the school, as can occur with minorities, and the

process in which diverse cultural (*ethnic*) backgrounds are accommodated or otherwise in the school setting, as papers in Spindler's collections indicate (Spindler, 1982; Spindler and Spindler, 1987). Interestingly, 17 contributors out of 18 in this latter collection were anthropologists.

Ethnography in school settings in Britain, on the other hand, has derived from sociology (symbolic interactionism on one hand, and social anthropology on the other). British researchers emphasised understanding of *relationships* among actors, rather than the culture of the group as a whole (which is the major concern for American school ethnography). Since their interest lies in understanding the schooling process through the subjective perceptions and interpretations of actors, British researchers see the actors and their capacity to interpret and negotiate meanings as being at the centre of analysis (D.H. Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey, 1970; Delamont, 1976; Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981). Quite contrary to the positivist approach, the "social construction of reality" rather than "objective reality" is the object of such studies. Much of this qualitative research was conducted in the context of *class* division within society (Atkinson, Delamont and Hammersley, 1988).

The more recent ethnographic studies link their ethnographic accounts to external social forces and structures (such as class, gender, politics, etc.) and general theories of society. Willis's (1977) ethnographic accounts of a group of working class "lads" were, for instance, theoretically discussed in terms of, and supported by his theory about the society. Connell et al. (1982) and Walker (1988) took a similar approach in their work on Australian secondary schooling. Feminism produced ethnographic studies as well (McRobbie, 1978; Fuller, 1980). This type of ethnography has been called "critical ethnography" by Maseman (1982), Angus (1986) and G.L. Anderson (1989) who distinguish it from conventional ethnography. To quote Angus's (1986) definition:

A critical ethnography, as opposed to conventional ethnography, insists upon an ongoing awareness of the fundamental human agency of social actors while simultaneously remaining aware that the subjective consciousness of individuals may conceal underlying structural relationships which are capable of distorting and limiting, or of enhancing and enabling, negotiated systems of meaning. (p.66)

It is suggested that the actors' consciousness must be linked to broader, general theories of society which may exist beyond individual consciousness.

The ethnographic method adopted in the present study selectively incorporates elements from the above three broad approaches. The study has a cross-cultural (cross-societal) outlook as emphasised in American educational ethnography, in that my observations of Japanese schooling are conducted using my Australasian teaching background as a frame of reference, and in that my "cultural interpretation" is presented to a Western audience. It also reflects on class division within Japanese society, a major theme of British ethnographic research, in that I am a Japanese from one class, looking at Japanese from several others. The study examines the everyday interaction between actors, and their accounts of it, in an attempt to provide a social construction of the transition process. Unlike

many "school ethnographies", however, my research focuses specifically on the school to work transition process and is not intended to cover all aspects of school life. This study also differs from interactionist studies of social relations within schools, in that my research interest extends beyond the micro-level interaction. The aim of the ethnographic method I have employed was, like that of "critical ethnography", to enable an examination of the process in which external structure and forces are both reproduced and produced, through the daily experience of actors at the schools in question.

The present research starts with a basic assumption that all descriptions of an action or event are incomplete, since description involves selection and summary through the observer's perception (Hughes, 1980, p.83-85). All perceptions are theory-ridden. Although the social world exists independently of perception, it can only be understood by means of various descriptions available to us, which are inevitably theory-laden (Hughes, 1980, p.124). Since description of an action or event constitutes data in social science, there is no "pure" data available. The aim of the fieldwork, then, is not to gather "pure" data that is free from potential bias, since this is not possible, but to discover the correct manner of interpreting the data that we have (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.112).

Data in the present study constitutes both the actors' accounts and the observer's accounts. Positivists generally consider the latter superior to the former, while interpretivists do the reverse. I consider that neither the actor nor the observer alone has full knowledge about a particular situation in which they are involved. How best to interpret actors' and observer's accounts depends on the particular situation and one's interest in it. The data deriving from actors' accounts can be interpreted in different ways. The data tells us about the phenomena to which actors refer and about the actors themselves, since their accounts are shaped by the context in which they occur--who produced the accounts, for whom, and why. The researcher's observations are as theory-ridden as those of the actors, but differ in that he/she is expected to remain *reflexive* about the incomplete nature of observation and the theory-ridden nature of all observations, both his/hers and those of the actors.

Having said that, I do not claim that I, as the researcher, have full knowledge of all that went on, and all that the actors thought and felt in the field. Although I utilised such ethnographic techniques as different forms of triangulation for checking my fieldwork data, it is still necessary to examine both the observer's accounts and the actors' accounts critically and hypothetically, and to read what is to be presented in the following chapters in this light. Since all descriptions are incomplete, theory and knowledge, which is a construction on the basis of available description, remain valid only until further notice (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.235). The theories deriving from the present study, and the basic assumption I started with are no exceptions.

Fieldwork in school settings is not new. Such studies have often been conducted by researchers in their own societies, examining school culture or organisation as a sub-culture. For instance, there have been studies focusing on a secondary modern school (D.Hargreaves, 1967); on a boys' grammar school (Lacey, 1970); on a girls' public school in Scotland (Delamont, 1976); on an unstreamed girls' grammar (Lambart, 1976); on working class male youth in Britain (Corrigan, 1979);

on a British comprehensive school (Ball, 1981); on a Catholic comprehensive school (Burgess, 1983); on working class youth (Willis, 1977; Coffield et al., 1986); on new middle class students (Aggleton, 1987); on an urban boys' school in Australia (Walker, 1988); and on a New Zealand girls' school (Jones, 1986).

I believe that the ethnographic method exploits distinctive features of social research, that the "objects" it studies are in fact "subjects" and themselves produce accounts of their world (Hughes, 1980, p.73), and that the social researcher and the research act itself are part of the social world under investigation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.234). I see that my role as a social scientist is to interpret the actors' accounts (which are actors' theories about a fragment of the social world) and to reconstruct the fragment of the social world in the context of other relevant sources.

In consideration of the nature of my research topic and concerns, I decided that the kind of ethnographic method described above would be appropriate. My concerns are: to examine how the job referral system is *practised* at micro-level; to understand how students and teachers make sense of and experience the job referral process/ transition process; and to explore the process of "cultural reproduction" at the level of the school. This required that I observe the process firsthand, to elicit the actors' perceptions of the process and then to relate my observations to these perceptions. To achieve this I considered it vital to be in contact with the actors throughout the process, and to develop a close and mutual relationship with them.

The Fieldwork Process

Pilot Fieldwork at a New Zealand High School

I spent one week at a local high school near Massey University in November, 1988 (4 months before the fieldwork commenced), to experience what it would be like to be a fieldworker in the school setting. It was a co-educational comprehensive high school with an enrollment of 1365 students ranging in age from 13 to 17, and having a teaching staff of 85. Access to the school was informally obtained through Mrs. A whom I had met at a transition education conference, and formal approval was confirmed when I made a telephone call to the principal.

The purpose of this short pilot fieldwork was to "practise" observation, eliciting the actor's views, recording those observations and comments, and creating fieldnotes. The research question I set for this particular exercise was "What messages did Mrs. A try to convey to the students and how did they interpret them?". I sat in on "transition course" classes and "vocational studies course" classes conducted for senior students (16-17 year olds), and spent break time with these students. They were generally friendly and talkative.

The experience provided valuable lessons. I learned that extra care was necessary to ensure that students did not identify me with the teaching staff. Note-taking turned out to be more difficult than I had originally expected in that the more time I spent writing detailed memos the less time there

was to properly observe the ongoing process. Conversely, if my note-taking was inadequate I found it difficult to recall the day's events when writing fieldnotes in the evening. I therefore learned to only record "key words" in relation to the study question in such a manner that I could later easily recall the particular situation to which they applied. In addition I became aware of the necessity of devising a recording technique which was specifically suited to the field I would be entering in Japan.

Locating the Group in the Japanese School System

The students in my study were Japanese 17-18 year olds in the last year of upper secondary school who are making the transition from school to work. By this time they have had 9 years compulsory education followed by their 3 years of senior high schooling.

The following discussion refers to the Japanese school ladder depicted in Appendix 1. In 1987 only 2.3 % of the national cohort entered employment at the end of 9 years' compulsory schooling. As many as 93.9 % entered senior high school after passing an entrance examination, 2.4 % proceeded to vocational training, and 1 % became unemployed (Japan, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 1988, p.40-41). Almost all of those who enter senior high school qualify for a high school diploma. This is because students see an advantage in staying on until the end of schooling, since the school takes the responsibility of securing appropriate employment for them. Senior high school offers two kinds of curriculum orientation; a general (academic) course and vocational courses (including commerce, industry, agriculture, home economics, fishery and nursing). These two types of course are usually offered in separate schools, but a few comprehensive arrangements exist. In 1987, 73 % of all senior high school students were enrolled in a general course (Japan, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 1988, p.44-45).

In most school zones, senior high schools form a clear prestige hierarchy based on relative difficulty of entry (Rohlen, 1983, p.11). The lower status of vocational courses is partly due to the relative ease of gaining admission to such courses, and partly because of the career patterns which their graduates follow. In 1987, 71% of vocational course leavers directly entered employment, in comparison with only 22% of general course leavers. Only 10% of vocational course leavers proceeded to tertiary institutions while the corresponding figure for general course leavers was 39 % (Japan, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 1988, p.48-49). Of course the ratios differ greatly between general course schools, varying with the relative prestige of each school. The top school in a zone would send almost all its graduating students on to universities, and, compared to other schools, a relatively larger proportion of these graduates would enter the prestigious universities.

There are, however, no institutional constraints preventing students of vocational courses from applying for admission to universities, and as shown above a small proportion of them (10%) do in fact enter universities. Similarly, students of general courses who immediately take a job, tend not to experience any particular disadvantage, since employers, especially large ones, do not consider specific occupational preparation such an important factor in the selection process (Umetani, 1985, p.5). They

are more concerned with a recruit's potential for development rather than with whether a candidate possesses immediately useful skills (McCormick, 1988, p.43).

It is clear that whether one is enrolled in general or vocational courses at senior high school level, has a narrowing effect on subsequent occupational decisions made in the last year of high school. The decision to pursue one curriculum course rather than another at the end of compulsory schooling is the first key occupation-related decision for most Japanese youth (Bowman, 1981, p.28; Evans, 1986, p.17).

Selecting the Site

I first chose a region where several industrial cities were located, and later selected one of them, Saki-city, as the result of negotiations I had with the local education authorities. The region was chosen largely for two reasons. Firstly, the project by its nature required contact with minority populations, but this was a factor I had to be careful not to mention to education boards while negotiating my access to schools. Since the region contains a significant number of minority populations, I inferred that any school in the region would have a certain number of students from minority groups on its roll. Secondly, the region is part of an industrial belt which is large enough to absorb the majority of local high school graduates. This makes it easier to trace and examine their eventual employment. Thirdly, there are several similar cities in the same region which were potentially suitable settings for my fieldwork. They offered an alternative in that should my first choice be declined a nearby city might be prepared to cooperate with my research.

Each school for my fieldwork needed to satisfy the following three conditions: (a) it had to be a government school; (b) it had to be co-educational; and (c) it was necessary that at least 75 % of the school graduates obtain employment straight after leaving school.

Documents on school leavers in the region indicated that only vocationally oriented high schools satisfied the above three conditions. Consequently I selected education boards which run high schools with vocational courses. There were four, one prefectural and three municipal education boards. I sent a letter to each of these four targeted education boards, requesting meetings with their officials during a preliminary visit, as well as an outline of my research and my curriculum vitae.

Negotiating Entry into the Field

Gaining access to high schools for my fieldwork was a demanding task. Compared with the relative ease I had in gaining access to a local high school in New Zealand for the purpose of conducting the pilot study, the process turned out to be time-consuming and involved many "interviews". My fieldwork commenced in April 1989 and finished in April 1990, but it took almost half a year of negotiation starting in October 1988 to achieve entry to the schools where I could conduct it. This was in part because government schools in Japan possess less autonomy than their counterparts in New Zealand, and in part because the schools had not previously experienced hosting

an ethnographic "field worker" from "outside". In addition, the kind of schools which I had nominated were what were publicly considered to be "difficult" schools and this fact would no doubt have influenced the education authorities in the course of their considerations. However, the process of negotiation I was required to go through provided me with valuable data on the nature of education boards and vocational high schools.

In January 1989, three months before starting the fieldwork, I paid a preliminary visit to the region, to introduce myself to local education boards. I expected that these education boards would refer me to what they considered "appropriate" high schools. My field supervisor from a local university had already rung these education boards, gaining the names of the contact persons and reconfirming my coming visits. After discussing the coming negotiations with him, I made appointments with the various education boards.

At all four education boards I met officials in charge of the Instruction Supervision Division, who had the most direct contact with schools administered by their respective boards. These officials "interviewed" me for one to two hours, and made decisions on the actions to be taken, often after conferring with the chairperson of the Division. They treated me politely but seemed guarded. None of the education boards had had to consider such a request before.

An officer at Aga-city education board continued, "This is the first time that our education board has been asked to assist in this kind of long-term intensive fieldwork and so we can't predict how the schools might react. We've had people from universities visit schools and give questionnaires to students and teachers. But those visits involved only one or two days at most. Some schools have refused even these people, saying that they disrupt the school routine. So, we can't promise you anything, until we talk to the two targeted schools." (Fieldnotes, 11/1/89)

The item in my curriculum vitae which most attracted the education boards' attention was, unexpectedly, my undergraduate degree from H University in Japan, which is quite distant from Saki-city. All the officials mentioned it to me at least once. The two officials who met me at the Aga-city education board were also H University graduates, talked about their days at the University and introduced me to their boss, who had also graduated from H University. Again the officials I dealt with at Saki-city education board introduced themselves as H University graduates, and referred me to two high schools whose headmasters were also H University graduates. These officials commented that H University graduates occupy important positions in school administration in the region. University graduate networks, which are widely known to be active in big companies and in government offices, also operate in the field of teaching.

All the education boards mentioned vocational high schools or vocational courses in comprehensive high schools as being appropriate for my study. This confirmed my previous understanding that over half of the graduates of academic high schools proceed to further education and that therefore such schools would be unsuitable sites for my fieldwork.

I visited three high schools during my January visit. The most positive reaction came from Sasaki High School, which was eventually selected as one of the schools where I would conduct my fieldwork. The headmaster gave me his views on schooling and asked various questions of me. He mentioned that Sasaki High's neighbouring community included the city's largest concentration of *buraku* people, and that the *buraku* issue was very sensitive.

Headmaster: [Your acceptance] all depends on the next academic year's third year home room teachers and also on the teachers of the Department of Guidance for Life After School (DGLAS). I will talk to them to see if any of the home room teachers are interested in having you in their classrooms for the year. The DGLAS teachers will not be a problem but some home room teachers may not like having an outsider present all the time. In any case, I will inform you of our decision in due course, before the end of March. (Fieldnotes, 11/1/89)

Although the headmaster was personally willing to accept me, he did not have the power to make the final decision by himself, and was required to bring the matter up at a staff meeting. The decision as to my acceptance or otherwise would therefore be made on a collective basis, but first it was necessary to wait until next year's home room teachers were selected in two months time. In March I received a letter from the headmaster advising that he was positive about the school accepting me. Later when I was well into my fieldwork, I learned that the headmaster and the HOD of the DGLAS had conducted *nemawashi* (lobbying or "spade work") among staff members, so that the staff meeting would support accepting me.

During the preliminary visit to the field, two particular messages from education board officials and headmasters stayed in my mind. One was that board officials and school staff were afraid that my research might lead to "journalistic" (whatever it means to them) and scandalous write-ups about internal problems at schools. For instance, one deputy headmaster commented, "I don't like various articles on Japanese schooling written by foreign journalists who have made short-term visits to observe schools and produced "superficial" descriptions and comments." (Fieldnotes, 13/1/89). Indeed, I later noticed bookshop shelves commonly displaying a significant number of books with such titles as "A look at the Serious Internal Problems of XYZ School", written by Japanese journalists.

The second message was that the revelation of information relating to a student's "family background" was a sensitive issue. When I made direct mention of "family background", the officials reacted in a sensitive manner and displayed a defensiveness about revealing related information, as demonstrated by the following quote:

Deputy-head: I'm sorry to say this, but family background is a very sensitive issue, and supposed to be kept confidential from anyone outside school, in particular, while students are in the process of obtaining employment. I doubt very much if you could have access to the information. This is a very serious issue both for students and teachers, because one piece of information may easily ruin the rest of a student's life. Another issue which concerns me and other teachers would be your interest in the internal selection process within our school. (Fieldnotes, 13/1/90)

I consequently decided that I would not mention "family background" until much later when I had gained the confidence of the school staff and students. I decided that I would search out suitable sources and devise indirect measures to obtain the information I required regarding students' family backgrounds.

Entering the Two Schools

When I arrived at Sasaki High in April, I was introduced to the staff at the staff meeting, where I gave a short talk, and no objection was raised about my proposed fieldwork. I learned later that the final decision regarding my acceptance was made at that meeting by the staff as a whole. It was decided that I would study a data processing course class (henceforth called 3D), and that the HOD of DGLAS would be "responsible" for my actions.

Access to Imai Technical High School, the other school which became the subject of my study, was gained through a different process. When I left the region after my preliminary visit, only Sasaki High seemed a promising prospect in terms of gaining entry. I also needed to gain access to technical course students, since commerce and data processing courses (which were offered at Sasaki High) were comprised mainly of female students, and my study required a balance between sexes. I talked about this to a university professor acquaintance who happened to be an ex-headmaster. He kindly offered to contact the headmaster of Imai Technical High, whom he knew personally and, who was also a graduate of H University. The professor was positive that his friend would agree to his request to accept me. I myself wrote to the headmaster of Imai Technical High, but did not receive any reply.

Strangely enough, it was the headmaster of Sasaki High who in the end persuaded the Imai Tech High headmaster to cooperate on my study. When I visited Sasaki High in April, the headmaster asked if I was studying other schools also. I informed him honestly of the situation with Imai Tech High, that I had not heard from them. The headmaster offered to contact the headmaster of Imai Tech High. The two knew each other from the H University network. Over the telephone, after a general greeting, the Sasaki High headmaster brought up my concerns with the Imai Tech High headmaster.

The Sasaki High headmaster: I have here Ms. Okano from New Zealand, who was referred from the education board to do her PhD fieldwork with us. I understand that she has contacted you also..... We have virtually decided to take her for a year..... I have had long chats with her twice now, and we have found her a reliable, mature, intelligent ex-teacher with common sense. I'm sure you will enjoy having her around.... Would you be able to meet her? (Fieldnotes, 23/4/89)

On the following day I visited Imai Tech High. The headmaster was already quite conversant with my fieldwork from my letter and his conversation with the headmaster of Sasaki High, and apologised for not having replied to my letter. He explained that he lost my contact address when the previous HOD of DGLAS died suddenly of a heart attack a month ago. Because he particularly trusted Sasaki High's headmaster, he did not conduct a thorough "interview". I was soon taken by the deputy-headmaster to the DGLAS room. The new HOD of DGLAS, Mr. Nakane liked the idea that someone was interested in studying what the DGLAS does. My acceptance at Imai Tech High was accomplished with a surprising smoothness which made me speculate about whether the school had a hidden motive for accepting me, a concern which I will touch on later.

As at Sasaki High, getting a home room class for my intensive study posed a problem. After the DGLAS agreed to accept me, Mr. Nakane called the dean of the third grade, Mr. Sumi, explained my project, and asked him to negotiate with home room teachers of third grade classes to have one take me into his class. Mr. Sumi was reluctant at first, but after an hour of talk, he agreed that he would do his best to facilitate my fieldwork. Eventually I was allocated an interior furnishing course class (henceforth 3I) of 21 boys and 16 girls and a machinery A class (henceforth 3MA) comprising 37 boys.

Establishing the Field Role

Having no previous experience of a long-term field researcher, both schools found it difficult to "define" my status at school: I was neither a teacher nor a student, the only two roles available at school. I did not intend to adopt the role of teacher like Corrigan (1979, p.11-12), since one's identification influences one's mobility in the field and relationships with others (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.98).

I needed to be "marginal" to both groups of teachers and of students. When the schools asked me how I wanted to be introduced to students, I responded that I had come to "learn" how the system operates here as a research student, as distinct from being either a teacher or a student, but that I was prepared to take an active part in the life of the school. I was subsequently introduced to students as "a research student from New Zealand who is to spend a year with us to learn about how our third year students get jobs. She will be in and out of school, observe classes and ask you questions. You are welcome to ask about what New Zealand students are like." (Fieldnotes, 10/5/89)

I spent two to three days a week at each school. Since the two schools are only 20 minutes apart I could be at one school in the morning and at the other in the afternoon if necessary. I spent most of my time with the three classes of students, 3D at Sasaki High, and 3I or 3MA at Imai Tech High, sitting in classes, having lunch, and just being around them. Some teachers refused to have me in their classes, in particular teachers of *futsuu-kyouka* (academic subjects). Social science teachers were an exception. *Senmon-kyouka* (specialised or vocational subject) teachers were however more willing to have me in their classrooms.

Initially when I was new to the classes students were quieter and more formal, but it did not last long. I was able to sit in any vacant seat if someone was absent, and could thus observe classes from different angles. Otherwise, I sat at the back of the room. Teachers who approved of my presence did not take much notice of me. Some teachers invited me to answer their questions during the lesson, and when I could not answer there was friendly laughter among the students. At Sasaki High Ms. Tani approached me and I became a teaching assistant for her commerce English conversation class once a week. I also gave a few slide presentations about the New Zealand schools where I had taught.

During the course of my fieldwork, and depending on the situation, I played each of the four ideal roles referred to by Gold (1958) and Junker (1960, p.36): those of "complete participant", "participant as observer", "observer as participant" and "complete observer". However, I was rarely the complete observer, only on the occasions when I listened to counselling from behind a screen. The role I played was also constrained by what I was allowed to do. I did not push my interest in "participation" at the outset, since I did not want to be seen as "pushy" and intervening, and waited until I was invited to take part. Although seated at the back of the classroom at the beginning, I ended up participating in classes in Politics and Economics, and Interior Planning, since the teachers of those classes included me in their class activities as if I were another student. I ran in the school athletic meeting for the 3I class team, joined in the class activities at the Culture Festival by making a shadow puppet and cooking *oden* (a Japanese dish) to sell with students, made a miniature house in a practical class, joined school excursions, visited companies and employers' organisations with Mr. Nakane, the HOD of DGLAS, and joined groups of students who congregated at the local shopping centre with other students after school. In other situations I could not participate in school events to the same extent. Since I could not understand the Machinery classes, I was only able to observe students' interaction with other students and the teacher. I was, however, able to assume the role of "observer as participant" in the confidential meetings pertaining to the internal selection meeting.

While interacting with the actors (students, teachers and employers), I was also observing the process from a research point of view. Playing a variety of roles along the continuum of complete observer and complete participant means that one is always marginal to any roles in the field, and to

the field itself. Being a reflexive fieldworker/ethnographer, one cannot have total commitment and become "native". Freilich (1970, p.2) calls this "Marginal Native" and Lofland (1971, p.97) "the simultaneous insider-outsider".

My Relationship with the Students

My initial impression of the students was their uniformity. For someone who had taught at Australasian secondary schools, the sight of a class of 40 students with the same coloured hair and eyes and all wearing the dark school uniform, sitting expressionlessly in rows, did have immediate impact. Although I was confident of my capacity (derived from my teaching experience) to match the names and faces of students in a short time, it took much longer, one month, to be able to do so in the case of the almost 100 students I came in contact with regularly. It was all the more difficult because most of these Japanese students did not express their individuality as outwardly as their Australasian counterparts would. All of them naturally possessed individual dispositions, personalities, mannerisms, speech patterns and the like, but did not display them in the same way as the students I had been used to in Australasian classrooms.

I consciously tried to be liked by the students. I also tried not to take sides with any one particular peer group, since to do so would have blocked the information route from another group, and I was careful not to reveal any information that I may have possessed at the time relating to other students. I basically projected myself as ignorant about the students, their academic marks, families, any "deviant" behaviour, club activities and interests, in the hope that *they* would tell me about these details themselves. Although I had been a school teacher, I experienced little difficulty trying not to act like a school teacher, contrary to Aggleton's experience (1987, p.22). This was perhaps because I had taught only at Australasian schools, and I therefore had had no experience as a teacher in a Japanese high school. As well I was new to the type of school, and did not have any teaching or supervisory responsibility.

Students were not sure who I was. In the first three months, I felt that they were "checking up on me". Boys at Imai Tech High used to talk in my presence about their part-time work and motorcycle riding, both of which were prohibited by the school, to see whether the news would get to their teacher, which would have resulted in a *kinshin* (suspension from school). Sometimes, students followed me to the DGLAS room, to hear what I would say about the class just observed. By July when the school athletic meeting was held, I sensed that I had been accepted by the students and felt comfortable with them. Most students addressed me as *sensei* (teacher), a form of address which extended also to include non-teaching staff such as the technicians. Those who became close just called me "Okano-san", although the use of this more familiar form of address was generally regarded as inappropriate by the teachers.

I tried to be conscious of my influence upon the actors in the field as a researcher, in terms of such factors as age, gender, ethnic group, regional group, appearance, previous experience and personality (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.78-87; Burgess, 1984, p.89-92; Ball, 1985, p.29-30). My personal dispositions and characteristics were interpreted in different ways by the students and teachers.

My relatively young age was a definite advantage in relating to students. They liked the idea of me also being a "student". Often, they did not register their teacher introducing me as an ex-teacher, and thought that I was a teacher trainee. The impression that I, too, was a student, rather than a teacher, was further enhanced when my supervisor from Massey University visited each school. On that occasion I introduced him to the students as my *sensei* (teacher) and he became a topic of conversation amongst the students, indicating that his visit had had an impact upon them. Being female was a disadvantage in relating to boys. Ball (1985, p.30) had also experienced such gender-related problems in respect of the girls in his study. This was particularly obvious at male-dominated Imai Tech High, where boys were simply not used to female adults and were shy and awkward about even talking to me. These boys, when in a group, tend to put on a "tough" air in public which reinforced the school's image of being "rough", and in turn led some outsiders to question my "security" at the school. I found the boys were basically good-natured and inoffensive as long as they were treated with respect and trust.

My ethnic identity was not discussed by students, at least in my presence, but they assumed that I was a Japanese who was resident overseas. Korean students had the same impression of me and were pleased to know that I was learning the Korean language by tuning in to Korean lessons on the radio.

Students immediately knew from my standard Japanese that I was not a native of the area, which initially created a sense of distance. At first some of them tried to respond in the standard dialect but soon reverted to using the local dialect. In the beginning students who were familiar with *keigo* (honorific language) tried to talk with me using the sort of polite and even respect-laden language they were expected to use in addressing someone older than themselves. (Some students, however, were still not acquainted with the various registers comprising honorific speech and so were not yet able to communicate on such a basis.) I always spoke to the students in the informal language they would adopt with their friends.

Therefore, by means of language, a hierarchical relationship was initially formed between myself and some of the students: I was perceived to rank higher than themselves. But, because I welcomed the use of "friendly" informal language by other students, those who had started using highly polite forms of language soon changed over to the friendly forms when conversing with me. Although a few teachers apologised to me about these students' "rude" speech patterns, I felt comfortable conducting a conversation in this way. The students' use of more relaxed language indicated to me that I was considered to be neither a threat nor an authoritarian figure to them.

I dressed casually, in such a way that I did not stand out among the students. Some students could not understand why I was studying after having been a teacher. Others were keen to hear about Australasian teenagers, boys in particular were interested to learn about the All Blacks (the New Zealand national rugby team).

My Relationship with Teachers

My relationship with teachers centred around the DGLAS at both schools. I had my own desk in the department room at each school and could observe and participate in what was going on in the department. DGLAS formed a cohesive group of teachers which operated in a room separate from the staff room where the majority of teachers had their own desks. The HOD of DGLAS were "responsible" for "looking after" me at both schools. When DGLAS was busy processing incoming recruitment cards, I helped by doing what I could. When teachers could not meet visitors from companies and universities, I acted as a school host. I was invited to drinking parties at the end of each term, and took part in the informal chats that accompanied them. At the end of the academic year I also joined both schools' DGLAS overnight trips to hot spring spas, a typically Japanese custom in which the teachers thanked one another for efforts made during the year. Because I had constant contact with the DGLAS teachers, we soon developed a close relationship. They looked on me as a new member or trainee of the department.

In relationships with teachers whom I saw only occasionally, I maintained a low profile by placing myself at the bottom of the staff hierarchy. Since age is a significant determinant of seniority in Japanese social organisations, my relatively younger age was a definite advantage. At both schools I was younger than most of the teachers, which made it easier for them to explain the school process and to talk about themselves. Teachers did not feel threatened in a way that they might have been if the research was being undertaken by an older, established academic. They were willing to explain basic matters to me, sometimes in a paternalistic way as if I were totally ignorant of how these schools operated and even of Japanese society! "Stranger value" was working: people talk more freely to an outsider, so long as he/she is not too much of an outsider (Beattie, 1964, p.87). This was convenient since I wanted to elicit their views, and I asked questions about matters which teachers took for granted. Some of the younger teachers, some of whom were younger than myself, were more hesitant about making comments, although they were helpful once they became close to me. I found talking to the older teachers who were on the verge of retirement especially valuable because they often made comments from multiple perspectives.

Being a female posed both advantages and disadvantages. Among male teachers a female was less threatening for them, and thus did not make them defensive about what they do and don't do. At Imai Tech High, where the total staff of 80 were male, I found it amusing that these teachers were protective (regarding exactly what I was unsure) and paternalistic towards me at the outset, and I used

to question what it was about me or the school environment that made them act that way. However, when they understood that I was coping well in this male dominated school their paternalism gradually faded away.

The regional origins of the teachers were more diverse than those of the students, and teachers from my home prefecture approached me and were helpful. My ex-teacher status exerted a positive impact, an often-mentioned comment being "Since you were a teacher like us, you would understand how we feel about.....". They sometimes asked me about schooling practices in Australasia. I developed a close friendship with some teachers, who turned out to be invaluable informal sources of information.

Confidentiality

A close-focused study like this raises the issue of the anonymity of the school and its individual actors. In the process of negotiation to gain entry to the schools, both headmasters requested: that the purpose of the fieldwork should be only my PhD research; that schools and actors should remain anonymous; and that the school be consulted if the result was to be published. I agreed in all cases. I felt that my Massey University supervisor's visit to the schools in June provided both staff and students not only with confirmation of my status as a research student but gave them extra insight to the work I was engaged in.

The headmaster at one school mentioned in particular the issue of confidentiality of information across groups of actors in the field, mainly between teachers and students. He said that the school would expect that I would understand the sensitive and confidential nature of much of the teachers' activities since I had been a school teacher, and would trust my personal integrity and "common sense".

Another aspect of confidentiality was that certain meeting reports and documents were red-stamped "confidential" (*maruhi*) and some actors tried to deny me access to such information. Although I eventually secured access to most of the information I required, these actions were interesting in that they revealed the views of the people involved, both regarding my presence and these documents, and later gave an insight into the internal politics among staff. As a result I became more conscious of my position at the school. It did not take me long to learn that the "gate keepers" who policed the release of data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.63-64) were the HOD of DGLAS at Imai Tech High, and the headmaster at Sasaki High. But often approaching these gatekeepers directly was not helpful without having done some groundwork. The issue of my access to "confidential" information will be raised in reference to that of "sensitive" information (e.g., that relating to family backgrounds) in the later chapters.

Data Collection and Recording

Since this study focused on the process of students' transition at the level of school, the school was the main site for data collection. Other spaces covered were the local shopping centre, where students often spent time on their way home, commuting trains which I shared with students, various spots in town where I went with students, various companies, and the city council. Access to students' homes was limited by my entry into the field through school. As Jenkins (1984, p.158) experienced in relation to the Youth Centre, the public sphere of the school was distinct from the private domestic world, and gaining access to students through school meant school control over my access to their homes.

In the first three weeks I just "hung around" school, without asking direct questions regarding who, what and why (Whyte, 1970, p.303). During this period I tried to gauge the temporal patterns of the actors so that I could make the best possible use of the limited time I had. I first chose which classes I would attend, based on whether the subject teacher was agreeable to my presence in their class and on whether a reasonable amount of active interaction among students and teachers was observable in the class. Individual teachers' views, in particular those not shared by the DGLAS, were easier to gain when other teachers were not present. So I studied the timetabling of the DGLAS teachers and devised a schedule whereby there were times when I could be alone on an informal basis with one particular teacher at a time. After school a number of teachers were likely to be present working together in the DGLAS room, and that was the time most discussions and decision-making took place. I found having lunch at the students' cafeteria in the fourth period, before the students' lunch hour, a convenient place and time to have informal discussions with other, non-DGLAS teachers.

Being a participant observer involves introspection, and I was aware that what I saw and recorded in the field was influenced by the questions I had in mind at the time. As my observation became more focused and selective in the later stages of my fieldwork, this awareness became more important. Data was collected in five forms: fieldnotes, interview tapes and transcription, questionnaires, documents and photographs.

Fieldnotes

In my fieldnotes, speech and action were recorded in relation to the factors which could possibly influence them: who was present, the physical location and time, and the context of the occasion. Spradley's checklist (1980, p.78) was useful: space, actor, activity, object, act, event, time, goal and feeling. I made a clear distinction between direct quotations, *my* description of events, and what some call "analytic memos" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.164), that is, my comments, ideas and speculations, both on theoretical and methodological aspects (Schatzmann and Strauss, 1973, p.99). The content of my fieldnotes was largely *my* description of the events, and this always involved selection, summary and interpretation to one degree or another (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.156). In the evenings I started entering the day's fieldnotes into my laptop computer from my handwritten notes. To save time I tentatively took my laptop computer to school and started entering

the fieldnotes during school breaks. However, this turned out to be inefficient, since the laptop computer was conspicuous and also because I could not take it into classrooms anyway. Also, typing the day's fieldnotes into the computer from the handwritten notes gave me an opportunity to reflect on myself and the day's events away from the site. From each day's fieldnotes I created a file, individually denoted by the date and the name of the school (e.g., File# SEP06.I). The computer served as a convenient means of storing such data, which could then be easily retrieved at a later stage.

Interviews

I conducted interviews with 90 students from mid-October, 6 months into the fieldwork. They were semi-structured interviews and "conversations with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984, p.102) centring on a set of themes and topics which were designed to allow the interviewees scope to develop their answers. My approach could be characterised as both "ethnographic interviewing" (Spradley, 1980, p.122; Spindler, 1982, p.7) and "reflexive interviewing" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p.113-116), as distinct from standard interviewing. For this kind of interview, the quality of the data depends on the quality of the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee (Measor, 1985, p.57; Burgess, 1984, p.107).

Interviewing students poses special problems since they generally find it difficult to go beyond institutional habits (Simons, 1981, p.129-130). A previous empirical study documented difficulties experienced in eliciting views from Japanese high school students through interviews: students gave similar short answers to the questions posed by the short-term visiting researcher, and as such the replies were of limited use (Horvath, 1986, p.2). This made me more aware of the significance and necessity of long-term, close relationships with the actors.

By mid-October I had spoken to and shared activities with all these students and was aware of their immediate futures. My presence in classes was accepted as routine by teachers and students, who used to describe me as "Okano-san who comes in and out of our classes but never misses out on major events". I felt comfortable with them. By mid-October the majority of students had a job to go to and had passed through the stages of anxiety and excitement, and I considered that they could now reflect sensibly on the processes of decision-making they had adopted. Until that time the students had informally spoken about their experience of decision-making in our daily conversation, and I wanted to confirm some comments which were contradictory in themselves. I speculated that the contradictory nature of some students' comments might have been due to the presence of others (students and teachers) when they had voiced them.

Using the previous informal talks, I made an interview schedule, tried it on a few close students, and then revised it, based on feedback from them. The revised schedule is attached as Appendix 2. In most cases I conducted a one-to-one interview, but when students wanted to have their best friend accompany them I included the friend. This provided a special advantage since, being close, the two friends would talk between themselves, often revealing aspects which had never

occurred to me. During the course of interviews, the interview schedule was not revealed to the students and questions were asked in the informal style of language friends would use with one another.

Interviews were conducted at the school in a private and quiet room where we were free from any interruptions, either at lunch time or after school. I personally approached the potential interviewees (each of whom I had come to know well) during breaks, explained that I was very interested in his/her decision-making process for my study, and asked if he/she would cooperate with me in consenting to be interviewed. The students' reactions to my requests were generally favourable. I received no outright refusals. Once they had agreed, I asked the student when, on the three days when I attended the school in the following week, it would be convenient to conduct the interview. I thus created a timetabling for interviews for the following week or the week after, but casually reminded the student about the coming interview the day before the interview was planned.

The level of articulation and willingness to talk about themselves differed considerably among individuals. This affected the length of interviews. On average an interview with one student lasted 45 minutes, but ranged from 30 minutes to 1.5 hours. Boys at Imai Tech High, some of whom had never experienced a one-to-one interview with a female, were embarrassed at the outset, and it took longer to elicit their views.

I initially attempted to transcribe the interview on the same day as the tapes were made. This, however, turned out to be difficult due to the time constraints I was working under then: I still worked at school every day, which meant that fieldnotes needed to be kept up as well. Transcription into Japanese was completed for about 50 of the students while I was in Japan. After returning to New Zealand, I at first still transcribed the tapes into Japanese, but later decided to transcribe them directly into English, in order to save time. I was aware that translation from Japanese into English had to be done at some stage of the research, but also knew that meanings of "cultural specificity" might be lost in the process. When an appropriate translation was difficult, I included the original expression as well as the English translation. Transcriptions were made in Japanese for 55 interviews and in English for the remaining 35 students.

It was not that every word was transcribed, since the present study did not require that. The relevant information from each interview was transcribed, placed systematically under the headings of the interview schedule in a standard format, and an interview file was created for each student. An example of an interview file is attached in Appendix 3.

Formal interviews were also conducted with home room teachers and the HODs of DGLAS, at the end of the fieldwork. I wanted to clarify and check various comments made during the course of the fieldwork.

Documents

I collected documents relating to job referral and to the third year students in general throughout the year. Each document was denoted by the date and the name of the school (e.g., "Document# Sept21.S"), and stored in chronological order in the respective file I kept for each school. The name and a summary of each document was entered in my fieldnotes on the day that it was obtained, in order to keep a record of the context in which I received the information. I created document summary sheets for major documents, which I stored in the computer for later retrieval. Important data obtained from documents included students' academic marks; the records of the previous year's students, containing details of their marks and eventual employment; data about companies; and a record of the number of students who received welfare scholarships.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to collect information regarding the relationship between students and their companies after the students had been offered positions, and in respect of company notification of initial training which was made just before graduation. When I noticed that many companies had contacted their respective students, I had already interviewed over half of the students and was unable to obtain information pertaining to this. Furthermore, companies sent final notices regarding training or pre-training orientation to students in the last two months. Therefore, I decided that it would be convenient to conduct a questionnaire covering these aspects on the graduation day.

Methods of Data Analysis

It is the methods of data analysis that have received most criticism in qualitative research; such as that qualitative research lacks explicit and agreed procedures for analysis of data and therefore the research's validity is questionable; or that qualitative researchers do not report on the methodological process of their data analysis (how they reduce, analyse and interpret data) (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p.15-16). Although some addressed the elaborate methods of data analysis (Spradley, 1979, 1980; Dobbert, 1982; Croll, 1986), Miles and Huberman (1984) and Strauss (1987) presented a more comprehensive process of mechanical operations in working with data.

While I endorse the second comment, that the data analysis process should be reported, it seems that the rationale presented by some for the "agreed-on canons for data analysis" contains positivist language (such as replicability, validity, generalisability, "testing", and reliability), which reflects the very approach which qualitative research set out to challenge in the first place. These researchers may be trying to systematise qualitative research and to make it more "scientific" in order to gain legitimacy for their accounts and to protect their research from being called "story telling". This is ironical, G.L. Anderson (1989, p.252) claims, since anthropologists have been moving in the direction of experimentation with more literary approaches to ethnography.

To the extent that these procedures provide the reader with a record of the decision-making process that produced the final analysis, they are valuable. To the extent that they suggest that the final analysis is more the result of methodological rigor than the creative act of researcher interpretation, they are attempts to fit ethnography into a positivist framework. (G.L. Anderson, 1989, p.252)

There is one thing in common among all the above researchers: several stages of data analysis can take place concurrently. These stages are as follows: (1) anticipation; (2) immersion in data (select concept and categories; data reduction); (3) validation (integrate categories and their phenomena; data display); (4) interpretation (delimit theory; conclusion drawing/verification); and (5) write a theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1984; Hopkins, Bollington and Hewett, 1989).

My study underwent similar stages, often simultaneously and therefore it is difficult to precisely delineate each stage. Below I describe the process of data analysis.

1. Analysis of data started with immersion in the data and the tentative generation of categories. This took place while in the field and continued after leaving the field. While in the field it was not difficult to identify the major events in the process of job referral from the school point of view. However, by reading through accumulated fieldnotes (which were arranged in chronological order) and by making constant reference to the documents associated with particular events, I was able to relate these events more closely to the overall process and from there construct "the critical phases of the transition", as the school saw it. Teachers worked to achieve the common goals set for each phase. Documents prepared by the school for students communicated the school's messages and intentions at each phase. Although my fieldnotes contained students' perceptions of the transition phases, interviews were my main source of students' interpretations of the process.

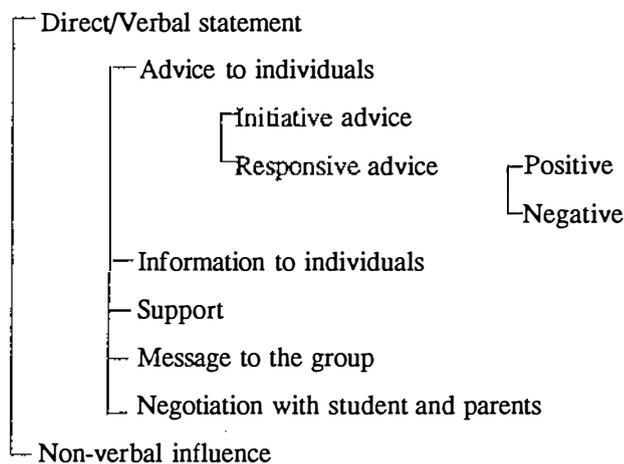
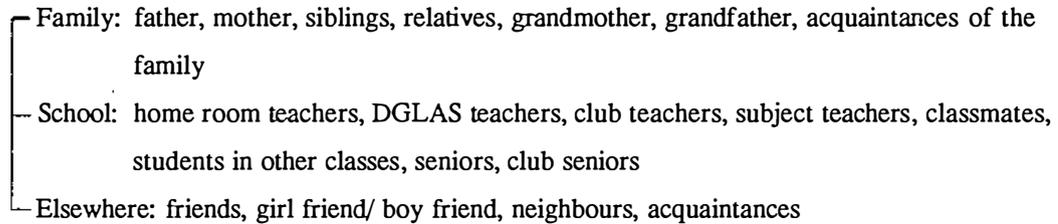
2. Relevant information from the interviews conducted with the 90 students was made into 90 interview files in a standard format. The transcriptions of narrative data into a standard form enabled me to compare students more effectively. The interviews revealed both shared events and differing experiences in students' trajectories stretching from primary school to the present. They revealed information about each student's family and his/her relation to it, and were an opportunity to explore the student's decision-making and to hear the reasons for particular choices having been made.

3. While reading through the interview transcriptions of students and teachers, I cross-checked with fieldnotes and copied relevant parts (say, a description of an event as I observed it) from fieldnote files into the relevant section of the interview transcription file, but always noting the source file of the section. This operation enabled me to compare the different perceptions of an event held by different parties, and to obtain a degree of authenticity regarding the event, through triangulation.

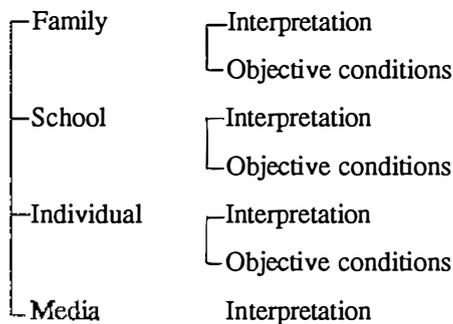
Table 2.1

Categorisation of Influence

(1) People who influenced students' decisions



(2) Non-people factors



4. Interview scripts indicated that students made decisions in complex contexts. I first asked myself "Who influenced students' decisions?" and identified the following: family (father, mother, siblings, relatives, grandmother, grandfather, acquaintances); school (home room teachers, DGLAS teachers, club teachers, subject teachers, classmates, students in other classes, seniors, club seniors); elsewhere (friends, girl friend/boy friend, neighbours, acquaintances). Whenever these terms appeared in the transcripts, I marked them. (Refer to Table 2.1).

5. From this I saw two distinctive types of influence attributable to these agents and agencies: one expressed through "direct/verbal statement" and the other taking the form of "non-verbal influence", where students *interpreted* non-verbalised actions of agents and agencies. Agents and agencies could also influence a student's decision without taking any specific actions. For instance, when one girl decided not to be a sales person it was because she saw that her sister, who was employed as a sales assistant, was required to work long hours, and not because of any comment her sister had made.

6. I amplified and further refined the "direct/verbal statement" category. I saw further distinctions: providing specific information to individuals; giving advice to individuals; supporting the student's decision or wish; giving a message to groups in public; negotiation among students and with parents. It was clear that messages targeted to individual students and those delivered to groups such as the whole class were received quite differently.

7. In the "giving advice to individuals" category, I made further distinctions: "initiative advice" when giving advice to a student who had not yet come to a decision; and "responsive advice" when making comments after a student had announced his/her decision. In the "responsive advice" category two types were discerned: "positive" and "negative".

8. It was not only what agents and agencies did in terms of providing advice and information that influenced students' decisions. "Non-people" factors affected their decisions as well. There are four sub-categories within the "non-people" factors: family (e.g., disposable income, ethnicity, outcaste status and home neighbourhood, etc.); school (e.g., social network with companies, information about job market, etc.); individual student (e.g., gender, academic marks, school attendance, club involvement, religious beliefs, personality, and personal interests, etc.); and media (radio, magazines, TV, etc.).

9. These "non-people" factors influenced students' decisions in two distinctive ways. One was through the student's interpretation of these factors. The same factor was often interpreted by different students in separate ways, and could lead to differing decisions, based on those interpretations, being made. For instance, an identical academic mark is interpreted as "not bad for a particular position" by one student, and as "too poor for a particular position" by another. The former applies for the position, while the latter does not, thus siezing or eliminating themselves from the opportunity. This was an important juncture of my study: It made me focus more on the "perceptions" held by individual students, and to relate them to Bourdieu's concept of habitus (which generates perceptions and actions). Secondly, "non-people" factors could directly affect a student's decisions and consequent job acquisition regardless of his/her own perception of the factor. For instance, a Korean student had to give up on applying for a particular position since the company in question simply did not employ Koreans. When companies offered positions through recruitment cards sent to schools, they often requested one or other of the two sexes.

10. I noticed students interpreted the various messages (information and advice) they received in a variety of ways. I explored why this was the case.

11. The standard form I employed in the interview transcription organised students' decision-making in chronological order, from which I noticed that certain kinds of influence operated at certain chronological stages. I divided the chronological order into eight stages: pre-junior high school; junior high school, senior high school first and second years; senior high school third year; senior high school third year, June three-party meeting; senior high school third year, July and August; senior high school third year, internal selection process; and senior high school third year, first employment examinations.

12. I identified relevant data in the interview transcription file of each student, and entered categorisation codes using abbreviation which are underlined.

13. Based on each student's coded interview file, I drew a transition chart for them, with arrows indicating direction of "influence" from various sources. An example is attached in Appendix 4. This clarified the process of transition for me in each case, since I was finding at that stage that immersion in detailed descriptions of the 90 students was leading me to stray from focusing on the major events and influences. Fieldnotes provided the context in which students' decisions were made.

14. I created eight critical phases of transition in the last year of senior high schooling, based on my observations and the teachers' perceptions.

15. I recognised the diversity of experiences and responses to school actions on the part of individual students in these critical phases, although teachers held certain sets of expectations for each phase. Patterns in the diversity of students' experiences became apparent.

16. I started seeing these patterns in terms of students' responses to available resources; how they perceived and activated them. I have attempted to fit together these patterns and constructs to form a substantive theory.

These processes of analysis often took place concurrently, and involved me going back to fieldnotes and documents, and then to analysis notes. Throughout the process, I consciously tried to be reflexive about my work in the field and my interpretation of the data.

Summary

The present chapter discussed the ethnographic methods I have employed in this study, and described the process of data collection and of data reduction and analysis. The abundant data I collected was thus processed, and its analysis will be presented in a systematic form to provide a picture of the school to work transition process in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Lutz's three models (1984, p.111) were helpful at this point: the "operational model" (which is constructed from the researcher's observations), the "representational model" (as the actors interpreted the events), and the "explanatory model" (a combination of the first two). Firstly, I present the eight phases constituting the process of transition, which derive from the data of events I observed, in combination with the data gathered from

teachers. Secondly, I will provide students' interpretations of events in these eight phases, from the data gathered from students (both fieldnotes and interviews). Thirdly, I will examine the transition process by combining the above two models and focusing on six particular students, in an attempt to explain the differentiation which took place in the school to work transition.

CHAPTER 3
TWO SCHOOLS:
SASAKI HIGH SCHOOL AND IMAI TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS

Friend: Have you managed to get access to a school that you wanted for your fieldwork?

KO: Yes, Imai Technical High School has now almost agreed.

Friend: Imai Technical High School?..... Is it OK?

KO: I visited the school yesterday, and it was OK. Why?

Friend: That school has got a bad reputation. Also, they are all boys, aren't they? Will you be safe enough?

KO: Well, there are a small number of girls in the interior furnishing course. What do you mean "safe enough"? Of course, I am.

Friend: Why did you choose that school?

KO: I didn't have a choice..... I had to take whatever school would agree, really.

Friend: Take care... Don't push yourself too much, will you?

This chapter presents the setting of the field studies: Saki-city and two of its senior high schools with strong vocational elements.

Saki-city: an Industrial City

Saki-city, at first glance, is typical of many Japanese cities. It is clean and modern with characteristic grey buildings and factories. At a closer look, you may notice ginko trees alongside the main road as well as features such as temples, shrines, a mosque and several Christian churches. In the mid-19th century, when Japan officially opened her doors to the West, Saki-city was designated as one of several ports which would accept foreign ships and foreigners. In those days, Westernisation meant civilisation and modernisation, and the city, having been a pioneer of Western imports, still projects itself to outsiders as a "modern, sophisticated and Western" city.

Like cities elsewhere, Saki-city has many faces: local government offices for decision making; factories; financial blocks; an entertainment quarter; poor and middle class residential suburbs. The city spreads along the coastline and covers approximately 550 km². Originally a coastal town Saki-city later expanded inland towards the mountains absorbing villages located further to the north to reach its present size. Being a prefectural capital, Saki-city is the location not only for local government offices but also branches of central government offices.

Large scale heavy and chemical industry plants stand along the coastline. As a result of Japan's emergence as a military power and her imperial expansion at the end of the 19th century and during the first half of the 20th century, these factories were expanded to produce military equipment, absorbing population from the surrounding countryside for the labour force. Saki-city's population multiplied through these times. New arrivals without possessions settled near these factories for

convenience, and created characteristic working class communities. Here small old town houses and family-run shops crowd together with small family-run factories. This type of community where an old neighbourhood solidarity is still strong is called *shitamachi*. A work by Wagatsuma and De Vos (1984) on *shitamachi* describes its characteristics well. The *shitamachi* inhabitants stayed on in these quarters unless they become wealthy enough to move into the outer suburbs.

Quite apart from the *shitamachi* area is the city's commercial and financial centre characterised by modern high rise buildings. Major banks, insurance companies and trading companies are located there. Further inland towards the mountains lie a mixture of commercial and residential areas. Residential areas exist across the whole city, even amongst factories. High rise government residential flats, for instance, stand out in the midst of the entertainment area. Unlike many Western cities, the clear division of residential area and industrial area is not observed.

The city's population grew along with the growth of the port and the heavy industrial companies from the last century to the present. Employment opportunities at the port and in heavy industry brought workers from the surrounding countryside. The population in 1989 was about 1.5 million, comprising 520,000 families (Saki-city Statistical Yearbook, 1989, p.2-3). The average population density of the city was 2688 persons per km². Population is concentrated in three wards, namely; Sakura-ku, Matsu-ku and Take-ku. Matsu-ku and Sakura-ku, where the population density is over 12,000 people per km², are characteristically *shitamachi*. Sasaki High is located in the densely populated Matsu-ku, taking students from *shitamachi* Matsu-ku and Sakura-ku. Take-ku is a combination of the city's business and financial centre, an entertainment district and a residential area. The city's northern region is sparsely populated and characterised by areas of bush and agricultural fields, in contrast to the coastline area. Imai Tech High shifted its site from the *shitamachi* Sakura-ku to a newly developed residential area near the hills, but still receives students from *shitamachi* wards.

Saki-city's population comprises a cross-section of ethnic groups in common with other large Japanese cities. In Japan resident foreigners are *popularly* perceived as belonging to one of two categories; they are either *gaikokujin* or *zainichi*. *Gaikokujin* comprise Caucasians and recent arrivals from Asia (e.g., Vietnamese "boat" people). The *zainichi* classification refers primarily to ethnic Korean and Chinese residents. This latter group will often be referred to throughout this study.

Koreans form the majority of *zainichi*, nationally numbering about 700,000. The original *zainichi* were brought to Japan as forced labour during Japan's occupation of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945. Many never returned home and instead settled in Japan and raised families. *Zainichi* Koreans therefore constitute a mixture of those born in Korea and those born in Japan. Many face discrimination in employment and marriage (Mitchell, 1967) and as a result commonly try to hide their ethnic origin and assimilate themselves into mainstream Japanese life by, for example, adopting Japanese names. Many young *zainichi* Koreans have Japanese as their sole language and are not easily distinguishable from their Japanese peers. The Chinese *zainichi* population is considerably smaller and faces less discrimination than the Korean *zainichi*.

Saki-city had 40,000 foreign residents in 1988. Koreans (28,000) formed a clear majority. The remainder comprised 7,800 Chinese, 1,000 Indian, 900 Americans, 400 British and 400 Vietnamese followed by other smaller ethnic groupings (Saki-city Statistical Yearbook, 1989). Asian ethnic groups concentrate in the three *shitamachi* wards. For instance, one third of the Koreans live in Sakura-ku. Over half of the Chinese live in Take-ku, which has a "Chinatown" in the commercial centre area. Over half of the Vietnamese live in Sakura-ku also. Indians concentrate in Take-ku. Caucasians live in Take-ku and in the wealthy eastern suburbs.

Both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High receive students from Sakura-ku and Matsu-ku and consequently some of them are *zainichi* students. Teachers at these two schools refer to these *zainichi* students as *gaiseki* when talking amongst themselves but no such reference to nationality is made publicly at school. *Gaiseki* students are invisible, because of this, and because of their attempts to cover up their ethnic origins as well as their physical similarity to their Japanese cohorts.

Another invisible minority in Saki-city is the *buraku* people. The *buraku* people are descendants of an outcaste population. This class was institutionalised in the early 17th century by the feudal Tokugawa government. *Buraku* people were required to do work which Buddhism deemed to be unclean--this included burying the dead, tanning, and the slaughter of animals. They were forced to live in the least desirable sections of town. Although the institutionalised caste system was abolished in the mid-19th century, the *buraku* people have remained and still face symbolic discrimination (De Vos and Wagatsuma, 1966; Ogbu, 1978). There are 40 specific geographical areas where *buraku* people concentrate in Saki-city. The specific locations of these areas are generally known only to local people. Both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High have some *buraku* students.

Most people work in the city, although some of them commute to nearby major cities. Some people from nearby towns commute into Saki-city to work. Since Saki-city is in a large industrial area, the city's high school graduates tend to get jobs within commuting distance. Therefore, the majority of high school graduates still continue to live at home after obtaining a job. Like other Japanese medium-sized cities Saki-city has undergone extensive growth and change in post-war times in the context which the two schools in this study exist and function.

The Students in the Study

The study examined students making the school to work transition in the final year of high schooling. The focus of my study at Sasaki High was the 44 students in 3D (the data processing course third year class), and 6 students in the commerce course. I interviewed 45 of these students. The counterpart group at Imai Tech High was 3I (the interior furnishing course third year class) made up of 21 boys and 16 girls and 3MA (the machinery course third year A class) comprising 36 boys. Forty five of these students were interviewed as well.

Sasaki High School

Sasaki High's three-storied concrete buildings stand amongst small, old houses and shops crammed along narrow streets, a typical scene in *shitamachi* Matsu-ku. I used to think these streets were one-way. I was wrong. When two cars meet, one car moves to one side to give way. Once you turn into the narrow street leading to Sasaki High from the busy modern major road, it is difficult to think that you just left a modern subway station only 10 metres behind.

At the corner of the major road and the small street, a pharmacy sells both Western and traditional Oriental medicine. Next to it is a sweet shop where the old woman owner sits in the sun. Another woman splashes water on vegetables for sale at the next shop. A smell of grilled fish on charcoal emanates from the small fish shop only 1 meter in width. The woman attending it is busy with grilling fish for the late afternoon, when male labourers return from the day's work. These men come to her to buy fish which they take to a bottle shop on the other side of the street to eat with beer and *sake*. There is a rice shop, a tailor, a stationary shop, a women's clothing shop, Shiseido cosmetics shop, electric appliance shop, a Japanese noodle shop, a Chinese cafe, and a cafeteria. These shopkeepers live either upstairs, or behind their shops. In between these shops, even narrower unpaved pathways, only about 50 cm wide, provide access to houses built along them. None of these houses has room for a garden. Students come out of these narrow pathways into the street in the morning. There are public bath houses open early in the morning and in the evening. People walk along the streets with bath bowl and towel, greet the shop owners and chat away. At a junction where the street meets another narrow street, a traditional noodle cafeteria and an *obento* (boxed lunch) shop stand in contrast with a modern, shiny public telephone. One block away from this junction along the street one enters the *buraku* community. It is the biggest *buraku* community in Saki-city. The city government instituted a welfare scheme to "upgrade" the area, by replacing old slum houses with modern high rise flats, and by improving the drainage system of the area. From the second floor windows of Sasaki High one can see these buildings.

Most Sasaki High students arrive at school on foot. Some bike to school. Many students use public transport like the bus, subway or train, or a combination of them to take them as far as the bus stops or stations on the major routes near the school. Then they have a steep uphill walk for about five minutes. The road leading to Sasaki High is too narrow for buses. Every morning just before school starts, navy blue and black school uniforms converge like ants towards the school gate from both downhill and uphill directions. The majority of the students come from *shitamachi* Matsu-ku where the school is located or adjacent Sakura-ku, the city's most densely populated area. The two wards contain factories, larger ones along the shore and smaller ones amongst residential houses. Although the school zoning system does not apply to vocational courses, over 90 % of students come from the neighbourhood of the school.

Sasaki High has a long history, its original establishment dating back to 1908. It was at first a private commerce high school, and was later taken over by the Saki-city municipal government. Through the post-war reorganisation of secondary schools, it was amalgamated with another city commerce school to become a co-educational three-year senior high school. In 1949 it changed to a comprehensive high school with an academic course. The school has been located on its present site since 1915. In 1985 a data processing course was introduced alongside the existing academic and commerce courses. At present each grade has four home room classes in the academic course, three home room classes in the commerce course and one home room class in the data processing course.

In the 1989-90 academic year when the fieldwork was conducted, the student enrolment was 1096. There were over twice as many female students (752) as male (344), since commerce has traditionally been a female vocational course. Each home room class comprised about 45 students on average. Students in vocational courses (i.e., commerce and data processing courses at this school) take *senmon kyouka* (specialised subjects) in commerce and data processing respectively for one-fourth to one-third of the total periods. The remainder of their time is spent on *futsuu kyouka* ("ordinary subjects", academic subjects).

Teaching Staff

There were 60 full time teaching staff (11 are female), 10 part-time teaching staff, 3 assistants and 3 technicians, 4 administrative staff, 3 care-takers and one medical officer. All full-time teaching staff are supposed to have a 4-year university degree with a teaching certificate, and although the qualifications of these teachers were not published, I understood that almost all of them hold these qualifications. The teaching certificate is granted on the basis of the completion of a certain number of required university courses (such as educational psychology, Japanese constitution, teaching methods, teaching practice, etc.), and subject to passing the screening examination set by respective local education boards. The majority of the teachers entered teaching immediately after university, but a few of the commerce course teachers and some of the older teachers had worked for companies before deciding to enter teaching. Almost all the teachers resided within Saki-city. Several lived within walking distance of the school.

There are three main organisational structures among the teaching staff: *gakunen* (a group of home room teachers in charge of the same year); task departments and committees; and subject groupings. The most important is the *gakunen* group which comprises the eight home room teachers, the dean and two sub-deans of each grade. In Japanese the word for grade is *gakunen*, a term which also refers to this grade-based grouping of teachers. These groups of teachers have their desks next to one another in the staff work room, so that they can easily confer amongst themselves. Once a teacher gets appointed as a dean, he/she stays in the position for three years until the entrants graduate from school. Some home room teachers move up with the students as they move from one grade to the next. Secondly, teachers who do not have home room classes join one of the four task departments (DGLAS, Rules and Discipline, Admission and Rolls, and General Administration), or one of the eight

task committees which have responsibilities for various school functions (e.g., health care, library, counselling, etc.). Only the DGLAS has a separate room where the departmental teachers are located. Thirdly, teachers belong to subject groupings, such as English, mathematics, science etc. Each subject department has a head, but the HODs of the subject groupings have much less recognition than do other department heads.

Dropouts

The proportion of *taigaku-sha* (drop-outs) from Sasaki High (about 2.7%) is average for a Saki-city high school. Out of 371 entrants in spring 1987, 10 students could not graduate in February 1990. One was required to repeat and join the year behind, nine left school altogether. To be more specific, in the first year five students left school. At the beginning of the second year, six students joined the 1987 entrants to repeat their second year. Those who do not satisfy the requirements for each year are, as a rule, requested to repeat the same year. In the second year, seven students left school (three of them were repeaters) and one did not satisfy the requirements for that year. The 364 students who started their third year stayed on to graduate. Mr. Hida, who prepared the document from which I am quoting, explained that continuous *teigaku* (suspension from school) and *gakugyou-fushin* (poor academic performance) were the main reasons for dropping-out but that the school never forced students to leave. Parents, after a long consultation with the home room teacher, finally submit a letter stating that they want their child to leave school. Once the letter is submitted, the request is normally accepted. Those who leave school early often go to evening high schools since very few day schools accept them, or else they get a job. (Fieldnotes, 13/2/90)

Academic Achievement

Teachers reported that Sasaki High's students were neither the top nor the bottom in their age group in terms of academic achievement. They cannot exactly locate their students in the percentile scale of academic marks for the age group, since the entrance examination process was complex, but reported that they were within 20 % of the middle. Teachers said that students in the data processing course have the highest academic achievement at the point of entry, higher than those in the academic course at Sasaki High.

A description of the senior high school hierarchy in Saki-city will be helpful to show where Sasaki High's students locate themselves in relation to the age group. There were about 60 senior high schools in Saki-city in 1989: 50 day schools and 7 evening schools (Saki-city Statistical Yearbook, 1989, p.226). About 96 % of the senior high school students in the city attended day schools. Evening schools (called *teijisei*) were originally established for those who work during the day, but the majority of the current students were those whose academic marks were below those required to enter a day school. Senior high schools are run by either the prefectural education board, the municipal education board, or are private. In 1989 about 42 % of Saki-city's senior high students attended prefectural schools, 13 % municipal schools, 42% private schools, and 4 % evening schools. The public is aware of a hierarchy of prestige among these schools, and believes that the hierarchy is in the order of

prefectural, municipal, private (except for a few elite private schools) and evening schools, on the basis of the "relative difficulty" of admission. Prefectural and municipal schools are collectively described as "government schools". Additionally, within these categories, academic courses rank higher than vocational courses. Sasaki High, being a municipal comprehensive school, ranks below prefectural schools and at the bottom of government schools.

It is too simplistic an assumption, firstly, to say that the school hierarchy based on "relative difficulty" of admission is "meritocratic", and, secondly, to say that one's entry into one of these schools is purely based on one's "merit".

Firstly, as theories on cultural and social reproduction through schooling suggest in chapter 1, one's academic marks, the "merit" in high school entrance examinations, does not provide a fair indication of individual achievement. Academic achievement is the product of one's overall background, that is, family and schooling. Differences in one's family's material, social and cultural resources constitute important factors in determining academic achievement. Children who come from the dominant group in society where these resources are relatively concentrated learn to achieve academically more than those who are outside the group. The system is not strictly meritocratic in that the "merit" is defined by the dominant group in society, and in that the system completely ignores differences in family background at the starting point of schooling. The hierarchy of prefectural, municipal, private and evening school, presumably based on academic achievement, seems to reflect the students' family income levels (Rohlen, 1984).

Secondly, students in Sasaki High's data processing course, which I studied closely, always have high academic achievement at the point of entry (Fieldnotes, Headmaster 22/4/89, Mr. Kodama 13/3/90; Interview notes, Mari 1/11/89), which shows that academic achievement is not the sole determinant for one's high school placement. Quoting Mr. Kodama:

The data processing course always receives students with high marks from junior high school. The data processing course students' marks are far better than those of the academic and commerce courses of this school. The majority of them could have gone to a second rank academic high school with their marks. Students like Tamami had marks good enough for a top academic school. Mr. Hida, who is in charge of student admission, and I talk about this every year when the entrance season comes. "Why do these students with such good marks apply for the data processing course of our school. Why not go to academic schools? Why don't their parents want them to go to an academic school and then on to university?" It's very hard for us to understand. (Fieldnotes, 13/3/90)

The above comments show that the choices (for the data processing course when they could enter an academic high) appeared "irrational" and "hard to understand" from the standpoint of the dominant norms held by Mr. Kodama and Mr. Hida. These choices seem to be grounded in what Bourdieu calls "the choice of necessity - plus, of course, the entirely negative effect of the absence of information and specific competence which results from the lack of cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.379). The headmaster explained that these students chose the data processing course because their families cannot

afford to send them to university although they are academically capable, and that they are from "disadvantaged" (*megumarenai*) families (Fieldnotes, 22/4/89). Through my interviews with the data processing course students I discovered that the majority of them had sufficiently good academic marks to enter second-rank academic schools but chose instead the data processing course. They responded in various ways when I asked them why they chose the data processing course at Sasaki High. Many of the girls had already decided on a commerce course when they had personal interviews with their junior high school teachers, but their teachers suggested the data processing course as an alternative. Some had only decided to get a job after senior high school (i.e., not to go on to further education), but had made no decision regarding the kind of job they wanted, and their junior high school teachers had suggested the data processing course. Some already had a fascination with computers, and, wanting to pursue their interest, obtained their teachers' support. Some were not certain whether they would want to go to university and believed/misunderstood (due to lack of information) that they could still pursue that path as successfully as if they had taken an academic course. The data processing course entrance examination places more emphasis on an applicant's school record and their junior high schools' recommendation than other courses offered at equivalent schools in the city. Therefore, those whose teachers recommended the data processing course were likely to have had reasonable school records.

It is interesting to note that many of the students decided on the data processing course even though they had sufficient marks to enter an academic high school. This is contrary to the public's view that academic achievement determines the level of senior high school a student would enter, and that the system is therefore "meritocratic". Why is it that while many junior high school cohorts with similar academic marks chose academic high schools, eligible data processing course students did not? It seems that, given the same academic achievement, those from "disadvantaged" families were less likely to choose academic high schools, which would enable them to pursue university education. As will be seen in later chapters, the data processing students in my study who went on to universities were not the class's top academic achievers.

Family Circumstances

During the course of my fieldwork, I often heard from teachers that compared with other schools in Saki-city, Sasaki High had a relatively large number of students from "disadvantaged" (*megumarenai*) and "complex" (*fukuzatsuna*) families. It was explained to me that these terms refer to relatively poor families, *gaiseki*, *buraku* and "broken families" (single-parent or non-parent families). Since anything to do with "family background" is "confidential" and sensitive, I had difficulty in obtaining data for the whole school and had to wait until I had almost completed my fieldwork to have access to such information.

Data on *gaiseki*, *buraku* and "broken families" were obtained from a school document and are shown in Table 3.1. Since the document was based on data provided by home room teachers, information regarding *gaiseki* and *buraku* status was perhaps recorded from students' birth certificates, and the latter from students' own statements regarding family members. The figure for "single or no-parent" families may, in fact, be a little larger, since I noticed that students do not necessarily record their parents' separation in the school document. For instance, there were two 3D girls who did not live with their fathers, although the school document recorded their fathers as the head of the family. Sasaki High's *gaiseki* students constituted 5.9 % of its total enrolment, a significantly larger proportion than 1.9 % that *gaiseki* represent in the city population.

The relative proportion of *buraku* students at Sasaki High is difficult to assess, since Saki-city does not make the relevant data available to the general public. The following statistics were passed on verbally and independently by teachers in charge of human rights affairs at both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High, and were in agreement on the figures. Although I did not have direct access to the source of the statistics, this agreement provides some measure of their authenticity. *Buraku* students represent 2.6 % of the total student number at Sasaki High, which equates to the *buraku* proportion of Saki-city junior high school graduates for the previous school year. However, Sasaki High has a proportionately greater number of *buraku* students when compared with other government day schools. Overall, *buraku* students tend to be disproportionately represented on the rolls of lower ranked private schools. According to the human rights teacher I consulted, whilst 65% of all students attended government day schools only 46% of *buraku* students did so. He said that *buraku* students still do not get the same benefits as the rest of the students, although some improvement in their situation has taken place over the last few decades.

The proportion of single or non-parent families represented at Sasaki High is significantly larger than the city's average. The statistical form created by the municipal education board and completed by human rights teachers did not use the term "broken family" (*kesson katei*), which is often used in schools, but instead referred to "families with difficult conditions" (*konnana katei*). The use of the term *kesson katei* to describe families without both parents, implying the "deviant nature" of the family, is being questioned and replaced by some conscientious teachers. The terms *boshi katei* (mother and child family) and *fushi katei* (father and child family) are still being used without reservation. The implications of these minority backgrounds in the process of job decision-making and acquisition will be referred to in later chapters.

In assessing a family's income level, I considered the living protection allowance (received by a student's family), municipal scholarship, and tuition exemption as proximate indicators of low income, since the issue of these three grants is approved only after checking the family's income level and the number of dependents. There are however some limitations in using these criteria as an indicator of income level. The issue of these benefits is in response to applications.

Firstly, not all those who are eligible (in terms of income level) apply for the benefits. Some families are unaware of the existence of such benefits, or of the fact that they may be eligible, although schools provide information about the benefits. Others, although aware that they would be eligible, do not apply, considering the benefits as "embarrassing" since it would reveal the family's poverty.

The degree of commitment of each school, or in particular, the commitment of the human rights teacher, and of home room teachers, to encourage students to use the benefit system is also an influential factor. For instance, Mr. Gomi at Imai Tech High, a teacher with a long involvement in minority issues, said that he persuaded several students' families to apply for the benefits, and was critical of some other teachers who did not push students to the same extent. Prefectural academic high schools, the majority of whose students are not from disadvantaged families and who aim for university positions, place more priority on preparation for university entrance examinations than on persuading students to use the benefits. In addition, when families decide to apply for the benefit, the home room teacher plays a significant part in the process of application. Many of the families who apply are not able to present an income record for the previous year, and in that case the home room teacher's letter of recommendation is the sole criterion. One teacher cynically commented that home room teachers' letters of recommendation are an "essay writing exercise", and that the teachers who can write a persuading letter can get any student a benefit! Having said that, these three benefits are the only available indicator of family income level, and give a general indication of the relatively low income level of families whose children attend Sasaki High.

Table 3.1

Indicators of Sasaki High Students' Family Characteristics

Indicators	# of students (Roll = 1097)	Average in the city for comparison
Minority Background		
<i>Gaiseki</i> (5.9%)	65	1.9% of Saki-city's population in 1989 (Saki-city Statistics 1989, p.29)
<i>Buraku</i> (2.6%)	29	2.6 % of the age group (the teachers in charge of human rights affairs at Sasaki High 1/3/90; at Imai Tech High 13/3/90)
Single or no parent (11.9%)	131	3.7 % of all families with children in 1986 (Saki-city Statistics, 1986, p.52-53)
Income level		
Living protection allowance (3.2%)	35	1.8 % of the total city population received this (Saki-city Statistics 1989, p.206) In 1986 3.5 % of all senior high school students received this.
Saki-city scholarship (6.0%)	66	In 1989 17.6% of municipal high school students received this. As discussed before, municipal high schools have proportionately more children from disadvantaged families than prefectural high schools.
Tuition exemption (13.7%)	150	

Life-After-School

The majority of vocational course students obtain employment at the end of their third year. Students in the academic course at Sasaki High are not as successful in gaining admission to universities as are academic students from other schools. Among the vocational course students whom I observed throughout the year, 83 % obtained employment, 5 % entered *senmongakkou* (private professional schools) and 12 % went on to 2 or 4 year tertiary educational institutions. Among the graduates in the academic courses of Sasaki High, 32 % entered tertiary educational institutions, 27 % went on to *senmongakkou*, 27 % found employment, and the rest failed to get admission to universities and decided to become *rounin*, spending an extra year to prepare for the next year's university entrance examination.



3D classroom scene.



Students coming to school by bus or subway must climb this steep path to the school gate.



3D students outside their class's home room.



Members of the Korean cultural study club. Two students on the right are wearing the Korean national costume.

Table 3.2

Life-After-School for Sasaki High's 1990 Graduates

Courses (# of students)	Academic (185)	Vocational course sub-total	Commerce (135)	Data processing (44)	The whole school (364)
4-year university	12.5%	5.0%	4.4%	6.8%	8.8%
2-year college					
<i>senmon-gakkou</i>	20.0%	7.3%	7.4%	6.8%	13.7%
employment at companies	27.0%	5.0%	6.7%	-	16.2%
public service	25.9%	82.1%	81.5%	84.1%	53.4%
<i>rounin</i> or undecided	1.1%	0.6%	-	2.3%	0.8%
	13.5%	-	-	-	7.1%

Imai Technical High School

Imai Tech High's large, modern campus matches well with its surroundings. There are many trees and parks located against a backdrop of green hills, and the air is clean, although only 20 minutes by subway from Saki-city's centre. The area was developed for residential purposes along with a suburban shopping mall and several other schools in the last 10 years. There are individual houses as well as high rise residential complexes, some of which are city government housing. Consequently, there is a mixture of social backgrounds amongst the local population.

During morning commuting hours the local station gets overcrowded with adults catching the subway to Saki-city centre and students coming to school. Four high schools use this station, two prefectural academic senior highs, a municipal high school for the handicapped and Imai Technical High School. Imai Tech High's students feel uncomfortable with the academic high schools' students, saying, that the academic students are "brainy". Students from these high schools use the big shopping mall next to the station as a popular spot after school, chatting at hamburger shops, window-shopping and just "hanging around". The two groupings of students hardly mix with one another.

Imai Tech High was established in 1938 to train workers for military industry factories. At that time the school existed in deep *shitamachi* Sakura-ku, the most densely populated area, amidst factories. The school shifted its site to the present hillside suburb in 1980. Technical school has

traditionally been a male option, and it was not until the interior furnishing course was introduced in 1982 that girls started coming to Imai Tech High. In the 1989-1990 academic year the school had 682 students. Sixty five were girls. In the same year, the third grade offered three home room classes in the machinery course, one in the automobile course, one in the ship-building course, and a further one in the interior furnishing course. The first and second grades of 1989 offered one home room class in the computing course instead of the ship-building course. The 1990 graduates were to be the last in the school's long history of ship-building courses. The ship-building industry drove the post-war Japanese economy till the beginning of this decade, but subsequently faced depression along with other heavy industries. In response to the changing structure of industry, Imai Tech High started offering a computing course two years ago in place of the ship-building course.

One half of the curriculum at Imai Tech High is devoted to academic subjects. These are compulsory and include Japanese, English, Maths, Science, Geography, Politics and Economics, Modern Society, Physical Education, Health, Art, and Home Economics (girls only). The range of technical subjects depends on the course. Machinery course students have Engineering Basics, Engineering Maths, Technical Drawing, Machinery, Machinery Designing, Measurement and Control, Electronics Basics, Motors and so forth. Part of the above lessons involve practical work. In addition, a whole day a week is allocated to practical work, such as welding and machinery operation. Interior furnishing course students take Engineering Basics, Engineering Maths, Technical Drawing, Furniture Production, Interior Furnishing Planning, Interior Furnishing Operation, Timber Craft, Design History, and General Practice. The school is well equipped with facilities for practical work, having two four-storied "practical work buildings" which stand separate from another four-storied building of home room classrooms. The two "practical work buildings" contain 36 rooms with equipment for different practical work purposes, creating, in effect, miniature factories. Both students and teachers work in workmen's uniform in these buildings. The municipal education board spends over five times more funding per technical high school student than it does for each high school student.

Teaching Staff

In 1989 Imai Tech High had 68 teaching staff and 7 administrative staff. Over half of the teaching staff taught *senmon kyouka* (specialised subjects) such as Machinery, which creates a distinctive atmosphere in the staff room and in the school in general. These teachers, in particular those over 40, are often ex-workers or technicians at factories, and entered teaching as assistants while completing a university course through correspondence to qualify themselves as teachers. Some, like Mr. Matsuhisa in the DGLAS, worked for a company as a university graduate engineer or technician, and shifted to teaching. Teachers of technical subjects work in workmen's uniform at school, and the students wear workmen's uniform when they have practical lessons. This was strange to me at first: The school almost looked like a factory. To someone unfamiliar with the school, it is often difficult to distinguish teachers from students. The staff of the school was predominantly male. There was only one female teacher, who came in to teach Home Economics once a week.

Teachers are organised in the same three ways as at Sasaki High: *gakunen* (home room teachers in the same grade); task departments and committees; and subject departments. One difference is that once a teacher gets appointed as a home room teacher of a class, he/she always stays in the same position for 3 years until the entrants graduate from school. These home room teachers therefore develop a long-term relationship with their students over the 3 years. Another distinctive difference is that the subject teachers of the four vocational courses form a strong bond at this school. Practice rooms for these courses are located in two "practice buildings", separate from academic subject rooms, and teachers in these courses spend substantial time (when they are not teaching) in each course department's preparation room. They in fact have their own desks both in the course department room and in the staff room. Academic subject teachers stay in the main staff room, unless they are in the DGLAS. Since Japanese government senior high school teachers teach 15 periods out of 35 a week, on average, and have more non-teaching periods than their Australasian counterparts, where they spend non-teaching time is an important factor in determining staff relations. In the main staff room, desks are organised so that home room teachers of the same grade sit together, like at Sasaki High.

Dropouts

The number of drop-outs, those who leave school before obtaining high school diplomas, is relatively large at Imai Tech High. Out of the 245 entrants in 1987, 43 students did not graduate in February 1990. This means about 17.5 % of the entrants dropped out. Of these 43 students 11 were requested to repeat a year, but whether these repeaters continued until graduation is not known. Often those who become repeaters leave school shortly afterwards. The details of enrolment change are shown in Table 3.3. By the end of the first year 14 students left school and 5 were requested to repeat the year out of the 245 1987 entrants. At the beginning of the second year, 3 students joined them to repeat. By the end of the same year, 16 left school (2 of them were repeaters) and 6 were requested to repeat the year. At the beginning of the third year one repeater joined. By graduation time 5 had left school (one of them was the repeater). All dropouts except one entered the workforce after leaving school. Many of these students left school when they realised that they would have to repeat due to a large number of absent days and/or poor academic achievement. Some left school because they could not get along with their new class when they started repeating.

Table 3.3

Early School Leavers at Imai Tech High

The first year (1987-8)		
April (beginning)	: 245	entrants
March (end)	: 226	(14 left school; 5 were to repeat the first year)
The second year (1988-9)		
April	: 229	(3 repeaters joined from the previous second year students)
March	: 207	(16 left school, out of which two were repeaters; 6 were to repeat the second year)
The third year (1989-90)		
April	: 208	(one repeater joined from the previous third year students)
March	: 203	(5 left school, out of which one was the repeater)
		(Fieldnotes, 14/2/90)

Academic Achievement

Although Imai Tech High's catchment area is the whole prefecture, 95 % of the students reside within Saki-city. About 70 junior high schools send students there.

Imai Tech High, being a municipal high school with vocational courses, ranks almost at the bottom of the government school hierarchy. Mr. Mita, who was in charge of admissions, said that although Imai Tech High was lowly ranked in terms of academic achievement average, some bright students also entered the school. In Saki-city 60% of the age group go to government senior high schools and the remaining 40 % to private schools. According to Mr. Mita, Imai Tech High's students are from about the middle 20 % (i.e., the 40 to 60 percentile, of the junior high school academic achievement distribution curve), with the majority located in the 40-50 % zone (i.e., below average) (Fieldnotes, 14/2/90). Mr. Nakane, the HOD of DGLAS, suggested that Imai Tech High students cover the bottom 40 to 55 % in the junior high school academic achievement continuum (Fieldnotes, 14/2/90). Each year about 5 to 10 students get admission because of merit in sports club activities. Therefore, a typical Imai Tech High student is academically average or a little below average, but has still managed to qualify for a government school. Those who were lower achievers typically went to private or evening schools.

Family Circumstances

Imai Tech High has a larger proportion of students from *gaiseki*, *buraku* and single or non-parent families than the city's average. Also, Imai Tech High students are more likely to be from low income families. The list below provides a detailed breakdown of these characteristics.

Table 3.4

Indicators of Imai Tech High Students' Family Characteristics

Indicators	# of students (Roll = 679)	Average in the city for comparison
Minority Background		
<i>Gaiseki</i> (2.9%)	20	1.9% of Saki-city's population in 1989 (Saki-city Statistics 1989, p.29)
<i>Buraku</i> (4.4%)	30	2.6 % of the age group (the teachers in charge of human rights affairs at Sasaki High 1/3/90; at Imai Tech High 13/3/90)
Single or no parent (14.6%)	99	3.7 % of all families with children in 1986 (Saki-city Statistics 1986, p.52-53)
Income Level		
Living protection allowance (4.4%)	30	1.8 % of the total city population received this (Saki-city Statistics 1989, p.206)
Saki-city scholarship (15.5%)	105	In 1986 3.5 % of all senior high school students received this.
Tuition exemption (21.9%)	149	In 1989 17.6% of municipal high school students received this. As discussed before, municipal high schools have proportionately more children from disadvantaged families than do prefectural high schools.

Life-After-School

As is the norm with vocational high schools, the majority of graduates get employment after finishing school. A strong emphasis on technical subjects in the school curriculum definitely disadvantages students seeking university entrance. In 1990, 14 out of 203 graduates went on to further education.

Table 3.5

Life-After-School for Imai Tech High's 1990 Graduates

Courses (# of students)	Machinery (105)	Automobile (31)	Ship- building (30)	Interior- furnishing (37)	The whole school (203)
4-year university	1	2	1	1	5 (2.5%)
2-year college	1	1	2	1	5 (2.5%)
<i>senmon-gakkou</i>	1	-	-	3	4 (2.0%)
employment with companies	101	27	26	31	185 (91.1%)
public service	-	-	-	-	-
<i>rounin</i> or undecided	1	1	1	1	4 (2.0%)

Summary

This chapter described the fieldwork setting. Saki-city is an industrial city, which despite its dynamism maintains its rich history and traditions. The two schools my study focuses on, Sasaki High and Imai Tech High, are a part of this dynamism and tradition. In March every year a group of students leaves these schools, to be followed by a new group entering in April. Although students' faces change from year to year, schools as institutions endure. Every year different students at both schools play out a "drama" in which they make major decisions about their futures which they then act upon. I was in the midst of the "drama" which took place in the 1989-1990 academic year as a participant observer. It is this "drama" I report in the following chapters.

IMAI TECH HIGH

The school is located in the outskirts of Saki-city, as can be seen by the surrounding vegetation.



3I students at the school athletics meeting. KO is the second from left in the back row.

3I students in a technical drawing class.



One of the 3I students sanding a part for the graduation project.

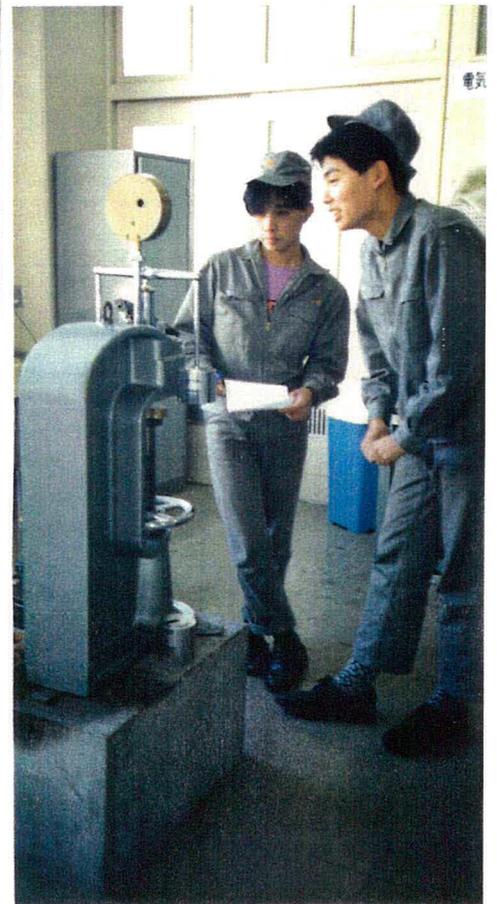
Two 3I girls working on their graduation project.



Completed graduation projects on display.



3MA students using materials testing equipment during a practical session. The uniforms the students are wearing are typical of the tradespeople in Japan.



3MA students waiting for their teacher to arrive.



CHAPTER 4

EIGHT PHASES OF TRANSITION: THE JOB REFERRAL SYSTEM AS PRACTISED

This chapter presents the job referral system as *practised* at Sasaki High and Imai Tech High, and in particular describes how teachers experienced the process by which students make employment decisions, from the teachers' perspective. The transition process as experienced by the students will be discussed in the next chapter. This chapter is an attempt to observe how a policy or institutional arrangement is implemented at the level of the actors involved. I intend to describe the process in which the job referral system is interpreted and put into action by the school and teachers.

While the job referral processes observed at Sasaki High and Imai Tech High were not identical and displayed features peculiar to each school, certain events took place in the same chronological order. Here I identify these shared events and the expectations of students held by both schools at various stages of the transition process, and present the "critical phases" of the job referral/transition process. Teachers expect students to be doing certain things at a particular time, and they conduct their tasks accordingly. Below, the job referral process is presented in chronological order from April 1989 to March 1990. The students involved are in their third, and final year of senior high school.

Phase 1: Groundwork by School and Employers

(April to June. The beginning of the last year of high schooling, until the three-party meeting)

When the students started their final year at these senior high schools in April 1989, most of them had already decided whether they would pursue further education at a university or *senmongakkou* (private professional school) or, alternatively, seek employment. Some of them had some idea about the kind of work they wanted, (e.g., clerical work, computer programming, factory work, sales). However, very few of them knew which companies they wanted to go to. Students did not know many of the company names except for nationally known ones like Mitsubishi, Kawasaki Heavy Industries and so forth. Many, in fact, had not seriously thought of what would be involved over the next six months in the process of obtaining a job. Schools attempted to raise students' consciousness about the significance of the coming events.

Sasaki High students' careers after graduation were more diverse than those for students of Imai Tech High, since the former had about 160 students in the academic course. While the majority of the 160 students in the commerce and data processing courses obtained employment after school, over half of the academic course students pursued further education. Consequently, Sasaki High's DGLAS (Department of Guidance for Life After School) organises guidance for four groups of

students: university, *senmongakkou*, civil service and nursing, and employment with private companies. At Imai Tech High, where the number of students wishing to pursue further education is very small, the focus is on organising guidance for obtaining employment with private companies, but individual guidance is provided for other options.

School gives Talks about Employment Acquisition: School's Public Messages to Students and Parents

In May both schools' DGLASs organised a meeting regarding the employment referral system for third year students and their parents. These meetings aimed at raising students' consciousness about getting jobs, and emphasised the critical nature of the coming year.

At Imai Tech High's meeting, the headmaster, three DGLAS teachers and the dean spoke about job acquisition to the third year students and their parents. The following is a summary of what they had to say.

1. Obtaining the first job is the most important moment in one's life, and students should take the matter very seriously.

2. The basic philosophy of Imai Tech High's DGLAS is to "guide students into stable prosperous and appropriate employment", not on to a further educational institution.

3. The average academic achievement of Imai Tech High students is low and cannot compete with that of academic high school students, but the Imai Tech High students can compensate to some extent for this through such non-academic qualities as individual personality and constant involvement in sports club activities.

4. "Persistence" and "endurance" against hardship (*nintai-zuyosa*, *nebari-zuyosa*) are the key personal qualities for success in work. To quote the headmaster:

Headmaster: Don't change jobs. Be persistent and patient for at least three years. After three years you will be able to appreciate what you have achieved. (Fieldnotes, 10/5/89)

5. An individual student's performance in the job affects the employment possibilities for future students of the school. The individual is therefore responsible for the collective well-being of the school. Mr. Sumi, dean of third year students, stressed,

Mr. Sumi: "Society's eye" (*seken no me*) is everywhere. Be responsible for how you look, talk and behave. (Fieldnotes, 10/5/89)

6. The headmaster, dean and HOD requested parents to cooperate with the school in assisting students making the transition.

At a similar meeting held by Sasaki High, the strongest message regarded manners and speech patterns. Mr. Yamada, HOD of DGLAS, gave an hour-long lecture on that topic. The following quotation serves to convey the flavour of his address:

Mr. Yamada: See yourself in the mirror and think what kind of impression you think that you would make on others. Whether people regard you as a "pleasant person" or not is a deciding factor....
Pay attention to how you are speaking to others. Make a distinction, according to whether you are talking to teachers, friends, seniors or colleagues. Don't talk to teachers as you would to friends, since you should be practising how to speak to adults now. (Fieldnotes, 12/5/89)

The meeting included role plays of greetings and manners. Students of 3D also continuously received the same message from Mr. Kodama, 3D's home room teacher, who repeated that students should practice using *keigo* (honorific language) when talking to adults. Mr. Kodama even made "attention to speech patterns" the monthly target of the class for June. All of these situations represent examples of the school trying to teach the dominant habitus explicitly.

Other public messages contained the same theme as those at Imai Tech High. For instance, endurance was emphasised. Mr. Yamada's concluding remark after a talk by some Sasaki alumni was interesting.

Mr. Yamada:As you can see, being *shakai-jin* (a society man) requires endurance, as opposed to the *wagamama* (selfishness) which you have as a student. To endure is to cherish yourself in the long run. (Fieldnotes, 13/5/89)

In these meetings not all students were attentively listening to the speakers. Some chatted among themselves without being caught by teachers, while others seemed to be day-dreaming. The extent to which these messages were accepted and internalised will be covered in the next chapter.

Ex-students Give Public Talks on Their Working Lives: Public Messages from Seniors

Sasaki High invited seven of its graduates from the last three years back to school. Five female clerical workers, one male supermarket sales person and one female programmer gave talks of about 20 minutes each and answered questions from the audience. Students were more attentive to these talks than to those of the teachers. Four of the ex-students said that the use of proper speech patterns was very demanding but most important in the work place. Two mentioned that the work place required a different sense of responsibility, which one girl explained in the following way:

My mistake is not only my individual responsibility but that of the company.
(Fieldnotes, 13/5/89)

How to relate to seniors and colleagues at work was another facet which many of them found difficult.

Imai Tech High invited two of its male graduates to speak to the students. Kino, following in his father's footsteps, was a local train conductor, having left school five years before. The other, Hanaoka, became a sales representative at a software company after leaving school the previous year. Both spoke well and with proper speech patterns, which conveyed a certain maturity. Kino made statements which confirmed his belief in the existing social structure, both in terms of class and gender: that we high school graduates are to form the bottom of the company hierarchy, and, since we men are to be bread winners for our families we must be that much more serious in our efforts to secure employment.

Both made realistic observations about being a *kousotsu* (a high school graduate) as compared to being a *daisotsu* (university graduate).

Kino: My present target is to become a station master. It is unlikely that a *kousotsu* will make it to the top, at least in a big company. You will always be a small part of a huge organisation. Knowing that, I still think it necessary to always have a dream of some kind. We need some *ikigai*, an aim in life.

Hanamoto: The biggest advantage of being a *kousotsu* is that you have 4 years of training before you are on a par with university graduates. You can make mistakes and learn during those four years. Some may argue against this, but I believe it is an advantage. Still, I would suggest that you pursue university education, although Kino doesn't agree with me on this point. But only if you are interested, your family circumstances allow it, and you are determined to make it. There is a clear wage difference between the two groups. In our company, a university graduate gets one and a half times the salary of a *kousotsu*. (Fieldnotes, 31/5/89)

Teachers hoped that these talks would have more impact on students than their own repetitive talks on the same topic.

Company Representatives Visit Schools: An Initiative by Employers to Maintain Relationships with Schools

In March-April employers formulate hiring plans for the March high school graduates of the following year. They are required to attend seminars organised by the Public Employment Security Office (PESO), regarding the referral procedure. In May representatives from companies started visiting the DGLAS of each school. These representatives brought with them literature about their companies as well as a present, often a box of cakes, for the school staff member hosting them. They were invited into a guest room within the DGLAS room and served with green tea. One of the DGLAS teachers acted as host. The parties introduced themselves to each other, exchanged *meishi* (business name cards) and made small talk. The length of the visit varied. Mr. Wagatsuma who had

just talked to two groups of such visitors that day, told me that they came "to do *goaisatsu* (extend greetings)", that is, primarily to maintain contact and good will. (Fieldnotes, 16/5/89). Some representatives reported on their company situation and the personnel planning underway for the coming July.

DGLAS treated big, influential companies with extra care. When Mitsubishi Heavy Industry representatives visited Imai Tech High, two DGLAS members and the HOD of Machinery attended to them. Mr. Nakane, HOD of DGLAS, negotiated the number of recruits from Imai Tech High.

The first topics of conversation were of a general nature; weather matters, the present and future prospects of the Japanese and Saki-city economies and the school atmosphere. Also, explicit gratitude was expressed towards the visitors.

Mr. Nakane: Thank you very much for having always been so good to us (*Itsumo o sewani natte orimasu*). And, thank you for coming all the way to see us today.

Mitsubishi reps: Don't mention it. We owe so much to Imai Tech High for sending us so many good students.

Mr. Nakane: I'm so pleased to hear that heavy industry has been doing well recently. Your company of course is a kind of *akogare* (yearning) for all our students.

Because your industry is becoming buoyant, perhaps you would increase the number of graduates you will accept from us?

Mitsubishi reps: Yes, we are thinking about increasing the intake.

Mr. Nakane: As you know, we have recently sent three every year, but perhaps it could be six this year? What do you think? We would really like you to increase the number.

Mitsubishi reps: Thank you very much for such encouragement. It's a privilege to hear that your students feel that way about our company. Well, I'm not sure if we could go as far as six, but perhaps five is OK.

Mr. Nakane: That's wonderful. I'm sure that the headmaster, staff and all the students would be delighted to hear that. That's great indeed.

Mr. Nakane also implied that the standard of the school was improving: compared with a couple of years ago when he had his own third-year homeroom class, this year's students were far better, he said. He then gave the Mitsubishi representatives a bound copy of Imai Tech High DGLAS newsletters, a school magazine, a couple of newspaper clippings about the silver prize given to the work by a group of interior furnishing students, and telephone cards featuring the school's prize-winning art work. (Fieldnotes, 25/5/89)

Representatives visited schools to convey thanks for sending good students the previous year, or to initiate relationships in the case of unfamiliar schools. The visits also enabled them to gain a general impression of the school and to gauge how many students might apply for the kind of employment their company was intending to offer that year. In this way the company could still, if necessary, make adjustments to its personnel plans. The representatives also wanted to inform the DGLAS staff about the company and its performance, (particularly so, in the case of the companies which had not had any previous contact with the school) so that they might attract some students as employees. Both parties, DGLAS and the company, are able to check on each other through these company visits.

Small Companies Organise a Meeting with Career Teachers in Saki-city: An Initiative by
"Disadvantaged" Employers to Maintain Relationships with Schools

Students prefer working for big companies to small-medium size companies, due to such factors as greater job security and better salaries. Small companies therefore face difficulties in attracting high school graduates, which *Douyuukai*, an association representing small and medium sized companies, takes measures to try to counteract.

Both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High received an invitation to *Douyuukai*'s meeting. I went along with Mr. Yamada and Mr. Nakano of Sasaki High DGLAS and was signed in as a teacher from Sasaki High. The venue was a reception room in one of Saki-city's modern hotels. Firstly, the chairperson of *Douyuukai* explained the functions of the association, followed by a career teacher from each school who talked about their school and employment possibilities for their forthcoming graduates. Then company representatives, usually the president from each company (of which there were about 40) took the stand and talked on their individual company philosophies. At the conclusion of these talks, there was a session for both parties to exchange their business cards, and the chance for casual conversation over a buffet-type supper. During this hour, several metal working companies approached Mr. Nakane to indicate an interest in Imai Tech High's Machinery graduates. "We will guarantee the welfare of your boys", they assured Mr. Nakane.

Douyuukai conducts recruitment activities and provides new-employee education for its members, as well as a ceremony for new entrants and counselling. The small size of member companies made it impossible for them to organise such events on their own. When a new recruit suffers from maladjustment to a company and counselling does not work, the employer negotiates with other *Douyuukai* members to transfer him/her to another *Douyuukai* member employer. During the meeting I attended, participating teachers listened attentively, but to what extent this meeting was successful remained to be seen later in the year.

DGLAS Teachers Visit Companies: an Initiative by the Schools to Maintain Relationships with
Companies

It is not only companies but also schools that actively try to maintain good relations between each other. During May and June DGLAS teachers visited companies, some of which have had previous contact and others not. At Imai Tech High, for instance, eight DGLAS teachers visited 125 companies in all over the two months.

Teachers visited companies when they did not have classes, such as after school. They changed into business suits and took copies of the school prospectus with them. I went along on one of these visits with Mr. Nakane, the HOD of Imai Tech High DGLAS. Mr. Nakane had a list of companies to visit which included the teachers assigned to visit each place. The list also contained the following information, which would be of use during the course of each visit:

- a. whether the company sent a recruitment card (henceforth referred to as RC) in the previous years;
- b. whether the school sent any applicants to the company;
- c. if so, whether these applicants were successful/unsuccessful;
- d. whether the company sent a gift to the school 50th anniversary event last year;
- e. names of ex-students who are now working at the company.

The company I visited with Mr. Nakane occupied a 5-story building, not a large firm by Japanese standards. The receptionist invited us into the guest room, and Mr. Maruo came in and introduced himself, presenting his name card. Mr. Maruo was a divisional manager, a white collar administrative position. Despite this he wore a company uniform (blue-grey pants and beige and blue jacket) with a badge indicating his name and position. He was polite and gentle, speaking softly, not projecting himself as an executive figure.

Mr. Nakane thanked him for the company's present on the occasion of Imai Tech High's 50th Anniversary and for their long association with the school, and engaged in general small talk at first. He then asked about the current state of the company. Mr. Maruo answered that the company was shifting its production to overseas factories since it is more economical, and that consequently the company is not expanding in Saki-city and not employing male factory workers. In addition, the company has moved its automobile section to another city. But he advised that they still need to continue taking on girls as office workers, as the company experiences a high turnover because the girls quit when they get married.

After leaving the company, Mr. Nakane said to me,

Mr. Nakane: If they are talkative I let them talk as much as possible. Through that you will get information and clues about the company's situation.

KO: How do you interpret Mr. Maruo's talk?

Mr. Nakane: They won't send recruitment cards to us this year. But they will give us a position at their factory in another city if one of our students desperately wants to work for the company. (Fieldnotes, 20/6/89)

Such company visits are an opportunity for both parties to check out and keep up to date with each other, as happens when company representatives visit the school. The purposes of visiting companies can be summarised as below, based on a survey I conducted of DGLAS teachers: (a) to pay a courtesy visit in order to maintain a pleasant relationship, in the case of companies which have had previous contact with the school; (b) to get comments on how graduates of the school are coping with the work environment, which will constitute valuable information when giving guidance to this year's students; (c) to start a relationship with new companies by marketing the school; (d) to observe and experience the company first-hand and to keep up to date with various aspects of the company which change over time; (e) to get some idea of the company's employment plan this year (e.g., whether the

company is likely to give the school RCs; if the company does, what kind of positions and if not, the reasons why; are there any improvements, in the opinion of the company, that the school should be making?).

The importance of personal visits by the school was highlighted in a comment that Mr. Ishida made about a company which he had visited the day before:

Mr. Ishida: I was reluctant to visit this rubber factory, thinking that it was another small-size family-run rubber factory, typical in Saki-city, from the talk I had with a representative of the company who had visited the school. On my visit, I found that the company makes huge tyres for trucks with sophisticated automated machines. It's far from a small family-run factory. I now think that some of our students may be interested in that kind of work. I had never considered this before my visit yesterday. (Fieldnotes, 20/6/89)

Teachers claimed that they could obtain such information more effectively than the students who lacked the necessary maturity.

Mr. Ishida:students are not yet mature enough to make a proper judgement, certainly not to the same extent as we do. Also, students can't see the subtle clues regarding the company's economic and employment situation from just talking to the company's personnel people. (Fieldnotes, 20/6/89)

Conversation in the DGLAS room was full of stories about companies which staff had visited the day before. This information forms another pool of valuable data for student guidance.

Search for a Compromise Solution: Indecision over University, *Senmongakkou* or Employment

Some students were still indecisive about whether to go to university or *senmongakkou* or to get employment. This happens when family, home room teacher and the student do not agree. There are two types of cases: a student wants university education while parents are against it, often for financial reasons; or a student wants employment but still has not made the final decision since his/her parents insist on university education. In the former case, usually the students eventually give in. In the latter case where parents are dominant in the household decision, DGLAS teachers seek a "rational compromise".

Kouji at Imai Tech was not keen on studying for university entrance, but his parents insisted that he should. His teachers did not think that Kouji, judging by his present marks would make it to university either.

Mr. Nakane:(to Mr. Hanamoto in the DGLAS room) Now it's a matter of persuading the parents, you know. The father is pretty stubborn. A compromise, which I think is possible, is that Kouji go to the evening course of a university and get employment during the day. XYZ company in Oyama-city came here the other day, and is prepared to let a new employee go to evening classes at university. I think it's a good idea. Since it's an evening university, even with his marks he will gain entry, don't you think?

Mr. Hanamoto: I wonder how his father will respond to your proposal.

KO: Why do you suggest that? Are there many companies that allow that kind of arrangement?

Mr. Nakane: Not really. I'm suggesting this as the best compromise, because, otherwise we will continue to get nowhere. The father is not going to accept our suggestion that Kouji would not make it to university and should get employment. We have to come up with some kind of solution which would satisfy the father, and the solution has to be realistic. We are not in the position of forcing our decision, we need the parents' consent. There simply are no universities for which Kouji is likely to pass the entrance exam. If he was to go to far away places, it would be OK, perhaps. But, the father insists that Kouji should go to a university in this area - by that he means cities no further than one and a half hours away by Bullet train. It's very likely that Kouji would have no place to go next year if we don't do anything about it now. Even if he goes to preparatory school next year, which university could he enter after that? Not even a third or fourth-rank university, you know. If he has employment, he would at least have a place to go to. I'm worried about him. (Fieldnotes, 26/5/89)

In the end, Kouji's parents did not agree to Mr. Nakane's suggestion that Kouji get a job. The DGLAS discussed the issue, and Mr. Gomi came up with what the DGLAS considered a "brilliant idea" - that Kouji attempt the transfer entrance examination for a local *kougyou koutou senmongakkou* (national industrial professional schools which accommodate 16 to 20 year olds). This would enable Kouji to continue with further education for the next 2 years, at tertiary level, and, Mr. Gomi claimed, the transfer examination would not be as difficult as the university entrance examinations. Mr. Gomi, in charge of further education guidance, spent many afternoons coaching Kouji in the examination subjects until he sat and passed it.

Mr. Kodama, 3D teacher, believed that *senmongakkou* would not offer more than what the school's data processing course did, and discouraged students from applying for *senmongakkou*. Midori, a 3D girl, wanted to go to a *senmongakkou*, but Mr. Kodama talked her into aiming at a university. Her family was delighted about the decision. Hiroaki, a 3D boy, wanted to go to a *senmongakkou* but not to a university. Mr. Kodama persuaded him to get employment instead. His family was supportive. Often parents gave in to the DGLAS suggestion.

Other Public Messages to the Students as a Group

Home room teachers conveyed messages and advice from the DGLAS such as items relating to speech patterns and manners and preparation for the employment examinations. Mr. Kodama, the home room teacher of 3D, repeated that 3D students should not go to *senmongakkou* (private professional school), saying that the programming course at Sasaki High was adequate for obtaining a

job as a programmer, and that many *senmongakkou* were not reliable. Mr. Kodama's persuasion was successful, talking some of those who originally anticipated going to *senmongakkou* out of that option, so that instead they selected either university or employment.

Mr. Kodama's comments on *senmonshoku* (professional positions), on the other hand, seemed to have a controversial impact. Later personal interviews with 3D students indicated that some of them took them positively while others expressed a negative reaction, considering that *senmonshoku* would be too tough.

Mr. Kodama: You, even as *kousotsu* (high school graduates), can get into *senmonshoku*, and I believe that you, and particularly the boys, having done the school's data processing course, should aim at that. But you have to be determined to make it, because you will be working with university graduates.... I know one data processing course boy who entered an electrical machinery company as a computer *senmonshoku* and quit after a year. The reason is that he was not patient enough. If you get a position as a *senmonshoku*, you will be competing with university graduates. University graduates form the majority of those in *senmonshoku* positions. You may be working as well as or even more efficiently with computers, compared with these *daisotsu* (university graduates). But, *gakureki-shakai* ("degreeocracy", academic qualification-based hierarchy) is the reality. Companies set salary levels based on your school qualifications, at least at the initial stage. If you are patient and work hard, you will catch up with *daisotsu* in terms of salary in 10 years time. (Fieldnotes, 21/6/89)

These comments aroused some interest and reaction amongst the students. A few girls said,

We won't be working at the age of 30! (Fieldnotes, 21/6/89)

Mr. Kodama's advice also conveyed the message that the work place exhibits an academic qualification-based hierarchy. Tsuneki, who was considering the NEC Corporation (one of the foremost electronics companies in Japan) at this time, internalised this message well. When I talked to him later in the year, he was determined to compete with university graduates to make a career as a programmer.

Mr. Kodama encouraged 3D students to seek a wide range of qualifications, such as in book-keeping, data processing, word processing, and English, and passed on the dates of such examinations during every short home room period (10 minutes after school every day). It seemed to me that there are many certificates which students could try. These examinations were held almost every other weekend.

Students were exposed to relevant messages from subject teachers also. Some of them took these messages seriously -- these reactions will be explored in the following chapter. Mr. Gomi, a DGLAS teacher at Imai Tech High, who taught all third year classes a subject called Politics and Economics turned out to have influenced several students' decisions on employment. Mr. Gomi casually mentioned some details of the companies which he had recently visited as a part of his

DGLAS involvement; information on what the company produces, working conditions, and the work place. I did not take much notice of this while participating in these classes, but later found that Yasuko, Akiko and Hidekazu all got to know about the companies which they successfully applied for, as a direct result of Mr. Gomi's casual reference to them in class.

Mr. Gomi did not use the government authorised textbook, which students purchased at the beginning of the year, and conducted classes with handout copies which he made. Students told me that his class was less boring than others and very useful for their life-after-school.

Today's class was on working conditions and related legal aspects: flexitime, core-time and irregular working hours and their reward system. ... He then raised the question of whether, in terms of employment, to choose *raku* (comfort), or money, and urged students to think it through before they decided on a job.

Mr. Gomi: Look at the working conditions section of recruitment cards. Watch out when it says *henkei-roudou-jikan* (glide hours). The worst is a monthly one, and you may damage your health if you are not careful. Pay attention to this word on the recruitment cards.... You perhaps are aware that people overseas think that Japanese are workaholics. Some people commute by *shinkansen* (bullet train) for two hours. If you spend long hours commuting, you would be working from 7 to 11 (including commuting time). Do you want to have *raku* (comfort) or money? Think thoroughly about what kind of life-style you want for the rest of your life. (Fieldnotes, 30/5/89)

Here, Mr. Gomi not only gave a realistic view of working conditions but also let students question the "traditional" work ethic. This was in part because of Mr. Gomi's involvement in DGLAS and in part due to his personality and commitment to labour unionism. In another class on the national budget and income tax, he challenged a newly revised national superannuation scheme.

Mr. Gomi: Under the new scheme, some of you, who are working part-time, would be paying income tax if you are earning over 70,000 yen....I would not pay the national superannuation if I were a student like you. There is no punishment as such. It's simply not a good deal. For instance, at present people over 60 years old receive 30,000 a month, which is not sufficient to live on. We don't know how much we'll be receiving in future. It's not that we pay the superannuation for our own future, but for those who receive the super right now. We don't know if there will be anyone to pay for us in the future when we need it, and if there is how much we will receive! (Fieldnotes, 3/10/89)

Mr. Gomi was not the only teacher at the school who did not use one of the government authorised textbooks, although students officially purchased them (since it is the regulation). He claimed that the textbook was not useful for the kind of students he had, those who would not be taking university entrance examinations, and that what he offered was more useful and enjoyable. Some teachers, (not all), do have the independence to create their "own" class material conveying their particular interpretations and views. Even with an authorised textbook, an individual teacher has the freedom to use the book in his/her own way without endorsing all that is in the textbook: he/she can make critical comments and express his/her disagreement with the official views in the classroom situation. Mr. Abe

at Sasaki High used a government authorised World History textbook, but his lessons always included his personal interpretations and casual comments on current affairs. Even if textbook authorization is the government's institutional attempt to "control" education, as has been indicated elsewhere (Yamazumi, 1986), it seems that the attempt has not been completely successful. Teachers are able to act on their own and, to a certain degree, resist the "control".

Three-Party Meeting: Student, Home Room Teacher and Parents

Both schools organised home room teachers to meet their students and parents on an individual basis in mid-June. Although by then conscientious students had informally approached home room teachers and DGLAS staff to receive employment-related advice, the majority of students did not take such steps unless told to do so. Three-party meetings were the schools' attempt to get student and parents together to discuss his/her future with the home room teacher, and DGLAS staff if necessary.

The meeting's first task was to confirm which one of the four possible options the student was considering: 4 year university and 2 year college; *senmongakkou*; civil service; employment at private companies. Home room teachers tried to get as much information as possible regarding the students' future plans and the wishes of the parents. Based on what the students told them, home room teachers gave realistic advice and suggestions, both supportive and otherwise, and collected further information from other sources for these students. Just how far individual students were down the decision making track differed greatly.

The majority of the students had decided on what kind of job they wanted: clerical position; key-puncher; programmer; bank clerk; manufacturing worker; sales position and so forth. Students received realistic feedback from teachers when they advised their employment intentions. For instance, Kenji announced his wish to get a job as a construction worker, but Mr. Kodama responded that Sasaki High had rarely received RCs for such positions in previous years and that Kenji should think about a position where he could make use of his programming skills. Mari of 3D was advised to aim at a programming position since *gaiseki* students were more disadvantaged in general clerical work than professional work. Manami of 3I wanted to work as a company hostess at a trade fair. Mr. Uno responded that the school does not receive such RCs and suggested a tourist bus guide position instead, reasoning that the two positions were similar. Having been so advised by their teachers, students then investigated other possibilities. Some followed the teachers' suggestions while others did not.

About one quarter of the ninety students interviewed announced their interest in specific companies and received feedback from the home room teacher. Junko was advised that she should study harder to raise her marks if she wanted to apply for Saki Steel, and she consequently made the effort. Several students received similar advice to study harder in order to increase their chances. Hisashi of 3I was told that the number of absent days he had accumulated was too large for the company he wanted, and as a result he decided against applying for a position there.

The three party meeting was an opportunity for teachers, students and parents to "check up" on where a student stood in relation to the task of finding employment. No final decision was made during the meeting. It served as the first step in a process of realistic decision making.

Phase 2: The Student and His/Her Home Room Teacher Decide on Specific Companies
(July to late August)

Recruitment Cards Arrive at School, Concrete Options now Available

The Public Employment Security Office (PESO) allows companies to send RCs to schools on 1st July. Some companies sent representatives to deliver the cards to schools, while others mailed the cards with an accompanying letter of polite request (*douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu*). Students were advised that they should greet these visitors and be nice to them to give a good impression of the school. The DGLAS became extremely busy with visitors from companies. Every half an hour a visitor wearing a business suit (in mid-summer!) entered the DGLAS room. DGLAS teachers were occupied with attending to these visitors and processing the large number of RCs, so that the list of the newly-received RCs could be handed to students in a few weeks.

Employers are required to fill in a recruitment card (RC) with information about the company (e.g., working conditions, wages, holidays, insurance schemes, and union arrangements relating to each vacant position for high school leavers), and to submit it to the PESO in July. The completed recruitment cards are checked. If the PESO approves the conditions written on the recruitment card, it gives it an approval stamp. Then employers are allowed to send copies of the recruitment cards to schools, or to visit schools with the cards and ask the department teachers how likely it would be for anyone from the school to apply for their company. Employers are not supposed to meet any particular students themselves.

Some students obtained employment through *enko* (whereby personal connections such as a relative or a close friend of the family refers a student to a company they are directly or indirectly familiar with - the phenomenon will be referred to again later). Both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High requested RCs approved by the PESO in the case of students who decided to get jobs through *enko*.

Mr. Nakane explains:

Mr. Nakane: We want to have a proper procedure.

KO: Why?

Mr. Nakane: To protect our students. If the working conditions which have been specified on the card are not met, students come back to us, and we contact the PESO, and the PESO negotiates with the company. With the card's PESO stamp, we can force the PESO to take responsibility for making sure any deficiencies are resolved. The written card and the stamp do carry power, you know. (Fieldnotes, 27/4/89)

The DGLAS tries to take care of, and responsibility for, its students. The same process does not take place for university graduates who are considered mature enough not to need such protection. High school students are still considered to be immature, needing protection from adults.

The RC form for high school graduates is designed by the Ministry of Labour, and is common throughout Japan. The RC format is shown in Appendix 5.

While the DGLAS was working long hours, students did not seem to feel any immediate pressure. They saw well-dressed men coming through the school gate, and knew that they were bringing RCs for them. The classroom routine was not any different from that in April: some students slept with a swimming towel as a comfortable pillow; some always chatted away during class; some read comic books hidden underneath desks; and some listened to the teacher. Late comers were still late comers. Relations among classmates remained friendly - there was no tenseness or hostility.

At Imai Tech:

The bell rings at 8:40. Mr. Uno comes into the 3I classroom after attending the daily morning staff meeting. He checks absentees, and announces the reasons for any absences. When he is not informed of the reasons, Mr. Uno asks around the other students. He knows that Manami has left home for school late and is on her way. He is now wondering if Hisami is to turn up for the photograph session. Being afraid that Hisami will miss out on the photo, Chiaki and Youko ask if they can go and telephone Hisami's home to wake her up. Chiaki informs me later that they let the telephone ring 15 times without a reply, and so they think that Hisami must have left by now. (Fieldnotes, 4/7/89)

Students conducted their routine in a relaxed manner, without paying any particular attention to the incoming RCs. The only unusual incident I observed in class was Takehisa looking through a file of last year's RCs hidden under his desk, instead of his usual comic book.

Home room teachers tried to make the best use of the short home room period, 10 minutes at the end of the day at Sasaki High and at the beginning of the day at Imai Tech High. They reported how many RCs the school had received, and mentioned companies which they thought suitable for their students. Some students registered these comments, and later talked to the teacher. Mr. Uno complained to me that although he spent a lot of time inspecting the newly-received RCs for his students, many were not serious about what he had to say.

Faced with the students' indifference and apathy, DGLAS at both schools organised meetings for those seeking employment in order to reinforce their public messages. Sasaki High called all parents to such a meeting. Mr. Yamada, HOD of DGLAS at Sasaki High, considered that this year's students were hopeless. DGLAS warned students and parents not to be optimistic about job prospects, simply because the school received many RCs, and urged students to prepare for employment examinations now. Mr. Nakane from Imai Tech High had a similar message for students:

Mr. Nakane: Don't forget that you are in the position of being chosen by companies rather than you choosing them. If they don't find suitable applicants they will leave the positions vacant rather than employ hopeless ones. (Fieldnotes, 5/7/89)

The headmaster of Sasaki High made it clear that he did not want his students to be *furii arubaitaa* (those who have limited term jobs and change them frequently), although there has been a trend towards this among young people in urban areas. He might have heard about several commerce course girls planning on taking up such employment.

Sasaki High's DGLAS invited training officers from Daimaru Department Store to teach students "manners". We received a three hour lesson on how to greet, walk, sit down, introduce ourselves, make telephone calls and so on, and practised this etiquette under their supervision. The chief officer said,

I know you think you know all these. But people who know what good manners are often do not practice them. We need practice until we can implement good manners unconsciously. (Fieldnotes, 13/7/89)

DGLAS Provides a List of RCs for Students: the Process of Selecting Companies

Students adopted a more serious attitude when they received the first list of information on companies which sent RCs to the school. This was in the second week of July at Imai Tech High and in the third week at Sasaki High. Most of the RCs arrived in the first three weeks, and some still continued to come after that. DGLAS issued a further two instalments of company information by early August. Students were told to read through the documents, pick out whichever companies appealed, talk to their parents and teachers and narrow down their choices. The lists contained the most essential information from each RC. Some students first selected possible companies by looking at the section on the kind of work (e.g., clerical, programmer, factory worker, sales, etc.) and then place of work, and further reduced their choice by referring to wages. Others had different priorities in selecting companies. Such differences in selection criteria will be discussed in the next chapter. Students came to the DGLAS room to inspect the RCs. They talked to each other, and with the teachers, about their preferences.

Sasaki High gave the 3D students two days to look through the RCs in the DGLAS room. Students had by then picked about 10 companies at home, and had inspected the RCs, pamphlets and the previous years' company examination questions. In each case, they were expected to settle on at least six companies and consult Mr. Kodama, Mr. Yamada and Mr. Nakano. These teachers gave realistic comments. Mikako was an example.

Mikako presented her list. Her first choice was Java Ltd, a fashion company. All positions which Mikako was interested in were clerical positions which require keyboard skills.

Mr. Kodama: Hum.....why did you choose Java? This looks different from any of the other ones on your list.

Mikako got concerned about his statement.

Mikako: Why do you say that? Is there anything wrong with the company?

Mr. Kodama: I just feel you can go to much better places than this. Think about this again, and get back to me, ok?

Mikako: If I'm not accepted anywhere, I will work as a clerk at the rubber company where my father works. (Fieldnotes, 29/7/89)

Students took serious notice of the previous years' recruitment examination questions for the respective companies (which were recorded by those who sat the examinations in previous years). Some students said that they wanted to avoid essay writing.

Getting Employment through *Enko*

Some students decide to obtain jobs through family connections. This arrangement is called *enko*. Such an instance would occur where a student's uncle works for a company and the uncle requests the company to spare one of the company's new positions for his niece or nephew. If the company agrees, it sends a RC to the student's school specifically for that student. Some students decide to work for their family business. The number is small, about five percent of those who get jobs from the two schools. Out of 90 students interviewed, eight got jobs through *enko*. Two entered their family businesses: Youichi was employed at his father's panelbeating workshop and Kaori at her mother's barbecue cafe. Another student, Chieko, was the only one who had been thinking of finding a job through *enko* since she was in the second year. Yumiko had almost decided on a position at a Korean bank through *enko* by the time of the three-party meeting. The remaining six students examined the school's RCs, but changed their minds when the *enko* possibility was offered by their family members. The major attraction of *enko* was that one would most definitely get a job and that the recruitment examination would be just a formality. For Chieko, it was the opportunity for better employment.

Interestingly, schools make it a rule that the company concerned has to send an extra RC to the school for the student whom they want, so that the student does not deprive other students of the possibility of employment at that company.

Chieko showed me *her* RC (the RC which the company sent to school for her position). Chieko is the only student in the 3I class who is getting employment by *enko* (at that time). Chieko's father's friend has an executive position (she used the term *ue-no-hito*, literally meaning the person above) in the company who requested the personnel manager to assist in finding her employment. Chieko is optimistic about her prospects of getting the position, since she says,

"The personnel department has to employ me, unless I do something drastically wrong, since the person asking the favour is in senior management".

She was aware that she had many good qualities: her grades were better than 4.0 (out of 5.0); she had been active in the karate club (and the club teacher would write a good reference for her); and she was also the chairperson of the Student Council. Chieko showed me her result in the latest mock employment examination - she ranked 8th out of 17 girls. Her view of the company she applied for centred on what she considered to be its strong points, including: two days holiday each week; a relatively good salary (including bonuses equivalent to five months' salary); the relatively large number of workers and their young average age; and the fact that the company was a subsidiary of the highly respected Mitsubishi conglomerate. (Fieldnotes, 28/7/89)

Teachers' responses to the *enko* arrangement were varied. If the position was a desirable one, teachers supported the student. If teachers considered the position not so good, they advised against it, as in Yumiko's case. Mr. Kodama suggested that Yumiko should apply for a better position than the one for which she applied for through *enko*.

Students Visit the Companies

Some students got their DGLAS to arrange a visit to the companies which they were considering for employment. If DGLAS requests a student visit, companies are generally welcoming, since it is an opportunity for them to meet the candidates. There is a benefit for both the school and students, since they are informed of the company's impression of each candidate. If the company's view of a student is negative, the student knows that he/she must search for another position before the internal selection meeting, and the school can arrange another student to apply for the original position. Yasuko described her visit to Kawasaki Train Carriage Engineering Company as follows:

Yasuko: I went there around 10 a.m.. Two people, one of whom was the general manager met me in the guest room and we had coffee. I felt good from the beginning. Then they took me around the factory where train carriages are manufactured. These trains are both for domestic and overseas markets. When I saw them, I said "I would like to get on one of these two-storied trains". They replied, "You can do that next April". I was very happy to hear that. I felt as if they were accepting me as "one of them" already.

KO: What kind of questions did they ask?

Yasuko: Things like the headmaster's name; characteristics of our school; how long it takes to get from home to the work place; where I live; about my brothers and sisters.

KO: Did they ask about other aspects of your family?

Yasuko: Yes, but not directly. For instance, "How old is your father?" and when I answered, they said "He's exactly the same as me. I have sons of a similar age." It was very informal and relaxed. I did not feel that they're investigating my family. They also asked about my personality. Merits and demerits. Also, what kind of tests I would want to have. I felt it was very strange for them to ask that, since they're employing me. (Fieldnotes, 24/8/89)

How to Fill in Students' School Records for Employers: Disagreement among Teachers

Schools submit a school record to employers when students apply for a job. The prefecture where Saki-city is located has a printed school record form so that all schools in the prefecture provide the same kind and amount of information about students. The DGLASs at both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High explained to third-year home room teachers how to complete the forms in detail, and raised the issue as to whether teachers would "modify" extremely poor marks and attendance.

At Imai Tech High, the DGLAS raised three questions regarding the school records to be sent to companies at the meeting for all third-year home room teachers held in early July. The first concerned whether the school record should show the "real" number of days absent from school when a student has accumulated too many.

Mr. Nakane: I know, from talking to company personnel people, that the first section the companies look at is the number of absent days. It's very important. Companies don't like those students who have, say more than 20 days' absence, and we would be taking away opportunities from those students, if they had more than 20 absent days. Even if the student has good qualities, once the company sees that they have a high number of absent days, he won't even be looked at. Given this importance companies place on school attendance, our DGLAS feels that some modifications of the absent days figure can be made based on a certain formula. First, this will give more opportunities to the students. Second, it will help in future when we experience an economic downturn again. Students' school attendance does affect the reputation of the school, and companies may be hesitant in sending a RC when they don't have many positions available. The same approach applies to the number of *kinshin* (suspension from school for a fixed period). (Fieldnotes, 6/7/89)

The homeroom teachers had been requested to discuss the issue before the meeting, and had come to the conclusion that they would not modify the records. Mr. Sumi, the dean, brought up the issue with individual teachers again during this session.

Mr. Abe (3 Automobile class home room teacher): I feel that we could modify the number of absent days for the students, but this needs to be based on some kind of standard agreed formula. I am not sure if I am in the position to do this, but feel strongly on behalf of the students.

Mr. Ide (3 Machinery A class home room teacher): I think it's OK to modify the number for the students who are at risk in getting jobs. But, it has to be based on a formula.

Mr. Ikeda (3 Machinery B class home room teacher): I am against it. Students were told a long time ago that the number of absent days they accumulated would affect their employment prospects, and I believe that they should be responsible for what they have done so far.

Mr. Mishima (3 Machinery C class home room teacher): I agree. School records are "official documents (*koumon-jo*)" and I doubt very much that we, home room teachers, can change that even for the sake of students. This is important for the school's public credibility.

Mr. Mori (3 Ship-building class home room teacher): I think that the record should reflect what the students have done. They should live with the consequences of their actions. We have repeatedly warned them of the adverse impact of absence from school since they entered this school three years ago. I wonder if the headmaster

would agree to it. It's after all the headmaster who issues the school records to employers, and as an institution, I believe that the school should be accountable for the students. Imagine if we reduce the number of absent days for a particular student, he gets a position, and the employer finds out that the new employee's attitude is not as good as originally expected. That's even worse for the school, than the school having a bad name because of students having a large number of absent days, don't you think? We should be honest. We can make up for a bad attendance record by writing a good recommendation on an individual's capacity.

Mr. Uno (3 Interior furnishing class home room teacher): I support the opinion that the record should be as it is, no modification. We keep the number as it is, and write comments in the other section, emphasising a student's good points.

Mr. Waki (3MB assistant home room teacher): The record should be kept as it is. We should think of some other way to make up for the students who have a large number of absent days.

Mr. Maki (3MC assistant home room teacher): It's too difficult for me to make a comment.

Mr. Kira (3A assistant home room teacher): I don't think that we should change an "official document". It's an ethical issue, although I do sympathise with the students.

Mr. Uda (3S assistant home room teacher): It would make the whole procedure complex and awkward. The homeroom teacher would have to remember the actual number of absent days and the number sent to companies. How would you explain the change to students? Some students would get more of a reduction than others, and some get none. Students may reveal the fact that records are being modified to someone else, which may cause problems for the school. It's all too risky, and personally, I don't think it's worthwhile. We should think of other ways to make up for these students and keep the number as it is. (Fieldnotes, 6/7/89)

Mr. Nakane was disappointed to hear this, but had no other choice than to accept the majority opinion. He had originally hoped that the discussion would lead to a formula for the modification. Mr. Nakane went on to the second point: marks for each subject had to be at least greater than two (on a scale one to five, five being the top).

If it's one, change it to two, since one means "fail" (not being able to graduate at the end of the year). And we don't actually know if a student will get "fail" or not until March. (Fieldnotes, 6/7/89)

The third issue was that a tick should be entered for at least one of the personal traits assessment section. Mr. Abe responded that he has students who don't deserve any of them. Mr. Nakane quickly said:

Mr. Nakane: Please, Mr. Abe, give at least one tick, or three ticks to our daring students !

Mr. Uno: Well, you can leave no sections ticked, but could write favourable comments.

Mr. Nakane: This assessment is not a relative one. So, it does not mean that if A gets a tick, B shouldn't get one. If you think both are independent, although to differing degrees, you can give ticks to both of them. (Fieldnotes, 6/7/89)

The meeting indicated the different positions and views held by individual teachers. Among the 12 home room teachers and assistant home room teachers, Mr. Ide and Mr. Abe were agreeable about "modifying" the number of absent days if it exceeded the accepted number and thus risked the student's employment chances, but on the basis of a fixed formula applied to all students. Other teachers were against it mainly on four counts: students should take the consequences of their past actions; they, as teachers, are responsible for the school's reputation; the school, as a collective, needs to be accountable for its students; and the arrangement involved practical problems. Teachers found themselves in a dilemma, needing to respond to the demands of students, school and community. They had their own personal interests and ethical considerations as well. The outcome was a product of "negotiation" among those 12 teachers, the dean and the HOD of DGLAS. Next year, the outcome may differ since another set of 12 teachers, with differing views, will negotiate the issue.

All the DGLAS teachers were disappointed at the outcome. At a DGLAS members' dinner party two weeks later, which was held to say "thanks" to each other for working hard in the last two weeks, they revealed their views on the issue. Mr. Nakane overtly stated his disappointment that the third year home room teachers did not support the idea of keeping the number of absent days under 20 for all students. He was also disappointed with the way in which it was decided, that the dean, Mr. Sumi, had not done a sound job of *nemawashi* (groundwork, lobbying) beforehand.

Mr. Nakane: "Under 20 absent days" [for the three years of senior high schooling] is often requested by companies. At present, about seven to eight students in each class have more than 20 absent days, already! Now that the home room teachers are not going to change the number when completing the school record, the DGLAS teachers have to "negotiate" with the companies about these students.

KO: How will you "negotiate"?

Mr. Nakane: For instance, I would say, "Although A was away from school for 25 days, it's not that he was absent for no reason. His enthusiasm is indicated in his constant involvement in club activities, and also he is a caring person, and so on."

Mr. Honda [interrupting this] : The home room teachers should be doing that, you know. They are supposed to know more about the individual students than we do. (Fieldnotes, 18/7/89)

Then a discussion followed on the relevance of "under 20 absent days" as a predictive indication for being a good worker. Mr. Ishida gave an example from last year:

Mr. Ishida: One boy whom I thought "hopeless" in that he had a large number of absent days and was a discipline problem, turned out to be a great worker. When I visited the company where the boy works this year, I was surprised to hear that the employer wanted to have someone like that boy! I think that the boys who confront teachers and come up with creative strategies to get away with certain things are often clever, and can become good workers when they want to. Boys can "change" a lot. (Fieldnotes, 18/7/89)

Mr. Wagatsuma agreed with Mr. Ishida, but in a more humanitarian and sympathetic way, that students lacking an acceptable attendance record can have the potential to be "good workers", and it is wrong that the potential is not recognised and chances are not given to these students. Mr. Honda said,

Mr. Honda: When students are trying to make up for their past "laziness" now, I want to encourage them, rather than tell them that their number of absent days are already over 20 and that there is no use in trying. People make mistakes, for all kinds of reasons, and we should give them a chance to make up for it. I want to keep finding the "good aspects" of students. I still feel disappointed and frustrated with this year's third year home room teachers.

Mr. Matsuhisa: I was talking to one of the home room teachers, and he said that he does not want to take responsibility for changing the number.

Mr. Honda [interrupting]: That's selfish, when his students are having problems in finding employment, you know. (Fieldnotes, 18/7/89)

It is important to note that the school may have different policies on the issue every year (depending on the teachers in charge), and that the school does not simply provide the "real" information about students to employers.

At Sasaki High, the *nemawashi* about how to complete the school record cards had been completed by Mr. Natsume, the dean, and no disagreement was raised in the meeting on the issue (Fieldnotes, 20/7/89). Mr. Yamada, the HOD of DGLAS, requested the *gakunen* (year) group to discuss the issue of recording modified academic marks and absent days in one of the previous *gakunen* meetings (Fieldnotes, 30/5/89), and Mr. Natsume had had almost two months to obtain consensus from all home room teachers. Mr. Yamada thus informed the home room teachers:

Mr. Yamada: Write down the reasons for all absent days. If the number is over five, exaggerate the reasons. If the number is over 10, you must make arrangements..... It's better to explain that the student had to take a block of absent days for sickness or whatever reason, rather than that the absent days occurred on repeated separate occasions. When you change the number, explain this to your student very carefully so that what you say and what he/she says are not different. If the student had *kinshin* (suspension from school), subtract that from the number. In any case, if your student has more than 10 absent days, please consult me. When we need to change the absent days figure, a discussion will be held between the student, his/her home room teacher, the dean and me. And I will take responsibility for the change. (Fieldnotes, 20/7/89)

All home room teachers accepted this. Perhaps the collective responsibility for any changes made it easier. Mr. Yamada continued that the academic marks to be entered in the school record were to be a modified version (based on a formula which scaled the marks upwards). Mr. Furukawa (3LA home room teacher) asked,

Mr. Furukawa: How should I respond to a student who is intending to sit a university entrance examination, where the university requires 3.4 (out of 5) and he calculates his marks and knows that his tally is 3.2? Students do not know about the two marking methods.

Mr. Yamada: Tell him that the 3.4 is a basic guide, and that you (as his homeroom teacher) can still offer him a recommendation. Often the students are glad to hear that, without knowing anything about the double arrangements.

Mr. Furukawa: Don't companies and universities ask about the student's marks in the interview? Students may realise that their marks differ from what the company and the university has been advised by the school.

Mr. Yamada: The PESO prohibits companies from asking for the academic marks. So, no problem. Also, for club activities, list the name of the club and his/her position. If the club achieved distinction in a tournament, write that down also. Companies want to know about the student's interaction with others, things like cooperativeness and tolerance rather than the club's achievement itself. (Fieldnotes, 20/7/89)

These cases are interesting in three respects. Firstly, these schools are not acting in the way the PESO and education boards expect, that is, the creation of school records which accurately reflect students' achievement and experiences at school. They are not responding to the employers' need to have "real" assessment. The two schools provided prospective employers with school records incorporating "modifications" in order to increase their students' employment chances. Here the schools were not "agents" for the state or employers, but acted independently, using the strategies they created for the sake of their present and future "students" (so they say). Secondly, the decisions on whether any "modifications" are to be made to the school record, and if so to what extent, were made through negotiations between individual teachers of the *gakunen* group. Although the Imai Tech High DGLAS believed in a policy, it was not able to impose it, and let relevant teachers decide. The decision on the issue will differ every year depending on who are *gakunen* teachers in that year. Thirdly, individual teachers have different views on the issue, and it seems wrong to assume that teachers as a collective hold a monolithic view.

Protection for *Gaiseki* Students

The DGLAS of the two schools made clear statements about job referral for *gaiseki* students. As shown before, the two schools have significantly higher proportions of *gaiseki* students and take the *gaiseki* issue more seriously than some other schools without the same relative numbers of *gaiseki* students. *Gaiseki* students face disadvantages and discrimination in obtaining employment. Some companies do not take *gaiseki* students, and the schools tried to avoid sending these students to such companies from the beginning, because being refused a job (on the basis of being *gaiseki*) would be too traumatic an experience for the *gaiseki* students. The headmaster at Sasaki High commented, "...it's a demanding task for teachers to "soften" the shock which these *gaiseki* students are likely to face" (Fieldnotes, 3/8/89).

The DGLASs of both schools had basically the same approach when helping *gaiseki* students to find employment, although individual teachers may perhaps implement it to varying degrees. When a *gaiseki* student decides on a company, his/her home room teacher contacts the company, in consultation with the DGLAS, to inquire if the company will take a *gaiseki*. If not, the teacher will negotiate; if the teacher is not sure that the company will let the *gaiseki* student pass the exam, he/she will not send the student to the company and will look for an alternative. This policy was stated at *gakunen* group meetings at both schools (Fieldnotes, Sasaki High 20/7/89; Imai Tech High 8/8/89 and 14/2/90). How did the teachers actually put the policy into practice? Mr. Shimahara (3I assistant home room teacher and a DGLAS teacher) visited Daimaru Furniture Company which Yasuhiro, a *gaiseki* student, wanted to apply for before the internal selection.

KO: I hear that you went to see Yasuhiro's prospective employer before sending his application..... What did you say?

Mr. Shimahara: Well.. I talked about Yasuhiro, including his *gaiseki* background, and asked if the company is prepared to take Koreans. The company said, "We have never taken Koreans, but at Daimaru our company policy is moving in that direction,..... so it's OK".

Mr. Gomi [overhearing this]: Of course, they will say that it's OK. They can't publicly announce that they don't take Koreans!! [KO: Some do. See the conversation with Mr. Yamada below.]

Mr. Shimahara: I conveyed the message *in various indirect ways* that if the company is to let Yasuhiro sit the recruitment exam, they will have to take him unless he writes nothing in the exam. I wanted to make sure that Yasuhiro does not get hurt due to discrimination. Mr. Gomi, do you think I went too far?

Mr. Gomi: No, I don't think so. We need that kind of assurance from the company. Suppose that he fails. He will not believe that it was not due to his *gaiseki* background. And who will believe it anyway? There are exceptions..... *gaiseki* students can fail in the exam due to their faults but that can be detected by teachers.... I don't think that treating Japanese and *gaiseki* students in the same way means treating them "equal". It disadvantages *gaiseki* students. I treat Yoshitaka [another *gaiseki*] as Korean ... (Fieldnotes, 30/1/90)

Yasuhiro's *gaiseki* identity was not revealed to classmates. At Imai Tech High, two of the four *gaiseki* students in the third year were open about their Korean identities. Yoshitaka in 3MA, one of the students I studied closely, was active in the Korean cultural club, and even tried to get students like Yasuhiro into the club. At Sasaki High students do not seem to "hide" their identity, and sometimes talked about the *gaiseki* issue with close friends. The headmaster thinks that it is perhaps because 80% of Sasaki High students are from *shitamachi* Sakura-ku and Matsu-ku, and went to primary and junior high schools with Korean students and already knew their identity (Fieldnotes, 3/8/89). Both schools encourage *gaiseki* students to accept their ethnic identity rather than hide it, but allow the students to come to their own decisions on the matter.

Why are companies reluctant to take *gaiseki* students? After all they are second or third generation Japanese-born Korean, often speak only Japanese, and are physically indistinguishable from their Japanese peers. The HODs at Imai Tech High and Sasaki High, who are constantly communicating with companies, discussed with me their speculations on the reasons companies refuse employment to *gaiseki* students. These, they felt, centred around a company's desire to maintain the "stability" of harmonious human relations at work, and to preserve the company's good "reputation" with the public and its business partners. Below are some extracts from the conversation:

KO: Are many companies still reluctant to employ *gaiseki*?

Mr. Nakane: Yes, they are still in the majority, particularly big, well-known companies. But, compared with 20 years ago, more companies take *gaiseki*. There is no comparison. Things have progressed in that sense.

KO: Why do you think that the companies don't employ *gaiseki*? They speak the language well, look like Japanese.

Mr. Nakane: I personally don't understand their reasoning. Tradition, backward tradition, I would say.

KO: What is the benefit to the company in excluding *gaiseki* who could offer great potential to the company? Would they think that having *gaiseki* damages the company's reputation or reliability?

Mr. Nakane: Very likely so. The public is pretty conservative. (Fieldnotes, 29/6/89)

KO: Why don't they want *gaiseki*?

Mr. Yamada: They say that *gaiseki* people are different from us, and don't get along with others in the company.

KO: How are they different ?

Mr. Yamada: Well, companies say that Koreans have different religions. And what that means is that they have different value orientations, and ask to have days off for religious occasions different from ours. Also, Koreans have an inferiority complex about mainstream Japanese, which doesn't help in developing good working relationships in the work place. After all, they have some funny ways of thinking. Unreasonable at times. The point is that companies value human relationships among workers, and that includes workers' kin and other affiliations. For instance, North Korean students at our school were hit very badly by reaction to last year's mid-air bombing [of a South Korean airliner by North Korean agents]. Companies were afraid of having anything to do with North Korean people, since they are afraid that they may bring unpredictable problems on the company. (Fieldnotes, 28/6/89)

Schools do not simply resign themselves to following what companies offer them in terms of *gaiseki* employment and protect *gaiseki* students within the existing constraints. They *challenge* the employers' practice by exerting some pressure, although not directly and not in a confrontational manner, in two ways. Firstly, schools ask if the companies take *gaiseki* and see how they respond to it. This constitutes a form of pressure as the state, the PESO and local education boards request employers to provide equal employment opportunities regardless of family background. The PESO makes their requests by organising a meeting for employers, and a letter of request by the education board is sent with students' application forms to employers. That is why, as Mr. Gomi said, companies can not make a public announcement that they do not employ *gaiseki*. Secondly, if a company that agreed to a pre-arrangement (that the *gaiseki* student would pass the recruitment examination) turns down the

applicant in the later exam and cannot provide a "valid" reason for doing so, the school may take action against the company. Imai Tech High had such a case in 1985. (Fieldnotes, 14/2/90)

The Home Room Teacher and the Student Make a Decision on the Companies for
which the Student Should Apply

Home room teachers read the RCs and relevant information from DGLAS more vigorously than students. Not all home room teachers of third year classes had experienced this complex process of employment referral before, so they had to learn the process and how to make school records, as well as go through information concerning the hundreds of companies. Sasaki High, having a relatively high turnover of teachers, had three inexperienced teachers, while there were none at Imai Tech High. It was perhaps because of this that Sasaki High's DGLAS organised two meetings, one in late-May and another in mid-July, in which home room teachers could study the various companies. They learned which companies have long-term relationships with the school and thus are important, which take *gaiseki* students, and the working conditions in each company. Later the teachers were to give guidance based on what they had learned.

Among individual home room teachers there were distinct differences in their commitment and philosophy towards guidance. Mr. Kodama of 3D made significant interventions into the students' decision-making: he persuaded students not to go to *senmongakkou*; he dissuaded Hiroaki and Shouko from sitting for their first choice companies in the internal selection since he was not convinced of the quality of the companies; he suggested another company to Jun and Miho after the internal selection decisions had been made; he continued encouraging Rumi to attempt a 2-year college when she had almost given up the idea. He also persuaded companies that sent RCs to take girls instead of boys. Mr. Uno of 3I differed greatly. He said,

My philosophy is to let students decide. I will give advice if they ask for it. I have been seeing them every day in the last three years, and have learned a lesson. Students complain to me about any consequences which they don't like. If they decide, they can't blame me. (Fieldnotes, 3/3/90)

Several students indicated mistrust in their home room teachers. In this case, they did not talk to their home room teachers but sought advice from their club teachers and DGLAS teachers. In the worst case, they did not talk to any teachers, as will be seen in the case of Shigeru.

Sasaki High students submitted a list of six companies in preferential order, with the first three choices considered to have the same weight. At Imai Tech High the list comprised only three companies. These choices were processed by computer, and the material for the internal selection meeting was compiled. While DGLAS teachers were frantically working on the data some students were so relaxed that they did not submit their lists until the last moment.

Phase 3: Internal Selection Meeting: the Individual's Decision Becomes the School's
(late August)

The school conducts the internal selection meeting to decide the final company which each student should apply for. This is a long and tedious session, and involves DGLAS staff, home room teachers of the third year students, and the dean. The internal selection meeting (henceforth called "the meeting" in short) examines whether the company which an individual student and his/her home room teacher agree on is suitable, and makes the final decision on who from the school applies for which company. Some companies attract more students than there are vacancies. If the students have to change their choices, home room teachers contact students for their opinions over the telephone. In some cases, "competing" students are asked to discuss the matter and come to some conclusion among themselves.

The criteria were academic performance, health, school attendance, personality, and sports club and student council involvement, though the weighting of these criteria depended on the kind of job. Not all teachers agreed on the relative priorities given to these criteria. Mr. Takada (3CB home room teacher) argued against the arrangement that an applicant with relatively low academic marks would be recommended by the school if another applicant with higher academic marks did not have suitable qualities for the company of their choice, claiming that "the latter applicant might have worked hard for the position". (Fieldnotes, 20/7/89) Other teachers made the following comments:

Mr. Naka (3LB home room teacher/ PE): I understand how Mr. Takada feels. But, this is all for the students. We don't want the students to fail. Also it's a loss to the school if a student does not succeed in getting a job.

Mr. Yamada: The basic principle of the school is that we have internal selection so that our students will sit the employment exam to "pass", not to "fail". When we know that a student won't pass and yet send him/her for the exam, it's tough for the student and also for the school. By sending a student who is unlikely to pass, a student who is likely to pass is deprived of a chance to pass. When a popular company XYZ makes it clear that it wants an outgoing and talkative person, we won't send a quiet, diligent student with extremely good academic marks. The diligent and quiet student should be going to the company that wants to have that type of student. (Fieldnotes, 20/7/89)

Imai Tech High had two internal selection meetings, one in early August and another in late August, so that students could consult and change their decisions between the meetings. Because of this, many more students at Imai Tech High got their first choice companies through the internal selection process than did those at Sasaki High.

The meeting checked students' first options one by one. Basically, when the number of applicants for a position is less than the requested number, the applicants get what they want: that is, their decisions (approved by their home room teachers) are accepted. However, in the following cases students are asked to reconsider and change their decisions.

Case 1

When the meeting decides that the applicant's academic marks and school attendance are inadequate in the light of the required standard, the meeting advises the student to change his/her choice. This can be judged by reference to an objective standard (like a grade of 3.2, 4.0 etc) or may be based on the DGLAS's long experience in making such evaluations.

For instance, Yoshikazu and Takehisa wanted to apply for the Sawanotsuru Sake company. Mr. Nakane advised that their academic marks were too low and that both had an unacceptable number of absent days, and suggested that the home room teacher try "further guidance" to encourage these students to change their first choice.

Mr. Nakane: Since the company has had a long term relationship with us, we can appeal to the manager, but I don't want to since that would negatively influence future employment chances at the company. (Fieldnotes, 8/8/89)

However, despite an attempt by the home room teacher, Mr. Ide, to have them change their minds, Yoshikazu and Takehisa submitted the same list for the second internal selection meeting. Mr. Nakane was disappointed but was prepared to follow it through.

Mr. Nakane: Neither of them has good academic marks, being almost at the bottom of the machinery course, and Takehisa has 45 absent days! I am visiting the company this afternoon to ask about these two boys, and I will emphasise their intensive sports club involvement. Now I need one boy who is reasonably good in terms of marks, absent days and personal traits, so that I can ask the president to take the two less favourable ones. I feel reluctant, and sorry for the company, to ask them to take these two on their own. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

The meeting suggested that Hisashi (3I), Shinji (3MA), Shinya (3MA) and Yoshikazu (3MA) change their choices for the same reason.

Case 2

When the meeting decides that the applicant is too good for the company/position applied for, he/she is encouraged to attempt a "better" company/position.

For example, Satoshi was the top student in the ship-building course. He wanted to apply for a bus driver's position at a small transport company.

Mr. Nakane: Why on earth does he want this ?

Mr. Mori (his home room teacher): Well, he says that his father has been a truck driver, and he has always wanted to be a driver of a big vehicle.

Another teacher: But, he is so small and short.

Mr. Mori: I know. I mentioned it to him. But he said that he had often been on the truck with his father and that he knows what's involved in the work.

Mr. Nakane: It has to be OK, if he likes that kind of job. But how about a bigger transport company, at least?

Mr. Mori: I also said that to him. He prefers smaller companies. He is very determined about this, and I doubt that he will change his mind. I will talk to him again though. (Fieldnotes, 8/8/89)

Case 3

When the meeting recognises problems with a company, the applicant for the company is informed about them and left to decide whether he/she still wants to try for it. For instance, the rate of quitting among new employees was high in the case of a company that Takayuki wanted to apply for; ex-students who now worked at the company complained about human relationships in the company; the company's attitude toward workers was uncaring. (Fieldnotes, 8/8/89)

In another instance Yuichiro (3MA) and another boy applied for three blue collar positions at Procter & Gamble.

Mr. Nakane: Since this company is based on a large amount of investment from overseas, its employment practice is rather different from a typical Japanese company. They take people who have been previously employed elsewhere, for instance. These two boys should know that. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

One girl applied for a clerical position at Shinmen Shoe company.

Mr. Natsume (dean of the third year): Is the girl's family OK? A previous student of mine had a hard time there when her parents got divorced. The factory did not like that. It's a small factory, and the working atmosphere is important. (Fieldnotes, 26/8/89)

Hitoshi, an academic course boy, lost his first choice to someone else, due to academic marks. His second choice was a clerical position at Java Fashion company.

Mr. Yamada: Boys in the fashion business have to be patient enough to work under women, and be talkative and outgoing enough to sell. Would he be OK? Also, the fashion business in general has a tendency not to look after their employees well.

Mr. Sato (3CA home room teacher): I don't think that he is outgoing. He has been in the soccer club, but always has been attacked or bullied by others, although he never loses his temper and control. But he won't be talkative.

Mr. Naka (his home room teacher): That's OK. He is decided.

Mr. Takeda (3CB home room teacher): Aren't you being irresponsible? [jokingly].

Mr. Natsume: How about his 3rd choice?

Mr. Kaku (3LC home room teacher): I just want to mention that his father is the chairman of the *Buraku* Emancipation Association in the city. We need to have good concrete reasons for his changing his options. For instance, the first choice was off beam due to his academic marks. That's fine. But how about Java?

Mr. Takeda: [again joking to Mr. Naka] Are you getting nervous?

Mr. Naka: No. I feel that we should stick to our original plan. (Fieldnotes, 26/8/89)

Case 4

When the meeting is doubtful about the applicant's suitability for the position in terms of personality, the student is informed. "Is the boy applying for Mita Engineering company tough and persistent enough?" (Fieldnotes, 8/8/89)

Three boys applied for two positions at Shinei Stockbroking firm: Hiroshi and Kenichi from the data processing class and Michihiro from the academic class. Michihiro's home room teacher stressed that Michihiro was the captain of the baseball club, the most popular club at the school. Mr. Kodama, who is Kenichi and Hiroshi's home room teacher, commented that Hiroshi was active in the handball club, and that Kenichi was a quiet boy. Their placings based on academic achievement were Kenichi 74; Hiroshi 95; Michihiro 160. Michihiro seemed to have a definite disadvantage. However, teachers at the meeting agreed that a stockbroker needs an outgoing and energetic personality as well as fitness and health for that kind of work, and that Hiroshi and Michihiro would be more suitable than Kenichi. It was a consensus decision. (Fieldnotes, 26/8/89)

Case 5

When the school does not have much experience and knowledge about the company which a student is applying for, he/she is advised to try a similar position at a more familiar company.

Mr. Wagatsuma (DGLAS teacher/Automobile Department): Hino also offers car mechanics positions. I would like to send the boy to Hino rather than Nissan Diesel, since the kind of work is identical, and the school has had a long relationship with Hino. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

An exception is made when the company is prestigious enough to warrant consideration, the applicant is an excellent student or the applicant is strong enough in personality to face a failure in the exam.

Mr. Nakane: Tsuyoshi (3MA class rep) is applying for a clerical/technical position at Toyota. Another student is applying for a trainee position. I'm not sure of the probability, but we will let them have a go. *Ganbatte* (do your best). (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Mr. Nakane suggested that the home room teacher talk to a boy who applied for an SE programmer position at Hitachi Information Network, since he thought that the boy only had a 50% chance of success. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Case 6

For *gaiseki* students, the meeting checks from the past record if the company takes *gaiseki* students; if there are similar positions available at more familiar companies which offer a pleasant working environment for *gaiseki* people, they are advised to change their application. Home room teachers are asked to contact the company and get a positive confirmation before sending *gaiseki* students to the screening exam so that they do not get turned down and get hurt as a result.

Yasuhiro's home room teacher was requested to visit Daimaru Furniture company for Yasuhiro (3I) to check if the company would take *gaiseki*. Yoshitaka (3MA) applied for Saki Isuzu Motors which had taken *gaiseki* before.

Case 7

When no one applies for the companies to which the DGLAS would like to send students, due to the school's long term relationship with them, it asks home room teachers to guide students into these companies.

It was suggested that Kiyohiko (3I), whose first choice company had not sent RCs, should go for Sakura Shoukai company. The teachers also advised that Yoshiyuki, whose first choice company had also not sent RCs, should make his second choice company, Sakura Engineering, his first choice. (Fieldnotes, 8/8/89)

No one applied for a *gijutsu* position at Mitsubishi Heavy Industry. Mr. Nakane suggested that one of the top students go for it. One teacher suggested that Shinichi (3MA) shift from applying for a *ginou* position with the company to a *gijutsu* position since he was the top student in the machinery course. Another mechanics teacher suggested Atsushi (3MA) for that position. Mr. Ide, the 3MA home room teacher, said that Atsushi had always wanted to enter Sanyou Railways. He agreed to talk to Shinichi about the change. (Fieldnotes, 8/8/89)

Two 3MA boys, Yoshikazu and Toshikazu applied for two *gijutsu* positions at Shizuki Electric.

Mr. Nakane: I feel that one is enough for this company. One should go to another "company important to the school". Why not send Yoshikazu to some other employer where we need to send someone? (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Later in the same meeting;

Mr. Nakane: Look at this. There are no applicants for the trainee positions at Mitsubishi Heavy Industry from the machinery course. We have three from automobile and one from ship-building! In the last survey, Shinichi (3MA) was one of the applicants, but Shinichi is now applying for a *gijutsu* position in the same company, since he gained top marks. They originally wanted students from the machinery course, and I feel that we should at least send one from the machinery course. Is there anyone appropriate? Please think about it..

[A bit later in the meeting]

Mr. Ide (3MA home room teacher/Maths): I wonder if Yoshikazu is OK for the position. Because either Yoshikazu or Toshikazu (both 3MA) have to withdraw from Shizuki Electric. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Mr. Nakane welcomed the suggestion after looking at Yoshikazu's marks and number of absent days and confirming that he was a pleasant boy. Mr. Ide went out to ring Yoshikazu at home, and got agreement from him.

Mr. Ide: This is a great *mouke-mono* (unexpected good luck) for Yoshikazu!!
(Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Two students apply for three available positions at Matsuhita Electric company.

Mr. Nakane: We need one more definitely. This Matsushita company says that they will be shifting to an adjacent town in two years time, and that they want to have students from our school, the nearest technical high school. I want to make sure that our school has the first stake in this company. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Case 8

A frequent case is when there are more applicants for a limited number of positions at a particular company. The following is an example of such a case: the meeting has to choose one of three applicants for a popular position.

The case of Shuu (male):

Shouji (Machinery B class), Susumu (Ship-building class) and Shuu (Machinery A class) want to apply for a position at Sharp Electric company. At the last meeting, held two weeks ago, the DGLAS suggested that someone should apply for this position since no one had at the time. Now too many want to apply.

Mr. Nakane: The three did not pick this position as their first choice. So, the starting point is the same for all. (If anyone picked this as his first choice, he would have had a priority.) Is this OK? Now here are their marks.

	place in the course (1st yr/2nd yr/3rd yr)		average mark
Shouji (Machinery B class)	3,17,23	no absence	4.08.
Susumu (Ship-building class)	1,2,2	no absence	4.13.
Shuu (Machinery A class)	14,12,5	no absence	4.04.

Could home room teachers tell us about the students?

Mr. Mori: Susumu was the vice-chairman of the Students' Council and active in the cycle racing club. As you see, he is one of the top students in our class. He originally wanted to "make something" with his hands at IBM. He selected IBM in the last survey. But, this year only the IBM manufacturing factory in Kakita prefecture sent recruitment cards to us. The local IBM company is only concerned with sales. He is from a solo-mother family, living with his sister and mother. Since both mother and sister are not healthy, they want him to work in a location close to them. So he searched for a "good" position in a good company nearby. His second choice is Naka distribution company, perhaps because his mother works for its subsidiary company.

Mr. Ide: Shuu was the vice-captain of the handball club, and was respected by other members. From the beginning, he wanted to apply for this position at Sharp Electric Company. But, because the company sent us recruitment cards very late, in the last

survey Shuu picked the Nagami-city branch of the company as his first choice. His second choice was Honda Giken in Sama-prefecture [far away]. He is a very reliable and articulate boy who gives a wonderful first impression. He is also from a solo-mother family. His father died in a traffic accident. His mother works in a cafeteria from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.. He lives with his mother and his sister in Hinoki-ku. Being the only son, Shuu's mother wants him to be near her.

Mr. Ikeda: Shouji has been active in the computer club. In the last survey he selected the Nagami-city-branch of Sharp Electric as his first choice. But another student in the same class wanted the position, and as a result of negotiations between the two, Shouji decided to opt for this. His second choice is Toshiba Hayama branch. He has a 2nd grade data processing certificate, a licence to handle a boiler and is keen on acquiring further qualifications.

Mr. Matsuhisa: [Looking at the recruitment card again] The card says that they prefer machinery course students.

Mr. Sumi: [KO:Looking glad that he now has a good reason to reduce the number on an objective basis] Mr. Mori, could you consider that comment?

Mr. Mori: [KO:Showing great disappointment] That is difficult.

Mr. Sumi: [To Mr. Nakane] Are there any other similar positions, a technical position in electronics?

Mr. Nakane: Sorry, there is no other technical position in electronics.

Mr. Sumi: What shall we do, then. No student has priority.

Mr. Mori: I understand the difficulties here. But I don't want Susumu with such good marks to go to his second choice, the distribution company.

Mr. Sumi: As far as academic marks are concerned, Shuu and Shouji are in the same boat.

Mr. Mori: [KO: Mori seems to be taking Sumi's comments as targeted at him and is getting rather emotional.] I have no doubt about him, from his record of club activities and student council work. If my appeal does not convince you, I don't mind leaving it to the majority vote!

Mr. Nakane: Let's see..... How about letting Shuu have a go for Hankyuu Railways?

Mr. Ide: No. This is his choice.

Mr. Okimoto [who is in charge of the handball club]: Shuu decided on this position because of the kind of work, that is, manufacturing. I don't think Hankyuu Railways will appeal to him, although the company is well known.

Mr. Ikeda: Susumu also wants to manufacture something.

Mr. Mori: What did Susumu and Shuu list as their second options?

Mr. Ide: Shuu's second option is Honda Giken, but his mother does not want him to be far away.

Mr. Ikeda: Susumu's second option is Toshiba Hayama.

Mr. Uno: It seems as though we are running out of criteria to make a decision here. The three are very competitive. How about letting them talk it over in the next few days?

Mr. Sumi: Well, that would not make much difference. I really want to make a decision today, so that we can proceed with the follow-up.

Mr. Nakane: Even if one gets a technical position when being accepted into the company, he will be transferred if he is not assessed as suitable. So, how about sending one of them to Toshiba as a skilled worker trainee?

Mr. Sumi: One of my ex-students got a technical position at Sharp Electric and quit in the end, saying that the job was not what he had originally expected.

Mr. Okimoto: We had a similar case with applicants for Haru Sake company last year, which involved one of my students. We let the two talk it over, but still could not decide. In the end we decided to base it on the latest mock exam result, because we thought that the mock exam result would give some indication of how they would perform in the employment exam. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Home room teachers left the room to get the data on the mock examination. The result showed that Shuu was definitely top.

Mr. Sumi: Is Shuu OK?

Mr. Okimoto: The recruitment card says that the employment exam consists of a basic achievement test and interview. So I think it appropriate.

Mr. Sumi: Any disagreement on this?

Mr. Mori: OK. I can't win with these marks. I will ask Shouji if he would like the trainee position at Mitsubishi. (Fieldnotes, 23/8/89)

Throughout the meeting home room teachers supported their particular students and provided relevant information. One of the home room teachers commented, "It's like marrying my daughter to someone. I want to make sure her partner is OK". They have an emotional commitment.

The DGLAS is familiar with the level of marks and attendance which a particular company requires and the kind of personality the company wants for a particular position (e.g., having been active and respected in sport clubs and having a loud voice and strong leadership). The DGLAS gains information on the companies' requirements by: (a) sending a certain kind of student and seeing how he/she coped with the company; (b) talking to the personnel staff about the result of the screening exam; (c) talking to the company people when conducting company visits; and (d) getting feedback from ex-students who work at the company. This information is stored in a systematic fashion.

Teachers basically wish for the well-being of the students. They would advise against students applying for companies with unfavourable working conditions, or advise a "better" company if they think the student is worthy of it. The HOD claims that the school wants to give each student a challenge and a better chance in life by suggesting what they consider to be the best. However, at the same time, the school restricts the student's choice.

The DGLAS has a "professional" responsibility for the school. Since the school needs to maintain a good relationship with companies for the sake of future students of the school, the DGLAS wants to send good students to good companies, so that middle students can apply for middle ranked companies. However, as a principle, the final choice is left to the student, as in the case of Satoshi applying for a truck driver's position at a small delivery company. For the sake of the school, the DGLAS wants to send students to the companies with a long standing relationship. In this respect I see a major difference between the school's guidance for employment and that for tertiary education. Schools do not have a long-standing, give-and-take relationship with universities.

Thus, a student's individual decision is extended to become his/her home room teacher's, and then the school's decision. The school, like the home room teachers, *cares about* its students' well-being : it wants to ensure a secure, predictable future. The school cares not only about the individual student and the development of their potential, but also about other students in future years. The

school is concerned with the *collective needs* of the school. As was shown above, the collective needs of the school are not necessarily consistent with individual students' wishes, and may even be detrimental to its individual members.

Phase 4: Final Preparation for the Recruitment Examination: the School Marshal's Resources
(late August to 14th September)

After being informed of the company to apply for, students had about three weeks before the recruitment examination. The PESO decided that companies could start recruitment examinations on 15th September, and most of the first round examinations were conducted between 15th and 20th of September. Realising that the employment examination was only three weeks ahead, students came under more pressure to prepare for them. DGLAS assisted by offering programmes, such as talks on interview skills and speech patterns and manners, lessons on essay writing, and assistance for the written examination in "general knowledge", that is, to "make up" for a lack of appropriate habitus. DGLAS organised the programmes so that students could not help preparing for the coming examinations.

For instance, Imai Tech High devoted four days to recruitment examination preparation seminars during the end of the summer vacation. It was made compulsory for everyone. The time table was as below:

	9-9:50	10-10:50	11-11:50	12-12:50
August 24	Interview (home room)	Interview	Maths	Individuals work on their own document
25	Essay Writing	Japanese	Interview	
26	Essay Writing	Maths		
27	Japanese			

Mr. Uno handed out: (a) a booklet of questions for the interview; (b) a print-out of manners/language for the interview; and (c) paper on which to record the reasons for applying for a particular company. Mr. Uno asked students to fill in (a) booklet in pencil. It contained questions likely to come up in the interview. Some, like Chieko, Kasumi, Yasuko and Hisakazu, worked hard on this, while others did not. Students were expected to complete (b) in their own time and bring it with them on the following day. (Fieldnotes, 24/8/89)

The preparation was completed with mock interviews of all students in formal settings, which occupied all the after-school hours of one week. The headmaster, the deputy-headmaster, and other teachers, who do not have direct contact with third year students, participated in mock interviews as interviewers, and filled in evaluation sheets on each student. As a reference, an evaluation sheet was distributed: it shows which aspects interviewees are supposed to concentrate on. I sat through a final mock interview session in one room, and observed about 40 students being interviewed by two teachers. These teachers made comments occasionally:

Students do not use *keigo* (honorific language) in a proper way, and they should practice this on teachers. They do not use keigo when talking to teachers at this school. Also, they are not good at marketing themselves, and are too reserved and humble. [KO thinks that students are not sure what personal qualities will appeal to employers.] (Fieldnotes, 4/9/89)

Home room teachers continued to give tips for interviews. Mr. Kodama outlined the features of the data processing course at Sasaki High again, and emphasised that students should mention these when asked about the school. Students were called into his office individually, and were informed about what he had written on their school record, so that no discrepancy would arise. Home room teachers asked questions about newspaper articles every day, so that students could mention recent news in the interview.

Application Documents are Prepared and Sent to Companies

Students received a lesson on how to fill in a curriculum vitae (the curriculum vitae form is standardised), and filled in their own curriculum vitae in pencil, gave it to the home room teacher to be checked, and then filled it in with a pen. Applications (with curriculum vitae and school record) are expected to be sent to companies by the school, not by individual students. The documents in each envelope were checked first by home room teachers, then by the dean, and finally by DGLAS staff.

At both Sasaki High and Imai Tech High, home room teachers or DGLAS teachers visited companies personally and handed in some applications. At Sasaki High, 50 applications were handled in this manner. They were "special" cases. Mr. Yamada explained:

When home room teachers think that they should advise the employer about some specific aspects regarding a student, and the DGLAS agrees, we take applications direct to the company rather than mail them. These cases are: the student has bad academic marks or many absent days; the student has physical problems, like weak eye sight and colour blindness or hearing difficulties; the student is a *gaiseki* or a *buraku* person; or the company is important to the school. (Fieldnotes, 6/9/89)

DGLAS teachers started visiting companies again, this time for different purposes. They called on companies to which the school had owed a lot previously in order to apologize for not sending any applicants this year (Fieldnotes, 6/9/89). On the other hand, companies were still visiting

DGLAS, to ask if the school had any applicants for their company, and if not, to ask the school to send some for the second round examination, to say thank you for sending students and to bring new RCs. In the last case, companies that had received fewer applications than expected started approaching unfamiliar schools for further recruitment possibilities.

Companies received and checked through applications. When some parts were not clear or in doubt, they contacted DGLAS immediately. In one especially interesting case, Osamu, a student with myopia, applied for a train driver's position, although the RC for the position specified good eye sight as a prerequisite. The company contacted Imai Tech High DGLAS to check if the mention of myopia on his curriculum vitae was an error.

.....we were wondering if the data on his cv was a mistake. If it is correct, we have to ask, following our convention, that the applicant withdraw his application.
(Fieldnotes, 6/9/89)

Mr. Shimahara, the DGLAS teacher who answered the phone asked the officer to give the school a couple of hours to investigate the point. As soon as he was off the phone Mr. Shimahara checked the RC about the eye sight requirement, and tried to contact Osamu's home room teacher, Mr. Mishima, and Mr. Sumi, the dean, but in vain. He managed to catch Mr. Nakane, HOD of DGLAS, in the PE staff room. Mr. Nakane rushed into the DGLAS office in his PE gear. He was upset, saying,

What on earth is happening? Why didn't the home room teacher check this?
(Fieldnotes, 6/9/89)

He checked the documents again, and confirmed what Mr. Shimahara had heard from the company officer. Then Mr. Mishima and Mr. Sumi came in, talked it over and decided that Osamu had no choice but to withdraw. Osamu was contacted. Mr. Nakane rang Hanshin Company and apologised.

Mr. Nakane: We are terribly sorry for the inconvenience which Osamu caused. We have spoken to Osamu and his home room teacher. He knew about the prerequisite, but could not give up applying for the position because he liked it so much. I am upset that the application went ahead without this being noticed. We are all to be blamed. Naturally Osamu will withdraw the application. We are very sorry for the trouble we caused.

Officer: Well, please don't mention it any more. This kind of accident often happens. You and I know that young people have dreams..... We are sorry that we disappointed Osamu, and we were wondering if Osamu would be interested in a position in our mechanics department since it does not have any special eye sight requirements.

Mr. Nakane: That's most generous of you. Thank you very much. I will consult with Osamu and his parents. (Fieldnotes, 6/9/89)

Mr. Mishima was called again, and consulted with about this turn of events. Osamu came to the DGLAS room and was reading through RCs in the sixth period. After school Mr. Nakane and the boy had a long talk. Osamu now seems to have decided on other companies, rather than a mechanic's position at Hanshin Railways. Mr. Nakane now suggested that they have a separate talk. Osamu was very disappointed that he could not now pursue a train driver's job. He said that his mother suggested Tetra Pack Ltd. Mr. Nakane implied that foreign companies were not suitable for someone like Osamu, although without imposing his views. Mr. Nakane mentioned his previous talk with Osamu's father (obviously the two knew each other), and said that the father wanted him to get a clerical or mechanic's position at a secure company.

Mr. Nakane: It's better to decide as soon as possible. We can just say that we were a bit late since we had some mishandling. How about Matsushita Electric?
(Fieldnotes, 6/9/89)

Mr. Mishima, Osamu's home room teacher, was also present to hear what Mr. Nakane had to say. At 4 p.m. Mr. Nakane called Hanshin, as requested, and asked that the boy be given more time to decide about the mechanic's position. Then there was a call from the boy's father. Mr. Nakane started the conversation with "Hey, Sei-chan....", establishing a certain degree of intimacy. Mr. Nakane knows what to do to make people comfortable. He explained the situation to the father and asked him to discuss the matter at home. (Fieldnotes, 6/9/89) Osamu now decided to apply for the mechanic's position at Hanshin. Mr. Nakane said:

It's the home room teacher's mistake, as well as the student's. In particular, his home room teacher should have checked the basic information beforehand, when some students had to give up this position for Osamu in the internal selection meeting. The other applicants might have passed the exam. In that case the home room teacher would be in an awkward position. Osamu said to me, after consulting with his father, that he decided on the mechanic's position at Hanshin Railways, instead of going for somewhere else, and that his home room teacher had also suggested that. I think that Osamu's decision was the best for his home room teacher. He does not lose face that way. (Fieldnotes, 12/9/89)

The final outcome was a compromise for everyone. The company, rather than discarding Osamu's application straight away, contacted the school to check, and offered another position. DGLAS was prepared to let Osamu try other companies, but left Osamu to discuss this with his father.

The day before the recruitment examination started, both schools organised a meeting for those who were to sit the examination. Imai Tech High named the meeting "meeting to encourage you", but it was cancelled since the school was closed due to a typhoon.

Phase 5: Recruitment Examinations: What Employers Want to Know about Students
(15th September onwards)

All companies, from a small factory of 10 workers to a giant like Mitsubishi, give prospective high school graduates recruitment examinations. Most companies assign written tests and an interview. The most widely used written tests involve what is called "general knowledge". "General knowledge" covers a wide range of fields, from maths to Japanese classical writers, with which the average citizen is expected to be familiar. However, without specific preparation the test can be difficult. Dore and Sako (1989) give examples attesting to the comprehensiveness of recruitment examinations. Several companies give tests related to technical subjects such as programming language, technical drawing and furniture-making. Other companies give an aptitude test or a personality test, which are available commercially. Essay writing is another common test. Popular titles are "My Thoughts on Becoming a *Shakai-jin*"; "Best Memory of My High School Days" and so forth. Small companies often conducted similar recruitment exams. Yoshitaka applied for a car mechanic position at a branch of Saki-city Isuzu Motors. This workshop has 25 employees in all. Saki-city Isuzu Motors conducted their recruitment examination with two other similar companies at the same place. They had eight applicants, including Yoshitaka. Yoshitaka had a two-hour written test on "general knowledge" covering Japanese, English, maths, social science and science, and a 20 minute interview with four interviewers. The interview is the most important component. Often students had group interviews. Some received a one-to-one interview as well as group interviews. Several companies conducted interviews only. Tamotsu applied for a factory worker position at a machinery parts manufacturing company with 29 employees. He was the only one who sat the recruitment examination.

An assessment scheme for recruitment examinations has been developed by each company. Some companies use school records as the first screening step, even before the recruitment examinations. The items in the school record used for this purpose are: the minimum academic achievement score; sports club involvement; and the number of absent days. Others combine school records with performance in the recruitment examinations (both written and interview), placing all applicants in order of achievement. The companies then select the most successful applicants, but do not necessarily take as many as they are looking for, if the applicants are not up to their standard.

Both schools provided students with a recruitment examination record form before the examination, and students were expected to fill in all relevant information about their examinations as soon as they finished. These records were handed in to DGLAS so that the following year's students could use them in their preparation for such examinations. Because companies do not publicly reveal the content of their examinations, these examination records are the only source for the following years' students to refer to. Students can gauge the general tendency of the examination content by looking at examination records for the last five years. Therefore, the longer the relationship a school

has with a company, the more advantaged the school would be in getting employment for its students. It was not easy, in particular at Imai Tech High, to get students to complete these forms and hand them in, once they believed that they had finished their turn. Home room teachers repeated their requests to their students to cooperate in this respect.

One of the major tasks of the DGLAS at this time was to deal with "accidents". There were four "accidents" involving Imai Tech High students on the recruitment examination days. Three boys were late for the examinations, and the headmaster and Mr. Nakane rang the companies to apologise for the mishaps. Another accident was more serious and upset many teachers. A student did not turn up for his recruitment examination for Matsushita Electric Company, and the headmaster ended up visiting the company to apologise for the rudeness of the student. This illustrates how the school takes responsibility for an individual student's actions. On the examination day, Shigeru, the student concerned, left home late, and took the wrong trains in Oyama-city. Nevertheless, it was considered he should have gone to the company, however late, as previously instructed by the school. But when Shigeru knew he was late he returned home. The company rang Shigeru's home, just as he arrived back. Shigeru told the person from the company that he was late and that he really wanted to go to a professional school. The company's personnel office rang the DGLAS straight away and said that they were sorry that Shigeru did not turn up for the examination. The DGLAS was surprised to hear about Shigeru's absence, and rang him immediately, asking him to come to school. At school Shigeru said that he really wanted to be a voice actor and that he wanted to go to a relevant school. After talking to him, the DGLAS sent him home for two days and asked him to think it through.

Mr. Sumi, the dean, regretted Shigeru's last minute admission:

The major problem is that he had not mentioned his desire before in the previous discussions-before he even submitted the application form. His parents were against him becoming a voice actor for TV cartoons. He found a special school for training voice actors, which we don't know much about, that is, we can't guarantee its quality, or whether it is reliable or not. I don't want to let him go to such an insecure place now. We need to talk further. Two days have passed now, and Shigeru must have *atama o hiyashita* (cooled his head) by now, and will be able to talk more sensibly. (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

Mr. Nakane, HOD of DGLAS had a long talk with Shigeru two days after the event. Mr. Sumi enquired if he should ask Mr. Mishima (Shigeru's home room teacher) to be present at the discussion as well. Mr. Nakane did not think too much of Mr. Mishima, saying,

What kind of guidance has he been giving his students? He should have talked such a basic matter through in advance. Those who have failed in the examinations so far are all from the Machinery C class.

When Shigeru arrived in the DGLAS room, Mr. Nakane invited him into a closed room, and talked in a calm voice. Below is the dialogue between the two.

Mr. Nakane: Shigeru, are you OK now? Have you thought it through to your satisfaction over the last two days? I thought that you needed a couple of days to reflect on what happened before we could talk over your future. It's not that we have given you up altogether. Understand?

Shigeru: Yes. Thank you.

Mr. Nakane: And, what have you decided on?

Shigeru: I have chosen what I have always wanted to do. I would like to pursue that.

Mr. Nakane: OK, OK, I understand. What are you going to do now? I hear that you want to be a voice actor for TV cartoons. Are you planning to go to a relevant school?

Shigeru: Yes. There is one in Oyama-city. I have the school's pamphlet.

Mr. Nakane: Did all those who finish the school become voice actors?

Shigeru: Not really. Some do and others don't. You can't tell whether you will make a voice actor or not till you finish the school. If I can't make it, then I will give up. I will have at least tried it.

Mr. Nakane: Hm..... How long have you been thinking of becoming a voice actor?

Shigeru: About a year.

Mr. Nakane: Have you mentioned it to your home room teacher?

Shigeru: No.

Mr. Nakane: Why not?

Shigeru: I found it difficult to mention that to him.

Mr. Nakane: Shigeru, there are times when you must speak up and reveal your desires in life, you know.

Shigeru: I know that I have caused so much trouble to others and the school, and am sorry for it. I am to blame for that. I am sorry.

Mr. Nakane: Since you are so aware of what you have done, and sorry for it, I am not going to blame you any more. You have thought it through, I can see. Just remember that what you did caused so much trouble. The headmaster visited Matsushita Electric Company to apologise for what you did. Why didn't you reveal your thoughts to anyone else, like your friend or me? We have no intention of forcing you to go to Matsushita. There were other boys who wanted to go to Matsushita and couldn't because they failed in the internal selection. You could have given them a chance to sit the exam..... I'm afraid that you have not grown up yet.... But you have now decided on what you will pursue within the constraints, and I appreciate that. I basically want you boys to make the most of your future. I am not suggesting that everyone settle down to a secure job. You are setting yourself a challenge in going for what you want to do. I believe that it's wonderful. Keep challenging till you are about 25 years old. But,..... it isn't acceptable to have gone through the official application process that far, and then not turn up on the exam day. I just wish that you had mentioned it to me beforehand, before the matter went that far. Matsushita now has a bad image of Imai Tech High, and will have for the next 5 or 10 years. Your employment acquisition process was a part of the *ooyakeno* (official) mechanism of school-company relationships. Never handle a public matter in such a private way, since it affects people involved in the public mechanism. You have now learned a lesson through this experience, haven't you? [Mr. Nakane with a smile, patting Shigeru's shoulder.] You have now decided, and I and the DGLAS are supportive of what you have decided. We will do our best so that you get what you want. So, talk to us frankly. Do your best.

Shigeru: Thanks. (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

Mr. Nakane said to me after the talk:

If he were still indecisive, I intended to suggest a secure job. But he has thought it through, I could sense it. We will let him do what he wants, and will see what happens. Even if he fails in pursuing a voice acting career, it's a learning experience for him, since he is convinced about it already. I have asked Mr. Gomi (the one in charge of schools) to investigate the school for voice actors. I'm just sorry that we could not have detected his hesitation beforehand. (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

Phase 6: Follow-up Action to Passing and Failing in the Recruitment Examinations (late September onwards)

Within a few weeks of the recruitment examinations, the majority of students heard the results. Companies notified the results of recruitment examinations both to individual students and to the DGLAS. Some first rang the DGLAS and later sent a formal notification by mail. Companies are not required to offer reasons for the result of the recruitment examinations unless asked. Whenever a student failed, the DGLAS teachers would congenially request the personnel office of the company concerned to divulge the reasons for the failure, stating that such information would be useful for helping next year's graduates. Personnel officers provided "sensible and uncontroversial" reasons, but to what extent these reasons were valid was unknown, particularly in the case of companies with which the school had not had a long relationship.

The rate of failures at the two schools was similar. At Imai Tech High 18 out of 187 students who sat recruitment examinations failed, while the number was 15 out of 174 at Sasaki High. Among the three classes which I closely observed, Imai Tech High's 3I class had one, Seiko, 3MA class had two, Hiroki and Hisashi, and Sasaki High's 3D class had none.

The Follow-up Formality: Job Offer Letters and Offer Acceptance Letters

Once students finished the first round recruitment examinations, DGLAS organised lessons on how to write *judaku-sho* (a formal letter of acceptance of employment), and *rei-jo* (a thank you letter). In long home room classes, students practised how to use fixed phrases for these official letters. Students who were to send these letters to the same company consulted each other so that the fixed phrases they used were not identical. By this time some students had received their results, and others had not. For those who had not heard from the companies, this was a painful exercise.

The school now faces the demanding task of keeping these students "straight" for the remaining 6 months of the academic year. This is like the end of year atmosphere which Australasian secondary schools experience after major examinations are over. Australasian schools organise various kinds of extra-curricular activities and outings to occupy students for a few weeks until school breaks up. At these two schools, however, the routine of classes was still conducted as before. The DGLAS

in each school repeatedly emphasised to students that now that they had secured employment, they would have to make sure that they graduated from school, by having adequate school attendance and completing the necessary academic requirements. In all cases the job which each student obtained is offered on the condition that they receive a high school diploma. Without a diploma they cannot go to the job.

Guidance for Failed Students: Why They Failed and Where They Go Next

The ways in which failed students received further guidance differed between Imai Tech High and Sasaki High. The latter organised a meeting for all home room teachers of third year students, and the matter of follow-up measures was discussed. The DGLAS prepared a list of failed students and the reasons for their failures provided by the respective companies, and a list of 58 companies that were prepared to take those who had failed in the first round of examinations. The range of companies became limited for the second round examinations. Imai Tech High, on the other hand, did not make such lists but DGLAS and the home room teachers dealt with failed students case by case.

Typical reasons for failure provided by the companies included poor performance in written examinations; that the candidate was too quiet in interviews; or lacked the skills to keep conversation going. Sometimes the assessment by companies differed from that of the teachers. For instance, Shinichi in Machinery C class unexpectedly failed the examination for Kiku Sake company, although only 8 applied for the 10 positions available. Mr. Nakane reported his conversation with the company personnel officer to other DGLAS teachers.

Mr. Nakane: They said that Shinichi did not do well. He could not focus on one point and looked down when he could not answer. He said he chose the job since he preferred working with machines rather than with other people, which the company did not like. This is totally unexpected. I had thought that Hiroto (another Imai Tech High boy who sat the same exam) was more at risk.

Mr. Matsuhisa: I agree. I would take Shinichi rather than Hiroto. Shinichi's personality would make him a far more pleasant person to work with.

Mr. Shimahara: I would too. (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

The respective academic placings for Shinichi and Hiroto were (24,24, 32) and (58, 53, 70). Shinichi had performed much better academically than Hiroto. In addition, the three teachers commented that Shinichi's personality was far more pleasant.

Interviews pick up personality factors in other ways. Naoki failed in the examination for a computer-related position at Hitachi Data Network Service. The company reported that Naoki could not answer when he was asked about his reasons for being repeatedly absent in his first year of high schooling. Mr. Nakane explained:

Mr Nakane: Naoki faced terrible *ijime* (bullying) in his first year. He was naive and nice, and did not rebel against the *ijime*. So he became the target for bullies. That's why he had so many absent days. I can understand why he couldn't mention the reasons. (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

Below is Mr. Nakane's consultation with Naoki:

Mr. Nakane: Have you decided that you will give up trying for a computer position? Do you mind a blue collar job?

Naoki: [nodding]

Mr. Nakane: How about Caterpillar Mitsubishi Company or Hyougo Fusou Company?

Naoki: [nodding].

Mr. Nakane: Let's make sure on what points we agree. You are prepared to take up a position that is not related to computers? Second, do you prefer big companies to small companies?

Naoki: Yes, I prefer big companies.

Mr. Nakane: Why ?

Naoki: They're secure.

Mr. Nakane: At big companies, you will be a small part of a huge organisation. Is that OK?

Naoki: That's fine.

Mr. Nakane: OK. Give me a couple of days, and I will come up with a range of selections. For the time being, if you have any ideas, contact me anytime.

(Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

This was more or less a typical consultation. DGLAS staff first informed the student that they had failed, and heard what the student had to say about the examination, discussing why they had failed. Since students who failed were not often able to plan for the next step immediately, DGLAS let them have a couple of days to think about their future plan and to discuss it with their family. A few days later, either the home room teacher or a DGLAS staff member held another consultation like the one above. Teachers listened to what the student had decided, and together they looked for appropriate companies.

Students can be turned down because of health problems. This case is more serious. Yasuharu in the ship-building class failed in the examination for Sanyo Railways Company. The company personnel officer reported that the medical examination detected problems with his liver.

Mr. Nakane: [With a pained look on his face] We can't do much in this sort of case - when the reason for failure is health troubles. Still, shall I arrange for him to sit another exam?

Mr. Wagatsuma: No, I don't think so. There won't be a good chance, when the reason is a medical problem. Even if he applies to other companies, those companies would use the same medical file. One way is to wait for a while, say until February, and to have treatment at a hospital before taking another examination.

Mr. Nakane: Let's get Yasuharu's home room teacher, Mr. Mori. [And he rang Mr. Mori in the staff room.] (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

Mr. Mori came to the DGLAS room with Yutaka, another student of his who had failed, and he must have thought that Mr Nakane wanted to discuss Yutaka's case.

Mr. Nakane: [Seeing Yutaka as well] Mr. Mori, I called you for different reasons, not about Yutaka.

Mr. Mori: [with a deep sigh] Don't tell me I have "another failure". Mr. Nakane explained Yasuharu's liver problem.

Mr. Mori: Really? I can't believe it. [He was very disappointed and in a panic]. What can I do now? I have never experienced this sort of case before. Since it is a physical reason, we can't do much can we?

Mr. Nakane: Well, I have been thinking about what would be the best solution with Mr. Wagatsuma ... there are two alternatives, Mr. Mori. First, Yasuharu will have a thorough medical check, receive treatment, and try another company once he is back to normal. We'll hope that he will be better by then. Second, Yasuharu could try for another company which will take someone with this kind of health problem. But these companies may not be good ones.

Mr. Mori: Hum.....I will talk to him and his parents. This is a tricky problem.

Mr. Okimoto: I am the one who talked to the company on the phone. They said that the job would be too hard for someone with such a medical problem. So it depends on the kind of job. How about getting him to apply for companies which will take him due to his merit in sports? (he played judo). (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

Subsequently, Yasuharu decided that he would have treatment for his condition at a hospital. Mr. Odawara, the teacher in charge of the judo club, recommended that he do so and this influenced Yasuharu's decision. Yasuharu himself had been worried that his liver problems would come out in the medical check.

There were two cases at Imai Tech High in which companies requested the DGLAS to ask students to work at another branch factory far away from Saki-city. The final decision was left with the students and their parents. Officially it is not acceptable that companies change working conditions from those written in the RC within the first 2 years of employment.

The company which Yutaka had applied for sent two middle-rank employees with a present. I was wondering about the purpose of this visit. The visitors first talked about Yutaka's performance in the examination: that Yutaka gave a refreshing impression, asked about holidays etc. However, the total assessment of his school record (his placings were 32, 31 23) and absent days, as well as his performance in the day's examination did not place him in the top rankings. They explained that they could not give him a position in Saki-city as originally cited in the RC, and wanted him to work in the Tokyo area. The two men asked politely if Yutaka would be OK in the Tokyo area [KO: Tokyo is far away from his home and he would have to live in the company's dormitory], and if Mr. Nakane could ask him and his parents very nicely to accept the change. They wanted to know Yutaka's response within three days. Mr. Nakane said that he would be happy to do that but would not guarantee anything. After the company people left, Mr. Nakane immediately called Mr. Mori, Yutaka's home room teacher. (Fieldnotes, 21/9/89)

Mr. Nakane, Mr. Mori and other DGLAS teachers discussed the topic, raising the pros and cons of either choice Yutaka could make. Interestingly, the negotiation and discussion was conducted without Yutaka being present, despite being the person who was to be most affected. Although the student does have the final say, these adults appeared to treat him as an immature person, unable to make a sensible decision and in need of guidance. In both cases, the students decided not to take up the positions away from Saki-city, and instead sat recruitment examinations for other companies.

Applications for the second round recruitment examinations were processed with extra care and *nemawashi* (groundwork). For instance, Mr. Yamada, HOD of Sasaki High's DGLAS, personally took all application forms for the second round exams to the 15 companies involved, and emphasised the student's merits in detail to the respective personnel officers. Mr. Nakane, HOD of Imai Tech High's DGLAS, carried out similar *nemawashi* on the telephone. Some of the home room teachers visited the companies.

This process continued until every student got employment. At the end of October, six weeks after the recruitment examinations started, the majority of those who had failed in the first round examinations got employment.

At Sasaki High, one boy and three girls had not obtained employment by that time. Hitoshi, a boy who was referred to earlier, in reference the internal selection meeting, sat examinations for two companies after his first one, and failed. He was still receiving guidance both from his home room teacher and DGLAS staff. Two of the girls, Tomoko and Hiroe, both *gaiseki*, had not sat any examinations after their initial attempts. Mr. Yamada introduced a range of companies to Tomoko and Hiroe, whenever a new position became available, but they showed no interest in them. Mr. Yamada confessed to me that these two girls were fussy, while Tomoko and Hiroe suggested to me that the school did not look after them. Mr. Yamada was extremely frustrated about the two girls' indecisiveness, and was consequently disappointed with their home room teacher who, Mr. Yamada said, did not push them to make a decision.

One 3D girl, Haruka, did not take even one recruitment examination, since she could not find a position which provided what she wanted: employment which finished at 5 p.m. sharp without any *zangyou* (overtime work) so that she could attend regular religious meetings (her family were Jehovah's Witnesses). She and her family were not prepared to compromise. Very few private companies do not work *zangyou*. Mr. Kodama, Haruka's home room teacher, was dependent on Mr. Yamada for finding an appropriate position for her. Mr. Yamada was more relaxed about Haruka than the two *gaiseki* girls, saying that by March something would come up.

At Imai Tech High, those who failed in the first recruitment examinations sat another one and had passed by the end of October. An exception was Yasuharu who was under treatment for his liver.

Phase 7: Post Examination School Routine and Employers' Actions
(October onwards)

School Routine after Getting a Job

By mid-October the majority of those who had aimed at employment at private companies had secured employment. After the excitement which students initially experienced over their job success, they gradually settled back into the school routine. The students knew that they would be working for a certain company unless they did something drastically wrong, and as long as they maintained a satisfactory school record. They were reminded that those who aimed at university and further education still had to work hard, and that they could not disturb them. The successful students seemed to feel for these classmates, and considered their needs.

While still looking after those who had not obtained jobs, the DGLASS's emphasis shifted from guidance for employment to that for further education. Students were making final decisions on the universities and colleges to apply for, based on various mock examination results.

In October public service screening examinations started for municipal, prefectural and national governments. There are three major entry tracks for the civil service depending on an applicant's final academic qualifications. High school graduates apply for the lower rank where the salary scale, kinds of tasks and promotion prospects are limited compared to university graduate positions. Students and the public regard the civil service as much more difficult to get into than private companies. Often those who apply for the civil service are top students who have confidence in their academic achievement. Many who wanted to apply for the civil service changed their minds when they started preparing for screening examinations, which cover a wider range of topics than private company employment examinations. At Sasaki High, only a few sat the screening examination, including Tamami, a 3D girl. At Imai Tech High, Nozomi was the only one who took the examination.

Blessed with the best weather of the year, both schools organised annual events on the school calendar: the school excursion and the Culture Festival. Students' participation in these extra-curricular activities was cheerful and lively, a feeling which seemed to be heightened by their freedom from the usual classroom routine. Both activities were organised around home room classes and made class solidarity stronger.

While students who obtained employment continued to attend classes as before, they started enjoying themselves more outside school. They claimed that this was the best time of their lives -- after entering the workforce they would be expected to conform to the company's expectations which include overtime work. They did not consider that they had to work hard at school, and were fully aware that they could get away with circumventing many of the school regulations. For them school was a place where they felt comfortable -- they could even sleep through classes, if they were not interested in the lesson. Many students who had obtained employment from April onwards had a part-

time job after school (e.g., waitressing, working at hamburger bars or as assistant cooks), although both schools prohibited this. Kenzo of 3MA class, for instance, always slept in classes.

During the break, Kenzo, Takehisa and I were chatting about driving licences. The machinery teacher for the next period entered the room, but some students still continued talking among themselves. At the teacher's instruction, they gradually returned to their seats and order came to the class. Kenzo, who was sitting in front of me, at the back row, was about to fall sleep, and said to me

I've been working late every night. But despite that, I am not late for school every day. I'm proud of it.Good night for now. (Fieldnotes, 12/10/89)

At Sasaki High the codes governing students' appearance became an issue for discussion among teachers. The headmaster had received a few comments from outside the school that Sasaki High students do not dress well, and took up the issue with students and staff members. He spoke about deviance in appearance, such as permed hair, dyed hair, untied long hair, coloured socks and brightly coloured jackets. The school rules prohibited all of these fashions (Fieldnotes, 4/10/89). While some teachers supported making the rules stricter, others did not, presenting "progressive" or "liberal" views which held that students should have greater freedom over such matters. The former teachers commented that those teachers who opposed tightening the rules do not want to face the demanding task of enforcing them and fear inviting student hostility and conflict situations. Mr. Yamada commented that the initiative by the DGLAS and the Department of Student Discipline (*seitoshidou-bu*) to tighten the rules would not work without the support of other teachers, and that more *newamashi* was necessary before raising the issue in a staff meeting or the school assembly (Fieldnotes, 4/10/89). Another teacher commented that the school should consider making the rules more "realistic" since students could not keep the present rules (Fieldnotes, 24/11/89). As can be seen the teachers held diverse views.

Companies Contact their Prospective Employees at School

Companies attempted to establish a relationship with prospective employees, after receiving a letter indicating acceptance of the offered position, together with the thank-you letter from students. As an indication, over 90% of students of the 3D, 3I and 3MA classes were contacted in some way by their employing companies. This was despite the fact that students were not due to start working until April of the following year and until then would not officially be employees. The companies' initiatives were appreciated by students as well as teachers.

A common form of contact was the practice of sending monthly company newsletters to students so that they could learn what had been happening within the company. Another popular method involved the company inviting new recruits to an appropriate staff gathering (e.g., to Christmas or the end of year parties) where they could meet current staff members. Those companies that required company uniforms to be worn requested students to visit the company for a fitting,

followed by a meeting. Some companies sent assignments: requiring students to write a self-introduction note which would be passed on to the student's prospective boss and colleagues, and which would also be placed in the company's monthly newsletter; other assignments asked the students to read a book provided by the company (some books were written by someone in the company about the company philosophy, while others were of a general kind) and to write an essay based on what they had read. Further similar tasks included studying a workbook on manners and speech patterns, or reading a book related to the particular field of employment. Teachers considered it desirable that students were kept purposefully occupied.

Phase 8: Official Exit from High School and Official Entry into Work place
(The last two months of high schooling. January to March)

Saki-city was hit by an unusually cold winter in 1990. Snow covered the school grounds on three occasions, prompting excited students to make snowmen, while sports clubs, unperturbed by the conditions, carried on training sessions in the snow. Students wore winter jackets, gloves and scarfs over their usual school uniform. The classrooms, however, were heated.

On the first school day of the third term, January 1990, the third year students were reminded that this term was to be the last; that they should make sure they came to school consistently so as not to accrue further absent days; and that they should prepare for the graduation examinations to be held in a month. Students chatted about what they did during the just-completed two week winter vacation which included New Years Day: travelling; working for the Post Office to earn money; some 31 students came to school to work on their furniture projects in order to enter a national competition. Several of them remarked, "I am sorry that I won't get any *otoshidama* (a cash present given to children at New Year) from next year. I may have to give *otoshidama* to my relatives! In that case, I'm not visiting them." Students were aware that they would change from *otoshidama* receivers to *otoshidama* givers.

The majority of the students received *nengajou* (new year greeting cards) from the companies where they would be working from April, and had sent a reply *nengajou* to them. Hearing this, those who did not receive *nengajou* from their companies became anxious, and some of them even inquired of their home room teachers if they were assured of jobs.

DGLAS also received many *nengajou* from companies, *senmongakkou* and universities. Imai Tech High, for instance, had sent 400 *nengajou* to what they considered important companies, and received over 500 *nengajou*. Mr. Okimoto sorted out the cards, and sent more *nengajou* to the companies to which the school had not sent one. A typical *nengajou* from a company read: "Happy New Year. We appreciate what you have done for us last year, and hope that you will continue your goodwill towards us this year as well." in printed form, and in handwriting "Thank you very much for

sending such a wonderful student as Tooru. He is working very well." (Fieldnotes, 10/1/90). The sending of *nengajou* was considered by DGLAS to be just a formality and to what extent *nengajou* exchange contributed to keeping/consolidating relationships between the two parties is difficult to estimate.

DGLAS at Sasaki High and Imai Tech High each had different priority tasks at this time of year. Since Sasaki High had students who were to sit open entrance exams to universities in February and March, the DGLAS was occupied with providing extensive guidance and coaching for these students. Imai Tech High had only a few of these students. The two DGLASs, however, did share the task of giving guidance to those who had already failed in entrance examinations and had now decided to look for employment. For instance, Hidetsugu, a 3MA boy who failed four entrance examinations in December, and Kaori, a 3D girl who failed in three entrance exams to junior colleges in December, now reported to the DGLAS that they were interested in getting jobs through the school. At Sasaki High there were still those who had not obtained jobs. Haruka, the 3D girl who was a Jehovah's Witness, and the two *gaiseki* girls, Hiroe and Tomoko, did not know where they would be in April. The two *gaiseki* girls had not sat their second round examinations, although Mr. Yamada had suggested several companies. Mr. Yamada invited the two to try for the positions which Haruka and Kaori had attempted, but they did not want them. Mr. Yamada expressed his frustration:

Mr. Yamada: I am starting to think that Hiroe and Tomoko in fact do not want permanent jobs, but instead want to be *furii-arubaitaa* (temporary workers). They perhaps don't want all the restrictions that come from being a full-time permanent worker. (Fieldnotes, 19/1/90)

Haruka felt insecure in that she was now the only 3D student who did not know where she would be going after graduation. For the time being, Mr. Yamada sought a position which would satisfy Haruka's conditions.

The school routine was a continuation of the end of the previous term. Students' conversation centred around driving lessons and *arubaito* (temporary jobs after school). They talked proudly of not being caught by teachers. Several 3MA boys disappeared from classrooms during breaks and went behind one of the sports club houses to smoke. Two other boys from the same class came to class one day with plastered limbs, which created an uproar among the boys but infuriated many teachers. They had injured themselves in motor bike accidents -- the riding of motor bikes was prohibited by the school. I still don't know how their home room teacher, Mr. Ide, managed to keep the two boys' accidents from the school records and their companies. 3I students stayed at school late to complete their graduation projects in furniture making. Amidst these events, a routine prevailed:

Mr. Shimahara made sure that the class was at least quiet. As usual, Hisami and Manami are asleep, and Kouji and Tadashi are chatting away in a low voice. Several are absorbed in reading comics hidden under their desks. The topic of the lesson is the lay-out of an office, which in many cases has no bearing on what many of them would be doing in their employment: Kouji will be learning to cook Chinese food, Yumeko making pearl necklaces, Kasumi selling at a department store. However, many of the students still listen to Mr. Shimahara, and take notes. It looks as if they do this for the sake of doing it OR because they have no choice. I don't feel that they are oppressed -- you can still sleep in class if you want to, like Hisami and Manami. The students may be enjoying simply being in class, being a student, and having a choice of activities (which would not be the case at work). (Fieldnotes, 9/1/90)

At the end of January the third year students (of both schools) sat the school's graduation examinations, and completed their academic work, following which they were to stay at home for a few weeks until the graduation ceremony. Those who failed in one or more subjects in the graduation examinations were required to return to school to attend extra coaching, and then sit the examinations again, thus being provided with the maximum opportunity to graduate with the rest of the students.

During February, third year students stayed at home, supposedly to study by themselves. Some groups of 3I students still came to school to finish their furniture-making. Others did little at home. Some students attended a pre-orientation meeting with their respective employers. Students received a letter from their companies regarding their initial training and education and the entrance ceremony.

In late February, one week before the graduation ceremony, Haruka finally got a job which conformed to the strict working hours she wanted. It was with a semi-governmental harbour transport company. Sasaki High's DGLAS was busy referring the students who had failed their university entrance examinations to employment positions. At this time, most employment examinations consisted only of an interview.

A girl in the academic course entered the DGLAS room and waited for the company representatives to arrive.

Mr. Yamada: [in a friendly manner] Do you have white socks on? Are you ready for this important meeting?

Mrs. Okui: [eating lunch] Are you sure of your decision? I know that you wondered if you would spend another year studying for the entrance examination, or get employment -- if you have any doubt, don't go ahead, since it will cause enormous trouble to the school. You can't just leave work after one month, you know?. You have to stay at the same job at least a year, Mr. Yamada?

Girl: Yes, I am sure of it. I will at least work there for a year. (Fieldnotes, 26/2/90)

After a while, the company representatives came in with a bag of sweets as a present. Mr. Yamada put relevant documents into an envelope and took it to the man in the guest room. An office lady served tea. Mr. Yamada talked for a while with the man, then the girl was called in. The three talked for 10 minutes, and later the man and the girl talked for 20 minutes. Mr. Yamada reported later that she was offered the position. (Fieldnotes, 26/2/90)

Once a student failed in all attempts at university entrance examinations, they had to decide whether they were prepared to spend another year studying for next year's entrance examinations. More boys were prepared to choose this path than girls.

On 27th February 1990, all Saki-city municipal high schools conducted their graduation ceremonies. By this time all graduates from Imai Tech High knew where they were going from April, except for Takekazu. Takekazu was still to sit the entrance examination for a school for professional bicycle racers in April. Sasaki High still had students who were sitting entrance exams to universities. There were also a reasonable number of *rounin* who were to spend another year preparing for next year's university entrance examinations at private preparatory schools. Students talked about when they would start receiving their initial company training and subsequently begin work proper, and expressed anxiety about going to a new place.

The graduation ceremony is the most formal and important event in a student's three years at senior high school (along with the entrance ceremony at the commencement of the first year). School staff and parents made the leaving students feel special about the graduation ceremony. The ceremony was attended by graduating students, the entire staff of the school, parents and representatives from the municipal education board and headmasters from nearby junior high schools. Parents attended the ceremony in formal clothes, many mothers wearing traditional kimono. Teachers were also dressed formally in black suit and white tie. The PTA had made an orchid corsage for every student and home room teacher.

The headmaster and guests delivered congratulation speeches: a prevalent theme was that the graduating students were to become *shakai-jin*, that is, adults who were expected to take responsibility for themselves. Some mothers cried when their sons and daughters received high school diplomas. Teachers later explained to me that these mothers had worked very hard to get their sons and daughters through high school.

The graduates had now officially left school, for ever. Many of them did not want this to happen to them so early. They still wanted to defer the major transition from a carefree student existence to the responsibilities of the *shakai-jin*.

Within a few weeks after official graduation, over half of these young adults started receiving "pre-entrance education" from their respective companies. For instance, Yoshimi stayed for a week at Nada CO-OP's training centre, located on an island, and received lessons on basic manners, at the same time making many friends. After that, she learned cashier skills at another training centre for two weeks before she officially entered the company and was assigned to a branch co-op on 1st April.

Those who had a general position, like a clerical job, at a big company received two distinctive types of education. Firstly there was a "pre-entry training session" covering an introduction to the company and lessons on manners and etiquette, during which the company observed the new recruits in order to decide which divisions they would be assigned to. On 1st April the new recruits received official notice of their appointment to a particular division. Each division then provided specific work-related training for their new members. The initial training/education period varied depending on the company and the kind of position.

Summary

Critical Phases of the Transition/Job Referral

I have presented eight "critical phases" in the transition from school to work as *practised* at Sasaki High and Imai Tech High. These phases were identified in the light of how the school, employers and teachers perceived the process of the job referral and the transition: what they thought they were doing in each phase. I intended to provide a "thick description" of the processes which took place at the two schools. The same transition process was experienced quite differently by individual students, and this will be presented in the next chapter. Here I summarise the relevant points.

Below are the eight "critical phases" of the transition from school to work.

Phase 1: Groundwork by school and employers (April to June. The beginning of the last year of high schooling until the three-party meeting)

Phase 2: The student and his/her home room teacher decide on specific companies (July to late August)

Phase 3: Internal selection meeting: individual's decision becomes the school's (late August)

Phase 4: Final preparation for the recruitment examinations: the school marshals its resources (late August to 14th September)

Phase 5: Recruitment examinations: what employers want to know about students (15th September onwards)

Phase 6: Follow-up action to passing and failing in the recruitment examinations (late September onwards)

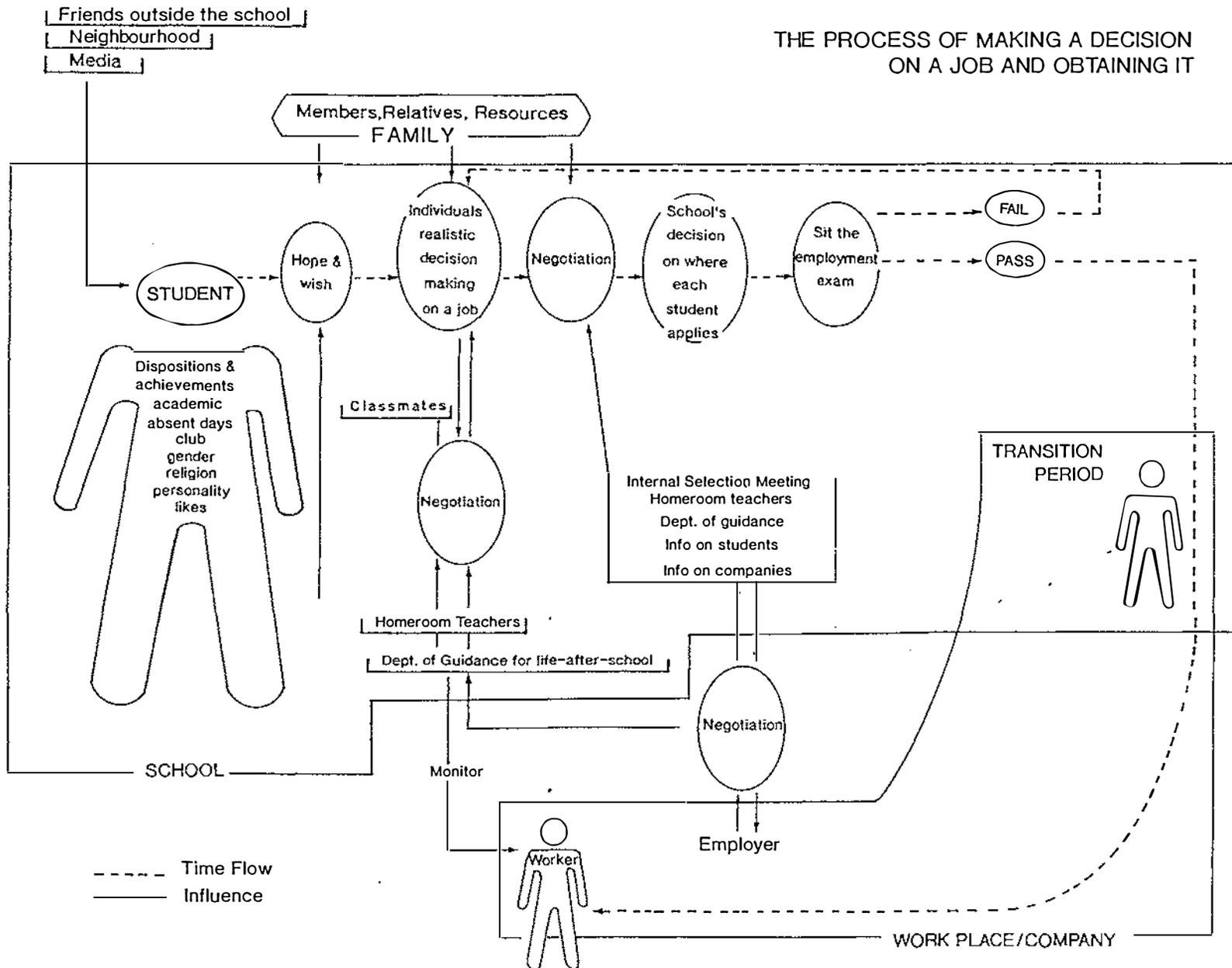
Phase 7: Post-examination school routine and employers' actions (October onwards)

Phase 8: Official exit from high school and official entry into the workplaces (January to March)

The phases may be better understood as presented in the chart on the following page.

The school's dominant ideology regarding employment was expressed overtly in phase 1, and implicitly at later stages. The schools suggested "stable and appropriate jobs", dismissed *furii arubaitaa* (non-permanent work), stressed "persistence and endurance at work", urged students to act

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in consideration of the collective well-being of the school, and told them to learn *keigo* and manners. These messages were reinforced by young workers (ex-students of the schools) invited to speak to the students, who added other important messages about the reality of the workplace: individual responsibility for the collective well-being of the company and the hierarchical nature of the work place based on length of service and educational qualifications. Individual teachers, in particular home room teachers and the DGLAS teachers, were engaged in providing relevant information and suggestions to students.

Relationship between the School, Companies and the PESO

The relationship between the school, companies and the PESO is worth examining in some detail. Companies get their RCs approved by the PESO before sending them to schools. The PESO checks the working conditions described by each RC so that youth labour exploitation does not take place. Such actions as "courtesy visits" and sending New Year's cards on the part of both schools and companies are not only for the sake of securing immediate support and cooperation over the next year, but more to establish and nurture long-term relationships, from which should flow long-term benefits. In addition the school monitors ex-students at work through "courtesy visits". The relationship is maintained for the collective needs of both schools and companies. The school's long-term relationship with a "desirable" company may be a determining factor in a student's employment decision, when they are not sure which of several choices is preferable. When the school's collective need is not necessarily consistent with that of an individual student, the school faces a dilemma.

Relations between companies and the school are not unilateral. Schools are *not* agents for companies but maintain an independence: schools do not simply respond to the companies' demands and select the kind of students that companies want. When the DGLAS and the *gakunen* teachers decide to "modify" academic marks and school attendance in the school records to be sent to employers in order to increase the chances of students "at risk", the school works in favour of its students, rather than of the prospective employers. Making such modifications is also a violation of the institutional tasks delegated to the school by the PESO and the education board (state agencies). When schools try to make sure that their *gaiseki* students get what they want, they approach the companies concerned and indirectly pressure them to accept *gaiseki*. Schools challenge the present employment practice of many companies which discriminate against minority students. Some companies tried to make an effort to provide what both new recruits and the school wanted -- an example was the *Douyuukai* (the nation-wide association of small to medium size companies) strategy of collectively organising counselling and initial training in an attempt to attract students. The school thus has a certain amount of autonomy from employers and the state agencies, and can initiate independent actions to help their students. These autonomous actions, however, were not always endorsed by all the school staff members.

Maternalism and Paternalism

The main feature of the job referral system as practised is the wide extent of the school's employment-related service which includes providing a social network with companies, intensive preparation for recruitment examinations, and detailed guidance and advice. An observer may gain the impression that teachers were to a certain extent "spoonfeeding" their students, when, for instance, they provided systematic guidance for employment examinations and interviews, and on how to fill in a curriculum vitae or write an acceptance letter.

The school policy of employment guidance was to minimise "failures" in employment examinations, to save individual students from choosing jobs which may be unsuitable for them, to protect students from harsh open competition, and to prevent students from making "mistakes". The teachers and the school believed that they were acting in these ways for the well-being of their students. If seen in another light, it is a school's collective attempt to allocate students to the positions available in the workforce. Functionalists might see such a system as performing an important function to maintain the present social structure (which is based on the division of labour and stratification). Marxists, on the other hand, might critically observe such a system as contributing to the social relations of domination by the powerful.

The system projects itself, to outsiders (in particular, to those with a Western background) as what I will refer to as *paternalistic*, in that the school treats students as "small children", deprives them of their independence and autonomy, and controls their decisions by giving over-explicit directions. However, according to those involved in the process (the insiders), the system is in fact what I will call *maternalistic*, in that students appreciated the "caring" and "protection" aspects of the system more than its elements of "control". Students appreciated the teachers' work and efforts on their behalf. Maternalism as a consequence, involves the school's control, both intentional and unintentional, over students. Maternalism is not a one-way relationship in which the school provides "assistance" and takes actions in favour of the students. The school *expects* students to respond in certain ways, not in an explicit and authoritative manner, but rather in a subtle and obliging way.

This was observed strikingly on a number of occasions. When Hanshin Railways rang to advise that Osamu's eyesight was not up to the required standard, Mr. Nakane, the HOD of DGLAS, took the blame on himself (the school) and *apologised* for the school's inadequacy. Mr. Nakane accused Osamu's home room teacher of lack of care and attention. These actions were based on an acceptance that the school was Osamu's patron, and that Osamu's home room teacher was Osamu's immediate patron. The Hanshin Railways responded by saying that young people make mistakes, and offered another position which did not require such good eyesight. The company's action was also "protective" of Osamu. Adopting maternalistic roles, the school and the company negotiated over Osamu's job, on his behalf. When Shigeru did not turn up for his employment examination, the headmaster visited the company to apologise for Shigeru's misbehaviour. Mr. Nakane considered that the DGLAS should have detected Shigeru's reluctance, and blamed the teachers (including himself).

Again Mr. Nakane saw the accident as Shigeru's home room teacher's responsibility. When Yutaka was asked to work in Tokyo instead of in a nearby city as indicated in the RC, DGLAS teachers and his home room teacher discussed the pros and cons of Yutaka's alternatives for him, rather than leaving the decision to him.

Maternalism is not only exercised by the school and teachers. As mentioned above, companies often take maternalistic actions toward students, through the school. When companies contact students in October for pre-orientation meetings, they make students feel cared for and consequently happy. This is a form of maternalism, although one can argue it is a type of manipulation and control. Seen at a macro level, the institutional system of job referral is maternalistic in nature. The state acts as patron for companies and schools through the PESO to facilitate appropriate distribution of high school students to companies, for the sake of the students, the companies and the schools. This is affected by the PESO issuing approval stamps and regulations. Again, one can argue that this is one of the state's mechanisms of control and domination.

One of the assumptions of maternalism is, as articulated by Mr. Nakane and Mr. Ishida, that students are not yet "adult" and mature enough to be able to make "appropriate" decisions on their own. Since students are not trusted in this regard, they do not make an *individual* decision about a job. The decision-making process involves teachers and family members. The larger amounts of information and contact with companies provided by the school means that Japanese students involve teachers and school resources to a far greater degree in employment-related matters than their Australasian counterparts.

Teachers' Views on Their Roles

I held a feedback seminar for Imai Tech High teachers towards the end of my fieldwork, and presented a view which emphasised the paternalistic aspects of the job referral system and introduced them to my chart of the process (between page 123 and 124). It led to a discussion amongst participating teachers about the "protective" nature of the job referral practice. Teachers differed in their views. Below are some of the teachers' comments.

Mr. Aso (HOD of the Automobile Department): I wonder if the *shuushoku-assen* (job referral), which we are practising, is really *shokugyou kyouiku* (career education). *Shuushoku assen* is job introduction and matching, and I don't know if that is desirable from the "educational" point of view. There is a teaching certificate in *shokugyou shidou* (career guidance) which you can get at university, just like a teaching certificate in English, Maths, etc. But the teaching certificate is not really useful in getting a teaching position. Few schools have a separate class for *shokugyou kyouiku*. What we are doing at this school is to get RCs from companies and to match them with students. As KO indicated, we do so much for our students. I do feel that we are doing far too much. I wonder if we should go to this extent. I

certainly did not see guidance practised to this extent at my previous school a long time ago. They simply put RCs on the employment board, or kept the cards so that students could inspect them. They didn't process the data so systematically. Because we do too much for them, the students become *amaeru* (yielding to the temptation of ease or pleasure). They don't learn to be independent. It's a vicious circle, isn't it?

Mr. Wagatsuma (DGLAS teacher/ Automobile Department): Well, the quality of our students has changed over the years. Twenty years ago, we had far more motivated students who were already independent. They could manage to find appropriate employment with the kind of system Mr. Aso mentioned before, but not now. They would be completely at a loss as to what to do.

Mr. Waki (3MB assistant home room teacher/Machinery): The chart was well presented. Since I have not thought of the process in such a systematic manner, it is striking - in particular, your comment that students may be deprived of *jishu-sei* (independence and autonomy) in the whole process; that students are absent from the within-school negotiation session where home room teachers act for their students. Negotiation takes place between teachers and companies, and teachers and students, not between students and companies. In a way, we are responding to what a company wants. (Fieldnotes, 21/2/90)

Mr. Aso's concern about the lack of professionalism and teachers qualified in career guidance was also mentioned by a few teachers outside the DGLAS at Sasaki High. (Fieldnotes, 4/9/89)

One of the active DGLAS teachers confessed that he did not believe in what the DGLAS does for students, but he still continued to perform his *tachiba* (assigned role) within the school.

Mr. Okimoto (DGLAS teacher/ Japanese): I have always thought that we do far too much for students, and do not let them learn on their own. For instance, we have calls from companies saying that students did not turn up, and take follow-up actions so that students don't get disadvantaged. Now, employment is for them and their future, not for the school. They should be able to look after themselves. I do work for the DGLAS, but this is my personal view, and I just wanted KO to know that not all teachers are doing what they believe in. We all have *tachiba* (an official role) within the school and society. (Fieldnotes, 21/2/90)

Teachers who are active in human rights protection argued that the "protection" was necessary for the minority students, that "open competition" disadvantaged the weak students:

Mr. Gomi (DGLAS teacher/ Social Science): I am impressed with the chart. You describe our system from a third person point of view. We are so involved in the process that we cannot often see ourselves in such a systematic fashion..... We need to maintain our guidance system since the PESO does not do enough. Do you know what the PESO does for high school graduates? They will give you a minute for what they call "consultation" and a few RCs straight away, without any knowledge about the student. I don't consider it "consultation". The PESO simply does not have the necessary data and knowledge about individual students. Individual students are not mature enough to judge for themselves, certainly not all of them. The PESO does not have enough data about companies either. They may believe in everything the company says, while we investigate till we are sure. ... Also, if we didn't have the present system, the minorities would have difficulties. They can't compete in an "unprotected" market. For the minorities, we negotiate with companies, and make

sure that all minority students have appropriate employment (good conditions, secure, and the understanding of the employers). We have a "one student for one company" system; where one student only can apply for one company at a time. This is to reduce the heated competition in which only the "powerful" students succeed. Look at the university entrance exams. Students can apply and sit for as many universities as they want. The result is that bright students pass several exams, and slow and weaker ones pass none. There is no protection for the weaker students. The same is true for university graduates getting employment. They can apply for as many companies as they want. The brighter ones end up being offered many positions, while the weaker students get none. *Kyousou genri* (principle of open competition) does work against the minority. They can't compete in such a market. That's why we need the present system, although it is certainly "protective".

Mr. Tanaka (teacher in charge of human rights issues/ English): The comment that students are protected underestimates the difficulties which minorities would face under "open competition". I believe that school must be responsible for *shinro hoshou* (guarantee students' life-after-school) so that everyone can have a good start in their life after school. They need our assistance. (Fieldnotes, 21/2/90)

When Mr. Gomi stated that the "open competition" in the job market disadvantages minority students, an assumption is that the competition is not purely based on academic merit. Minority students lose in the competition with other students having identical marks. What is the "merit" in the Japanese high school labour market, then? It seems that it is the predictability of the individual worker. Merits and demerits do not necessarily only relate to *present* achievement. Unalterable attributes such as female gender, *gaiseki* or *buraku* status, *kesson katei* (broken family background), or a family member's criminal record are considered to be demerits. Companies do not want employees from minority groupings, because usually they have not had much experience with such people, and fear that they would be unpredictable. Mr. Honda (DGLAS teacher/Machinery) described this as *bunan-shikou* (an inclination to choose a safer path), and explained that such companies reason "why get someone unpredictable when the alternative is someone who you know from your previous experience will provide stable service?". Since I was not sure of what he meant, he continued his explanation, giving an example: "Imagine there are two candidates for your prospective spouse, one is divorced and the other not, and that you like both of them more or less equally. You would choose the latter since it's fairly certain that he will not do anything unpredictable. He may not be exciting, but you will have a secure life". If the majority of companies take this *bunan-shikou* orientation in employing high school graduates, the school needs to "protect" these students, as Mr. Gomi said. However, when are the minority students going to learn to be independent and even to fight against such practices?

Mr. Ishida (DGLAS teacher/Maths): I have observed you working hard and asking very thought-provoking questions. I personally enjoyed that. Our detailed, systematic and well organised system of job referral must have looked odd to you. Japan was a poor country that had to catch up with the West by any means, placing a priority on efficiency -- we could not afford to make mistakes. We were desperate. Rich countries did not have such a problem. I remember very well after the Second World War we as kids looked upon Americans with envy, surprised at what they had. We had to be organised. ...I think that our system has changed, and will keep

changing. For instance, changing jobs is much more common now than before, which is likely to have some effect on our practice of job referral and vocational education. If we change, that would be in the direction of Western practice. I would be interested in what the future of job referral and guidance in our school might be. (Fieldnotes, 21/2/90)

Deputy-head: The chart is well done, but it looks as if the school were only mechanically matching jobs. The school provides *shokugyou kyōiku* (vocational education) through homeroom classes in the first year. Students talk about the meaning of work, how they should decide on a particular job, etc. *Shinro Nyūusu* (a newsletter published by the DGLAS, which contains letters from ex-students about their working lives) is an important reference for them. Also, compare our school with academic schools. They do not do much for job seekers, since they are preoccupied with preparing students for university entrance. There are differences across schools. Also, please note that there are cases where our students' independence (*jishusei*) is encouraged.

Mr. Nakane (HOD of DGLAS/ PE): I am worried that your use of the term "protection" may give the wrong idea about our practices. You can explain what we do, not as protective, but as "detailed guidance". You need to present the whole picture. (Fieldnotes, 21/2/90)

Three older teachers in their 60s whom I interviewed (one at Imai Tech High and two at Sasaki High), made two shared comments on the present practice which reflected their long experience. They considered that nowadays school provides much more systematic and elaborate job referral than before, processing all the RCs for students by computers, conducting the internal selection and storing relevant data for future guidance; and they felt that teachers do far too much for students. The practice of the job referral system as described in this chapter does not have a long history. The DGLAS was created as a separate department in the late 1960s at Imai Tech High, and in late 1983 at Sasaki High (Fieldnotes, Imai Tech High 13/3/90; Sasaki High 9/3/90). Mr. Uda, who has been at Imai Tech High since 1950, was a third year Ship-building home room teacher in 1970, and described the practice at that time.

Mr. Uda:Since many positions were specifically related to students in the ship-building course, I used to pin the RCs on the wall of the classroom. It's in part because we did not have a photocopying machine then. We did not give such detailed guidance as they do now. I guess that there were simply so many jobs that anyone who sat the exam passed it -- it was a boom period for the ship-building industry. Our attitude toward guidance for life after school was different. We understood that we were giving "help" to PESO in their work. The DGLAS only handed the RCs to home room teachers. The employment exams started on 1st October, which meant we did not give career guidance during the summer vacation either. The date changed to 15th September, and now it's 1st September..... In those days, I used to have many more holidays from school and went fishing during the summer vacation. When I came to school during the summer vacation, I found

almost no teachers here. Not now.... all teachers work hard during vacation time. I feel that teachers take on a greater and greater workload, there is never any reduction in their duties. They say "because School A is doing this, let's try it out here". Whenever we have a new headmaster, he introduces new programmes. They think the more work the better. I don't think so. The quality of the work is more important. (Fieldnotes, 13/3/90)

Another view shared by the three teachers in their 60s was that minority students do not face the level of discrimination that they experienced ten years ago. Thus, teachers within a single school hold diverse views on the practice of the job referral system.

Creative Teachers: Diversity and Some Autonomy

Teachers are diverse and do not blindly endorse the school's "collective" decisions and what is expected from education authorities or elsewhere. They maintain a capacity to act on their own. Firstly, teachers have various views on school policies and practices, as was seen in the case of the job referral practice. Some of them may be playing an important role within the job referral system even if, like Mr. Okimoto, they do not necessarily believe in what they are doing. Conflicting views were expressed by teachers during the discussion about "modifying" school records, and tightening students' dress codes.

Secondly, teachers negotiate, interpret and implement the given decisions and policies of the school differently. This was shown in internal conflicts and complaints about one another observed among teachers. For instance, Mr. Nakane, the HOD of Imai Tech High's DGLAS, was furious about Mr. Mishima's inadequate guidance and pre-investigation on behalf of his home room students. Mr. Yamada complained that Mr. Takada did not develop a rapport with his home room students and make an effort to help his *gaiseki* students. Mr. Takada and Mr. Sato thought that the affirmative action measures suggested by the DGLAS went beyond what they personally considered necessary. Some of the teachers' actions contradicted school decisions and policies. Mr. Gomi, for instance, did not use government textbooks but created his own handouts to suit students' needs, challenged the present work ethic of the Japanese workforce, and questioned a new superannuation scheme, advising students not to join it. Several teachers at Sasaki High stopped warning students whose appearance was not consistent with the school regulations, saying that students should have a little more freedom. It is not that these teachers challenged all of the school's decisions: some actions they took were contrary to school policy and decisions but in other respects they conformed with school requirements.

A school is not a monolithic organisation where all teachers (or for that matter, students) agree on school policies and practices. The next chapter will observe how students experienced the transition process.

CHAPTER 5

ACTIVE AND REACTIVE STUDENTS: ACCEPTANCE AND RESISTANCE

The previous chapter discussed the eight phases of transition, primarily from the perspectives of the school and teachers. The phases are an organisational and institutional arrangement, created by the school in response to external demands from employers and the government agency, the PESO. The system may project itself as so systematic, organised and tightly structured that it leaves little room for individual students and teachers to take independent actions. The institutional arrangements as described before may give the impression that teachers and students follow the phases passively. This is not the case.

This chapter examines how individual students perceived information and advice from the school, parents and companies, how they made sense of it, solved problems and took action in each of the eight phases. These students' responses, in return, affected the actions of teachers and the school. The pre-arranged organisational structure did determine what students do, by setting boundaries, but did not determine practices within those broad boundaries.

Phase 1. Groundwork by School and Employers

(April to June. The beginning of the last year of high schooling until the three-party meeting)

Students received messages from public meetings organised by the DGLAS. They became more realistic about their decision-making, hearing what their seniors had to say about their work experiences. The kind of messages absorbed and the degree to which they registered in students' minds depended on what they were thinking at the time.

The following section shows the diversity of individual student's trajectories during this period. At the June three-party meeting, the end of this phase, roughly three types of students' responses were evident: those who indicated the kind of work they wished to engage in but not specific companies (57 out of 90 students, including those who decided to aim for university); those who, having decided the kind of job they wanted, announced specific companies of their choice (21 out of 90); and those who announced neither a specific employment choice nor company (12 out of 90).

Some of Those Who Announced their Choice Regarding a Preferred Job

Sayuri

Sayuri, a 3D girl, had always wished to become a clerical worker since she did not know of any other options after completing her high school diploma in the data processing course. She entered Sasaki High since she was told that "computer skill" (whatever it means) would be useful in her

future, but did not know exactly how to use the skills for obtaining a job. At the beginning of her third year, she learned that 3D students can use their skills in three kinds of work: programmer, key-puncher and operator. She *wrongly believed* that only the top one or two students in the class could get programming positions. If her marks had been better, she would have wanted to be a programmer. At the June three-party meeting, she was told to study and raise her marks. She did not mention that she favoured a programming position, since she thought she was not good enough, although her mother (single-parent family) encouraged it, and instead said that she would be happy with any clerical position.

Sayuri's underestimation of her capability, or possibly her misunderstanding of what was required to be a programmer, was observed in respect of several other 3D girls. They opted for clerical positions, saying "I am not good enough to be a programmer". At the three-party meeting, their home room teacher, Mr. Kodama, responded by suggesting that they try for a programming position. Some, like Mari, took his advice and decided to aim to be a programmer, while others did not.

Kyouko

Kyouko, a 3D girl, had continuous arguments with her mother about her life-after-school at the beginning of the year when she had to decide on option subjects: English and Japanese Classics for those who aim at further education and Data processing for those who do not. Kyouko wanted to go to university to study either economics or art, while her mother (single-parent family) insisted on Kyouko getting employment.

Kyouko: I like painting and sculpture. My mother was against it. The major problem was money. I will spend money if I go to university, while I will earn money if I get a job. My younger brother will enter senior high school next year, which will cost our family as well. I know also that it's easy to get a job after graduating from Sasaki High's data processing course. Well, I came to this school with the intention of getting a job after school.

KO: You mean that you hadn't thought of going to a fine arts university when you entered this school?

Kyouko: No. I would get a different kind of job after finishing university. Since I was at primary school, I have always wanted to spend an extra year to prepare for university entrance, and then, following graduation, become an art teacherI loved art classes at junior high school. I wanted to enter an art course at a senior high school. My mother kept telling me to take a commerce course at senior high school from the time I entered junior high school. She did not take any notice of what I wanted. My home room teacher at junior high school also did not take my wish seriously.

KO: Didn't you insist on doing what you really wanted?

Kyouko: I was busy resisting taking the commerce course then. At junior high school, I thought it "ordinary" to go to academic high. I rebelled against my mother's insistence on the commerce course. I said that I was going to go to an academic high. I knew, though, that it would be more difficult to get a job from an academic high. My mother still tried to push me into a commerce course. My teacher, knowing my mother's wish, guided me into a data processing course, saying that this was not a commerce course. Then I compromised.

KO: Since when have you wanted to go to university?

Kyouko: Always. Even now I do. I looked through pamphlets from fine arts

universities, and chose some. When in April I told my mother about it, she was not happy. In the end she got furious, and said, "In that case, do whatever you want!" But I knew that she was not saying that from her heart. She also threatened me, "You would have to get part-time jobs to supplement your fees, and won't be able to be the same as other university students." Then I thought, "If I have to work to earn money all the time, what's the point of going to university?"

KO: What exactly did your mother say about you going to a fine arts university?

Kyouko: She said that one of her friends has her child at a fine arts university, and that it cost so much. My younger brother took my mother's side. He hates studying and has no wish to go to university.

KO: Did you talk about this with your teacher?

Kyouko: Yes I did. I also talked with Mr. Furukawa, my second year home room teacher. They were supportive of me going to university, mentioning the availability of scholarships. (Interview, 30/10/89)

Kyouko's uninformed and premature decision to come to the data processing course (instead of academic high school) three years ago made it almost impossible for her to pursue a career in art, although she still has a desire to do so. Her mother made the decision for her on the grounds of limited economic resources, although Kyouko resisted complying until the last moment. When I talked to Mr. Kodama later in the year, he did not remember Kyouko wanting to go to a fine arts university. Kyouko might not have discussed this with Mr. Kodama.

Kyouko: When I decided on the option subjects from the viewpoint of getting a job, I thought that a clerical job would be better than a professional computer job.

KO: Why?

Kyouko: Programmers have a lot of responsibility. I am not particularly good at programming. It's not that I don't want to be one.... I just thought that a clerical job would be more suitable for me. I am good at calculations, and I wouldn't get bored if I had to do that sort of clerical work. If you are a key-puncher, it would be repetitive. I know that one of our ex-students quit her job because she got bored. (Interview, 30/10/89)

Thus Kyouko narrowed down her choice prior to the June three-party meeting. In April she gave up her idea of trying for further education and decided to get a job because, she said, her mother insisted on it. Kyouko's personal preference was for a clerical position, having eliminated programming and key-operator positions as possible choices, and she conveyed her decision to Mr. Kodama at the three-party meeting. Mr. Kodama was supportive of Kyouko's choice but unaware of the complete background against which it had been made.

Hisako

Speeches given by ex-students (arranged for the benefit of the students by each DGLAS), had some impact on the students. They were surprised at the ex-students' *keigo* speech patterns, and wondered if in a year's time they too would be naturally using such patterns. The talks had the general effect of raising the students' awareness of what was involved in getting a job and leaving school, but at the same time interpretations of what was said differed between individual students. For instance, Hisako, a 3D girl who had wanted to be a programmer since she entered the school, had second thoughts about it after the talk.

Hisako: When I heard the talk by an ex-data processing course student who had got a programmer position this April, I started thinking that such a professional programming position would not be suitable for me.

KO: In what respect?

Hisako: She said that she talked to customers directly, and visited their offices as part of her job and for the sake of goodwill. I am not good at casual conversation with strangers. (Interview, 26/10/89)

Others interpreted the talks positively, seeing them as reinforcement of the decisions they had already made.

Yuuji

Yuuji's high school life centred around his involvement in the bike racing club. In his second year, he started thinking of jobs relating to bikes: making custom-made bikes; bike racer; bikeshop salesman; bike design. However, he did not think his technical drawing skills were good enough for the last option. At the three-party meeting, Yuuji advised that he wanted to find a job relating to bikes. Mr. Uno said that he would leave the task of searching for such jobs to Yuuji's club teachers.

Kasumi

Not all those who advised their teacher of the kind of work they wanted received their home room teachers' support. Kasumi had wanted to become a hairdresser since she was at kindergarten, but did not get any support from her parents who possessed traditional values regarding the occupation.

Kasumi: When I was leaving junior high school, I wanted to become a hairdresser trainee, but my parents were furious about it, saying that I had to go to senior high school. Perhaps because they themselves did not go to senior high school, they wanted me to go there. If I had failed to enter this school, I would have become a hairdresser trainee. So, I am not too sure if my passing the entrance exam was a good thing or not. My mother said, "If you are not going to senior high school, go to cooking school to be a chef. That way, you can at least have useful skills even when you have family." My aunts and uncles also advised against becoming a hairdresser. They did not think highly of the job. My parents perhaps did not wish me to be in an occupation where you always have to please customers. They themselves worked in a dress shop, and had to please whoever came.

(Yoshimi interrupted, "True, we don't have a high opinion of hairdressers. Hair designers, these trendy ones, may be different, though".)

Kasumi: I think that hairdressers are not highly regarded since they don't really have to use their brains. For that matter, sales work is the same. People tend to think that those who don't do well at school get sales positions. Nursing is another job that is not highly regarded. Nowadays you need a certificate from a nursing school to be a nurse, but it is not all that difficult. People tend to see those in the occupations which few people want as "lower class". In my case, my personality does not suit clerical work, you know. I will get bored just sitting there. Some people think a clerical job is much easier than a position which requires contact with strangers. At the beginning of the year my parents still did not want me to become a hairdresser -- because they have this traditional idea that hair is something dirty, and therefore an occupation which involves touching someone else's hair is despised. So, I wanted a sales rep. position. It's different from an ordinary retail sales position in that you sell things like houses and cars more by showing the customer pamphlets rather than the actual products. Another idea was a service position, like a job at a stage setting company. But all these positions are not available to girls. So, I had to give up on them I feel that many companies don't know that Imai Tech High has girls as well. Our school has been known for its machinery course for the last 50 years.

KO: What did you say at the three-party meeting?

Kasumi: When I mentioned about a sales position, Mr. Uno's facial expression gave me the impression that he thought a sales position was not a desirable option. I feel that nobody else thinks highly of sales positions, either. (Interview, 4/10/89)

Kasumi's father had been employed at a local post office in some lower level capacity since leaving the tailoring shop where he met his wife. Her mother earned a small income by doing some work at home. Her elder sister had gone to a local academic school and had subsequently become a clerical worker at the post office. Kasumi was a cheerful and outgoing girl who often took a leadership role in organising class events, and was an elected member of the student council, both at junior high school and at Imai Tech High. She had acquired respectable manners and speech patterns through her involvement in school council activities. She was aware that the dominant social values supported a job hierarchy and that, accordingly, hairdresser and sales positions occupied a low ranking. However, she tried to be honest with herself in voicing her true desires.

Kouji

Kouji was another who reached a decision on an occupation which his home room teacher did not support. Until the second year at Imai Tech High, Kouji had several ideas for future jobs: to be a truck driver, a cartoonist, a taxi driver and then an electrician, and sometimes to succeed his father by becoming a carpenter. When working part-time at a local hamburger shop, he became aware that he enjoyed talking to people and making something for them. During his second year summer vacation, when he spent a lot of time at the shop, Kouji thought of making a career in a related field, for example, as a chef. Once this possibility occurred to him, he lost interest in making cabinets and in Technical Drawing at school.

KO: What did you say at the June three-party meeting?

Kouji: I told Mr. Uno for the first time that I wanted to be a chef. He said, "Since you are in the interior course, why don't you pursue a career in that line?" But I repeated that I wanted to be a chef. Mr. Uno in the end gave in and said "Since there are many RCs from restaurants, I will look out for them for you." But in the end he did not do that for me.

KO: Is that because he still wanted you to go into interior design?

Kouji: Well...I don't think that he is the kind of person who thinks very seriously about his students.

KO: And your parents?

Kouji: My parents were not against my wish to be a chef. (Interview, 30/11/89)

Kouji's decision to become a chef originated in his after-school activities in town. Kouji worked part-time at the hamburger shop without the necessary school permission. The school made it a rule that students get permission from the school before taking on part-time work, because it was believed that after-school activities in town could have a detrimental influence on students - they may learn to smoke, drink and buy other "unnecessary" things with the money they earn, in addition to being diverted from study. Kouji confessed that his parents' support, though not overtly encouraging, kept his morale up during this period.

In the cases of Kasumi and Kouji, we see that teachers were not successful in making students accept the dominant stand (school's) regarding different kinds of work.

Some of Those Who Did Not Announce their Preferences to Teachers

Tamotsu

Tamotsu, a 3MA boy, had wanted to be a suburban train conductor since he was three. He thought of nothing else as his choice, but did not mention this to his teacher. He lived in *shitamachi* with his mother and his younger sister. His mother worked at a restaurant in the centre of the city, and, he said, did not interfere much in his life. His younger sister went to a private girls school.

Tamotsu: Since I had by then decided to get employment after high school, I chose the machinery course.

KO: Why not other vocational courses like ship-building, electronics, commerce etc?

Tamotsu: These options did not occur to me. My junior high teacher told me that I could go to Prefectural Tech High which ranked higher. But I did not want to have to commute by bus. So I decided on Imai Tech High's machinery course.

KO: Why the machinery course?

Tamotsu: I am not sure. I first saw Imai Tech's pamphlet, and then came to the school's open day. I noticed that there were three machinery classes while there was only one class in both ship-building and automobile. The machinery course might be more general. Something like that.

KO: Was your mother supportive?

Tamotsu: She did not say anything to me about it.

KO: Did you have a plan for your future at high school?

Tamotsu: I always wanted to be a train conductor. In fact, I had thought that I could become a train conductor till the last moment.

KO: What did you talk about at the June three-party meeting?

Tamotsu: Mr. Ide told me that my academic marks had deteriorated. No mention of employment was made at that time. (Interview, 16/1/90)

Tamotsu did not seem to have "seen" many options when growing up, even when he was at Imai Tech High. He did not associate his hope to be a train conductor with his choice of senior high school, for instance. He chose Imai Tech High rather than a prefectural technical high (which has a higher status) simply because of the former's physical proximity to his home. Although he was unaware of it at the time, his failure to mention the fact that he wanted to be a train conductor at the three-party meeting would be cause for serious problems at a later date.

Some of Those Who Had Already Decided on a Company Using School Connections

Among 21 students who advised at the three-party meeting that they wanted to try for specific companies, four had made their decisions based on school connections. One boy's choice had been aided by his sports club teacher; one through his home room teacher; two through DGLAS via the home room teacher.

Teruyuki

Teruyuki, a 3MA boy, had played basketball since he was at junior high school. He entered Imai Tech High's machinery course, on the recommendation of the basketball club teacher at his junior high, who knew that at Imai Tech High Teruyuki would be able to continue playing basketball. In fact, the basketball club teachers at his junior high and at Imai Tech High had known each other and had spoken about Teruyuki beforehand. Although Teruyuki preferred the interior furnishing course, he accepted his club teacher's suggestion that the machinery course was more advantageous in terms of finding employment. Despite this he never developed a liking for machinery subjects during his time at Imai Tech High, but became absorbed in basketball again. He did not have specific desires regarding employment after school, but believed he would be content as long as he was able to do different things every day so that he would not get bored. When Teruyuki was still in the second year the basketball club teacher spoke to Teruyuki's mother about getting a machinery job at Kawatetsu Building Materials Company where he could also play basketball in the company team. His mother said that she would leave the decision to her son. The club teacher said to Teruyuki, "Would you like to continue playing basketball while working at some company? If so, how about Kawatetsu Building Materials Company, where the school's club seniors play as well?" Since Teruyuki wanted to decide on a job at an early stage he agreed. At the June three-party meeting Teruyuki and his mother referred to the prospect of a job through the basketball club and Mr. Ide was supportive.

Since Teruyuki did not have a strong wish to enter any particular senior high school, and later, for any particular kind of job, he took opportunities given to him by others. They happened to be basketball club teachers. His trajectory of moving from junior high school to senior high, and then on

to a work place was governed by his involvement in basketball. It was an "easy" process of decision-making, since he did not have to ask himself what he really wanted and "think for himself". In Teruyuki's case, all the necessary decisions had been made before the June three-party meeting, the end of Phase 1.

Tsuneki

Tsuneki, a 3D boy, was an active member of the handball club at Sasaki High, but it was not the sports club which determined his trajectory. He was the only child in his family, consisting of his father, mother and ill grandmother. His father was a senior factory worker at a well known steel company and often did shiftwork, which made Tsuneki decide against any employment involving shift work. His father used to take him for train rides. Tsuneki's desire, since he was very small, to be a train conductor, had lasted until very recently. His choice of the data processing course at Sasaki High was not as a result of planning for future employment. He simply liked computer games and wanted to make game programmes. At Sasaki High, he had a good time: classmates liked him; he did well academically; he was elected the class representative every year because of his outgoing and pleasant personality. At the end of his second year the whole class went to see the NEC company. In April of his third year Mr. Kodama said to Tsuneki, "Would you like to think about getting a position at NEC?" At that time Tsuneki was still undecided about whether to become a train conductor or a programmer. However, Mr. Kodama's invitation to try for NEC influenced his final decision -- to try for a programmer's position. He was supposed to keep the matter secret and only told his parents. They were supportive.

Tsuneki's decision-making about his future was also completed before the end of Phase 1. The process differed from Teruyuki's case in that Tsuneki had envisaged two options (train conductor versus programmer) before his home room teacher offered a special route into NEC.

Some of Those Who Had Decided on a Company Using Family Connections

Three students had decided on specific companies through their family social network before June.

Chieko

Chieko, a 3I girl, was the chairperson of the male-dominated Imai Tech High student council. She was the second female chairperson in the school's history. Members of the student council are elected by voting. She was an assistant for the school's karate club, and seemed to feel at ease with a wide spectrum of students, from the rebellious elements to the more academically-inclined conformists. Chieko was calculating in that she became the chairperson to achieve the advantage that such an experience would confer when seeking employment. Her father used to work for one of Japan's biggest companies, but left to begin his own business. The business failed leaving a substantial amount of debt because one of the company's employees (for whom the father was a guarantor) made a serious error in his work. Chieko's family suffered financially as a consequence. Since then her father

had been running a small electrical contracting company employing five people. Because of this bitter experience, Chieko's parents urged her to get a secure job at a respectable company. Her elder sister had a degree in English from a local university, was married and had been in Australia on a working-holiday visa. Her elder brother (a year older than Chieko) graduated from Imai Tech High's ship-building course, and got a factory trainee position at Mitsubishi through one of her father's connections last year. He had been living in the company's dormitory since then, a requirement of his employment. Her brother's employment experience made Chieko realise the reliability of her father's connection with Mitsubishi, and she decided to make use of it. However, she did not intend to work for the company for long, having wanted to be a fiction writer since she became absorbed in reading "teenage fiction" two years ago. Chieko had concluded that the best way to achieve this goal was to have a job which offered many holidays, that is to say, at a big company, so that she could continue writing for practice, until her work was recognised. She asked her father to try to get her a job with both numerous holidays and short working hours, hopefully in the designing section. The father contacted his friend in Mitsubishi in June. At the June three-party meeting Chieko informed Mr. Uno that the job arrangement was under way.

KO: What did you say to Mr. Uno?

Chieko: Well, since I was in the first year I told Mr. Uno that I would get a job through a connection. He said that he trusted me. I knew that Mitsubishi did not send RCs to the interior furnishing course at that time. Even if they started sending RCs to us I thought that a family connection would be more advantageous since my marks are not good....I would not succeed against others in the internal selection meeting. Even if I got through the internal selection process, I doubt that I would be able to compete.... you know this school ranks very low. Because both my sister and my brother got jobs through my father's connection, I thought this would work for me as well. (Interview, 4/10/89)

Chieko was one of those students who planned ahead to make sure she got the job she wanted. She did not think highly of her marks nor the status of Imai Tech High, and decided to use her family social resource, the success of which had been confirmed in her brother and sister's cases. Chieko's initial plan to use family resources was expressed to her teacher as early as in her first year at Imai Tech High. And now she is planning a further 5 years ahead, to be a fiction writer.

Some of Those Who Had Decided on Specific Companies without "Connections"

These students had decided on the company of their choice before the three-party meeting, without the direct input of either family or school-based connections. There were 14 such students in my study group. Some students' decisions were realistic, while others were not. The latter received advice from their teachers about the probability of their getting jobs at the companies of their choice.

Atsushi

Atsushi, a 3MA boy, was one of those students who took school seriously, but not to the extent to which he got bullied for it. His father was a builder, and Atsushi wanted to be a builder too when he was at junior high school. Before that he wanted to be a train driver. However, his father injured himself while at work, which made Atsushi decide against carpentry. When deciding on high school, his junior high school teacher told him that his marks were insufficient to gain entry to a public academic senior high school. When he heard this, Atsushi knew that he would have to get a job after leaving school, and he thought that the machinery course would lead to good employment opportunities. He did not think at all about what kind of job he would like to do. Atsushi's parents first suggested that he aim for academic high school, but hearing the teacher's comment later agreed to his decision on the machinery course. The teacher had also said that his marks would be good enough for the prefectural technical high school (which ranked higher than Imai Tech High), but recommended "You'd be better to be at the top of Imai Tech High than to be at the bottom of the prefectural tech high. That way you will get a better job in the end."

Atsushi: I had not known about the machinery course curriculum before entering the school. I found the course reasonable and thought it would be useful for my future career. I like shaping things with my hands.... At the end of the second year we had the three-party meeting. At that time my mother and I said that I wanted to go to Sanyou Railways.

KO: Why Sanyou Railways?

Atsushi: I talked with seniors from Imai Tech High's machinery course. One of them came to school to give a talk on Sanyou Railways. I also read "*Shinro Nyusu*" (Newsletter for Life-after-school) published by the DGLAS, and found an article written by a senior working for Sanyou Railways. I thought that the work there would be *raku* (easy).

KO: What do you mean by *raku*? In terms of the content of work, or working hours?

Atsushi: Not in terms of working hours. I had thought that the content of work would be *raku* in comparison with other jobs, but now I realise I was *amakatta* (underestimating). I happened to see a senior from my junior high who got a job at Sanyou Railways. He was from an academic high school. He talked about his work, the many things he had to remember and learn, and shift work, etc. That made me feel anxious and worried. Would I be able to handle that?

KO: Did you decide on Sanyou Railways first, and then tell your parents?

Atsushi: Yes. They were supportive.

KO: What did you talk about at the June three-party meeting?

Atsushi: It was a repeat of the three-party meeting at the end of the second year. Nothing new. (Interview, 26/1/90)

Atsushi happened to live near the headquarters of Sanyou Railways.

Hiroshi

Hiroshi's early decision on a company was the result of a completely different trajectory. Hiroshi, a 3D boy, was an energetic, outspoken and sporty boy, who was the vice-captain of the school's handball club. His mannerisms and speech patterns showed his youthfulness and enthusiasm. He was secretly keen on gambling, and enjoyed betting on cycle and horse racing on the weekends.

His conversation centred around the results of his gambling and on baseball when teachers were not around. He was at Sasaki High as a result of his junior high school teacher's recommendation. At junior high school he liked working with computers. As soon as he entered Sasaki High and received a list of companies showing where that year's graduates had obtained jobs, he decided that he would try for either Shinei Stockbroking firm or Daiichi Kangin Computer Service. Hiroshi liked the competitive environment of gambling, and thought that a stockbroker's job would offer a similar atmosphere. His cousin worked for a stockbroking firm. His parents were initially against Hiroshi joining such a firm since the broker's task is physically demanding and involved huge amounts of money and unpredictability. However, they eventually supported his decision. When he expressed an interest in Shinei Stockbroking firm at the June three-party meeting Mr. Kodama did not look too happy, but it did not worry Hiroshi.

Perhaps Mr. Kodama had never expected Hiroshi would want to try for the stockbroking firm. He had just confirmed to Kenichi, who also wanted to enter the firm, that he would be a suitable applicant for the job. With Hiroshi as a competitor, Kenichi would be disadvantaged.

Some of the decisions on specific companies that students made were not supported by home room teachers.

Junko

Junko was a tall, sporty and outgoing 3D girl. She wanted to be a kindergarten teacher, to work in a pet shop, or to be a tennis player, as a result of playing tennis at junior high school. She entered Sasaki High's data processing course on the recommendation of her junior high teacher. Junko found Sasaki High pleasant but the data processing subjects difficult, and in her first year thought that she would get a clerical position.

Junko: In my second year I was undecided about going on to tertiary education versus employment. I was influenced by my close friends who had decided by then that they would go to uni. Also, I thought I would be able to continue my tennis and play around a little bit more at uni.

KO: Why did you give up that idea?

Junko: Hm.....let me think back... If I was going on to tertiary education, it would have had to be a 2 year college, instead of a 4 year college. The entrance exam to 2 year colleges are so competitive [KO: she has wrong information here.] I did not think I was good enough to succeed. Also my reason for going to uni was not to study but to play tennis.

KO: Couldn't you get a recommendation from the school because of your achievement in tennis?

Junko: If you want to go to uni because of tennis achievement, you would have to have gone to the regional level tournament. [KO: she is guessing here.] I only went as far as the prefectural level.

KO: Did you think of getting a job as a tennis coach at a public sports centre. Where I play tennis, there are a lot of young coaches who teach housewives, you know, complete beginners. You know that recreation for adults is being encouraged and that it is claimed that adults do not know how to use recreation time.

Junko: Is there such a job? I did not know. It never occurred to me. What a pity! I could have done that. At the end of my second year I decided to take academic

subject options because I also wanted to be a civil servant. Taking the academic subject options would enable me either to go to university or to be a public servant. At the beginning of the third year I decided on getting a job. When the results of the mock exam for public servants came through, I thought that I would not make it. I was thinking of becoming a public servant because I thought it was a secure job.

KO: What did you talk about at the three-party meeting?

Junko: I said to Mr. Kodama that I wanted to go to Saki Steel Company because that company is strong in sports, and I can continue with my involvement in tennis and other sports. Mr. Kodama said, "Well, many people would like to get in there, since it is a popular company. You will need a higher average mark than you have at present.. So, work hard." He mentioned Nihon Air Brake Company also. At that time I did not know anything about Nihon Air Brake Company. (Interview, 11/12/89)

Junko's decisions seemed to be based on a "misunderstanding" of many matters. Firstly, entry into a 2-year college is not more difficult than entry into a 4-year university. (Generally it is the reverse). She assumed that she could not use her achievement in tennis at the prefectural level for entry into tertiary education institutions. She lacked information on the possibility of a career based on her interest in tennis, associating tennis with her life-after-school only in terms of playing for the university or college. Giving up her wishes either to seek tertiary education or enter the civil service, she decided on a company well known for sports, so that she could still play tennis.

Hidekazu

Hidekazu, a 3I boy, was not sure what kind of work he wanted, but mentioned a few companies to Mr. Uno at the three-party meeting. The jobs at these companies all differed. For Oshi Gas Company, he was told that his marks were not good enough. Another possibility he had considered was station work at Sanyou Railways, but he was warned that students in other classes would apply for those jobs as well. He had also thought of the civil service, but once again his marks were far too low. Hidekazu had been unaware about what levels of marks different companies required. After the meeting, he had a better appreciation of what sort of companies he should be concentrating on.

Hisashi

Hisashi, a 3I boy, had a clear idea of what he wanted: a job to which he could commute by car a short distance. He entered Imai Tech interior furnishing course because his elder brother, who had also attended Imai Tech High, had said that the course was not demanding. He was told by his junior high school teacher that he had the ability to go to a higher rank technical high or an academic high, but Hisashi preferred the "easy way out". He had no parental feedback or input regarding his choice. Hisashi's mother had left the family of five children years before. Since then the father's mother had done the housework until her death when Hisashi was in his second year at Imai Tech High. Hisashi's marks and school behaviour had deteriorated since then.

KO: What did you say at the three-party meeting?

Hisashi: I said to Mr. Uno, "I want to get a job near my home where I can commute by car, and I want it to be a well paid job." Then he mentioned the Taki Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company. But the Taki Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company is in the eastern part of Saki-city, and I would have to commute by train, which I did not want to do any more. My home is in Aki-city, which is on the western edge of Saki-city, I spend over one hour commuting to school.

KO: How about Daimaru Furniture Company?

Hisashi: Oh no, it's too *shindoi* (physically demanding). We have been there to observe the factory.

KO: How about Procter & Gamble? That's in Aki-city also.

Hisashi: I thought of it. But Mr. Uno said that I had too many absent days. So, I gave up on that. I was a good student without any absent days till the first term of my second year.

KO: Why did you suddenly change?

Hisashi: I got injured during a PE period. Once I started taking one day off, I began to feel it's not a big deal.

[KO: This period corresponds with the time when his grandmother died and the family was split up]. (Interview, 25/1/90)

Students experienced different rates of progress in arriving at a decision regarding their future employment. Two-thirds of the students had decided on the kind of job they wanted; some of the others already had a specific company in mind; while there were still others who had yet to make a decision on either job type or prospective company. This difference was to affect the next stage of the transition process.

Phase 2: The Student and His/her Home Room Teacher Decide on Specific Companies (July to late August)

Students heard that recruitment cards had started arriving. Those who had already decided on a specific company were concerned whether the company had sent a RC this year and went to ask the DGLAS about it. For the majority of students, however, reference to the list of companies which had sent RCs marked the beginning of their search for prospective employers.

Fifty seven students (out of the total 90) had already decided on a certain kind of job and this influenced their examination of the list of available companies. They picked companies, firstly, according to the kind of work offered, and then examined other aspects relating to the position which they considered important. The order of importance attached to the various aspects of each position and to the companies therefore differed among individuals. The size of companies, both in terms of capital and the number of employees, and the location of work were widely considered "important". In the process of narrowing down their choice of companies, some students consulted family members, teachers and seniors. As seen below, some sought "advice" and "relevant information" from these adults very frequently, processing and evaluating this information before reaching a final decision. Others lacked such a thorough approach. The majority of students, however, at least reported their decision to their parents.

Whether or not a systematic examination of RCs was undertaken

Hisakazu

Hisakazu, a 3I boy, had a "late-start" in that he had not even decided on the kind of job he wanted. However, once he received the list from school he took the process seriously. He took the list home and read the relevant information given about each company. He marked the positions which appealed to him with red pen, and reduced the number after examining the working conditions pertaining to each job. Not all students' final decisions were based on such a systematic examination of the RC list. Hisakazu first decided that he preferred work which involved "making something" to work which required direct service to customers. In further refining his choices, Hisakazu decided that he wanted work where he could participate in the production process right through until the last stage of production, rather than in mass-production work. With this criterion in mind, he picked about 20 positions in diverse fields which included printing, art work, pearl jewellery and machinery, as well as various service industry openings. (Hisakazu decided that he would not mind being in a job where he was providing service when customers required it, as opposed to being a sales representative). His next consideration was the location of the companies: he excluded some of the 20 selected companies if their locations were outside Saki-city. He hoped that wages would be at least average, that he would have the weekends off, that no shift work would be required, and that the work place was clean. At that stage, Hisakazu went to ask Mr. Uno for his comments: His reaction was favourable. He also sought advice from ex-students of Imai Tech High who were working at Taki Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company, and learned that a good working atmosphere existed at the firm. Following this Hisakazu decided to apply for Taki Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company, and advised his parents to that effect. His parents were happy, since his father wanted Hisakazu to get a secure job at a big company.

Hidekazu

In contrast, Hidekazu, another 3I boy, became aware of Takara System Kitchen Company when Mr. Shimahara casually mentioned it in one his Interior Planning classes in July. At that time Hidekazu was having trouble deciding on specific companies since he was recently told by Mr. Uno that three well known companies he had already chosen were beyond his marks. His mother, a solo-parent, said that Hidekazu could choose to work wherever he wished as long as he continued to live with her. Hidekazu's major concern was that the company was in another city, and he would have to commute at least one hour each way. Mr. Uno was supportive of his choice of Takara System Kitchen Company.

Seeking Teachers' Suggestions

Some students sought their teacher's "advice" about several companies which they had selected from the list. Teachers selected one company from those nominated. After examining RCs, Kengo showed his choices to his parents. His mother strongly suggested Hankyuu Furniture Company,

which was a subsidiary of a leading department store chain, and at school Mr. Uno was keen on the company as well. This coincidental agreement made Kengo decide in favour of the Hankyu Furniture Company. When Hisako was undecided over two selected companies at this stage, Mr. Kodama's comment determined the final outcome. In the case of a few students, home room teachers directly suggested a company. When Yasuhiro, a 3I boy, mentioned his desire for a furniture-making position, Mr. Uno suggested Daimaru Furniture factory.

Change in Desired Kind of Work after Examining RCs

Yasuko

Yasuko, a 3I girl, changed her mind about the kind of work she wanted during this phase. She had always thought that an interior designing position would be very difficult to get, although extremely attractive. Therefore, she decided to aim at obtaining an interior furnishing-related position in a department store, and announced her intention at the June three-party meeting.

Yasuko: I never thought I could get a designing position....In early August, the HOD of the Interior Furnishing Department asked me if I would be interested in a designing position at Kawajuu Train Carriage Engineering. At first I was not keen on trains, you know. But when he said that the company designs overseas trains, I suddenly got curious.

KO: Did you decide on it immediately?

Yasuko: No. I got my teacher to arrange a visit to the company. I wanted to have a look. I visited the company, observed the work place, and liked it. But what made my mind up in the end was my parents.

KO: In what way?

Yasuko: I talk to my parents a lot, sometimes too much, in particular to my father. When I was thinking of interior decoration, he offered to arrange *enko* through his friends in a big construction company. When I mentioned Kawajuu Train Carriage Engineering, he was delighted and encouraged me. He said, "It's ideal if you can live by doing what you want to do", and supported my wish. He listed the pros and the cons of the company for me, and told me to decide on my own. My mother wanted me to go to university, but I myself did not wish to. But I was prepared to go to *senmongakkou* if I could not get the kind of job that I wanted. My parents also told me not to get a job at all if I didn't find satisfying work. (Interview, 7/11/89)

Yasuko's father was the only father who was a university graduate among the parents of the students in my study group. He was an valuer for a real estate agency, and the family lived in a comfortable northern suburb. He maintained contact with the "social network" from his university days. Yasuko's mother grew vegetables in her organic garden, and ran a "natural food" shop in the suburb. I was invited to their home once and there were several occasions where we went out together.

Being Told to Reconsider Decisions

Often students were told to reconsider their decisions. There were various reasons for this: Some students were simply uninformed about the range of options, although access to the RCs could widen the range of possibilities for many; they had inadequate understanding of the various positions

and companies; or they had underestimated/overestimated their potential in terms of their academic marks and other attributes. Teachers thus attempted to offer "protective" advice, to prevent their students from going to "undesirable" or "unsuitable" work places, and from failing in employment examinations.

Tamotsu

Tamotsu, the 3MA boy, listed train conductor positions at three local train companies from the RC list. This was the first time that he had revealed his desire to be a train conductor to his teacher, since he did not mention this at the June three-party meeting. Mr. Ide, his home room teacher told Tamotsu to read the RCs more carefully: A train conductor's position required a certain standard of eye sight, which Tamotsu did not have. He now had to examine the list of RCs all over again for alternative positions, and abandon his long-held idea of becoming a train conductor.

Tamotsu: In August I was told that my weak eye sight was not acceptable for being a train conductor. In fact, I already knew this since the RCs mentioned good eye sight as a prerequisite. So, I had to change. I picked out 15 companies offering machinery-related positions. From this list I deleted the ones already taken by someone else. About eight were left then. (Interview, 16/1/90)

If Tamotsu had announced his wish to be a train conductor at the June three-party meeting, he would have been notified about the eye sight requirement then, and would not have had to face a late-start.

However, compare this case with that of Osamu, presented in Phase 4 of the previous chapter. Osamu's home room teacher did not notice that Osamu had inadequate eye sight for the train conductor position that he had decided to apply for. Osamu's eyesight deficiency was still not brought to notice when he competed, and was selected, for the position during the internal selection process. The school duly forwarded Osamu's application, only to have the company inform the DGLAS that Osamu did not have adequate eye sight. The event upset and embarrassed the DGLAS.

Yumi

Yumi, a 3D girl, had believed that her solo-mother family background would disadvantage her in getting a decent job at a well known company, and chose less favourable companies accordingly. Mr. Kodama told her to aim for "better" companies since her record was good.

Yumi: I originally chose small-size companies. I read a letter to the editor of Saki Newspaper that a student from a solo-parent home applied for three well known companies and had been turned down by all of them. So I thought that I would be in the same boat. My mother told me not to worry too much. And, because Mitsubishi Belt Company near my home takes kids from solo-parent homes, I would have a good chance there, I thought.Also my grandfather told me that since he used to be the chairman of the local community committee he could exert some influence on companies in my home area. Out of these companies, Mitsuboshi Belt was the biggest and best known one..... but when we came to the DGLAS room to inspect all the RCs I saw that Hisako, the top student in our class, was interested in that company. I thought I would not have a chance if she was going for it.
KO: When did you first think of Saki Steel?

Yumi: It was out of the blue! Saki Steel was suggested at the last moment really. When Mr. Kodama saw my list, he made negative comments on all the companies I had selected, which made me feel insecure. He then suggested big and popular companies such as Saki Steel, Mitsubishi, and Sumitomo. I talked about this with my family. And we decided on Mitsuboshi Belt as the first choice, although I knew that Hisako would take it anyway; Saki Steel as the second choice, since the wage was better than at Mitsubishi; Mitsubishi as the third choice; and Sumitomo as the fourth choice. I put two small to medium size, but reasonable companies as the fifth and sixth choices. The sixth choice was the only programming position, the rest were all clerical work. Because I was afraid of losing the first five choices to someone else, I thought if I have a programmer position as the sixth choice, I would at least settle on that. Programming positions are less competitive, you know. (Interview, 1/12/89)

Yumi came to trust Mr. Kodama's comments and to accept his advice after he repeatedly counselled her on an *individual* basis. Yumi seemed like a cautious person: Although she accepted Mr. Kodama's suggestion to attempt big well-known companies, she still employed her own strategy as a "back up" in case of failures.

Sayuri

Sayuri, a 3D girl, made decisions based on what she heard from her friends, some of which was misunderstood information, and accordingly adjusted her expectations to what she then perceived to be personally attainable.

Sayuri: I went through the list of RCs, and selected "good companies". But I found later these companies were for "brainy students", not for me.

KO: How did you find out that these companies were for "brainy" students?

Sayuri: Come on, Okano-san, you should know. You get a good idea about these things from rumours among classmates...such and such a teacher said this and that. And then, I got to know that brainy ones in my class wanted these companies. Then it's natural that I feel that I have no hope. I will lose in the internal selection.... so, I reached this conclusion. (Interview, 27/11/89)

Sayuri listed the companies of her choice at that time. The first four were clerical positions, the fifth choice was a programmer position, followed by another clerical position as the sixth choice. She remembered only the names of the first choice company, Shinmeiwa Engineering, and the fifth choice company, Nihon Business Data, where she ended up going. She chose Shinmeiwa Engineering's clerical position since her brother, whom she trusted very much, worked there. She asked him to make an *enko* arrangement, but was told that her marks were not good enough and that she should enter through open screening. Her brother had entered the company because of his strength in baseball. Sayuri's mother (solo-parent), who was an insurance sales representative and supported two children, suggested either a clerical position or a programming position, since people can get sales and factory work on a part-time basis, and that Sayuri should examine the company thoroughly before deciding.

Her boyfriend, an Imai Tech High student who was also in the process of securing a job, did not make any comment on the kind of job she should pursue, but requested her to get employment near his work place-to-be. Shinmeiwa Engineering was suitable in that respect. Sayuri underwent this process of decision-making over a period of 2 weeks, and at the last moment changed her list.

Sayuri: It was Mr. Kodama's final comment that changed my mind. When I asked if I would be OK for a programming position, he said, "Those who did not do well at programming at school are working OK. You will be OK." Then I changed Nihon Business Data from my fifth choice to my first choice. My mother was happy. (Interview, 27/11/89)

Sayuri finally accepted Mr. Kodama's suggestion when it was conveyed to her *personally*. This is similar to Yumi's case. She had heard the same message from him many times in the class. But it was given to the whole class, and she did not think the public message was aimed at her. Also, Sayuri felt more encouraged when she heard that the previous years' students, whom she considered were comparable with her, had made it. Information about the employment experience of someone close to her may have helped Sayuri, since this was not available at home.

Shinya

A teacher's advice was not always accepted. Shinya was a cheerful, outgoing and energetic boy from 3MA. He first selected *gijutsu* positions from the list of RCs. He knew that he was not suitable for service positions and that he did not like factory worker's positions, and examined all the companies which offered *gijutsu* positions one by one. Shuu, his close friend, reported to me that the thoroughness of Shinya's examination was almost maddening. He decided on Meitekku Company.

Shinya: I liked the company because it offers a full-year of training at the beginning. It is an indication of the company's emphasis on human resources...spending so much time and money on them.

KO: I see. Then, why not Kawajuu or Mitsubishi Heavy Industries? They offer trainee positions, with an initial year of training.

Shinya: I thought about them as well. But, those are *ginou* positions after all. So different. They are not designing (*sekkei*) positions.

Shuu: We, all of the third year machinery classes, went to observe one of the Mitsubishi factories. Not so good, you know.

Shinya: Awful conditions. Workers were dirty with oil and all that. Mitsubishi and Kawajuu are not good.

Shuu: Exactly.

KO: What do you mean by "not good"?

Shuu: Well..... the work seemed physically demanding.

Shinya: You know, dirty with oil and dust.

Shuu: It was a rainy day. That made it look even worse.

Shinya: I prefer more sophisticated working conditions.

Shuu: Yah, we are more "delicate"....(laugh).

KO: So, you liked the company spending money and time for your training, huh?

Shinya: Not as simple as that. I liked the company's philosophy.

Shuu: It is also more to do with your first impression of the company. (Interview, 9/1/90)

Shinya took other aspects into consideration as well, although they were of a relatively lower priority. He wanted to work within commuting distance eventually. In the first year at Meitekku, he would be in the company's dormitory in another city. The wage should be average and the company should be large. He preferred 5 days a week work, and no shift work. Shinya's parents were supportive. His father was an accupuncturist and was forced into succeeding his father in the job. The father did not want to do the same to Shinya. After the first internal selection the home room teacher called Shinya and his mother to school for another three-party meeting. Mr. Ide said to them, "Listen. Meitekku, your first choice, may be a bit difficult. It may not be impossible, but as well as being difficult to enter, it's probably a tough place to work. How about Toshiba? You will get in easily because of your involvement in the karate club." Shinya thought it over, but still did not change his mind.

The DGLAS Get RCs on Request for Specific Students

Some students found specific companies which they wanted to apply for, and asked the DGLAS to get a RC from that company.

Sukenori

Sukenori, a 3MA boy, did not advise any particular work preference at the June three-party meeting. When he entered Imai Tech High, he wanted to be a car mechanic. But now he thought he would be happy to get any employment at all.

Sukenori: I did look through the RC list. When RCs started arriving at school, my mother happened to be at school for PTA work [Sukenori's mother was active in the PTA, and she read the PTA speech at the graduation ceremony]. Mr. Nakane, my club teacher, asked her about me, and she said casually, "I hear from our neighbour that Shinkou Company is a good company. So companies like Shinkou Company would be great for my son". On the following day, Mr. Nakane visited the Shinkou Company, and requested a RC for me, and got it. You see, he is always quick in taking action. So, I had no choice. I felt that I had to go to that company when Mr. Nakane said, "I have spoken to the managing director of the Shinkou Company. I found that the company was a good one. I mentioned your good points and recommended you. So, study hard, OK?" I feel that Mr. Nakane makes sure that everyone in the volleyball club gets what each of us wants. He goes out of his way. He gives priority to us.

KO: Are you going to play volleyball at the Shinkou Company?

Sukenori: No. They don't have a volleyball club.

KO: How about Kazuaki (another 3MA boy in the volleyball club who got a job through Mr. Nakane's action)? Is he playing volleyball at Yamato?

Hironori: Yes. Yamato needed another volleyball player in their team. I feel sorry for Kazuaki, playing volleyball even when he becomes a *shakai-jin!* (Interview, 31/1/90)

Terumi

Terumi, a 3C girl, had decided that she would be a nurse trainee at a clinic while attending nursing school in the afternoons. Her friend's sister held a similar position at Yoshida Clinic and had told Terumi that there was a pleasant working atmosphere there. Terumi asked Mr. Yamada of the DGLAS if he would contact Yoshida Clinic and get a RC for her, so that she could apply for the position. Mr. Yamada did so successfully.

Change to *Enko* Arrangement

At the end of Phase 1, when the three-party meeting was held, of the 90 students interviewed only Chieko and Yumiko planned to get a job through *enko* arrangements. During Phase 2, Junko and Fukiko of 3D decided to get jobs through family connections instead of through school RCs. Masayoshi of 3I, who had decided to go to a *senmongakkou*, now changed his mind in favour of a job at the company where his uncle worked.

Junko

Junko, the 3D girl who announced her hope to enter Saki Steel at the June three-party meeting, did not change her decision when she examined the RC list.

Junko: When we went to the DGLAS room to examine RCs, I talked to Mr. Kodama again. We looked at the academic marks of last year's recruit at Saki Steel: it was 4.2. My mark was not that high at that stage. I also noticed that many other classmates were thinking of Saki Steel as one of their first five companies. Mr. Kodama said to me, "It may be a bit difficult for you." I went to school twice to talk to Mr. Kodama. At that time he said that several students from 3D class had gone to Nihon Air Brake. I mentioned his remark at home. Then my father said "The company where I work has a connection with Nihon Air Brake and I may be able to do something about it." When I told Mr. Kodama about this, he said "That's great!" Since then, things started rolling in that direction. Nihon Air Brake gave Sasaki High an extra position specifically for me.

KO: And you went ahead with it?

Junko: Not so smoothly, Okano-san. I was confused. I had second thoughts about changing back to Saki Steel, since other girls were told to give up. I thought that my involvement in tennis and other sports activities might work as an advantage. But, at that stage the process of *enko* employment was under way and I could not pull out. (Interview, 11/12/89)

Negotiation among Students

Students in the same home room class got to know who was wanting which position. Sometimes two or more students wanted the same position. They tried to avoid clashes by negotiation among themselves. Students thought it better to resolve such a situation before entering the internal selection, since they knew that one of them would have to relinquish their position in the coming internal selection meeting.

The negotiation took various forms. The most overt negotiation involved Kana and Kasumi. Neither knew that the other wanted the same sales position at the Seidensha Department Store chain until they each submitted their first list of three companies. Mr. Uno called both students and asked them if they would like to come to some agreement with each other.

Kana: Since I overheard Kasumi talking about Daiei Supermarket chain, I wrote down Seidensha as my first choice. Mr. Uno told us that one of us should go for Daiei or Sogo Department Store. We talked it over to see who would give up until the last day, but couldn't reach an agreement, and went to the DGLAS. Mr. Nakane and Mr. Shimahara said that Sogo was good. I was then starting to think of the worst scenario.... you see, like, if we both enter the internal selection, Kasumi would win the game. She had better marks at that time. More important, she was thought more reliable since she was an elected member of the student council. Also, Seidensha required applicants to advertise themselves in front of a video camera as a part of the employment exam, which I hated. So, when Mr. Nakane and Mr. Shimahara suggested Sogo to us, I said to Kasumi, "OK. That's it. I will go for Sogo." But it was strange..... Kasumi didn't like that.....maybe the way in which I said it was not good. She said, "It sounds as if I were forcing you to give up." And we talked and talked again....That evening, she rang me at home to say that she was going to submit Seidensha as her first choice, and I said that's fine. I went to school very early the next morning to report the result of our "discussion" to Mr. Uno.
(Interview, 7/11/89)

Kasumi: At that time, the more I insisted on applying for Seidensha, the more Kana withdrew..... I felt so uncomfortable.

Chieko: Well, it showed her personality: She was "weak". And this personality question is relevant at the work place. I mean weaker people will not get what they want.

Kasumi: I wonder if companies want to have stronger/ more assertive personalities.
(Interview, 4/10/89)

In the end, Kana gave in and decided on a sales position at Sogo Department Store. Since no one from Imai Tech High had worked for the sophisticated department store, DGLAS was concerned that the position might be too difficult to attain, which worried Kasumi as well as Kana. Kasumi felt guilty and apologised, but was relieved to know of Kana's success when she passed the employment exam in September.

More often, negotiation took place indirectly. Students read each other's minds. They did not discuss the matter face to face, but "negotiated" in a covert way. For instance, both Takashi and Hiroshi had thought of trying for positions at Shinei Stockbroking firm and at Daiichi Kangin Computer Service since they were in the second year. Hiroshi, being fond of gambling games, was prepared to compete in the internal selection with Takashi. But Takashi was overwhelmed by Hiroshi's enthusiasm for becoming a Stockbroker, and gave in, deciding on Daiichi Kangin Computer Service. On the other hand, Hiroaki, also from 3D, gave up the possibility of trying for the position at Daiichi Kangin Computer Service, when he knew Takashi, his classmate, wanted it. Hiroaki justified his decision, by telling himself that he would not have a chance over Takashi: Takashi had better academic marks and was active in the basketball club.

The concerned parties therefore did not necessarily confront each other. Akiko, a 3I girl, looked for a designing position in the RCs and found two possibilities, one at Kawajuu Train Carriage and another at Kawamura Cycle. Akiko soon found out that Yasuko, another 3I girl, was also considering Kawajuu Train Carriage.

Akiko: I thought I would have little chance if I competed with Yasuko. Yasuko has always been the top of our class throughout the three years.

KO: Did everyone check each other like that...who is going for which company?

Akiko: More or less. Yasuko did not make the final decision until much later. That annoyed us. You see, until the top student decided, we couldn't make our own decisions..... We knew who in our class was thinking of what company, not through a formal channel but by word of mouth. And, we decided.... since so and so is going for this company, I won't go for it, like that. (Interview, 1/11/89)

Yasuko: It's more or less "first come, first served". When you knew someone else was applying for a particular company, you tended to give up applying for that firm. Akiko and I both wanted to go to Kawajuu Train Carriage, and we sort of checked on each other indirectly. We never talked about it face to face. I knew that my academic marks were better than hers, but also that she was active in the students council which would work as an advantage for her.

Mie: In the end, Mr. Uno talked Akiko out of it. Isn't that the same as Kana giving up Seidensha for Kasumi? (Interview, 12/12/89)

A Few Students Were Late in Decision Making

Yuuji, the 3I boy who wanted to get a bike-related job, had not decided on a possible company by the time everyone was supposed to have decided on three companies and to have submitted their list for the internal selection. Yuuji examined the RC list, but did not find any company offering a bike-related job, except for a designing position which required a female. He felt insecure. He saw advertisements for jobs at bike studios (which make bikes for racing) in a bike racing magazine and submitted those companies' names in his final list. The DGLAS teachers contacted the nominated studios and asked if they would send RCs to Imai Tech High for Yuuji. In each case, the answer was negative.

Students thus underwent the Phase 2 process of deciding which company to apply for in a diversity of ways. Some examined the existing RCs in a systematic manner, taking their priorities into consideration; some sought more information and suggestions from teachers about what they had in mind; some voluntarily changed their decisions in the course of contemplation; some were told by teachers to reconsider their decisions at this stage, and accepted their suggestions; others did not follow the teachers' suggestions to change their decisions; some students asked the DGLAS to contact the companies they wanted to request RCs for them, with some success; some decided to use an *enko* arrangement instead of the school's RCs, believing that it would offer a "better deal"; and some students became aware of being in competition with other students, and negotiated who would compromise. Almost all students submitted the list of the companies they wanted on time, and were about to enter the internal selection. An exception was Yuuji, who, along with a few others, had not

decided on a specific company. Although the submitted lists were processed by computer and treated mechanically, just like another school document, the process behind the scenes in reaching the decisions shown on the lists involved individual students in emotional agonies and conflicts.

Phase 3: Internal Selection Meeting: Individual's Decision Becomes the School's
(late August)

While teachers conducted the internal selection meeting, occupying two days at Sasaki High and one day at Imai Tech High, students were expected to stay at home so that teachers could contact them if necessary. Students were not attending school at this time as it was the summer holiday period.

Yumi

Yumi, the 3D girl who made Saki Steel her first choice following Mr. Kodama's suggestion, was so worried that she took the day off from her vacation work in case she was contacted by the school. She did not receive any telephone call after all, and was overjoyed to get her first choice.

Kayoko

Kayoko, a 3D girl, did receive a call.

Kayoko: During the days of the internal selection meeting, I had a phone call. Mr. Kodama said, "Your first, second and third choices did not work out. We may not get your fourth, fifth or sixth choices either. Please think about your further choices." I said, "Don't tell me that. What would you suggest?" I was in a panic. Then Mr. Kodama suggested a few computer companies. Remembering that KCS Data Company offered good wages, I mentioned that company to Mr. Kodama. He supported me.

KO: You must have known that your first, second and third choices would not work out from the beginning. Why did you still put those as the first three choices?

Kayoko: Because I thought I might have a chance. I wanted to have a try.

KO: Did Mr. Kodama say anything about your list?

Kayoko: No. Mr. Kodama gave advice to those students who were close and who communicated with him. But not to others. I had thought that "key-puncher" and "key-operator" were two different positions: That key-operator involved more than just punching. It was a mistake on my part. (Interview, 2/12/89)

Takayuki

Takayuki, a 3MA boy, also received a call from the school.

Takayuki: I had a call from Mr. Ide in the middle of the internal selection meeting. He said, "You are unlikely to get your first choice. Are you prepared to go to your second choice, Kounan Denki Company?" I answered yes.

KO: Why didn't you push for your first choice.

Takayuki: I don't know. It did not occur to me. (Interview, 9/1/90)

Imai Tech High teachers made telephone calls when a student was unlikely to get their first choice. At Sasaki High, they called when students were not successful in any of their first three choices.

Atsushi

Atsushi, a 3MA boy, was advised to change the kind of work he was seeking, by applying for a different position with the same company after the first internal selection meeting at Imai Tech High.

Atsushi: After looking through all the RCs, I decided on Sanyou Railways's train carriage maintenance department. But, Mr. Ide told me, after the first internal selection meeting, that gaining entry to the train carriage maintenance department would be too difficult for me. Also he told me that the seniors from Imai Tech High who work there are all from the ship-building course. So I decided on a station work position with the same company.

KO: What do you mean by "difficult"?

Atsushi: My academic marks. My classmates said that I wouldn't be using mechanic's skills in a station work position. And I would have preferred the carriage maintenance department. But Mr. Ide said that other students were also aiming for the carriage maintenance department *gijutsu* position, and that it would be difficult for me. That was what persuaded me. (Interview, 26/1/90)

The students, who were still on holiday, were required to attend school to be advised of the results of the internal selection the day following its conclusion. They now knew which companies they were applying for. If they did not like the decision, they could still appeal to DGLAS and their home room teachers but very few did. Over half of the students at Sasaki High and a majority at Imai Tech High succeeded in having their first choice. The high rate of success in Imai Tech High's case was because the school conducted the internal selection twice to give students the chance to adjust their first lists if necessary. Students who did not get their first choice did not always see the internal selection as a "traumatic" experience, as might be thought by outsiders. They took it as necessary and inevitable as long as the number of recruits was limited. Naoko ended up with her fifth choice company after the internal selection meeting.

KO: You ended up with your fifth choice company. Were you shocked?

Naoko: Not really.... The day before it was decided Mr. Kodama called me at home and said that my first to fourth choices had been taken already. He asked me to consider my order of preference after my fifth choice. When I heard this, I got worried that I might be ending up with my sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth choices. I had submitted a list of 10 choices. So, when I was informed finally that I got my fifth choice, I was delighted.

KO: What do you think of the internal selection as a system?

Naoko: When you know that you will fail even if you sit a particular company's exam, it's better that you sit the exam for a company where you are likely to pass. I think it is far better and more reasonable to do that, rather than failing in the first round and then sitting the second round exams. By that time, there won't be as many good companies as at the time of the first round exams. (Interview, 12/10/89)

Kazuko succeeded with her second choice, but was not concerned about missing out on her first choice.

KO: How did you feel about getting your second choice? Did it affect you?

Kazuko: Well... I was delighted. I had been expecting that I would get one of my first three choices. As long as I got one of them, it would not make any difference. Also, since one of the top students at our school got the position at Hanshin Railways, my first choice, I can't complain.

KO: Do you think the school should let you at least try the exam?

Kazuko: Not at all. I will choose a secure route. (Interview, 28/10/89)

How the internal selection affected a student depended on his/her expectations of the outcome, and their enthusiasm for the position applied for. Kenichi was gravely disappointed.

Kenichi: It was totally unexpected that I did not get it. When I talked to Mr. Kodama about Shinei Stockbroking firm in the June consultation, he said "There won't be any problems since I don't know anyone wanting that position." That made me so optimistic that I did not even think seriously about my second choice. At that stage Mr. Kodama had not expected that someone like Michihiro would apply for it. I was thinking that Hiroshi and I would get the positions. I could not think of my second choice for a month. Now I am going to a printing company as a computer operator. (Interview, 12/1/90)

Students had often adjusted their enthusiasm and expectations *before* submitting their lists, through negotiations among students and consultations with teachers and DGLAS staff. They had worked out what were the highest expectations they could realistically hold for their job prospects. The ones who experienced trauma were those who, like Kenichi, were not prepared for a negative result.

Students interpreted the school's internal selection meeting in their own way. The majority of them, in response to my question about the internal selection meeting, said that such a process is almost inevitable since there are only a limited number of positions available for the school: that the school had no choice but to conduct an internal selection. Although many of the students indicated sympathy for those who did not get their first choice in the internal selection, they stated that they themselves preferred being screened out at the level of school rather than in the recruitment examinations. They preferred going for a "secure position". Many however supported the idea that those who are willing to take a risk should be allowed to take a recruitment examination, even if the number of applicants from the school exceeded the assigned number. Even some of the students who were successful in being allocated their first choice in the internal selection questioned the process.

Yumiko: I understand that the school has to keep its credibility: that good companies want to have good students. Haruka did not even get her fifth choice in the selection meeting, and she had to start again from square one. Mr. Kodama rang her at home, and she was not there. So, she was put at the bottom of the queue. That's too harsh, since a person's first job can have a bearing on the rest of their life. (Interview, 17/1/90)

Chika: I prefer being screened through the internal selection process, and going for a secure company. But, I don't like it that my first choice and someone else's third choice are put on par in the selection meeting.....

Jun: I agree. It's not fair. (Interview, 17/11/89)

Kayo: It (the internal selection) lowers our hopes for our future and guides us into "secure and predictable" paths. I feel that the school system is designed to make it impossible for us to insist on following our own wishes and using our own initiative. If we try a company which the meeting decided against, and then fail, they would say, "We told you!". (Interview, 24/11/89)

Chieko: The internal selection is necessary. It reduces the probability of failing an employment exam.

Kasumi: I question that. For instance, Kawajuu sent our school five positions, and seven students applied for them, and all passed after all. Also, the school's assessment of a student is not necessarily the same as an employer's assessment.

Chieko: Well, if a student can't get their choice, he or she can plead to the teacher.

Kasumi: How many of us students are brave enough to do that?

Chieko: I feel that if one has worked hard, he or she won't fail.

Kasumi: I don't think so. The internal selection result depends on many other factors, like luck and the teachers. Also the strong emphasis on academic marks in the selection is

Chieko: It's not only academic marks. The internal selection also considered personality and motivation.

Kasumi: It is also affected by whether the home room teacher is pushy and eloquent, or not. And teachers have their favourites.

Chieko: OK, OK. It may be so. But teachers do try to be fair to everyone. (Interview, 4/10/89)

Hisakazu: I feel that the school should let everyone try for wherever he wants. I don't support the school deciding such an important issue on academic marks... since the deciding factor is the interview at the company.

KO: Why do you say that?

Hisakazu: My impression from the recruitment exam. You see, the written exam part was so easy that everyone would have got similar marks. The interview decided the final outcome. (Interview, 9/11/89)

Takashi: It (the internal selection) makes decisions mainly based on academic marks on paper..... I would like the selection meeting to consider other aspects such as personality, motivation and enthusiasm, by, say, increasing interviews with applicants. I want them to assess the applicant's suitability for the particular company, I mean, conduct a more individualistic assessment. (Interview, 8/11/89)

Although Takashi seemed to consider that the internal selection was based purely on academic marks, the selection meeting does consider other aspects as well, as the description of the meeting (Phase 3) showed in the previous chapter.

During this phase, students' choices were screened by the school, and became the school's decision. In Sasaki High's 3D class, out of the 36 students who entered the internal selection 12 did not get their first choice. Among those 12 students, 6 were granted their second choice companies. In Sasaki High's 3I and 3MA class, from a total of 61 students in the internal selection, 16 were asked to change their choices in the preliminary selection meeting in early August, and 4 in the final selection

meeting (which was held two weeks later). Among those who did not get their first choice companies, many accepted the school decision without much disappointment and trauma, since they had adjusted their expectations beforehand to allow for an initial negative result.

Phase 4: Final Preparation for the Recruitment Examinations: the School Marshalls its Resources
(late August to 14th September)

Students appreciated the mock interviews, and learned to perform certain roles in different contexts. Some girls talked about the interview later on:

Masako: Hey, Okano-san. We never expected you were going to be there in the interview!

KO: Did I make you nervous?

Kyouko: A little. We were nervous anyway.

KO: Masako, why didn't you mention handcrafts as your hobby? You make such wonderful things, you know.

Masako: Of course, I could have said that. You see, I was confused, and could not think clearly. I was nervous.

Kyouko: I feel shy when someone I know well watches me in an interview. I have never had classes with the two teachers who interviewed me. So that was OK.

Because in the interview we all put on an air, trying to look mature, you know. I felt shy, when I saw you.

Masako: True, we tell all kinds of lies in the interview to project ourselves well, although I am not sure how successful we have been (Fieldnotes, 6/9/89).

These girls had learned what employers expected to see, and were prepared to play the "game". Once applications were either sent (by registered mail) or handed in to the companies, students waited for notice of the date for the recruitment examination. When they received cards addressed to them from the companies, their consciousness of getting a job reached a climax. Some worried and expressed their anxiety, while others were relaxed. Ordinary class routines were conducted as usual during school hours, and interview practice still continued after school. Those who were judged to be at risk were called and put under the supervision of teachers who were considered to have the most influence on that particular student. These teachers were often sports club teachers if the student belonged to a club, and home room teachers otherwise.

Tsuneo

Some students made substantial changes in their trajectories. After the summer vacation, Tsuneo, a 3D boy, directed himself to getting a job instead of going to university. The immediate reason for his change was that he had not studied for the university entrance examinations during the summer vacation. Instead he had worked at a part-time job of which he had deliberately not advised the school. The change seemed to stem from advice received from both teachers and family.

Tsuneo:Since I entered Sasaki High three years ago, I intended to go to university. I originally thought that I could go to university to study computer science since I am in the data processing course. But I soon found that it was impossible since we did not study academic science subjects in the data processing course. So, I thought of going to a commerce university.

KO: What did Mr. Kodama say?

Tsuneo: Mr. Kodama, as you know....he says this to everyone in class..., suggested that I get a job after school, that I would get a better job now than after finishing university in 4 years time; that the employment market was buoyant this year. My parents also suggested that I get a job, but were prepared to let me go to university if I wanted to. My elder sister told me to get a job as well. (Interview, 18/11/89)

When Tsuneo changed his plan from trying for a university to seeking employment, many jobs had already been taken. He consulted Mr. Kodama and Mr. Yamada, HOD of the DGLAS, who suggested he choose one of three particular companies. Tsuneo took these names home, talked to his family, and decided on Nihon Air Brake.

Naomi

Naomi's *enko* arrangement was completed after the internal selection. Because this 3D girl had told Mr. Kodama that her uncle had been trying to arrange employment through *enko* with Touyou Information Systems, Mr. Kodama was prepared for this. By this time she had been allocated her second choice company, Meiden Engineering, through the internal selection. Naomi's pulling out at the last minute affected two of her classmates, Jun and Miho. Jun had been offered her fifth choice company (programmer position), and Miho her second choice company (programmer position), as the result of the internal selection.

Miho: The internal selection gave me my second choice company, a programming position at Atorasu Inc. About a week after that....already in September.... I had an unexpected phone call from Mr. Kodama. He asked me if I would be interested in Meiden Engineering. Sasaki High's seniors have been there, and he knows that the working environment is great. Someone was supposed to go there, but she is now getting a job through *enko*. That created a vacancy there. He said that in fact the company will now take two from Sasaki High, and wondered if Jun and I would like to go there.

KO: That's interesting indeed.

Miho: Yes, I had thought that the internal selection was final, and never expected that I would face another major decision like that. Oh, I couldn't decide..... There're pros and cons for each company. Meiden Engineering was far away, almost one and a half hour's commuting, offered a lower wage, and work started earlier in the morning. Then, Atorasu Inc. had never had students from Sasaki High and thus its environment was unknown. I talked to my parents. They said that I should decide, but also said that Meiden was much better known. (Interview, 17/11/89)

Jun: I was surprised to receive that phone call. I knew that Meiden was a good company when I examined the RC list in July. But because the previous years' students from Sasaki High who work there all had better marks than me, I excluded it from my choice. It was difficult to make a decision, and I talked to many people. I was happy to go for a clerical position instead of a programming position, but didn't like having to commute such a long distance to Meiden Engineering. The programming position which I had from the internal selection paid much better, and

the company started work later in the morning. At first I felt that the only good aspect of the Meiden job was that it was a clerical position. My parents and elder brother told me that Meiden was much better known than Dejitaru Company. Dejitaru Company was new to Sasaki High, which concerned me as well. I was so confused..... finally I thought, "Since Mr. Kodama rang me after the internal selection, the company must be good". (Interview, 17/11/89)

Both decided to go for Meiden Engineering instead of the companies initially allocated in the internal selection.

Yuuji

Yuuji finally started to "make a move" towards more realistic decision-making. He wanted to get a job to do with bikes, but did not find the kind of position he wanted in the RC list, and was unsuccessful when he tried for jobs at bike studios which he had seen advertised in bike magazines. Mr. Nakane contacted these studios to request RCs, but was turned down. It was then that Mr. Honda, the bike club teacher, suggested Ribaro Bike Workshop near Imai Tech High. Although Yuuji had been to the studio to get his racing bike made and had it maintained there, he had never considered it as a potential place of work.

Yuuji: Then Mr. Nakane and I visited the Ribaro studio. Mr. Nakane talked to them very skilfully. He really marketed me..... as if I thought only of Ribaro as the place to work, you know. On that visit, we were told that an employee had recently left the studio and that they might be taking on someone in his place. Mr. Nakane said, "This will turn out fine". And it did. The next time, Mr. Honda, my club teacher, and I visited the studio, I had a sort of interview, and they decided to employ me. So, I did not have an employment exam after all. (Interview, 6/11/89)

It took only two weeks from the time Mr. Honda first mentioned Ribaro as a possible work place for Yuuji until he got the job. Although Yuuji left the decision until the last moment, he got what he wanted.

Phase 5: Recruitment Examinations: What Employers Want to Know about Students (15th September onwards)

The format, the content and the assessment scheme relating to the recruitment examinations were examined in the last chapter. What were the students' perceptions of the examinations?

Tsuneki

Tsuneki had his examination one month earlier than everyone else. He had applied for a position at NEC West Saki-city branch through his home room teacher's connection. He described his experience:

Tsuneki: The exam was OK. It was held on 15th and 16th August. The atmosphere in the exam room was pretty serious. In particular, all the other applicants were university graduates. One third of them were female. All the male candidates wore suits and a tie, and I was wearing school uniform (as requested). I had a written exam consisting of four subjects -- Japanese, Maths, Social Studies and English, and an aptitude test on the first day, with an interview on the second day. I was nervous at the interview. (Fieldnotes, 13/9/89)

Hisakazu

Hisakazu, a 3I boy, who repeated his first year at Imai Tech High due to his absence, deviant behaviour and poor academic record, was asked about this repeat year in the interview. He had expected this and felt uneasy about it, but thought that his honest answer paid off.

KO: Did they ask you about your repeating?

Hisakazu: Sure. I told my side of the story honestly, since I'm sure they knew the teachers' side of the story from the record book. In my first year I wagged a lot since I didn't like this school. I was rebellious, I would say..... Four of us, two boys and two girls, were notified that we had to repeat the first year. The other three all quit school one by one. In the third year I was the only one, and I wanted to graduate. (Interview, 9/11/89)

Satomi

Satomi, a 3I girl, was also anxious about the interview questions. She was hospitalised due to hepatitis and away from school for a month in her second year. She was afraid that, although she was now fully recovered, this episode of bad health would adversely affect her employment chances.

Satomi (factory work position at Taki Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company): On the first day of the recruitment exam, we had a medical check, a written exam on general knowledge and an essay with the title, "On Starting a Job". There were 35 girls and 35 boys there. The room was completely silent. On the second day we had interviews. I got so nervous. I knew that I would be turned down if I had to compete with other applicants, because of my liver problem. I became even more nervous when asked about my liver. The school did send a doctor's letter about my liver along with my school record and curriculum vitae. (Interview, 11/10/89)

Following are a selection of some of the other students' impressions and experiences of recruitment examinations. The students seemed to perceive what it was the examinations were trying to determine about themselves. A typical interview would focus on such factors as possession or lack of basic skills, persistence and endurance and good human relations skills. It is difficult to estimate to what extent the students' perception was affected by the pre-examination seminars and talks given by their teachers.

Kana (sales position, Sogo Department Store chain): About 120 girls sat the exam yesterday. One hour for Maths, and 20 mins for Japanese. There were two sheets of test papers, and I don't think I quite made it. Time was too short. At the beginning of the exam, one chap from Sogo talked about the "great" achievements of the department store, like how much profit they make every year. I felt he was boasting. Then we had a written exam, and an interview. Three of us were in the same room being interviewed together, and I was sitting in the middle. Since they asked different questions of each of us, I did not have time to prepare for them. I was rather nervous, and don't remember all of the questions I was asked and how I answered them. I did mention that I wanted to work in a furniture section, when asked which section I wanted to work for. That was a surprise to them. They asked why, and I said that I was in the interior furnishing course. That was well done. As for the result of the exam, I am not confident. I was amazed at the way in which the other students talked -- very artificial, pretentious and unnatural -- like using *watakushi* (formal pronoun for I). I didn't go as far as that. I called myself *watashi* (standard pronoun for I) as usual. (Fieldnotes, 19/9/89)

Yoshiyuki (technical drawing position for an engineering consulting firm): There were four of us. On the day of the exam they suddenly decided not to have a written exam. So they didn't check our technical drawing skills.

KO: What do you think they were checking?

Yoshiyuki: Well.... personality mainly, if we have endurance and persistence. They asked questions like, "Are you confident in continuing in this job long?" and "Are you tolerant?". (Interview, 21/11/89)

Yoshimi (a checkout for CO-OP): It was a big event, I mean there were 200 girls sitting the exam. I saw many from far away country areas as well. They were staying overnight. The written exams were in Maths, Japanese and general knowledge. Not difficult. Two of us were interviewed together by two interviewers. I was relaxed..... I don't think the exam content had anything to do with the kind of work I will be doing. I feel they just wanted to check our basic ability. (Interview, 31/10/89)

Akiko (a design position with a bike company): I was the only one who sat the recruitment exam that day. I heard a few others sat the exam also, but on another day. They were fine arts university graduates. I had an aptitude test, and a personality test...I guess this is to see whether I can adapt to human relationships in the work place, and I had to write an essay.I don't think the content of the exam had much to do with my work really. (Interview, 1/11/89)

Yumiko (a bank teller position at a Korean bank): The general knowledge exam did not have direct relevance to my future work. Well, except for the *Kanji* (Chinese characters) exercise involving banking terms. In the interview they asked about my relatives, father's and relatives' occupations. I saw applicants from solo-mother families being asked a lot of questions. I think that they were checking on candidates' credibility and honesty, since we will all deal with money. (Interview, 17/1/90)

Toshikazu (*gijutsu* position at a machinery manufacturing company): I think the written exam was relevant, like technical drawing, and designing mechanical objects...In the interview, I felt they were trying to check my personality. I didn't get difficult questions, like the ones which we practised at school such as, "Why did you choose this company?" I think that they were interested in the ways in which I responded, since they show our inner thoughts and personality.

KO: Did you feel anything special in being at the work place?

Toshikazu: Well, I guess so. When I saw the place, I felt, "Oh, I will be working here next year." I saw the rows of young people in workers' uniform assembled for the morning meeting, and I thought I would be one of them. (Interview, 10/1/90)

Students did not make confident comments about the result of these examinations. Every student I questioned responded that he or she would fail. They were worried, "What if I am one of the few who end up failing and having no place to go?" Of course, those who fail in the first round recruitment examination would have a place to go by the end of the year, since the DGLAS at each school simply does not allow students to leave school without jobs. Some girls even seemed to enjoy a feeling of melodrama stemming from the immediate uncertainty of their employment prospects.

This "I-am-left-behind" feeling was even stronger for Tamami, who applied for the civil service and was waiting to sit the exam in a few weeks. Even if she passed the screening examination, she would not be assured of a position until March, at the very last moment. Schools do not allow students to attempt examinations for the public service and those for private companies at the same time, since a student who passes the public service examination is then likely to turn down a confirmed position at a company. This would cause inconvenience and embarrassment for the school and company alike.

Junko: What will happen if you wait till March, the last moment, and don't get any position?

Tamami: Don't say that! I will become a *furiitaa* (temporary worker).

Junko: Then will you sit the exam again next year?

Tamami: I am not willing to do that.

Junko: Rather than becoming a *furiitaa*, you can go for the second and third round of applications, can't you?

Tamami: But by that time, there won't be any good companies left.

Junko: Exactly. That's why I gave up the idea of going for the public service. I had originally wanted to be a civil servant, and that's why I took the English option. But I gave up, because it's so competitive, and because I wouldn't know the result till the last moment. Don't worry, Tamami. You are a hard worker. You are too good to be a *furiitaa*. You should try the public service exam again while being a *furiitaa* next year. It's OK if you get behind a year, since you can work much longer as a public servant compared to working for private companies.

Tamami: You are able to say all this because it's about someone else! (Fieldnotes, 20/9/89)

Phase 6: Follow-up Actions to Passing and Failing in the Recruitment Examinations
(Late September onwards)

Students waited for the results of recruitment examinations with great anticipation. Those who passed were overjoyed while those who did not became disappointed, but these students did not outwardly express their emotions as Westerners might do. This might have given an impression to outsiders that they were aloof and indifferent to their future. The results were advised to the DGLAS of each school by telephone calls from the respective companies. The DGLAS passed the information on to home room teachers, who then notified their students. Companies later sent an official letter confirming the examination result to the student's home.

The first student of 3I to be advised of his result was Kouji who had applied for a chef trainee position at Akoyatei restaurant chain. That morning Mr. Uno broke the news at the start of the short home room period after the morning greeting. "Listen, our first good news! Kouji-kun, *goukai omedetou!*" (Kouji, congratulations on your success). Then the whole class applauded Kouji's achievement. Kouji then stood up and made a short speech, "Thank you very much. It's due to all of you helping me over the last three years." Every morning home room teachers made similar announcements. Those students who were successful expressed their delight:

Mari: Now that I have a place at a company, I am going to play up. I guess that I deserve it. I am going to have my hair permed today! (Fieldnotes, 20/9/89)

Since the students had been worried and anxious about their jobs, they were naturally excited about the good news that they had a job to go to after school. A typical initial response from them was like that from Mari, that they were going to play up now.

Not all students were successful, although as mentioned in the earlier chapter, the rate of failure is not high. At Imai Tech High 18 out of the 187 students who sat the examinations failed, while Sasaki High's rate was 15 out of 174. Among the three classes which I closely observed, 3I had one failure, Seiko, 3MA had two, Hiroaki and Hisashi, and 3D had none. In 3D, though, Haruka, the Jehovah's Witness, did not sit any examination, and therefore had avoided failing up until then, since the DGLAS had not found any companies which were flexible enough to accommodate her request regarding working hours. Those who failed were subdued. Others in class avoided talking about their unsuccessful classmates, in case, they said, it upset those who had failed.

Seiko: When I sat the recruitment exam at Toyota, I knew that I wouldn't make it, since I couldn't do much of it. So, I wasn't all that surprised or shocked. But I was embarrassed.....since at that time, all my classmates had passed their examinations and I had not thought of my next step at all. I felt sad really. I knew that I made others feel bad as well. (Interview, 13/11/89)

Seiko: I talked to Mr. Uno after I failed. A bit later he told me that Fuji Interior Furnishing Company had now sent a RC for girls....the company only sent RCs for boys before. That decided it. If he hadn't said that then, I would have searched for other RCs. I am happy about what I've got now. (Interview, 13/11/89)

Seiko got a technical drawing position at Fuji Interior Furnishing Company after failing at Toyota.

Naoki was successful in obtaining a *gijutsu* position at a smaller size company on his second attempt, and Hisashi got a car mechanic's position at another garage.

Phase 7: Post-examination School Routine and Employers' Actions

(October onwards)

For the great majority of students the climax of job hunting was now over. They were back to the school routine, attending classes as usual, but with less interest. Students who had already secured a job were aware of those who still had to sit the examinations for the civil service and university entrance, and tried not to disturb them. Tamami, a 3D girl, and Nozomi, a 3I girl, took the civil service examinations (national, prefectural and municipal governments). Nozomi failed to pass any of them, while Tamami passed the first round of the national government examinations (post office).

"The Company Cares for Us"

Those who got jobs were contacted by their prospective employers. Makiko, who got a clerical position at Sanseido Company, received a packet from the company every week from mid-October. She was expected to write an essay on given topics, and send it to the company who would then make comments on what she had written. In November Mari, who had a programming position at a computer systems company, received a thick workbook on programming and was expected to complete it before she started working. Below are others' experiences:

Mayumi (programmer at a medium size company): In mid-October, I was invited to attend a meeting for new recruits. There were about 50 people there, the majority of them being male - I guess they're to be sales reps. All except two of us (Kazuko and I) were from universities or junior colleges. That alone was overwhelming. I was so relieved to know that I had at least Kazuko beside me!! We went in school uniform, and that made us stand out even more.

KO: What did you do there?

Mayumi: First, company people gave us a talk about the company, its achievements and prospects, etc. Then we had a personality test followed by a nice lunch. At each table there was an executive of the company, hosting the new recruits.

KO: How did you like the meeting? What was its impact on you?

Mayumi: Well... It made me realise that we were the youngest and at the bottom. It was worthwhile, since it's better to realise it now and prepare myself for it. I would like to catch up on my programming.

KO: Have you had any contact with them since then?

Mayumi: I received a copy of the company newsletter last week which contained

information on general events taking place within the company. This information did not necessarily relate to me. I know quite a few students who have received similar newsletters from prospective employers. (Interview, 2/12/89)

Kazue (programmer/key puncher at a data processing company): The company sent exercise books on general knowledge. I was supposed to complete one book each month, and to send them the three books by November. And I recently received these books marked. They sent me a company lottery ticket for the grand baseball match, and I got two questions right and received a bottle of herbal alcoholic drink as a prize. Then I was invited to their Christmas party. At the party I played Bingo, and won an electric tooth brush. About 200 new recruits, from both universities and high schools, were present. Naoko and others from school went also. They were indecisive about it, but said, "If you are going, I will go also."

KO: How did you feel about the company including you in these activities?

Kazue: I feel good. I feel that this is a good company, that the company thinks about me. (Interview, 13/1/90)

KO: Have you heard from the company?

Kayoko (key operator at a data processing company): No, which makes me feel insecure. But I know other recruits from Sasaki High have also not heard anything from them. So it's not only me. (Interview, 2/12/89)

Atsushi (station worker for a suburban train company): I received monthly company newsletters. In December I went to the company to get measured for a uniform. They also asked me to read a book which they sent me and to write an essay about it. I filled in a lot of forms also. I went to get a *juumin-hyou* (residence registration) from the city council and forwarded it to the company. Also I had to find a *hoshounin* (guarantor) at the request of the company, and I got his signature. I asked my father's brother to be my *hoshounin*. (Interview, 26/1/90).

Students receiving contacts from their prospective employers felt secure about the position they had obtained, were happy in the thought that the employers cared for them, and became more aware that they would be employees in six months. Those who received assignments were disappointed at the further "study" they had to do, and complained about it to their home room teachers. But they were easily convinced by the teachers' comments that their employers must consider them worthwhile to be investing such an education in them. Students now felt that they belonged to two places: school and company.

Anxiety about Changes

Students started to imagine what it would be like to be working at their respective companies, and to assess their jobs more realistically, since they now felt more settled. They were conscious of the fact that they would be working in a mere 5 months time. No one expressed a simplistic desire to be starting soon. Rather, many students expressed anxiety about anticipated changes, which, because they were not clear, led them to feel insecure. Often students wanted to continue as they were: being students.

Kyouko: I now feel relieved to have a job to go to in April, although I don't feel it's real. I'm now interested in planning a trip with Mikako and Hosoko. (Interview, 30/10/89)

Kana: I was so excited and delighted when I heard that I got the job. Now I am starting to get worried.....

KO: Worried about what?

Kana: Well... You know, I am not good at talking to strangers. What happens if I can't keep a conversation going when customers come? ..

KO: Would you want to be a student longer?

Kana: Of course. I have had an easy-going three years at school. (Interview, 7/11/89)

Mikako: I feel lazy these days.... a feeling that I've lost a goal or purpose. Before the recruitment exam, I had a clear goal. I would like to work soon, but I don't know.....

KO: Would you like to spend another year at school?

Mikako: I would like to if I was with my present classmates. (Interview, 10/11/89)

Yoshiyuki: I am realising that I will be "tied up" soon, when I start to work. But, I will have to become a *shakai-jin* at some stage in my life.

KO: Would you like to have another year as a high school student?

Yoshiyuki: No. I have enjoyed enough of it. (Interview, 21/11/89)

Students' thoughts regarding the transition which they were experiencing were more clearly expressed in their answers to my question: "Which would you prefer, being a student, or a *shakai-jin*?"

Junko: Wearing a school uniform you can do silly things on the street. Once we are a *shakai-jin*, we can't. Because we are high school students, we are allowed to be silly. Once an adult, not so. School uniform is powerful in that sense. I would want to be a student longer if I could ... What I look forward to by being a *shakai-jin* is earning money. But also I will feel happy in that I will be recognised as an adult. (Interview, 11/12/90)

Kayoko: Of course being a student is easier. Being employed looks demanding. Students can sleep, or take a day off, and you can do what you want if you join a club. You can get teachers to do various things. I guess now that I am leaving school soon, I can say this. I would love to be at school another year if I could. (Interview, 2/12/89)

Kengo: A difficult question to answer. From a student's point of view, I think being a *shakai-jin* would be easy because we won't have school regulations and dress codes, etc. If we are a *shakai-jin*, we can do anything, but in return, we can't bother other people, or cause trouble, and we will have to take responsibility for what we do. So, when I become a *shakai-jin*, I am likely to feel that I prefer being a student. Being a student is like "being in a basket". Parents' and school's basket, you know... My honest feeling is that I want to be a *shakai-jin* soon. At the same time I do feel like staying on at school with my classmates for another year. (Interview, 5/12/89)

Manami: Being a student is much easier. Even if you are playing up at school, you can still get financial support, say from your parents.

KO: But school imposes a lot of rules, doesn't it? You've been rebelling against that, haven't you?

Manami: Sure, but once you get out of the school grounds, everything is on your side. Well, as long as you are careful enough not to be found out! Don't you think, Masayoshi?

KO: Would you want to spend another year at school with your classmates, if you were allowed to do so?

Manami: No way, I am going to graduate now.

KO: I mean not as a repeater, but just spend another year.

Manami: That's attractive.....(silence). No, I still don't want that. (Interview, 6/12/89)

Change from University or Civil Service to Employment at Private Companies

Those who sat entrance examinations to universities and 2-year colleges through the *suisen-nyuugaku* (entry by recommendation) system received the results in November and December. Some of those who failed decided to get employment, rather than try for the entrance examinations in the open competition in 3 months. These students came to DGLAS with their home room teachers to search for appropriate employment.

Hidetsugu was the only one in 3MA who had aimed at university, but failed in the examinations.

KO: Have you had your exams?

Hidetsugu: Yep, but I've failed in the exams for two universities so far. Honestly, I don't know what I should do. [with a sigh]

KO: I'm sorry to hear that.... Are you sitting another one?

Hidetsugu: For evening courses at two universities. [He looked anxious and exhausted.] How can I prepare for writing essays. These coming exams both involve an interview and an essay. I need to pass them, (Fieldnotes, 21/11/89)

Hidetsugu received essay writing lessons from Mr. Gomi of DGLAS. However, he failed in the subsequent examinations, and was still indecisive about what he would do at the end of the second term.

Those students who sat, but were unsuccessful in, the civil service screening examinations were advised of the remaining employment opportunities by their respective DGLAS. It was easier to recommend them than those who had failed in examinations for private companies. Nozomi of 3I failed in the civil service exams, and came to DGLAS straight away. She sat the examination for Matsushita Electric Ltd, and was successful.

Phase 8: Official Exit from High School and Official Entry into the Work place
(January to March)

The third term, starting in January, is a short one, and for those who enter the workforce this is the last term at school. Since only a few were taking open competition university entrance examinations, Imai Tech High students were relaxed and enjoyed themselves. At Sasaki High academic course students were under the tension of preparing for upcoming entrance examinations.

For those whose "life-after-school" placement and career had yet to be determined, the winter vacation was not comfortable. Such students were now desperate to do something about deciding their immediate futures. Hidetsugu, a 3MA boy who had failed four entrance examinations, decided on a position at Toshiba Lift Company as advertised in a newspaper, applied for it and was told that he should apply through his school's official channels. Imai Tech High had received a RC from the company, but Hidetsugu, having had no intention of getting a job, had not looked through the RCs at all. He applied again through the school, sat the examination and got the position.

Kaori, a 3D girl who failed in three entrance examinations, was desperate to obtain a job as soon as possible, since she felt insecure about not knowing where she would be going after graduation. Her home room teacher and Mr. Yamada, HOD of DGLAS, discussed the matter and introduced her to a clerical position at a construction company nearby. Mr. Yamada arranged for the company president to come to school to interview Kaori. Kaori was subsequently offered the job, on the day she was interviewed, and she accepted it.

Haruka, the 3D girl who was a Jehovah's Witness, sat an examination for a clerical position at a medical clinic. Mr. Yamada managed to find this position, which satisfied the strict working hours Haruka needed to allow her to observe her religious commitments. She passed the written test at the first stage, but failed in the following interview. She wondered if she would ever get a job. Her classmates were supportive.

Those who had already got a job did little while remaining at home for four weeks in February. School claimed that these four weeks were for students to "study" at home, but they did not seem to use this time in the way the school intended.

KO: How have you been at home?

Yumi: I've been so bored. I get up around noon, watch TV and then have dinner, then sleep again. I can't sleep at night since I sleep in so late. (Fieldnotes, 24/2/90)

Some students were called to companies to attend a pre-orientation meeting or to receive training.

KO: What's wrong with Mari?

Yoshiko: I wonder if Mari is going to come today. She went to Tokyo on the 20th for a training session. She was panicking until the day before she went about the thick workbook which the company sent. She is going to Tokyo again for two weeks of training in March, before she starts work at the beginning of April. (Fieldnotes, 24/2/90)

In February students received a letter from their prospective employers about their initial training and education and the entrance ceremony.

At this time last minute decisions were made at both schools. Youko, a 3I girl who was unsuccessful in her attempts to enter university, decided to seek employment one week before the graduation day. With DGLAS's help, she got a job at a well known shoe company a week later. Kaori, who had got a clerical position at a construction company, at the last moment decided to withdraw from the position and to help in her mother's barbecue shop in the *buraku* area, since her mother had become ill. Mr. Yamada visited the company to apologise. Kaori's position at the construction company was taken by Tomoko, one of the *gaiseki* girls, later in March.

Other students were in a reflective mood, looking back on how they had secured their jobs -- they also pondered what the future held for them. They seemed to see themselves in a more detached manner, and were far from being enthusiastic. Recorded below are some of their thoughts:

KO: How do you feel?

Tamotsu (factory worker at small machine parts factory): I feel settled now that I have got a job.

KO: Are you looking forward to becoming a *shakai-jin*?

Tamotsu: Yeh, I want to be a *shakai-jin* soon.

KO: Would you prefer being a *shakai-jin* to being a student?

Tamotsu: Of course, I prefer being a *shakai-jin* rather than being a student.

KO: Why?

Tamotsu: If you are a *shakai-jin*, you don't have to worry about *sotomi* (appearances and behaviour) as long as you follow the basic rules, like not committing crimes, etc. That's different to being a student.

KO: What do you mean by *sotomi*?

Tamotsu: I mean, ... When you are a student, the school tells you not to do this and that. When you are a *shakai-jin*, you can do deviant things as long as you are not committing a crime. If you are a *shakai-jin*, you can say, "I know what I am doing. I have got a reason for doing deviant things!" If you are a student and say this, you will be told off, "What are you talking about? You are still just a student."

KO: Would you like to stay at school with your classmates another year?

Tamotsu: I would love to be with my classmates, but not at school. (Interview, 16/1/90)

KO: Do you still feel bad about not getting the job you wanted?

Kenichi (computer operator/programmer at a small printing company): Of course. I still regret that I did not get the job.

KO: Have you thought of changing your job?

Kenichi: To be honest, yes.

KO: Really? To what kind of job?

Kenichi: I am seriously thinking of quitting the job before long. An acquaintance says I can get a job in a computer firm with my skills. But I will stick to the present company for at least three years.

KO: Why?

Kenichi: Three years of working for the company will do me good when looking for another job. Also, I have my responsibility to the school.

KO: Who told you that? Mr. Kodama?

Kenichi: I think of next year's students who may want to go to this printing company. If I quit soon, the school may not get RCs from that company any more. Mr. Kodama said in class, "Don't cause problems, since the school will suffer later on". So, I will work there for 3 years.... I prefer being a student, since I am freer. I can do what I want to more easily. Sure, I will get money, but I don't see many ways to spend it. I am not looking forward to April, since I did not get what I wanted. But I realise I will have to convince myself. (Interview, 12/1/90)

Hisashi (forklift operator): I don't mind working, but I am worried that I may not last there long.

KO: Why?

Hisashi: Because I will have to work shift work, which means working nights.

KO: Didn't you know about this, that you will have a night shift?

Hisashi: Yes, but I took it lightly, thinking that it'll be OK.

KO: Do you want to be a *shakai-jin* soon?

Hisashi: Of course it is easier (*raku*) to be a student than to be a *shakai-jin*, but you get money being a *shakai-jin*.

KO: What do you mean by it being *raku* to be a student?

Hisashi: Well, you don't have to work hard, you can wag, I mean, sleep in classes if you don't like them.

KO: Would you like to spend another year with your classmates at school, if you could?

Hisashi: Perhaps, yes. (Interview, 25/1/90)

Kazuaki (*ginou* position at a machinery company): I feel anxious and insecure about becoming a worker soon. I don't want to leave school. The idea occurs to me at least once a day. When I think of April, I feel bad. As a student you have more freedom. I want to spend another year at school. I don't like studying, but the rest of the time I spent at school was great. (Interview, 10/1/90)

Sukenori (*ginou* position at a machinery company): I would like to be a *shakai-jin* soon, but also to be a student. I think that being a student is much easier (*raku*), because you don't have many responsibilities. (Interview, 31/1/90)

Some aspects of these students' views were shared: they thought that being a student was easier than being a worker; they wanted to be at school longer although not for the sake of study; they became more aware of, and worried about, the major transition ahead of them. Kenichi's view suggests that he had accepted the school message that he should stay in his job for at least 3 years, for the sake of the school's reputation.

On the graduation day students looked both happy and sad. Light pink orchid corsages decorated the chests of their dark school uniforms when they walked row by row into the gym among parents and teachers, to the accompaniment of baroque music. Some of them noticed my presence and subtly winked at me. The students projected themselves as an extremely disciplined and homogeneous body, and this lent a solemn atmosphere to the occasion. They knew that was what the school and

teachers expected at such a ceremony. But beneath the uniformity exhibited by the students lay a diversity of talents, creativity and promise.

Summary

"Creative" Students: Counter-school Culture and Resistance

As with many high schools elsewhere, students at the two schools were not passive in the sense that none of them completely endorsed all that the school, explicitly and implicitly, expected of them. Instead students were "creative" in that they variously interpreted the schools' messages and devised their own strategies to circumvent them where they considered it appropriate. For instance, they resisted school authority and the imposition of school rules. The rules most challenged were those regarding the schools' prohibition of part-time work after school, and the bans on smoking and on the riding of motor bikes, as well as the school dress codes. This situation might be taken as a form of conflict between two cultures (teachers' and students') and/or a "game" which students enjoy. Some students questioned the legitimacy of these rules, that is, the situation whereby the school had the power to decide these norms, but they rarely expressed their views to teachers.

I came to know from casual daily conversations that many of my Imai Tech High students had part-time jobs after school, mainly waitering and waitressing (Fieldnotes, 5/9/89; 21/11/89; 12/12/89; 9/1/90). I was asked by the students concerned not to inform any of the teachers. Boys reported their "successes" in pretending to look older than they were and "chatting up" older women at bars where they worked. Students often introduced a classmate to their employers so that the classmate could get a job at the same place. There was a "social network" among students who held jobs at various bars and cafes. Interestingly this network based on part-time work places was not used when students obtained their "real job" for the following year. The school claimed that it prohibited part-time work after school to "protect" students. Mr. Sumi, the dean, explained:

Mr. Sumi: (We prohibit part-time work) because students can get part-time jobs only after school, mainly in the evening. The sort of work they can get in the evenings includes waitressing and other "unsuitable kinds" of employment, which is likely to give them a chance to get to know undesirable kinds of people. Plus, with the money they earn, what are they going to do? They want to buy a motor cycle, if they're a boy; dresses, make-up and other silly stuff if they're a girl, you know. All of these are a distraction from study. The student's duty is to study, that's all. (Fieldnotes, 31/5/89)

The last comment was ironical since Mr. Sumi knew that many Imai Tech High students did not study, and were generally not interested in studying at all. The majority of the students, in securing part-time work, were careful to choose work places that teachers hardly visited, and avoided getting caught. Some of the teachers were aware that particular students were working part-time, but ignored it (Fieldnotes, 4/8/89). These students, in turn, were aware that they had been found out.

Much of the extra cash earned through unauthorised part-time work was spent on "entertainment": dresses, make-up, cafes, bars, records, music tapes and compact discs, and comic books, etc. Some girls, like Mie and Yasuko, saved their earnings "for future use" (but they had no specific purpose), and enjoyed counting how much money they had in their bank accounts. Over half of the students in Imai Tech High's 3I and 3MA classes had been out drinking with friends in the evenings. *Karaoke* (singing to background music accompanied by a video), a popular form of entertainment among adults, was also enjoyed by the students.

Smoking was widespread among Imai Tech High boys, but not overtly seen on school grounds. They talked a lot about smoking, how they felt good afterwards and about what brands were good. Regular smokers on the school grounds included several 3MA boys who disappeared behind the sport club buildings for a "rest" during breaks (Fieldnotes, 10/1/90). Hisakazu, a 3I boy, got caught for the second time when he was smoking *outside the school grounds* and was sent home on *kinshin* (suspension from school) for one week (Fieldnotes, 27/6/89). It seems that the students were under school supervision even outside school. Some of Imai Tech High girls smoked in the girls' toilet, the safest place at school since there were no full-time female teachers.

Another school rule which students contested was that which prohibited getting a motor bike licence and the riding of a motor bike without school permission. If a student was caught, he/she was punished with *kinshin* (suspension from school) for a couple of weeks. In the case of continued offending, school dismissal could follow. This rule, however, became very difficult to impose later in the year, when all students had already obtained a job for the following year. Students started taking driving lessons. The majority of the 3MA students and over a half of the 3I students had obtained a driving licence without the school's knowledge by February. It was not that the school banned the obtaining of driving licences all together. Students could go through an "official" procedure, in which they got a letter from their prospective employers saying that the job required a driving licence. A few abided by this procedure. Again, some Imai Tech High teachers were aware of students attending driving school, but did not make a fuss about it.

If a student was caught for unauthorised part-time work, smoking or riding motor bikes, he/she was given *kinshin* (suspension from school) for self-reflection under his/her parents' supervision. The length of *kinshin* depended on the seriousness of the offence. Those students who were engaged in these oppositional activities did not necessarily want to be *seen*. This differs from the "lads" in Willis' study.

The majority of them smoke and, perhaps more importantly, are *seen* to smoke. The essence of schoolboy smoking is school gate smoking (Willis, 1977, p.18) ... , drinking is undertaken openly because it is the most decisive signal to staff and "ear'oles" [conformist students] that the individual is separate from the school and has a presence in an alternative, superior and more mature mode of social being. (Willis, 1977, p.19)

For the students in my study, it was "cool" to be engaged in oppositional activities in a "tactful" (*youryougaii*) way without being caught. They enjoyed testing school authority to see how far they could "bend the rules", but always only to the extent that they did not face confrontation with teachers. The capacity to estimate the "right" extent was important, and was the essence of "tactful" strategies.

Such "tactful" strategies were seen in students' mode of dress as well. They attempted to make changes and look a little different from the standard appearance. "Tactful" students did it in a subtle way so that they did not get caught by teachers, while some overdid it and were told off. Boys, for instance, permed and dyed their hair, wore a black school uniform jacket much longer or shorter than regulation, or wore bright coloured socks (when they should be white or navy) and unofficial styles of trousers. Boys did not talk back to teachers when told off, and just nodded as if in agreement. On the following day, however, the student in question would arrive at school dressed exactly the same way as the day before, but would take extra care not to be seen by the teacher who had reprimanded him. Girls also permed and dyed their hair, did not tie long hair, wore skirts shorter or longer than regulation required, failed to wear a navy (ribbon) tie with their blouse, or wore bright-coloured socks.

"Tactful" skills (*youryougaii*) were observed in everyday classes as well. "*Youryougaii*", a term often used by students, means getting what they wanted without having to confront teachers. In a typical 3I class, only about 10 students out of the total 37 listened attentively to the teacher. The class was not noisy, neither was it silent, several students chatting with one another in low voices. At least 10 students were asleep, about three read comics under their desks, a few girls combed their hair, and a few copied other subject notes taken by "brainy" students. The extent of these activities differed depending on the subject teacher. Teachers were aware of a small proportion of these non-study activities, but did not seem to care, as long as those students were not disturbing the motivated students. Almost at the end of the class some of these inattentive students suddenly got notes from others and copied them. Others did not bother. Their strategy was to make the minimum possible work effort *and* to get the maximum return from that minimum input. These students seemed to have worked out "tactful" strategies to accomplish this over their three years at senior high school. The purpose of coming to school was not to study (as Mr. Sumi believed), but to have a good time with friends. But since the school required students to work, they made "creative" adjustments to "manage" the school routine according to their own outlook.

Students did have dissatisfactions, but typically did not express them outwardly. There were, though, some exceptions. A few 3I girls were most confrontational when told off about their appearance. Mr. Uno told Manami that she was not allowed to go on that day's school trip unless she took off the bright red jersey she wore underneath her school jacket (regulation jerseys were not allowed to be brightly-coloured). Manami tried to justify herself, saying that it was too cold to go outside without it on and that she would catch a cold. She then started crying in a rather exaggerated manner, which attracted the attention of all the students and teachers in the gym, but Mr. Uno did not give in! An hour later Manami, now not wearing her red jersey, was chatting on the bus with her classmates, looking as if she had forgotten all about the event (Fieldnotes, 1/11/89). There were few cases in which students took open confrontational actions against teachers and the school. Takehisa, a 3MA boy, was punished with *kinshin* because, he explained, he punched his science teacher.

In the process of the transition from school to work, students at the two schools were not passive either. They did not simply accept the school's dominant message and follow what teachers told them to do.

Kasumi, a 3I girl, was aware of the occupational hierarchy as defined by the dominant group (that a hairdresser or sales person ranks lower than a clerical worker), but still chose a sales position. She made the decision, against her home room teacher's advice, and despite her excellent school record. Kouji, a 3I boy, when announcing his wish to be a trainee chef, was told off by his home room teacher, who said that he should aim for a furniture-making position. He thought about the suggestion but did not change his mind. Shinya (a 3MA boy) and Tsutomu (a 3I boy) were advised to change their choice of company, since they were unlikely to pass the examinations. The two considered it, but were still determined to take a risk and eventually got the positions they were seeking.

Some students, while still heeding the advice they received from school, were able to achieve a compromise option. Kengo and Yoshiyuki (3I boys) wanted to pursue their commitments to their rock bands, and first considered a stage setting company. Later they independently decided to obtain positions which would enable them to continue their band commitments after working hours. They decided that they would continue their band activities as a hobby instead. Maloko, a 3C girl, wanted to become a radio announcer, a position which she had enjoyed and been good at while at school. She decided to take lessons at a professional school twice a week. Her priority in selecting a job was that it would not prevent her attendance at the school. Likewise, Yuuko, another 3C girl, did the same to attend a professional beauticians' school. Yuuko took this course despite the willingness of her parents to arrange a job at Hankyuu Railways where all her family members worked. Yumi, a 3D girl, employed a different kind of strategy. She accepted her home room teacher's repeated advice to apply for a prestige company, but was not fully convinced that her application would be successful. She therefore listed small-size companies which appealed to her, so that in case she was not accepted by a large firm she would at least end up working for a company she liked.

Students did not confront their teachers when they had a disagreement over their job decisions. They listened to, and appreciated the teachers' suggestions, thought them over, and then decided if they would follow the suggestions, or negotiated to reach a compromise solution. Perhaps they found it difficult and uncomfortable to outwardly confront these *maternalistic* teachers and school. Students, thus, created their own trajectories of transition by evaluating the information and advice given at school, which they then made use of in their employment related decisions.

Differing Perceptions of School Messages

The preceding passages suggest that individual students formed different perceptions of an identical message from the school, and responded differently to it. Only some 3D students, for instance, immediately accepted Mr. Kodama's explicit message that the data processing course students should apply for programmer positions instead of clerical positions. Others thought that Mr. Kodama was not referring to them personally but to someone else in the class. For those who had been contemplating choosing a programmer position, like Hiroaki, Akiteru, Mayumi and others, Mr. Kodama's message confirmed their decisions. Most of those who had decided not to choose programmer positions heard his message but did not register it. In the same way, the public talks by ex-students of the two schools were interpreted differently. The same talk, for instance, made Hisako (who had already decided on a programmer position) to have second thoughts about it, but confirmed Hiroaki's wish to be a programmer.

How the message was conveyed to a student seemed to have a significant impact: a message personally given to a specific student was more likely to be accepted. Mari and Sayuri did not accept Mr. Kodama's advice when given to the whole class, but his personal suggestion became a catalyst in changing their minds to opt for programmer positions.

Students also interpreted school events in various ways. The internal selection, which seems like an impersonal sorting mechanism to outsiders, was not experienced as such by the majority of the students. Those who failed to get their first choice company in the internal selection were not necessarily devastated, but accepted it, saying that it was better to fail in the internal selection than in the recruitment examinations. Some of them were delighted that they got their second choice instead of their eighth choice! The majority of the students saw the internal selection as necessary. The student most affected by the internal selection was Kenichi, who was highly enthusiastic about his first choice and never expected he would not be granted it. How students reacted to the results of the internal selection depended on their initial expectations.

Students Adjusted their Wishes and Plans

Students' initial expectations of themselves underwent *adjustment* over the year. There were two main types of influence affecting those making such adjustments: One comprised directional advice/requests, and the other influential information and activities of a non-directional kind.

Directional advice/requests covered, for instance, the internal selection asking a student to apply for his/her second choice company; a home room teacher suggesting that his student aim for a programmer rather than a clerical position, and that his *gaiseki* student apply for a "safe" company. These examples are directional since they guide students in specific directions. Non-directional influences included negotiation with other students, and information about other students' wishes, individual companies, and the previous year's students' performance in recruitment examinations, etc.

These influences, both directional and non-directional, led students to reappraise their wishes and plans. If two or more influences guided the student in the same direction he/she was more likely to adjust his/her wishes and plans accordingly.

Some students raised their expectations because of their home room teachers' suggestions (for instance, Yumi, Sayuri, Mikako, Mari, Kengo and Yasuko). Yumi, for instance, did not think she was good enough to apply for prestigious companies because of her solo-mother family background. When Mr. Kodama told her *personally* that she should apply for these companies, she followed his advice. Yasuko had never expected that a girl would be offered a designing position at a train carriage engineering company, until one of the teachers *personally* encouraged her to apply for the available position. Sayuri's wish to get a clerical position instead of a programmer position was based on her *misunderstanding* about what the occupation involved, what was required for it, and on what she knew from her classmates' rumours. She decided to choose programming after Mr. Kodama told her that her skills were good enough for the position. Other students adjusted their expectations downward in response to a variety of advice from teachers: that a position was too difficult for them because of their relatively low academic marks, lack of club involvement, for personal health reasons, or because of their absence from school (e.g., Hidekazu, Junko, Takayuki, Atsushi, etc). In the case of other students, teachers confirmed their expectations.

Students underwent a similar adjustment through the internal selection meeting: some were referred to "more desirable" companies, while others were advised to attempt "less difficult" companies. Many students, but not all, adjusted their expectations of themselves in upward or downward directions in response to advice given, and requests made, by teachers.

A student's expectations about a job were subject to other students' expectations about their jobs. Students adjusted their wishes regarding a particular job in relation to other students' wishes. Hiroaki gave up the Daiichi Kangin Computer Service job when he knew that Takashi wanted the position because Takashi had a better chance of securing it. The process of students adjusting their wishes became more complex when they did not talk *frankly* with one another about their aspirations. Akiko and Yasuko both wanted the same position and "negotiated" over who would go forward but

without talking to each other. In this way, students often made these adjustments on their own among themselves, based on available information. However, this information could be "wrong".

Some of those who originally planned to get jobs through school channels decided to get jobs through *enko* at a later stage. In Phase 1, only Chieko and Yumiko announced that they were going to get jobs through family connections. In Phase 2 when RCs became available in August, Junko, Fukiko and Masayoshi decided to employ family connections. Youichi, although having been indecisive before, also finalised his decision to work for his father in Phase 2. In Naomi's case, family-initiated *enko* employment arrangements were completed after the internal selection process had already allocated her a prospective company. Naomi opted for the family-arranged employment. The last change came just before graduation day: Kaori decided to work for her mother's barbecue shop since her mother had fallen ill, and withdrew from a clerical position which she had obtained through the school's channels. Each of these students did not actively seek jobs through their families, but responded to the voluntary offer by family and relatives to arrange jobs because, they claimed, the *enko* jobs were easier to get.

Use of School Resources

The ways in which students used school resources were diverse. Firstly, the most explicitly used school resources were the RCs and the information about companies, both of which the DGLAS made available to all students. RCs offered students the opportunity of using the school's social network with companies to find jobs. The DGLAS also kept pamphlets about companies and records of previous years' examinations, as well as the previous years' students' school records and information relating to their performance in the employment examinations. The latter pool of data, the DGLAS staff claimed, enabled them to give "realistic" guidance to students.

Secondly, some students even expected further work from the DGLAS. Hironori, Yuuji and Terumi had in mind specific companies which they wanted to apply for, but from which the school had not received RCs. They requested the DGLAS to visit these companies for them. These students initiated DGLAS action on their behalf, with successful results. This idea, however, never occurred to some other students.

Thirdly, Kazuaki and Teruyuki got their jobs through their sports clubs' connections with particular companies: their club teachers advised them of these job openings. Kazuaki would be playing volleyball, and Teruyuki basketball, for their company teams.

Fourthly, some students used their club involvement in another, symbolic, way in their job acquisition activities. Employers regarded students with three years of sports club involvement as having endurance, persistence and cooperative personalities. Hankyuu Department Store and some other companies specifically requested that they wanted students who had been involved in sports

clubs. Takahiro, Hironobu, Sumie and others used this symbolic value. Involvement in other school activities, such as being a class representative or an elected member of the student council was also of symbolic value for the students. Chieko, the chairperson of the student council, was aware of this and emphasised it in her interview.

Fifthly, some students obtained jobs through teachers' personal connections. Yoshiko got a well-paid clerical position in a trading company, because Mr. Yamada, the HOD of DGLAS, was asked to send a "very good" student.

Sixthly, students secured jobs which required the certificates, skills and knowledge which they had obtained at school. 3I students tended to get jobs in furniture-making and technical drawing, 3D students in the computer industry, and 3MA students in the heavy or machinery industries. There were also students who entered occupations totally unrelated to the course they had taken at school. Students with "good" academic marks used this advantage in applying for "better" jobs. Shinichi, the top student in 3MA, was advised to change from a *ginou* position to a *gijutsu* position at Mitsubishi.

Lastly, students consciously and unconsciously used "cultural skills" they had learned and practised at school -- the proper manners and language that reflect the dominant values of the society. This "cultural" aspect was emphasised when students underwent job interview practice.

The causes and consequences of different ways of using school resources were significant. The next chapter will discuss them in depth, and relate them to reproduction theories.

CHAPTER 6

DIFFERENTIATION: MAKING DIFFERENT USES OF SCHOOL RESOURCES

I have so far presented the transition process as interpreted by teachers, and as experienced by students. The two previous chapters showed the ways in which the school resources were made available to students, and the diverse ways in which students used these school resources. This chapter examines how students utilised these school resources *in relation to family resources* in the process of transition from school to work, and discusses the differentiation among students which took place in this process.

The present chapter starts with a discussion on *capital* as defined by Bourdieu, and on what I refer to as *resources*, *positive resources*, *negative resources*, *neutral resources*, and *lack of resources*. These terms are used in the following discussion. Secondly, I closely trace the transition trajectories of six students in reference to their family backgrounds and situations, to highlight the salient features involved in activating resources. Thirdly, I present matrixes of 93 students which summarise each student's background (family circumstances, school career) and employment outcome, and then discuss these six cases in relation to the matrixes.

Among the 93 students who were closely studied, there were, as expected, no identical school to work transition trajectories, although these trajectories variously conformed to the *modal trajectory* (Bourdieu, 1984, p.110) of the group in question; that is, the relatively underprivileged or working class people in contemporary Japanese society. Bourdieu (1984) argues,

To a given volume of inherited capital there corresponds a band of more or less equally probable trajectories leading to more or less equivalent positions that modal trajectory is an integral part of the system of factors constituting the class. (p.110)

It is not the present study's intention to determine "average" features of individual trajectories in terms of frequency, to generalise tendencies from them, and to present the modal trajectory of the group. To do this would gloss over and "average out" the peculiarities and specific nature of individual trajectories. The "average" feature thus obtained might be applicable to none of the individual cases. My interest lies in studying variation *within* the modal trajectory of this particular group. Suffice to state here that the six case studies present contrasting features in activating resources, and that these particular features were observed in relation to other students as well.

Capital as Defined by Bourdieu, and Resources

In this chapter I followed Bourdieu's method of inquiry (1984, p.101). I view students' decision-making and the acquisition of a job as a *practice* resulting from the interaction between students' *habitus* and available resources (in school, the family, the employment market). My observation of the practice is, however, restricted to what takes place at school.

Bourdieu's capital is a convenient concept in that it easily enables us to see the possession of certain kinds of intangible things (such as taste, forms of language, consumption patterns, personal network and educational achievement, all of which come to constitute the *habitus* of individuals and groups), in the same sense as economic capital which one can invest to accumulate future profit. Capital represents resources which help to promote one's social position in a specific setting. Bourdieu, thus, extends economic calculation to other possessions:

...to extend economic calculation to all the goods, material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation - which may be "fair words" or smiles, handshakes or shrugs, compliments or attention, challenges or insults, honour or honours, powers or pleasures, gossip or scientific information, distinction or distinctions, etc. (1977, p.178).

Bourdieu presents four kinds of capital, as discussed in chapter 1: cultural capital (including linguistic and educational capital), social capital, symbolic capital and economic capital. In the course of analysis of my data, however, I found it difficult and inconvenient to use only the concept capital. This was due to the fact many of the students in my study were from underprivileged families and thus did not possess the family capital necessary for obtaining "desirable" employment (as defined by the dominant group).

At this point I must clarify the distinction between *capital* and *resources*, and introduce different categories of resources, explanatory concepts which form part of the following discussion. Everyone possesses resources (cultural, social, symbolic and economic). A particular resource qualifies as a *positive resource*, a *negative resource*, or a *neutral resource*, given a specific purpose in a specific setting. Bourdieu's capital is another term for positive resources. A person's total resources comprise all three types of resources. In brief then, the following formula is applicable to a specific purpose *in a specific setting*: Resources = positive resources + negative resources + neutral resources.

The relative nature of resources needs emphasising before going further, so that this proposition regarding resources does not project itself as a version of the "deficit theory". Whether a resource qualifies as a positive resource, a negative resource or a neutral resource depends on a specific setting, that is, the market in which one uses the resource, and therefore remains "arbitrary" (in Bourdieu's sense). What resources qualify as positive resources or negative resources, and the extent of a resource's power, are relative to the compositions of different types of resources (cultural,

social, symbolic, and economic) existing in a particular society (including sub-culture groups) at a particular point of time. For instance, within the Korean sub-culture group, Yumiko's employment at a Korean bank will promote her status in the Korean community and thus is a positive resource in that context, but is a negative resource in the dominant Japanese employment market. A tightly knit extended family and social network among the urban poor (which pressures children to conform to the family norms) is a resource which offers psychological comfort to its members, but is not a positive resource in obtaining "better" employment as defined by the dominant group in Japanese society. Changes in the power of resources are observable over time: For example, discrimination against Koreans in Japan has diminished considerably in the last 20 years, and accordingly the degree to which Korean ethnicity acts as a negative resource in the dominant job market has declined too.

Having stressed the relative nature of positive resources, negative resources, and neutral resources, unless otherwise specified I will henceforth use these terms in the context of my research, that is, in the field of employment acquisition as defined by the dominant group of contemporary Japanese society. Positive resources help a person obtain "better" employment in the employment market as defined by the dominant group and consequently promote his/her social position, since a person's employment position forms an important part of his/her social status. For instance, good academic marks (educational resource), wealthy parents (economic resource), father's old boy network (social resource) and certain mannerisms (cultural resource), all qualify as positive resources, since they can help the student who possesses them to obtain "better" employment.

Some resources have a detrimental effect in terms of improving one's social position. I call this kind of resource *negative resource*. For instance, Yumiko's father activated his family kinship network (social resource) to arrange a job at a local Korean bank, which offered less desirable working conditions (such as pay, and working hours) than the options which Yumiko's teacher suggested. Haruka's affiliation with the Jehovah's Witnesses (social resource and cultural resource) made it very difficult for her to get a job. These personal features are negative resources. People who hold negative resources tend to hide their possession of them, as seen, for example, in the case of *gaiseiki* Koreans who try to pass as Japanese.

There are also resources which perform neither positively nor negatively for a specific purpose in a specific setting. I call these *neutral resources*. For instance, one's physical height is a valuable resource when applying for a position in the police, but is irrelevant when applying for a clerical position. In the same way, being able to play the piano is a positive resource in gaining entry into primary school teaching, but has no clear value for obtaining a sales position.

Another relevant aspect of resources in terms of the present study is *lack of resources*, that is to say, lack of positive resources (often referred to as "lack of capital" in Bourdieu's work), and lack of negative resources. A family's low income (lack of income), lack of a father in the household (i.e., a solo-mother family), lack of certificates in various skills and low academic marks (lack of academic achievement), for instance, qualify as lack of positive resources. This lack of positive resources

adversely affects a person's attempt to promote his/her social position. I initially regarded lack of positive resources as negative resources, in the same manner as I regarded Korean ethnicity. However, later a distinction became visible between lack of resources and negative resources. Negative resources indicate a person's *possession* of them, while lack of resources (positive or negative) *non-possession* of them.

Bourdieu's conception of capital was well developed and discussed in his studies on the "elites" trying to maintain their dominant status within the dominant group (1973, 1984), and that of cultural capital was covered in his discussions on students from the dominant groups versus those from the dominated (Bourdieu, 1973; 1976; 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Bourdieu's works on education or industrial societies have given more attention to differentiation within the privileged group, or to that between the dominant group and the dominated group, than to the differentiation within less privileged groups.

Bourdieu referred to "lack of capital" as a useful explanation for the failure of working class students at school (1973, p.83; 1976, p.112), when discussed in comparison to the students from privileged families. However, when the study examines differences within those who lack positive family resources, the "lack of capital" explanation alone is not helpful: it does not enable finer distinctions to be made. In other words, "lack of capital" alone does not account for *different forms* of "lack of capital". Since my study concentrates on students from families who do not possess large amounts of positive family resources, I found it necessary to elaborate Bourdieu's concept of capital, and more convenient to use the terms resources, positive resources, negative resources and neutral resources.

As the previous chapters showed in detail, school provides resources which students can utilise for making employment-related decisions and obtaining jobs. There are four types of such resources: academic, symbolic, cultural and social. By "academic or educational resource" I mean the mastery of the skills and knowledge which school offers. For example, students in the six cases to be presented were enrolled in one of three vocational courses: data processing; machinery; and interior furnishing. "Symbolic resource" includes sports club and student council involvement, and a good school attendance record, both of which give students significant advantages in the labour market as will be shown. "Cultural resource" covers the school ethos and teachers' advice, and "social resource" refers to the social networks developed with employers, which Japanese schools systematically and explicitly offer students through an institutionalised job referral system.

The school to work transition practice in Japan is unique in that three parties, namely, school, employers and a government agency are involved in making social networks available to all students through the school (regardless of level of family resource). Compared with their Australasian counterparts, Japanese high schools possess more established networks with companies and receive larger amounts of information about these companies, which they process and make available to students. However, even when presented to them in such an explicit way, not all students perceive

these school-based resources in such a way as to be able to take advantage of them. When students do not perceive a resource's value to them personally, they are not likely to use it. Why is it that some students seem to perceive as valuable the resources available at school and take advantage of them to get a better job, while others do not? Here I see particular relevance in Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* as an explanatory tool. The following six cases will show how each student's *habitus* operated in response to given resources from both school and family to influence their decision-making regarding employment.

Six Illustrative Case Studies

The six young people are 17 to 18 years old and in their last year at Saki-city municipal high schools. They are in the data processing course (3D) at Sasaki High School, or in the machinery course (3MA) or the interior furnishing course (3I) at Imai Technical High School.

Two Boys Who Wanted To Be Cabinet-Makers

Soutarou's Case

Soutarou is a 3I boy at Imai Tech High. He lives with his parents and a 22-year old brother in a rented municipal government flat in the centre of Saki-city. His father works for himself as a tile-layer, while his mother has always stayed home. His elder brother worked for someone else for a while after high school but now helps his father. The family lives in that part of the flats allocated for *buraku* people (ex-outcast). Because Soutarou's father is of *buraku* descent, the family is entitled to receive various welfare allowances for *buraku* people. Soutarou receives a scholarship for *buraku* students from the municipal government. No students at Imai High talk about Soutarou's background. His home room teacher, Mr. Uno, is confident that no one in his class knows about his *buraku* status.

When he was small, Soutarou's main interest was in baseball. He played for a local boys team when he was at primary school, and for his junior high school team. In those days he wanted to become a professional baseball player. Midway through junior high school he realised that he would not make a professional player, and thought he would like to be a tradesman, such as a tile layer.

In the last year of junior high school, Soutarou had to decide on the basis of his academic marks which senior high school he wanted to apply for. He did not think seriously about his life after high school, but the thought was always there that he could work for his father's tile-laying business. Being a tradesman of any kind would suit him, he considered, since such a job would enable him to see a finished product from his labour. Because Soutarou liked woodwork at school, he chose a civil engineering course at a technical high school and announced this to his home room teacher. He was told however that his marks were too low for such a course. When I asked him why his interest in woodwork led to him opting for civil engineering, he responded, "Because the Japanese characters for

civil engineering include a character for 'timber', I thought it was something to do with woodwork." It seems that he made his decision without adequate information about the course. Following his home room teacher's advice, Soutarou applied for, and entered, Imai Tech High's interior furnishing course.

In the first year at Imai Tech High, Soutarou wanted to become an interior coordinator. In the second year, he started thinking he would not make an interior coordinator since he was not good at technical drawing, and that he would have more chance of becoming a furniture-making tradesman. Since his father is a tradesman, Soutarou asked his father if he could work for him as a tile layer. His father's answer was a flat no. He said to Soutarou, "Don't be self-employed like me. Look, I have no company insurance or welfare. When I get sick or injured, that's it. If I don't do a day's work, I don't get paid. No sick leave. Get a job at a decent company where you are paid even if you take leave." Soutarou's father was not happy about Soutarou's elder brother ending up working for him. The elder brother also told Soutarou not to work for his father since the physical work was too demanding.

At the June three-party meeting Soutarou announced to Mr. Uno, his home room teacher, that he wanted to work in the building industry, something he had already advised Mr. Uno of a number of times. Mr. Uno responded that Soutarou needed to study harder for whatever job he wanted. His mother told Mr. Uno that the family left Soutarou's employment decision completely up to Soutarou. Soutarou did not mention that he was now thinking of a joinery job at this stage. When RCs arrived, Soutarou examined them and found a few positions in furniture-making.

KO: Why didn't you go for them?

Soutarou: I knew then that boys brighter than me were going for them.

KO: Weren't you prepared to compete?

Soutarou: No. I have poor marks and many absent days. I've very often been late for school. It was obvious that I would lose in the internal selection meeting.

KO: Who told you that? Mr. Uno?

Soutarou: No one really.

KO: Well....how did you know that these were to be the criteria for the internal selection? Who told you?

Soutarou: No one told me, but it's common sense.

(Interview, 7/11/89)

Based on *his* "common sense" Soutarou gave up applying for furniture-making positions. Among the other RCs he didn't find any appealing jobs. Early in August when students were expected to submit a list of their chosen companies to the school for the first internal selection, he was late for school and scribbled down the names of the companies which sounded "fancy" at the last moment. Mr. Uno, looking at what he had written, told Soutarou to examine the RC list again and submit a more serious list of choices. Two weeks later, Mr. Uno arranged another three-party meeting for Soutarou before the second internal selection. Soutarou had not decided on anything by then. He said to Mr. Uno that his family would arrange *enko* for him to get a job. Mr. Uno asked if they had anything in mind. His mother then suggested a wharf worker's position at the Kuma Wharf Company.

After the meeting, Soutarou's mother contacted one of her acquaintances at the Kuma Wharf Company but was told that Soutarou should apply for the position through his school since they had sent an RC to Imai Tech High. Soutarou himself had not thought about the Kuma Wharf Company job before his mother mentioned it. He thought that a wharf worker's job, loading and unloading ships, would suit him since he preferred physical labour and hated sitting down at work all day. Soutarou had seen the work place, Saki wharf, which was near his home, and a friend of his family was working there. From that friend he heard that he could earn extra by working long hours. In addition, Kuma Wharf Company was a big and well known firm. When Soutarou's mother mentioned Kuma Wharf Company to his father, he was supportive, saying that he had been familiar with the company for 20 years. Soutarou's elder brother was supportive as well.

Soutarou applied for the wharf worker's position through the school's RC channel, sat the employment examination which consisted of a written test covering general knowledge, a physical fitness test, a medical test and an interview, all of which he passed. Mr. Uno never understood why Soutarou wanted to be a wharf worker, and why the decision was made so quickly at the last moment. He never knew that Soutarou wanted to be a furniture maker. Soutarou did not express his desire for a furniture-making job to Mr. Uno or any of the other teachers, nor to his family. He mentioned it only to his girl friend. In November when I had a personal interview with Soutarou, he told me that he worried about whether he would be able to graduate from high school. He was afraid that the school might end up failing him since he had not passed in several subjects and had been absent from school frequently.

Kengo's Case

Kengo is another 3I boy, one of the few who commute a long distance from an eastern suburb. His father is a factory worker and leaves home so early that Kengo hardly sees him. His mother works full time for a company. His younger sister, now in the final year of junior high school, is close to him. The two often talk when he comes home late at night, mainly complaining about their parents. Kengo played baseball both at primary school and junior high school.

His hope when he was small was to be a car racer. Later he gave up this idea when he was told that car racing requires good eye sight. At junior high school, Kengo's home room teacher told him that he would not make it to an academic high. Kengo decided to go to a technical high, rationalising that he did not like studying anyway. Since he liked woodwork at school, he decided on an interior furnishing course.

At Imai Tech High he joined the soccer club but only lasted a term. He never thought about his future career at all. He became close to one of his friend's co-workers at a take-away hamburger shop. The new friend was involved in a rock music band, which Kengo later joined since he liked festivity. Kengo became more and more absorbed in the band and even started wanting to make his musical activities a lifelong career. However, at the same time he was aware of the difficulty involved in earning a living by music.

At the beginning of the final year Kengo had a passing desire to go to university, perhaps influenced by Tsuyoshi, a good friend in his class who had decided on that option. At the June three-party meeting, Kengo announced to Mr. Uno his interest in pursuing a job to do with music bands. Mr. Uno suggested a stage setting company where some of the ex-students of the school were working. His parents were against the stage setting company, saying, "The company will want you to work irregular hours. You will have difficulties in adjusting yourself to another work place if you quit the work."

Kengo became confused and asked for comments from friends, seniors and teachers. Many of his friends at school told him, "You can have music as a hobby. You may be confining yourself too much by sticking only to music. Leave it for a while. One day you may be recognised for your band music. Then think about it as a career!" Kengo also went to the DGLAS to see the HOD, Mr. Nakane, since he felt Mr. Nakane would give better advice than his home room teacher. Mr. Nakane said to Kengo, "I know very well your passion for band music. Listen. You can change your career direction before you turn 23 or 24 years old. So, you can pursue music and later change. That's possible. If you find a nice position in music, let me know. I will visit the company to get a RC for you." After listening to various advice, Kengo still thought he wanted to keep an "escape" route open in case he did not make it in music. The band members, most of whom did not have permanent jobs, also suggested the safe route.

When RCs arrived, Kengo went through the list closely and picked out several companies, keeping in mind that the working hours, holidays and work place location had to be convenient in terms of allowing him to attend the band practices. He did not like clerical or banking work but the kind of work where he would see the final product, such as woodwork or furniture-making, the course he was taking at school. Kengo showed the list of the companies which he selected to his parents. They asked him why he had chosen the companies he had and he answered honestly. When his mother saw Hankyuu Furniture Company, which is a part of the well known Hankyuu Department Store, in his list, she enthusiastically recommended it, saying "I know this is a rather selfish idea of mine, but I really think Hankyuu would be the best choice." Because he did not already have a clear preferential order, Kengo decided to please his mother and opted first for the Hankyuu Furniture Company, followed by the stage setting company and then a ship interior furnishing company in the list he submitted to the school. When Mr. Uno saw Hankyuu Furniture Company on his list, he said, "This is a great choice!" Since no one else applied for it, Kengo got through the internal selection despite his poor marks. He sat the recruitment examination and passed it.

Discussion: Soutarou and Kengo

Soutarou perceived much less of his own academic resource than Kengo did of his. Soutarou considered his academic marks and school attendance record were poor. Knowing other classmates were wanting the same cabinet-making positions, he estimated his probability of getting these positions and concluded that his chances would be remote. He accordingly adjusted his aspiration to what he saw as "objective probabilities" and not only eliminated himself from the competition but did not even express his wish to secure such employment to anyone who could help. When his mother mentioned a possible *enko* arrangement at Kuma Wharf Company, Soutarou grabbed the opportunity, relying on his family's resource to find him a position as a wharf worker. It turned out that the wharf worker's position was available through the school's RCs and that he did not need to use his family's connection after all. In the measurable form presented to employers, Soutarou's and Kengo's actual academic resources were similar. Soutarou's placings in the first, second and third year were 22nd, 34th and 37th, with 13 absent days. Kengo's were 22nd, 32nd and 33rd with nine absent days. However, the two boys' different perceptions of their own academic resources created distinctively different trajectories in terms of decision-making and job acquisition.

In addition to his academic resources, Kengo also recognised his liking for music and his potential for making a career out of music. Since he felt he alone could not estimate the extent of his realistic potential in terms of pursuing a music career, Kengo sought advice from teachers, friends, and others. He subsequently concluded that his potential was neither great nor nil, and adopted a strategy to keep open the possibility for a music career, that is, to get a job with working conditions which would allow him to continue with his band activities.

It was not only his own academic resources that Soutarou failed to perceive. He perceived few "valuable" resources at school which he could make use of. One of the striking contrasts between the two boys was that while Kengo deliberately sought the opinion of other people, Soutarou failed to approach the school for information, comments and advice. He did not even mention his wish to find a furniture-making position to his home room teacher, since he thought the teacher would do nothing.

KO: Why didn't you tell Mr. Uno that you wanted to be a furniture maker?

Soutarou: What for? It would not have made any difference.

KO: What do you mean ?

Soutarou: I would not have got the job.

KO: Do you mean that Mr. Uno could not have done anything?

Soutarou: Yah.

KO: How do you know that Mr. Uno would not have done anything for you?

Soutarou: I just know.

KO: Have you had a similar experience.... like, you said something to him and he did not take any action for you?

Soutarou: I don't remember exactly, but something like that. (Interview, 7/11/89)

Soutarou did not understand or trust the cultural resources offered at school in the form of guidance and advice, nor its social resources, a whole network of employers which the school could utilize through RCs and other connections. As Mr. Nakane told Kengo, the DGLAS was prepared to visit a company specifically nominated by a student to request a RC. In fact several students of Imai Tech High insisted on chosen companies which were outside the school's RC list and got the DGLAS to negotiate with those companies. These students believed in the DGLAS's power. Unlike Soutarou, Kengo actively sought advice regarding "a music career versus a secure job" from his classmates, seniors and teachers, processed the information he received, and based on his subsequent analysis decided on taking a secure job. It is not that Soutarou did not know that resources existed, but that he did not think that *he* could make use of them.

Soutarou perceived that relatively more resources were available to him in the family. He wanted to work for his father as a tile-layer, asked his father and was advised to get a secure job at a large company. Without access to his father's work, he was at a loss as to what to do since he did not see the resources available to him at school. He finally sought his family's social resource (social network) as a means to getting a job instead of utilising the school's social resource. Soutarou's family's social resource did not guide him into what he originally wanted, a furniture-making job, but to a wharf worker's position. Kengo did not depend on his family's social resource but did accept his mother's advice to apply for a big company.

Two *Gaiseki* Girls in 3D Class

Yumiko's Case

Yumiko is one of the *gaiseki* at Sasaki High. The majority of *gaiseki* are Japan-born Koreans, and constitute about six percent of Sasaki High students. Yumiko is a second generation Korean living in a working class area, where the majority of the city's Koreans reside, but does not speak the Korean language in common with most of her contemporaries. Yumiko's mannerisms are akin more to a middle class "proper" family upbringing, which distinguishes her from the majority of 3D girls. In fact many girls do not like her, saying that she is pretentious and acts as if she were superior to them.

Yumiko's father is a taxi driver, and her mother runs a barbecue cafeteria, a common occupation among Koreans. Yumiko sees her father as being too protective and restrictive in that he does not let her travel to nearby cities on her own and insists that she live nearby after her marriage. In contrast he lets her two brothers do whatever they want. Although her father holds dominance in the household, she does not resent that. Yumiko's 19-year old brother attends a cooking school in order to become a chef of Chinese cooking. He went to the North Korean senior high school in Saki-city, in spite of no prior Korean language; since, Yumiko explained, he could not enter the Japanese senior high school he wanted. Yumiko believes that through his Korean high school experience her brother

has come to share many of the values her father holds. Yumiko's other brother, who is two years younger than her, is thinking of going to university. The family maintains close relationships with relatives who live nearby.

When Yumiko was small, she wanted to be an electric piano teacher since she was learning the instrument and liked it. At primary school she respected her teacher and aspired to model herself on her. Even at present she thinks teaching is a wonderful occupation. But since her first year at junior high school, when her father asked her if she would like to become a pharmacist, she had wanted to take up that vocation. (Her father had learned that being a pharmacist was a good female occupation from one of his customers, a professor of pharmacy at a local university.)

When deciding on a senior high school, Yumiko was told by her home room teacher to attempt an academic high school one rank lower than her first choice. She then opted for the data processing course at Sasaki High, since she did not want to try for a lower rank academic high school. Yumiko now does not think that she was well informed about the course at that time: A friend of hers had gone to Sasaki High's Open Day and had shown her the school pamphlet she had obtained there. This choice virtually eliminated any opportunity for her to go to university to become a pharmacist, although she was not aware of it at that time.

Yumiko liked the data processing course at Sasaki High and she felt that she now had a wider field of occupational choice after learning computer operation and programming. In the first half of her second year she intended to receive further education at a *senmongakkou* in order to learn advanced level data processing. Later in the second year she often went to the DGLAS room to examine RCs, and started thinking of a clerical position at institutions like hospitals and pharmaceutical companies where pharmacists work.

At the beginning of her third year Yumiko was still indecisive as to whether or not she would pursue further education, and opted for academic subjects in case she needed them for examinations. Mr. Kodama, her home room teacher, suggested that she aim at a 2-year college, since Yumiko's academic achievement was high, she liked studying and her family could afford it. In June a friend of Yumiko's father offered to make an *enko* arrangement for a clerical position at a Korean bank in the city. Yumiko's family was delighted. Her father and the friend had been talking about the arrangement for some time, without letting her know. Her parents wanted her to work for a Korean company since they thought that she would feel more comfortable working with Koreans in a Korean company. Yumiko herself did not feel reluctant about working for a Japanese company.

KO: Why do you think your father did not want you to work for a Japanese company?

Yumiko: Well,..... I myself have not experienced awful discrimination. But in my father's day, Koreans experienced terrible discrimination, and he still remembers that. Even now I hear that there is discrimination in one way or another. So, he seems to have felt that I would be better off and more comfortable working with Koreans in a Korean company. He wanted me to work for a Korean company.

KO: What do you yourself think about it? Did you feel reluctant about working for a Japanese company?

Yumiko: Not at all. Ever since I entered nursery school, I have been among Japanese. So, I have no *wadakamari* (reluctance). But my parents are reluctant. ... they have always been like that. It's probably because yes, my elder brother went to a Korean high school. Since it was a North Korean high school, some girls at the school were bullied and teased by people around that area at the time of the accident ... when the North Korean spies bombed the airliner. Hearing about that may have influenced my parents. (Interview, 17/1/90)

At the June three-party meeting Yumiko and her mother advised that Yumiko would opt for the job at the Korean bank arranged through her father's connection. Mr. Kodama was not supportive. He said, "You can apply for better companies. Think about it again. It's too early to decide on the Korean bank. Compared with other companies that send RCs to Sasaki High, the Korean bank is not so good." It is difficult to estimate to what extent Mr. Kodama's assessment of the bank was influenced by the widely held prejudice towards Koreans. The bank was not "good" by the criteria which he repeatedly mentioned in class: large size in terms of capital and employees, existence of a welfare scheme, and favourable working conditions. Mr. Kodama said that the bank required female workers to resign after a few years, and took virtually any Korean nationals. Yumiko subsequently started reconsidering her decision after the three-party meeting.

Yumiko did refer to the RCs when they arrived. She found only one position at a medical institution, but thinking that the working conditions there were not good, she justified her previous decision. Her relatives were all supportive of her pursuing the job at the Korean bank. All Yumiko's classmates had thought that she would apply for a programming position, since they considered her one of the top students. She however applied for and secured a clerical job at the Korean bank. She plans to work for the bank for three years and then get married. Even if she is not married by then, she will still quit her job and plans to stay at home.

Mari's Case

Mari is another *gaiseki* girl in 3D. Mari forms a friendship bond with Yoshiko, a Japanese girl. In fact, the three *gaiseki* students in 3D belong to different friendship groups. Mari projects herself as an ordinary girl, often making humble comments on her academic marks and appearance, but is seen by others as having some kind of power. No one makes belittling comments about her, even as a joke. Mari is a member of the Japanese harp club and the Korean cultural study club. She is one of the few *gaiseki* students who have revealed their Korean identity by joining the club, which has only five members.

Mari's father runs a small cotton cloth factory, employing part-time workers. Her mother helps at the factory along with her elder brother who used to work elsewhere but now works at the factory as well. Her elder sister does clerical work for a company. Mari's younger brother is in the final year of junior high school and involved in the volleyball club. All the family members want him

to go to university, since he is the last child. Nobody in Mari's family has been to university and those who are working are saving to pay for his future tuition fees. The family lives in a newly-developed hillside ward from which few students come to Sasaki high.

When Mari was small she wanted to be an airline stewardess, having been influenced by a TV programme of the time. She changed her mind when she found English difficult at junior high school, and decided to pursue a nursing career after meeting a family friend who was a nurse. But she became aware of the demanding physical work involved in nursing and opted out of the idea.

When deciding on a senior high school, Mari knew from her academic marks that she would be able to enter a second rank academic high school but instead chose the data processing course at Sasaki High. She was aware that her family could not afford to send her to university and that she would be getting a job after high school. Her family did say that she could go to university if she wished, but Mari could not justify her wish to go to university if it required her family to make unreasonable sacrifices. She advised her junior high school home room teacher that she would opt for a commerce course since vocational senior high schools were more likely to help her find employment. The teacher gave her information on the data processing course at Sasaki High, suggesting that it would be a good choice for her. Mari considered that such a course would equip her with professional skills, and her family was supportive of her decision to enrol in it.

Mari found the data processing subjects difficult and considered herself too mediocre to aim at being a programmer. At the beginning of the last year of senior high school she announced to Mr. Kodama that she would become a clerical worker. Mr. Kodama told her that she would be disadvantaged when applying for employment because she was *gaiseki*, but that such discrimination was less applicable to programming positions. He suggested that Mari's skills were good enough for her to consider a programming position as long as she worked hard for the rest of the year. This comment had a major influence on Mari. She started thinking that if she could find more rewarding work, she and her family would be able to "show-off" her achievement to her relatives and acquaintances. She had often thought that she did not want a job that anyone could do, such as a sales position, and also remembered her elder brother and sister warning her about the disadvantages of being *gaiseki*. Mari decided to take Mr. Kodama's advice.

When RCs arrived, Mari examined the list closely and selected several companies which were offering programming positions. Mr. Kodama informed her of the companies which would not take *gaiseki*, and the ones which would. Mari felt that not all companies which would take *gaiseki* might necessarily announce that they do, and that the school could ask them directly. She selected CS Company because she liked the company's emphasis on merit-based promotion. Mr. Kodama was not happy about her choice, saying that CS Company was new to the school, and suggested other, familiar

companies which offered similar positions. But Mari continued to insist on CS Company. Mr. Kodama and the DGLAS inquired about the reliability of the company from different sources, and approached the company directly about whether it was prepared to take *gaiseki*. The company's response was favourable. Mari sat the company's pre-employment test and got the position.

Discussion: Yumiko and Mari

Yumiko did not perceive much of her own academic resource: she did not consider herself a high achiever (although her marks suggested she was), nor did she think that she had learned skills at school that would be useful in a job. She never thought of becoming a programmer, although many of her classmates expected that she would become one and her teacher suggested she pursue further education. Mari did not perceive much of her own academic resource either, until her home room teacher made a comment about the disadvantages faced by *gaiseki* when seeking employment and suggested a strategy to circumvent them: to aim at a programming position. Once she recognised her potential, assisted by her teachers' encouragement, Mari was determined to use her academic resource (data processing skills) for obtaining a job which would eventually offer her more pay and status than a clerical position.

Yumiko perceived the social and cultural resources offered at school. For instance, she examined RCs even when she was a second year student. She sought advice from her home room teacher, and was influenced by it. However, she did not appreciate the school's academic resource, compared with Mari who considered that what the data processing course offered her was valuable and was determined to make use of what she had learned in a career. Why didn't Yumiko use the social and cultural resources offered at school? It seems that Yumiko's perception of her family resources was greater than that of school resources. Yumiko's perception of the social (in the form of a social network) and cultural resources (Korean values) at home was heightened by her family's explicit actions to marshal their resources. It was the way in which her family presented their resources and persuaded her that directed Yumiko towards using family resources rather than those at school. Yumiko did not make use of her family's economic resource for university education, as her home room teacher suggested. A family's economic resource alone does not enable children to achieve an upward trajectory (as judged by the dominant group), unless it is accompanied by certain individual/family dispositions (*habitus*) which enable the resource to be used in a "correct" way.

Mari perceived the school social and cultural resources as "valuable". Mari followed her home room teacher's advice to aim at a programmer position, rather than opting for a clerical job, to counterbalance the disadvantages of being Korean. However, believing in the school's capacity to investigate the company of her choice and to negotiate with it on her behalf, she did not accept his suggestion to apply for companies known to the school. Mari ultimately obtained the position she wanted. Unlike Yumiko, Mari perceived little in the way of social and economic resources at home, which caused her to rely solely on school resources.

At the time of decision-making, Mari did not see her attempt to "get a job which not everyone can do" and to "be proud of it in front of relatives" as a rejection of her home culture (which includes being Korean). Her trajectory so far did not seem to me to be a simple "escape" from her home culture. She was one of the few Korean students who had studied about being a minority in Japan, who had become aware of human rights issues, and had revealed her "real [Korean] name" through her membership of the Korean cultural study club. Mari had come to terms with her Korean identity. She had heard first-hand stories of discrimination and related advice from her elder brother and sister, and was realistic about the society's treatment of minority groups. Yumiko's *gaiseki* identity was not known to many of her classmates. She had been protected from stigmatisation by her father and it is likely to be that way in future. It will be interesting to see how Mari will find herself in relation to her home culture once engaged in a successful career.

Family Business or Not ?

Tsutomu's Case

Tsutomu is an easy-going and friendly boy who is not shy when speaking to girls. This is not common at Imai Tech High where 95 % of the students are boys. Tsutomu is liked by everyone in his class, but not necessarily greatly respected. He likes to have cute designs, such as Snoopy and other animals on his pens, bags, towels and stationery. None of the boys in 3I explicitly show off physical manliness, "toughness" or macho aspects. There was little of the peer group pressure to conform to a "macho" culture that I observed as a teacher in Australasian high school classrooms and that has been documented by Walker (1988).

Tsutomu's family lives in the midst of small shoe factories and town houses crammed against each other. Tsutomu's father makes parts of shoes in his own small workshop. His mother helps the father in between doing housework. Tsutomu sees his mother treating him like a small child and resents it. The family has two girls. One is two years younger than Tsutomu and attends a private girls high school (which ranks lower than government schools). She hopes to go on to further education, and, Tsutomu says, does not respect him because his aim is to get a job and not to go on to university. His younger sister is 15 years old and still at junior high school. Her performance at school is worse than Tsutomu's.

When Tsutomu was small, he wanted to run a sweet shop, to be a TV comic figure, and a singer. At junior high school he wanted to be in movie-making either as an actor or a director. When choosing a senior high school, he had to become more realistic. He chose the interior furnishing course of Imai Tech High, since he liked drawing pictures. He did not have any intention of going to academic high school, since he did not like studying, and he hoped that he could obtain professional skills at school.

Tsutomu found Imai Tech High a comfortable place to be. In the first year he wanted to be a fashion designer but gave up that idea, realising the enormous effort and talent required. After that he did not think about his career until the beginning of the third year. Not having any particular occupation in mind, he consulted his parents. Tsutomu did not see furniture-making as worthwhile since he hated manufacturing jobs in general. When he helped in his father's factory, he got bored with the work and as a result decided that he never wanted that kind of manufacturing job.

KO: But, didn't he want you to inherit his factory?

Tsutomu: No. He asked me to avoid shoe-making jobs. Our house is surrounded by many small shoe factories. All the relatives on my father's side make shoes. I grew up watching them working and know what they do. I think the job is repetitive and isolated since there is no contact with other people and it seemed easy for everyone. (Interview, 13/11/89)

From Tsutomu's description of his home environment I detected similarities between his situation and that pertaining to the *buraku* community but could obtain no evidence to confirm whether or not he was from a buraku family. Tsutomu thought that technical drawing would be a good employment option, and his father was supportive of this choice. When he announced this to his home room teacher, he was supportive as well. Tsutomu examined RCs for designing and technical drawing positions. He chose Mita Engineering Consulting Company since the naming of the company appealed to him: It sounded "modern and trendy". Mr. Uno responded that previous years' students who had entered the company did so with much higher academic marks than Tsutomu had but that he could apply if he was prepared to take a risk since no other student was trying for the position. Tsutomu considered Mr. Uno's comments. His classmates said that he would not make it, since he did not have any qualifications in lettering and technical drawing, which was true. Tsutomu's family was supportive of him, saying "There is nothing to be ashamed of in failing, since the company's standard is so high. Take a risk." In the end Tsutomu took the risk and got the job.

Youichi's Case

Youichi is a cheerful 3MA boy, liked by all his classmates since he does not take sides in disputes, and belongs to the largest friendship group in his class. He is *youryougaii* (tactful): he never gets caught by teachers for doing "wrong" when others do. Other boys say that he is lucky, but it is simply that Youichi knows how far to bend the school rules without being caught. He likes the school and being in 3MA. At junior high school he was involved in the volleyball club, but at Imai Tech High is a member of the athletics club.

Youichi's father is a panelbeater and owns two workshops in Saki-city, an older one in the midst of an old entertainment area and another in a newly developed suburb near Imai Tech High. At present his 21 year old brother works at the original workshop, while his father is at the new workshop. His mother does clerical work for the family business.

Until he entered junior high school, Youichi had not thought about his future career. Like many other boys of that age, he started playing in a music band and hoped to be a professional singer. He started thinking of the possibility of work in his father's panelbeating workshop when he decided not to go to university. At that time, however, he did not know anything about universities.

Youichi: I guess when I decided to come to Imai Tech High, I thought about working for my father, I mean, when I decided not to go to university.

KO: What did your parents say about not going to university?

Youichi: My parents said, "You can go to university if you want". But I said no, since I did not want to study.

KO: Do you think your father wanted you to go to university?

Youichi: I don't know. It should not bother him. He will retire when he saves enough money to keep him and my mother in his retirement.

KO: Are they prepared to pay for you to go to university?

Youichi: Yes.

KO: So, you didn't want to go to university since you did not like studying, huh?

Youichi: Yes. I did not know what a university is like. Now I sometimes feel I should have gone to university.

KO: Why?

Youichi: University students can play up for four years. I missed out on that.

KO: Well, you could have changed your option in the last year. Why didn't you?

Youichi: From this school, you can't go to good universities.

KO: You could still have fun for four years!

Youichi: But playing up for four years at a lower rank university does not appeal to me too much. If I was going to go to university, I would want to go to a good one.

(Interview, 25/1/90)

Youichi's concept of universities changed over time, but still seems to differ from that held by students who actually got to university. Those students chose to go on to a university, thinking that any university degree is a necessary prerequisite for certain careers and advancement within them, even if they are unable to enter a "good" university. Youichi seemed to set his goal far above his academic achievement and chances, when he said that he wanted to go to a good university if he was going at all. Because this would have been impossible he opted for an alternative which was easy and obtainable: working for his father.

Youichi's home room teacher at junior high school suggested Imai Tech High when he mentioned his plan to work for his father. He first intended to apply for the automobile course at Imai Tech High, but decided not to take a risk since students were to be divided into automobile and ship-building courses in the second year depending on each student's aspirations and their marks in the first year. The machinery course was more flexible.

At Imai Tech High Youichi became very close to one of his seniors in the athletics club. When the senior left school, Youichi wanted to get a job at a the machinery company which the senior had gone to. But Youichi's mother asked him to work for his father. He considered the advantages of

this option: He *knew* that the workshop's working conditions were sound (although he did not know any other places for comparison); and that he would run the business eventually (although he could do that anyway after working somewhere else first).

At the three-party meeting in June, Youichi and his mother announced that he would be getting a job at his father's workshop. Mr. Ide, Youichi's home room teacher, said, "Isn't it better that you work for someone else first?" A good friend of Youichi gave him the same advice. Youichi thought about these comments, but justified his decision by saying "I will learn the skills more quickly if I enter my father's workshop. Once I learn them, I can move if I want to." Youichi never received any encouragement from his father regarding his future employment, not even an invitation to work for the family business. Youichi did examine the RCs, but was still only interested in the senior's company or his father's workshop. He did not find anything in the RCs that interested him, and later confirmed his decision to work for his father.

Discussion: Tsutomu and Youichi

Both Tsutomu and Youichi perceived that social networks, provided through the RCs, and valuable information and advice from teachers were available through the school (i.e., social and cultural resources). However, the extent to which each of them saw these resources as being of value to them depended on their respective perceptions of family resources. Tsutomu saw neither his family's social network nor their economic resource as being of specific use to him in his search for employment. From his experience of helping his father, he developed a clear aversion to his father's and relatives' occupations in shoe-making. His father's advice to avoid taking up similar employment reinforced Tsutomu's antipathy towards manufacturing jobs. Tsutomu also wished to be proud of doing something different from his relatives.

Comparison with the case of Soutarou (the student who became a docker) may be interesting and instructive. Both Soutarou and Tsutomu were advised by their fathers not to take up the same employment as themselves, and both boys were aware of the limited economic resources at home. What distinguishes Tsutomu from Soutarou is that Soutarou did not develop an aversion to his father's work. In Soutarou's eyes, his family's social network was still valuable *to him*, and consequently he depended on it. As a result, he became a wharf worker because a family friend was a wharf worker at the same company. Another difference between the two cases was Tsutomu's attempt to use the technical drawing skills he had learned at school for getting a technical drawing job. Even though he was not good at the subject and had not obtained any relevant certificates, he strove to convert educational resource into employment.

Unlike Tsutomu and Soutarou, Youichi was not discouraged from succeeding his father in his job. Youichi's father told him to pursue whatever career he wanted to and was prepared to pay for his university education. It was his mother who encouraged him to work for his father, but not to the same extent as Yumiko's father who had worked hard to persuade her to join the Korean bank. Youichi was not informed about the option of continuing on to university, about what such a course would

involve and what it could offer him in future, and he did not make use of his family's economic resource. He missed an opportunity to convert his family's economic resource into future symbolic (in the form of prestige), cultural and economic resources.

Resource Conversion and Reproduction

I have traced chronologically the processes of job decision-making and acquisition on the part of the six selected students. These cases, I hope, complemented the previous chapters, where portions of many students' trajectories were shown separately in each critical phase, and presented a more cohesive picture of individual trajectories leading to employment in relation to the family background and specific circumstances pertaining to each student. The present chapter's discussion of school and family resources ideally requires an examination of each individual's particular situation, but it is physically impossible to present all cases. As a compromise I relate the discussion of the above six specific cases to all the students in the study.

The Matrix Representation of 93 Students

The two matrixes (one for each school) in Appendices 6 and 7 provide an overall picture of the 93 students I studied closely, summarising each student's background (family circumstances, school career) and employment outcome. From this group 90 students were interviewed, and three attained entrance to universities. Features exhibited by the six specific cases are also apparent in respect of this larger group. Later discussion will refer to both the case studies and the matrixes.

In each matrix the first column presents the names of the students, listed by class. The second column indicates whether students used family relations to obtain jobs. There were five such students at Sasaki High and three at Imai Tech High. The third column shows whether a student got a job through the school's RCs, and whether he/she received extra assistance from the DGLAS (such as the DGLAS teachers visiting companies on behalf of the student, or where special arrangements were made for *gaiseki* students).

The fourth column contains six indicators of "specific family circumstances". These indicators were discussed in chapter 3. *Gaiseki and buraku* statuses are categorised as negative symbolic resources, and single-parent families as lack of symbolic resource. Tuition exemption, city scholarships and living assistance indicate low income, that is, lack of positive resources. The more ticks a student has, the less able they are to use the family's resources in obtaining "desirable" jobs (as defined by the dominant group). Data for 3MA and 3C was not available.

The fifth, sixth and seventh columns show the students' performance at school. The fifth column shows academic achievement in terms of placing. For Sasaki High, the placing is out of the total of 166 who entered the internal selection, and includes the data processing class, the academic

classes and the commerce classes. For Imai Tech High, the placing is out of 37 for the 3I class, and out of 107 (the combined total of the three third year machinery classes) for the 3MA class in the third year. Since both sets of data originate from the documents prepared for the internal selection, those who acquired jobs through *enko*, and thus did not enter the internal selection, are not included here. In other words, lack of academic achievement did not matter for those who obtained jobs through family connections. The sixth column records if the student was involved in sport clubs, and the seventh column if he/she was a club captain or class representative or a student council representative, all of which represent symbolic resources.

The eighth column onwards shows information relating to the job which each student obtained. A desirable job, in the Japanese labour market, is determined as much by the size of the company where one works as by the kind of job one does. The former is more important in Japan than elsewhere since it greatly affects wage level, welfare entitlements and working conditions. The eighth column records the kind of work obtained by each student, the ninth column, the number of employees in the company concerned, the tenth column the capital of the company, and the eleventh column describes the type of business conducted by each company. When considering the job a particular student obtained, these three columns need to be referred to in combination.

Specific Family Resources and Jobs

The matrixes show that a total of eight students (from both schools) used family *enko* to obtain jobs (see column 2). Among them there were two types of students: five had no "specific family circumstance" indicators, while the remaining three did. The former group possessed positive family resources which facilitated employment acquisition, did not need to use school RCs, and obtained "good jobs" at big companies.

The remaining three, Kaori, Yumiko and Masayoshi, show specific family circumstance indicators (column 4), but still opted to use family *enko* to secure jobs. Kaori was a *buraku* person, from a single-parent low-income family (receiving both tuition exemption and a city scholarship). She had been offered a clerical job at a construction company through the school RC channels, but decided to work for her mother's barbecue shop in the caste area at the last moment. Yumiko was a *gaiseki* student from a middle class family and her job at a Korean bank was arranged by her father. Kaori and Yumi failed to recognise their family resources as negative resources, that is to say, they overvalued (as defined by the dominant social values) the potential of their family resources to assist in achieving more "desirable jobs", or valued their positive social resource (within the context of their respective minority groups) more highly than occupational mobility in the wider context, and therefore missed the opportunity of harnessing school resources instead. Masayoshi's case was different. Masayoshi was from a single-parent low-income family, his parents having been recently separated. He obtained a *gijutsu* position at the company where his uncle (mother's brother) worked.

The remaining students without positive family resources used the school's RCs to obtain employment. Note that those students with family circumstance indicators obtained reasonable jobs, which were basically no different from the types of jobs obtained by those without family circumstance indicators. This shows that students equally benefited from the school's job referral system, regardless of their family backgrounds. For instance, Akiteru and Kyouko at Sasaki High were the least able to use their family resources, having four family circumstance indicators: single-parent and three types of government financial assistance. Nevertheless Akiteru got a programming position at a chemical manufacturing company (273 employees and 3.8 billion yen capital) while Kyouko obtained a clerical position at the system engineering company of a well-known bank (619 employees and one billion yen capital).

The following four tables more clearly show the relationship between "specific family circumstances" and the jobs gained by the students of 3I and 3D. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 depict job type and students' family circumstances, while Tables 6.3 and 6.4 in a similar manner relate family circumstances to size of company. These tables show that the jobs which the students with "specific family circumstances" obtained cover as wide a cross-section, in terms of both kinds of jobs and size of company, as those obtained by their fellow students. That is to say, the students characterised by "specific family circumstances" were not significantly disadvantaged in getting the kinds of jobs which were considered desirable when they used the school channels.

Academic Marks and the Job Obtained

The same tables include the students' academic placings. Reference to this factor shows that those in *gijutsu* positions and programming positions (which are generally considered as "desirable") tend to have relatively good academic rankings, but that those with good marks did not necessarily choose this level of job. For instance, in the 3I class, Hironobu (who was fifth in the class) chose a *ginou* position instead of a *gijutsu* position. In 3D, a number of girls with higher marks than some of those who obtained programming positions chose clerical jobs at big companies. In addition the tables reveal that those accepted by the biggest (and therefore more "desirable") companies tended to have relatively good academic placings, but again that those with good marks did not necessarily select these companies.

Table 6.1

The Kinds of Jobs, Specific Family Circumstances and Academic Placings for 3I Students

Kind of job	Student	Specific family circumstances	Academic placing (out of 37)
<u>Gijutsu</u>			
Industrial designer	Yasuko(F)		1
	Akiko(F)	TC	7
Interior decorator	Takahiro	C	4
Kitchen designer	HidekazuS	TC	14
Set designer/builder	Kentarou	TC	1
Copy machine technician	Kiyohiko		19
Paint consultant	Kazuhiro	ST	32
<u>Draughtsperson</u>			
	Tsutomu		16
	Yoshiyuki		29
	Miyako (F)		11
	Seiko (F)		13
<u>Clerical worker</u>			
	Nozomi (F)	S	6
	Youko (F)		Not Available
<u>Ginou</u>			
Pearl factory worker	Kenichirou	STC	30
	Hisakazu		34
	Satomi(F)	TCL	23
	Yumeko(F)		36
Heavy industry factory worker	Hironobu		5
Liquid crystal factory worker	Mie(F)	TC	20
<u>Sales</u>			
Checkout operator	Yoshimi (F)		8
Retail sales person	Kasumi (F)		18
	Kana (F)		27
<u>Furniture maker</u>			
	Kengo		33
	Yasuhiro	G	26
<u>Forklift operator</u>	Hisashi	ST	28
<u>Bike mechanic</u>	Yuji	BSTC	22
<u>Trainee chef</u>	Kouji		25
<u>Watersider</u>	Soutarou	BTC	37
<u>Tourist bus guide</u>	Manami (F)		17

Note: G = *gaiseiki*; B = *buraku*; S = single parent; T = tuition exemption; C = city scholarship; L = living assistance; (F) = female.

Table 6.2

The Kinds of Jobs, Specific Family Circumstances and Academic Placings for 3D Students

Kind of job	Student	Specific family circumstances	Academic placing (out of 166)
Programmer	Takashi		30
	Tsuneki		Not available
	Hiroaki		135
	Akiteru	STCL	60
	Mari (F)	G	84
	Hisako (F)	C	1
	Kazuko (F)		24
	Mayumi (F)		22
Computer analyst	Kenichi	S	74
Data-processor	Shouko (F)		53
	Kayoko (F)		111
Clerical workers	Kenji		52
	Ken		19
	Yoshiko (F)	ST	Not available
	Kyouko (F)	STCL	38
	Etsuko (F)	TC	44
	Sumie (F)	TC	23
	Mikako (F)		19
	Masako (F)	B	46
	Jun (F)		132
	Yukiko (F)		29
	Hosoko (F)		5
	Haruka (F)		57
	Miho (F)		61
	Yumi (F)	STC	16
(+programming+ data processing)	Naoko (F)	S C	71
	Kazue (F)	TC	99
	Sayuri (F)	S	137
	Miya (F)		28
Bank teller	Chika (F)	G TC	48
Trainee stockbroker	Hiroshi		95

Note: G = *gaiseiki*; B = *buraku*; S = single parent; T = tuition exemption; C = city scholarship; L = living assistance; (F) = female.

Table 6.3

The Size of Companies, Specific Family Circumstances and Academic Placings for 3I Students

Size of company (the number of employees)	Student	Specific family circumstances	Academic placing (out of 37)
Over 5000	Hironobu		5
	Takahiro	C	4
	Kentarou	TC	1
	Nozomi(F)	S	6
	Yoshimi(F)		8
1000-5000	Kenichiro	STC	30
	Hisakazu		34
	Soutarou	B TC	37
	Hidekazu	STC	14
	Manami(F)		17
	Satomi(F)	TCL	23
	Youko(F)		Not available
	Mie(F)	TC	20
	Yumeko(F)		36
	Kasumi(F)		18
	Kana(F)		27
300-1000			
30-300	Hisashi	ST	28
	Tsutomu		16
	Kiyohiko		19
	Yoshiyuki		29
	Kengo		33
	Yasuhiro	G	26
	Kouji		25
	Kazuhiro	ST	32
	Miyako(F)		11
	Seiko(F)		13
	Yasuko(F)		1
	Akiko(F)	TC	7
	Under 30	Yuji	BSTC

Note: G = *gaiseki*; B = *buraku*; S = single parent; T = tuition exemption; C = city scholarship; L = living assistance; (F) = female.

Table 6.4

The Size of Companies, Specific Family Circumstances and Academic Placings for 3D Students

Size of company (the number of employees)	Student	Specific family circumstances	Academic placing (out of 166)
Over 5000	Tsuneki Ken	-	Not available
	Yumi(F)	STC	19
			16
1000-5000	Tsuneo	-	Not available
	Sumie(F)	TC	23
	Hisako(F)	C	1
	Hosoko(F)		5
300-1000	Takashi		30
	Hiroshi		95
	Kyouko(F)	STCL	38
	Masako(F)	B	46
	Jun(F)		132
	Yukiko(F)		29
	Miho(F)		61
	Etsuko(F)	TC	44
30-300	Kenichi	S	74
	Akiteru	STCL	60
	Mari(F)	G	84
	Naoko(F)	S C	71
	Kazue(F)	TC	99
	Sayuri(F)	S	137
	Miya(F)		28
	Shouko(F)		53
	Kayoko(F)		111
	Mikako(F)		19
	Chika(F)	G TC	48
	Kazuko(F)		24
	Mayumi(F)		22
Under 30	Hiroaki		135

Note: G = *gaiseki*; B = *buraku*; S = single parent; T =tuition exemption; C = city scholarship; L =living assistance; (F) = female.

The Activation of School Resources for Getting Jobs

There were differences in individual students' responses to the resources provided at school. Some students made use of the school resources for getting "better" jobs, while others did not. Individual responses were significantly affected by each student's perception of these resources: whether and, if so, to what degree students perceived the different kinds of school-based resources as *personally* valuable. Some students saw little value in the school-based resources and therefore did not make much use of them in their search for employment.

As mentioned earlier, the resources at school comprise four forms: social resource in the form of recruitment cards (which provide links with employers) and other such connections which the school is prepared to develop; academic/educational resources such as the skills and knowledge taught by the school; cultural resources in the form of school ethos and teachers' advice; and symbolic resources such as sports clubs and student council involvement.

How then, did the six students in the case studies use the school resources available to them?

Kengo, Tsutomu and Mari saw their school offering something valuable, in terms of skills and knowledge (*educational or academic resource*), which would help them in obtaining jobs. Mari, after being advised by her home room teacher, decided to become a programmer using the data processing skills she had learned at school. Kengo chose a furniture-making position at a well known department store's custom-made furniture factory, hoping that what he had learned in the interior furnishing course would be relevant. Tsutomu aimed at a design/tracing position to make use of the technical drawing skills he had acquired at school. In the 3I class 12 students (out of 37) obtained the kind of jobs which would require them to use what they had learned in their course: four became draughtspeople, two industrial designers, one an interior decorator, one a kitchen designer, one a set designer/builder, one a paint consultant, and the remaining two furniture-makers. Not all students sought jobs which required skills and knowledge specific to their course. For instance, many 3D girls opted for clerical jobs (which now need keyboard skills), instead of programmer positions. Kasumi and Kana chose sales positions, and Kouji opted to be a trainee chef, jobs which had no relevance to their training in interior furnishing.

Kengo and Mari understood and trusted their school's *cultural resource*, seeking information and advice from teachers and the DGLAS, but not necessarily always accepting what they received. The DGLAS kept information relating to the various companies which could be of use in the decision-making and job acquisition process, such as the records of previous years' employment examinations for each company, and of individual students' performances in them in relation to their school records. Soutarou however had formed a certain view about the school, and did not think that the school could do much for him.

Students' individual initiative in seeking information and advice from teachers was important in their process of decision-making and job acquisition. As the previous chapters indicated, teachers rarely took initiatives in personally giving suggestions to an individual student, but disseminated

information and gave advice to students on a collective basis in the classroom and at third year student meetings. However, they were often prepared to investigate and take action on behalf of a student if he/she requested it. For instance, when Mari wanted to apply for a job with the CS Company which was unfamiliar to the school, teachers suggested she try instead for a particular company which was known to the school and offering similar positions. However, the school later investigated the CS Company on Mari's behalf. Yasuko informed her teacher of her uncertainty about her choice of company, and got him to arrange a visit to that company for her. Two DGLAS teachers established contact with a bike workshop for Yuuji, who was not interested in any other kind of job. These examples point to the fact that students needed to make a specific request or inquiry in order to receive personal advice from, or have action taken specifically on their behalf by, the DGLAS or individual teachers. Further to this, not all students took such initiatives to obtain guidance and consequently made decisions without adequate information and advice.

Like many others, Kengo, Mari and Tsutomu planned to select companies from RCs, which is the most explicit form of school *social resource*. RCs form the basis of the school's social network with companies as well as conveying information about these companies and the jobs they need filled. Sukenori's mother, Yuuji and Terumi were not satisfied with the school's existing social network, and further activated the school social resources: they got the DGLAS teachers to establish contact with the companies they were considering.

Individual actors within the school were sometimes associated with separate networks. Sports clubs sometimes have networks with the sports clubs of companies, and the club teachers gave proficient players an opportunity to get jobs through the club. Kazuaki got a job in a machinery factory through the school's volleyball club, and Teruyuki got a similar job through the school's basketball club. Influential teachers sometimes have personally-formed networks with companies. Yoshiko got a well-paid clerical job through this channel.

Although not seen in the above six detailed cases, some students used their activities at school as positive *symbolic resources*. Involvement in school sports clubs, captainships of those clubs, involvement in the student council, and serving as class representatives (who are elected in each home room class) were valuable attributes for getting jobs. They symbolise the sort of personal qualities which are highly valued by employers: persistence and the capability to develop congenial interpersonal relationships within an organisation. For instance, two 3MA boys, Takehisa, in the *judo* club, and Yoshikazu, a member of the baseball club, were the bottom two students in the class in terms of academic achievement, absent days and deviant behaviour, and thus had only very limited positive educational resources in comparison with their classmates. But both gained reasonable jobs at a *sake* factory because of their commitment to sports clubs. The DGLAS teachers emphasised the two students' sports club performance to the employer when they applied for the positions. Hironobu, a 3I boy, had good academic resources already and his three-year commitment to the karate club gave him a greater edge. The above three boys did not *plan* to use their membership as a symbolic resource

when joining their respective clubs, but all students are aware of its symbolic advantage. Takehisa often said that the only strength in his school record was his *judo* club involvement.

There was, however, one student who had judged the value of this kind of symbolic resource from the beginning: a 3I girl, Chieko, became the chairperson of the student council, partly in the hope that she would thus be better equipped to secure a good job. But there were also those who despite having this type of symbolic resource did not use it in order to obtain a better job.

Three Groups of Students and Their Strategies

Three types of students are identified in terms of their possession of family resources. They are, firstly, those students with positive family resources who obtained jobs through their family social network (*enko*) and did not need to use the school's social network with companies; secondly, those without positive family resources (i.e., lack of positive resources) who depended on the school's institutionalised social network with companies to get jobs; thirdly, those with negative family resources (such as minority background) who were entitled to "extra" school resources to compensate for their disadvantage (although it must be noted that not all those who were eligible took advantage of these "extra" resources).

Among those students who used family resources, the majority obtained desirable jobs at big companies, (they included Chieko, Junko, Naomi, Fukiko, Masayoshi and Youichi). A few of them (Kaori and Yumiko), however, overestimated the value of their family resources as positive resources and took a lesser job than their potential indicated. Consequently these students limited their opportunities to advance their social position.

In the case of the second group, the students with no positive family resources, "success" in the transition was dependent on the extent to which these students were able to utilise the available school resources. The ways in which these resources (educational, cultural, symbolic, and social) were used was discussed in the previous section. Some made the maximum use of the given school resources to obtain jobs, while others activated them less effectively.

For the third group, characterised by negative family resources (such as belonging to a minority group), the effective use of the school resources was even more crucial. The school policy was to protect these students and to offer them extra assistance in the form of affirmative actions and by providing specific advice. Some students, like Mari and Yoshitaka, exploited the school's provision of resources to their ultimate benefit.

Resource Conversion Strategies

What was taking place in the above process of obtaining jobs was conversion of resources from one form to another, from one generation to the next. The conversion involved one's strategy to estimate the value and the volume of different kinds of resources. Failure to estimate them correctly often led to ineffective use of resources. Bourdieu presented the capital reconversion strategies among

the elites: one reconverts a form of one's own family capital into another form in order to maintain and promote one's social position. This strategy is possible only for those who possess positive family resources. Those who do not possess positive family resources in the first place, like many of the students in my study, are not able to adopt such a strategy.

I argue that the first group of students tried to convert their positive family social resources into permanent jobs (which will in turn generate positive social and economic resources), like those in Bourdieu's upper classes. The second group, those without positive family resources had to take a different strategy. The most successful and widespread strategy of resource conversion among those students was to convert their resources into a job through utilising the school resource, that is to say, to use school resources as the instrument to convert such non-family resources as one's academic achievement into a job. Students convert one or a combination of the school-based resources (educational, symbolic, cultural and social), into a permanent job for their "life-after-school", through the social network with companies, itself a social resource. The strategy was to appropriate *public* or *shared* resources for one's own *individual* use, that is to say, they converted *public* or *shared* resources into their own *private* resources. The third group, students with negative resources, in principle is able to adopt this last strategy most effectively, since the school made more resources available to them in the form of affirmative actions and by providing specific advice, acting to protect the human rights of these minority students.

Perception of School Resources and Family Resources

Given the opportunity to adopt the strategy to appropriate school resources into a job, however, not all students made use of this strategy in the most effective way. In fact, some did not use it at all and ended up with a job which they did not want, or else failed to get employment until the last moment. Why was this?

I have so far been discussing positive resources--whether a student possesses them, and if so, what kinds and in what quantities--as if they existed in an "objective" form, that is to say, as if they existed independently of perceptions. Resources and capital do exist independently of perception, but they can only be known and understood by means of particular perceptions and descriptions available to us (which are inevitably theory-laden or screened). What was important for the activation of these resources was, therefore, whether they were *perceived* by students at all. I intend to explore the students' *perception* of resources, drawing on the case studies presented here, and also with reference to the experiences of the other students. A number of patterns regarding students' perceptions of resources can be discerned.

Firstly, when students saw no positive resources for getting jobs in the family, they were likely to perceive more positive resources for that purpose as being available at school and to rely on the school's resources. That is to say, the fewer positive resources students perceived at home, the more likely they were to seek and use the resources at school.

Kengo and Mari saw no positive social and economic resources at home, and their decision-making about their jobs depended on the school's resources. Their respective families supported their decisions. Tsutomu did not perceive positive social and economic resources at home. His family even encouraged him to better himself and escape from the existing family situation, which reinforced his aversion to his family lifestyle.

Secondly, when students perceived few positive resources *for them* at school, they sought and consequently saw more positive family-based resources. It has to be remembered, however, that many of the families of these students did not possess positive resources in the "objective" sense.

Soutarou found furniture-making positions that he wanted to apply for in the RCs, but knowing his "brighter" classmates were applying for them, he saw no chance for himself and did not even mention his initial choice to teachers. He instead made an adjustment to what he saw as his "objective chances", and conducted "self-elimination" from the path which he had originally wanted to pursue. When he believed options for employment in the type of work his father was engaged in, or in a trade, were closed to him, he was at a loss as to what to do, but knew he wanted to find physical work rather than a clerical position. Soutarou used his family resource, that is, social contact with a wharf company nearby, where a family friend worked, and was hired as a docker. His directly-experienced social world was limited, and other options did not occur to him.

Thirdly, often, perception of resources was often not an either-or case. Most students perceived positive resources both at school and in the family, compared the volume and composition of these resources, and weighed the pros and cons. They then made a decision about which resources best applied to their situation, if at all, and about how, and in what amounts, each resource should be applied.

Yumiko and Youichi saw positive resources both at school and in the family but depended on family resources in their final decision. Yumiko chose a bank teller position at a Korean bank through her father's connection, over going to university or becoming a programmer, which her teacher had suggested. Youichi decided to work for his father's panelbeating workshop instead of trying for a position at a machinery company. In these cases, because of their lack of relevant information and exposure, Yumiko and Youichi "incorrectly" perceived their family resources as being more powerful and valuable in securing a "desirable" job than those the school had to offer. This "false" perception coloured their subsequent actions.

There were opposite cases, where a student's perception of school resources won over that of family resources. Kayoko, a 3D girl, did not take up her grandfather's offer to arrange a job at a local post office, where her father worked. Instead, she chose a key operator position at a software company. Yuuko, a commerce student, did not follow her father's suggestion that she get a job at Hankyuu Railways, for which her parents and her two elder sisters worked, although many students at

Sasaki High wanted to enter the prestigious company. She chose a clerical position at a children's boutique, since, she said, she would rather be away from her family's influence and wanted to enter the fashion business.

Perception, Actions and Habitus in the Transition Process

The above discussion suggested that students' *perceptions* of school-based resources is affected by that of family-based resources, and vice versa; and that their perceptions of the relative volumes of positive resources at school and in the family significantly influenced their decisions about how to use these resources. This suggestion elaborates the previous chapter's discussion regarding students' diverse perceptions of school-based resources without reference to family-based resources. It argued that individual students perceived school messages and resources variously, and that their different perceptions led them to adjust their wishes and plans, and to utilise school resources in different ways. A student's *perception* of school-based resources seems to be a determinant factor in the differentiation which occurs when students make employment-related decisions and eventually obtain a job.

At this point Bourdieu's concept of habitus is useful and powerful. A student's perception is generated by his/her habitus. Habitus is an acquired system of generative schema which generate perceptions, thoughts, expressions and actions (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72, p.85, p.95), and is a product of an individual's past experience and material conditions (Ibid., p.72).

The habitus generates one's perception. This has significant implications for studying students' job choices, since one's choice is dependent on his/her repertoire of conceivable and practical "options" (Lakomski, 1984, p.152). As indicated in the six cases, a choice was made from the range of options which were perceived to be possible. An individual's habitus generates his/her actions as well. It determines how he/she utilises available resources: cultural, economic, symbolic and social. Seen in this light, a series of students' decisions in the transition is the process of their habitus activating the resources. Since habitus is a product of an individual's past experience and material conditions, it operates as a mediator in the process of reproduction/ production of differentiation or social inequality.

Resources were not fully utilised if students did not possess a certain kind of habitus. A good example of under-utilisation of resources involved able students from 3D, 3I and 3MA who chose not to attempt entry to university or (2 year) junior colleges. Those who decided to go on to further education were not the top students or even relatively high achievers in terms of academic ranking in each class, contrary to what one might expect. In 3D seven students out of 44 opted for further education at the beginning of their third year. Kaori, one of the candidates, did not pass any of the entrance exams, three girls were accepted by 4-year universities and the remaining girls went to junior colleges.

KO: It seems that students with high marks did not go to university.

Mr Kodama: Exactly. Those who went to universities and colleges were the ones with average marks, some below average, like Rumi and Kaori. This happens every year with students from the data processing class. (Fieldnotes, 13/3/90)

Mr Kodama, in an expression of the dominant values held by society, tried to persuade his students with high academic marks to try for universities.

KO: Did you suggest to anyone that they go on to university?

Mr Kodama: Yes. I suggested that those in the class who have good academic marks consider the option of going to university. I was thinking of Tamami, Hisako, Tsuneo, Yumi, Tsuneo, and Yumiko. For instance, I have always suggested that Tamami go to the prefectural university to which the school can recommend students under the *suisen nyuugaku* (recommended entry) system. I also suggested Hisako, our top student, try for that university. When I talked with her privately in May, she said that she would consult with her parents about the possibility of university education. She returned to say that it would be financially difficult. But I said that the university, being a prefectural university, would offer tuition exemption. Since she would be able to get a scholarship, it would not cost her parents any more than what they presently had to pay for her education..... But in the end she still said that her financial situation was difficult. I could not pursue it any more. The student from our school who ended up at the prefectural university had much lower marks than many of our 3D students, like Tamami, Tsuneki and Hisako. Too bad. I don't think that Hisako's reason for not going to university was really financial, because the family is supporting her now. It's the family's way of thinking about university education in general. If I had a child like her, I would grab the opportunity. There are diverse values in society, and I sometimes wonder if my values are dominant. Yumiko was another one who I thought would easily pass the entrance exam for a 2 year college. And she likes studying. But, her father was rather feudalistic about female education. I still think that if Yumiko had had a strong wish to continue her education, her father would have let her do so. Her family is rather wealthy, very different from that of Chika, another Korean girl in our class. Yumi and Tsuneki had no intention of going to university. Their answer to my suggestion to go to university was simply "No". I could not do much about it. Tsuneki will become a programmer at NEC.(Fieldnotes, 13/3/90)

These top 3D students failed to utilise their high academic achievements, although their home room teachers advised them to pursue further education because of their good marks. This was a case of "double selection", as Harker (1990, p.91) argues and "excessive elimination" of the underprivileged children. Such students, who, because of a lack of positive cultural resources had less chance of academic success, tended to make the "wrong choice", even when they achieved a good academic result. Bourdieu contends (1976, p.112):

.....children from the lower and middle class who overall achieve a lower success rate must be more successful for their family and their teachers to consider encouraging further study.

The 3D students under consideration achieved academically well enough to go to universities, despite their family disadvantages (as compared to the middle class students). And yet, they chose not to take advantage of this opportunity.

I have so far discussed how one's habitus generates his/her perception and activation of given resources in making employment decisions and acquiring a job. Seen in this light, habitus is a carrier of social inequality. It might seem as if the process of job decision and acquisition were largely pre-determined, because of one's habitus, and as if the process of reproduction were complete.

This is not the case. As shown above, students' perceptions of resources and their consequent actions were also subject to direct intervention by family members and by the school. Family and school each tried to pull the student under their influence. Yumiko's father worked behind the scenes arranging an *enko* recruitment at the Korean bank. Yumiko had not thought of working for the Korean bank until the *enko* was mentioned to her. Without the *enko* put in front of her, she would not have taken that particular job. Here, her habitus responded to the given resource. Mari's homeroom teacher advised her to aim for a programmer position rather than a clerical position. Again, without such advice, Mari would not have thought of that option.

In the above processes of intervention on the part of the family or school, a student's habitus was activated by the given resources, and simultaneously the habitus activated resources. A variation on Bourdieu's formula is useful here: $(\text{Habitus} \times \text{Resources}) + \text{Field} = \text{Practice}$ (Bourdieu uses the term capital instead of resources). This interaction between a student's habitus and resources in a particular context was central to the process of job decision-making and acquisition. For the students with relatively few positive family resources, like many of those in my study, the more school resources they perceived and activated the more likely they were to advance their social positions.

Summary

Students responses to surrounding conditions, actions and events are determined by their habitus. Students perceive the availability/lack of resources (what kind and how much) and activate/do not activate these resources to gain future employment through their habitus. This is not to say that habitus is so powerful that the process is unilateral and therefore deterministic. Change in surrounding conditions, and particular actions and events could and did influence individual outcomes in relation to job decision and acquisition. These actions often comprised direct intervention by people close to the students concerned.

CONCLUSION

Non-University Bound High School Students

The study examined the school to work transition experienced by 18 year olds at two Japanese urban senior high schools. These students represent a certain type of Japanese senior high school student who is enrolled in vocational courses at urban government schools (which always occupy a low ranking in the area's high school hierarchy), and who enter the workforce directly from school. The existence of an overt senior high school hierarchy means that differentiation of students takes place across institutions when students enter senior high school at the age of 16. As is the case elsewhere, however, the study's findings cannot be generalised to extend to all Japanese high school graduates due to differences across regions and institutions.

The direct cause for the differentiation which takes place on entry to senior high school, it has been claimed, is the individual's "academic achievement". I argue, however, that academic achievement is a product of the accumulation of past material conditions and experience (including those which are family-based), and that academic achievement is assessed by the dominant group's criteria, which favour those who belong to the dominant group. In addition, students from underprivileged families tend to choose lower rank vocational high schools over academic high schools, as many 3D students did, even if their academic achievement is sufficient for entry to the latter. These students adjusted their hopes to their perceived objective chances, and took what they considered as a "safe" path, one with which they were familiar. This initial choice (to attend vocational high school) meant that the students in question had automatically restricted their opportunities of going on to tertiary education. Thus, their disadvantages were cumulated.

The non-university bound students tend to have a less privileged family background, in comparison to university bound students. The two schools in my study had relatively more students from *gaiseki*, *buraku*, single-parent, and lower-income families than did other schools in the same city. These students experienced high schooling quite differently from those at higher ranked high schools. Many of them attended school not to study but to have fun with their friends. They enjoyed testing the school's authority with a variety of *youryougai* strategies: obtaining what they wanted without having to confront teachers, and gaining the maximum return from the minimum effort. Students basically liked being at school, and preferred being a student to becoming a *shakai-jin*.

The modal trajectories of students from schools representing each level of the school hierarchy are, to a large extent, predictable. Students from the top academic high schools are likely to enter more prestigious universities, which then makes them eligible for elite occupations, while those from medium range academic high schools tend to secure places at less well-known universities or junior colleges (in the case of girls) and take up less prestigious jobs. The students from lower rank

schools, often vocational schools, typically enter the workforce after finishing high school and occupy the lower mass strata of the labour market hierarchy. Although the modal trajectory of each group of students is thus not difficult to discern, there are variations within each group. An example from the study, whereby Mari became a programmer, while Kyouko, whose academic achievement was much higher, chose to be a clerical worker, illustrates this point.

My interest lay in the differentiation within the modal trajectory of the non-university bound students at the time of the school to work transition. The thesis argued that the variation in the transition trajectories was due to different uses of school resources, which are "shared" and "public", made available to all students (as opposed to "private" individual or family resources). Three particular areas were examined: what kind of resources the school offered students; how the school resources were utilised by students; and what led the students to make different uses of the school resources. While exploring these questions, I found it useful to consider *resources* in terms of the categorisation and definitions I present below.

Positive Resources, Negative Resources, Neutral Resources and Lack of Resources

I proposed the categories of resources, positive resources, negative resources, neutral resources and lack of resources as explanatory tools. Everyone has resources. A resource qualifies as a positive resource, a negative resource, or a neutral resource for a specific purpose in a specific setting. For instance, one's height is a positive resource in applying for a position in the police force, but is a relatively neutral resource if applying for a clerical position.

I stressed the relative nature of resources. Whether a resource qualifies as a positive resource, a negative resource or a neutral resource depends on a specific setting (a "field" in Bourdieu's term) where one uses the resource. A resource's power (both negative and positive) is also relative to a specific setting, that is, the compositions of different types of resources in a particular society (including sub-culture groups) and at a specific point in time. Working for a Korean bank is a positive resource in the Korean sub-culture group, but a negative resource in the dominant Japanese society. Having emphasised the relative nature of resources, unless otherwise specified, I used these terms throughout the study's discussion in a particular setting, that is, in the field of employment acquisition as defined by the values of the dominant group in contemporary Japanese society. The dominant values define an occupational hierarchy, which largely determines one's social position, and places importance on promoting oneself within that occupational (and hence social) hierarchy. Positive resources help one promote his/her social position, and negative resources do the reverse, while neutral resources neither help nor hinder social mobility in the specific setting.

All the students in my study possessed resources. In their possession of family resources, three types of students were identified. One group of students possessed positive family resources, and utilised these positive resources to obtain jobs without the need to use the school-based resources. The second group lacked positive family resources. For them "success" in the transition depended on utilising available school resources. The third group possessed negative family resources, such as a minority background. The school attempted to compensate for this negative resource through affirmative actions taken on behalf of such students. Therefore, for them the effective use of the school-based resources was even more critical. In brief, those who do not possess positive family resources and those who hold negative family resources, which formed the majority of the students in my study, depended on school-based resources in obtaining jobs.

The above-mentioned process involved conversion of resources from one form to another, and from one generation to the next. Bourdieu (1984, p.135-137) presented the capital reconversion strategies among the elites: one converts a form of one's own capital into another form in order to maintain and promote one's social position. This strategy is possible only for those who possess positive family resources. Those who do not possess positive family resources in the first place are not able to adopt such a strategy, and have to look to external sources to provide them with a "stake" in the job market. I argue that members of the first group, holders of positive family resources, tried to convert these resources into a permanent job (which will generate social and economic resources). The second group, those without positive family resources, or the third group, those with negative family resources had to adopt a different strategy. The most successful and widespread strategy of resource conversion employed by these students was to convert one, or a combination, of the school-based resources into a job for their "life-after-school". The strategy was to appropriate *public* or *shared* resources for their own *individual, private* use. For these groups, the school resource acted as a substitute for family social resources. The conversion centred on the participants' strategy to estimate the value, and the volume, of different kinds of resources. Failure to estimate them correctly often led to ineffective, or even a detrimental use of resources.

The strategy of utilising the school-based resources to secure employment is not restricted to Japanese high school students. Students elsewhere also use what they learned at school (both cognitive and social skills) and the school's informal contacts with local employers when looking for jobs. However, the extensive provision of school-based resources at these two Japanese high schools illuminated the process of, and extended the possibilities of, utilising school resources for obtaining jobs.

School Resources Made Available by the Job Referral System

The two schools made a wide range of resources available to all students engaged in looking for employment. While secondary schools elsewhere also provide students with resources, the Japanese schools' provision was more systematic and discrete, made possible by the institutional arrangement known as the job referral system.

The job referral system involves three parties, namely school, employers and a government employment agency (the PESO), and makes social networks available to all students (regardless of level of family resources). Chapter 4 presented a detailed description of the system as practised at the two schools, tracing the relevant events throughout the 1989-1990 academic year. Chapter 5 examined how students interpreted the practice. The DGLAS establishes a network with companies, maintains and processes large amounts of information about these companies, and makes it available to students. The DGLAS and home room teachers convey the dominant messages, conduct intensive preparation for recruitment examinations, and provide detailed guidance and advice. A major feature of the job referral practice is the wide-ranging nature of the schools' employment-related activities and the staff's commitment to it, as represented in the schools' intent to prevent students from making "mistakes".

My early impression of this intensive and extensive employment-related service was that the school treated students not unlike small children, deprived them of their independence and autonomy and controlled their decisions, exercising what I viewed as a sort of paternalism. Later I came to interpret the same practice as *maternalistic* in that students valued the school's efforts on their behalf and appreciated the caring and protection aspects of the job referral system more than its elements of control. The two views seem in fact to be different interpretations of the same phenomenon, the former being that typically held by an outsider (in particular one from the West) while the latter conforms in general to the insiders' perception. The school's maternalism involves control over students, both intentional and unintentional in nature. In addition, the school holds certain expectations of the students, expressed not in an explicit and authoritative manner, but in a subtle and obliging way.

One of the assumptions of maternalism, held both by teachers and students, is that these students are not yet "adult" and mature enough to be able to make "appropriate" decisions on their own. Students themselves were aware of a distinction between being "protected" students and being *shakai-jin*, and many of them expressed a preference to remain as students if they could. Consequently, the job decision was not a student's *individual* matter, but was shared by teachers, the school and family members. The job referral practice makes Japanese students involve teachers and the school to a far greater extent in employment-related matters than their Australasian counterparts.

The resources provided by school are of four types: social resources in the form of recruitment cards (which provide links with employers) and other such connections which the school is prepared to develop; academic/ educational resources such as the skills and knowledge taught by the school; cultural resources in the form of school ethos and teachers' advice; and symbolic resources

such as sports club and student council involvement. The most frequently used resources are social resources through which the majority of students applied for positions and obtained jobs.

The kinds of resources and the ways in which they were made available by the two schools differed greatly from those widely observed in the transition programmes in Anglophone societies, where "vocationalism" has been emphasised. The Japanese schools' major emphasis was not on specific skill acquisition but on the provision of an extensive network with employing companies, and of large amounts of information pertaining to them. Career guidance was conducted not only in relation to what kind of work would suit a particular individual, but with more emphasis being given to choosing an appropriate company using an abundance of accumulated information. The process of transition was *gradual*: it took place over one year. The transition was not a sudden break from school to work, since the majority of students had obtained jobs six months before graduating and were contacted by prospective employers while they were still at school.

Students were made to contemplate what was important to them in terms of their future work, while deciding on the companies of their choice through use of the extensive company-related data made available to them. The most frequently cited priority considerations were: the kind of work, the location of the work place and the size of the company. The wage level was not a major consideration, in part because the starting wage for new high school graduates hardly varied between jobs. Students believed that everyone eventually becomes a *shakai-jin* at some stage, and knew that having a permanent job was a necessary condition for becoming one. They were however generally ambivalent about becoming *shakai-jin*, and many in fact preferred instead to continue being students, since, they claimed, the former role required more responsibility and was accordingly more demanding. It seems that the concept of *shakai-jin* is culturally specific to Japanese society in that a comparable concept is not easily discernible in the West, and that these students' understanding of it affected their transition. To these Japanese students, obtaining a job equated with becoming a *shakai-jin*, which required learning adult language patterns and taking up new and increased responsibilities, as much as with earning a wage.

How School Resources were Used, and What Led to Different Uses of School Resources

Although school-based resources were made available to all students, individual responses to them were diverse. Based on their perceptions of the available resources, both at school and in the family, students adjusted their initial expectations of themselves over the year.

The most explicitly used school resources were the RCs and the information about the companies and their recruitment examinations which the DGLAS had kept over years, and upon which the teachers based their guidance to students. In addition to this, other strategies using the school resources were also adopted. The DGLAS's capacity to "create" connections with the companies of

their choice on their behalf was exploited by students like Sukenori, Yuuji and Terumi. Sports club members like Kazuaki and Teruyuki were able to make use of their club connections with particular companies in securing employment. Involvement in sports clubs and other school activities (e.g., service as a class representative or an elected member of the student council) enhanced the individual's employment opportunities, in that it symbolised the possession of such favourable dispositions as persistence and a cooperative personality. Influential teachers' personal connections provided employment for Yoshiko and Tsuneki. The skills and knowledge acquired at school were often necessary to obtain specific jobs, for example, in computer programming, technical drawing and furniture-making. Good academic marks assisted the student in applying for prestigious companies. Lastly, "cultural skills" (proper manners and language use) which were explicitly taught at school also facilitated the transition from school to work.

What led students to make different uses of school resources? Firstly, the availability of resources in an "objective" sense was important. Indeed, those with high academic marks (academic resource) could use that resource, while those with poor marks did not have a similar resource to call upon.

Secondly, students often formed different perceptions of an identical resource. For instance, while an ex-student's talk on her work as a programmer discouraged Hisako from pursuing that career, the same talk confirmed Hiroaki's decision to try for a programming position. While Kengo considered his academic mark was adequate for a furniture-maker's position, Soutarou regarded his mark (which was similar to Kengo's) as inadequate for the same position and consequently did not even mention his original desire to apply for it to his home room teacher. All students were informed of the available school resources, but did not necessarily consider that these resources were personally valuable to them (due to what they perceived as their own potential). Resources exist in an "objective" sense, independently of perception, but they can only be known and understood by means of particular perceptions and descriptions available to individuals (which are theory-laden). What mattered most in terms of the use of these resources was whether students *perceived* them as valuable.

Thirdly, based on their perception of these resources, students took different actions. For instance, while perceiving the value of sports club membership, students used this resource in different ways. Kazuaki secured a position through the club's connection with a particular company; Takehisa compensated for his poor school record with his judo involvement in obtaining a position at a *sake* factory; Takahiro's commitment to the karate club caused teachers to consider him an ideal candidate for a prestigious company. Perception has a strong influence on subsequent actions.

Why did students form different perceptions? As Bourdieu argues, perceptions are basically the product of one's habitus, which is a product of an individual's past material conditions and experience. However, patterns of perceptions were also influenced by resources made available at a particular time.

Students' perceptions of school-based resources were affected by that of family-based resources, and vice versa, and their perceptions of the relative volume of positive resources at school and in the family influenced their decisions about how to use these resources. When students (like Mari and Kengo) saw few positive resources in the family they were likely to seek positive resources at school. When students perceived few positive resources for them at school (like Soutarou), they were likely to seek family-based resources. Often students perceived positive resources both at school and in the family, which they then compared to arrive at a decision about which resources best applied to their situation and how, if at all, and in what amounts, each resource should be utilised.

Students' perceptions of resources and their consequent decisions were affected by directed actions of influential people around them, such as their home room teachers and family members. These directed or intervening actions represented "resources" specifically put in front of the students for immediate use. Yumiko was provided with the chance to use *enko* to obtain a job at a Korean bank (arranged by her father), and decided to use this resource. In the absence of such an opportunity she would not have thought of the bank as an employment prospect.

In brief, students' employment-related decisions and consequent job acquisition can be seen at the following three levels.

(1) Resources in an "objective" sense

Available Family-based resources	Available School-based resources
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(2) Perception of resources = (habitus x resources) + field

(3) Activation of resources = (habitus x resources) + field

Available resources exist in an "objective" sense both in the family and at school (1). Habitus generates a selective perception of these resources (2). Based on that perception, habitus activates the resources in a particular context and in a particular way (3). As part of the processes represented by (2) and (3), family and school can provide directed resources for immediate use more explicitly and personally, in order to intervene in the student's perception and activation of the resources (e.g., in the form of an *enko* arrangement). These attempts can, in individual cases, have an important bearing on the final outcome, as in the case of Mr. Kodama personally advising Sayuri and Mari to aim for programmer positions, and in the case of Yumiko's father arranging a job for her at a Korean bank.

Being a product of one's past experience and material conditions, habitus acts as a carrier of social inequality and contributes to reproduction of that inequality. A family's available resources tend to facilitate the children's return to the family's social location and therefore contribute to reproduction as well. It was the school-based resources, if any, that had the potential to counterbalance the inclination toward reproduction in the transition process. However, just making the resources

available was not in itself sufficient to ensure that the students would use these resources. How they were presented to the students had a significant impact on their perception of the resources. Once students perceived these school resources, they could adopt the resource conversion strategy which converts school resources (shared) into a job (private). This is particularly critical for those students without positive family resources or with negative family resources, who have no other conversion strategy available to them.

The School to Work Transition, and Reproduction

What did the school to work transition process bring to these students? Did they eventually return to their origins (i.e., the family's social location)?

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the major differentiation had taken place at the entry point into senior high schools, presumably based on academic achievement, and was a reflection of the students' family background in that the higher rank schools received children from the dominant families while the lower rank schools (like the two schools in my study) received children from dominated families. Vocationally oriented high schools thus differentiated the non-university bound students from students who were headed for universities and then the more prestigious jobs, and legitimated the different outcomes which acted to maintain inequality in the society.

However, a finer sort of differentiation (one may call this secondary differentiation) operating within this group of non-university bound students was not as significantly affected by family background as was the case with the differentiation taking place between high schools. The schools in this study received many students without positive family resources as well as those holding negative family resources. The schools provided job opportunities regardless of the students' family resources and almost guaranteed employment upon graduation. All students, in particular those with negative family resources, could exploit the job referral system to their advantage by appropriating school resources. In other words, once a student entered a vocationally oriented high school, within the given range of options in the modal trajectory, he/she could pursue his/her choice to a large extent, as discussed in chapter 6.

This does not mean that all students in my study made their "choices" about employment strictly according to what they really wanted. The choices they made did not necessarily reflect their desires, since students adjusted their aspirations and hopes about their employment to what they considered their "objective probabilities", which tended to be a product of their past experiences and material conditions. Subsequently these students made different uses of resources at school and in the family. Several 3D girls considered themselves inadequate for programmer positions (although some others with similar marks were prepared to apply for them), and instead aimed at clerical positions. Yumi initially thought "I'm not good enough to apply for prestigious companies, since I'm from a single-parent family", and eliminated herself from that option. Soutarou, not seeing any chance of

getting a furniture-making position because of his relatively poor marks, did not even mention his wish to teachers and ended up becoming a docker. These examples suggested that some students, as a result of their particular habitus, conducted self-selection or self-elimination, thus excluding themselves from positions which they considered they could not obtain. Habitus was contributing to reproduction.

Although these vocationally oriented high schools differentiated non-university bound students from the rest and thus contributed to reproduction, they seemed to have less of a reproductive role than the school system as a whole since they provided an extensive employment-related service for all students backed up by the staffs' commitment to the students. Hence the highly organised, structured system of job referral has an egalitarian outcome, *within* the non-elite school and job hierarchy. Bourdieu writes that a major factor in inequality and social reproduction is the fact that the dominant habitus is never explicitly taught as part of the curriculum. In these Japanese schools however there is a department (DGLAS) whose specific job is to inculcate aspects of the dominant habitus in a direct and conscious way. The results of the job referral practice seem to provide an insight into the way the determining relationship between family background and job placement can be loosened.

Relative Autonomy of the School, Teachers and Students

The ethnographic details from the fieldwork revealed the diversity of the actors and their capacity to act independently at the level of school. The study suggested that schools are not passive agents for companies who want new recruits from them, although the close relationship between schools and particular companies might give that impression to outsiders. Schools do not simply respond to the companies' demands and supply the kind of student which a particular company wants. Sasaki High developed a systematic scheme to modify the school records of those students considered to be at risk in order to increase their employment chances, thereby acting specifically in the interests of its students. Both schools made sure that their *gaiseki* and other minority students secured appropriate employment by directly approaching the companies concerned on the students' behalf and by providing extra assistance to them. This represents a challenge on the part of the school to the present employment practice of many companies, which discriminate against *gaiseki* students, and to society-wide discrimination in general.

While schools operate under a highly centralised system and the state control of Japanese schooling is often emphasised, they are not simply obedient servants of the state. The DGLAS teachers did not speak highly of the PESO's work in relation to job referral for high school graduates, and devised a wide range of employment-related services to compensate. Making modifications to the school records of students at risk violates the institutional tasks delegated to the school by the state agencies.

The teachers, where they felt it necessary, were prepared to question the tasks assigned to them. There were occasions when, for instance, they did not endorse the school's "collective" decisions and the expectations held of the school, but instead negotiated over, or made their own personal interpretations regarding the implementation of a given decision. The DGLAS's extensive provision of employment-related services was not supported by all the staff, not even by all the DGLAS teachers (like Mr. Okimoto). Affirmative action taken during the internal selection for the benefit of *gaiseki* students and the modification of school records for students at risk raised disagreement among teachers. Some actions on the part of teachers were not necessarily consistent with what is generally expected of schools. Mr. Gomi, for instance, in his Politics and Economics class occasionally made comments which questioned the conventional Japanese work ethic and the economic system. Teachers therefore had a capacity to convey their own personal views to students.

Under the highly organised job referral system, individual students perceived information and advice from around them, interpreted it and subsequently took varying courses of action. The organisational structure set boundaries, but did not determine what students do within those boundaries. In this context students created their individual transition trajectories by utilising perceived resources in diverse ways, as is shown throughout the study.

Methodological Issues

The ethnographic method adopted in the present study exploited the bilingual and bicultural capacity of the researcher. This capacity is not simply the technical language skill of being able to comprehend what was taking place (both verbalised and otherwise) in the field. Being bicultural means being able to operate in both sets of social norms and values, shifting from one to the other depending on the field, without making comparative judgements; not to be embedded in one particular culture; and consequently to stay marginal to any particular culture. The experience of being bicultural makes it easier to perceive actions in multiple perspectives and to remain self-reflexive.

General ethnographic techniques were used for collecting data in the field. By adopting a participatory method, I was able to collect more detailed and relevant data than I would have been able to obtain from surveys and other non-participatory methods. This was particularly obvious when actors were engaged in actions inconsistent with the school's "official" policies, for instance, when teachers disagreed over modifying students' school records for the sake of increasing their employment possibilities. I was able to observe and interpret these actions firsthand, but the actors themselves would otherwise not have informed me about them had I not been present during these discussions. There is often a distinction between what is officially supposed to take place and what actually takes place. Actors knew that they needed to project to an observer the impression that they were taking the official line, even if the observer was aware that this was not the case. For instance, when I inquired Mr. Nakane, the "gate-keeper" of information at Imai Tech High, if I could have copies of certain

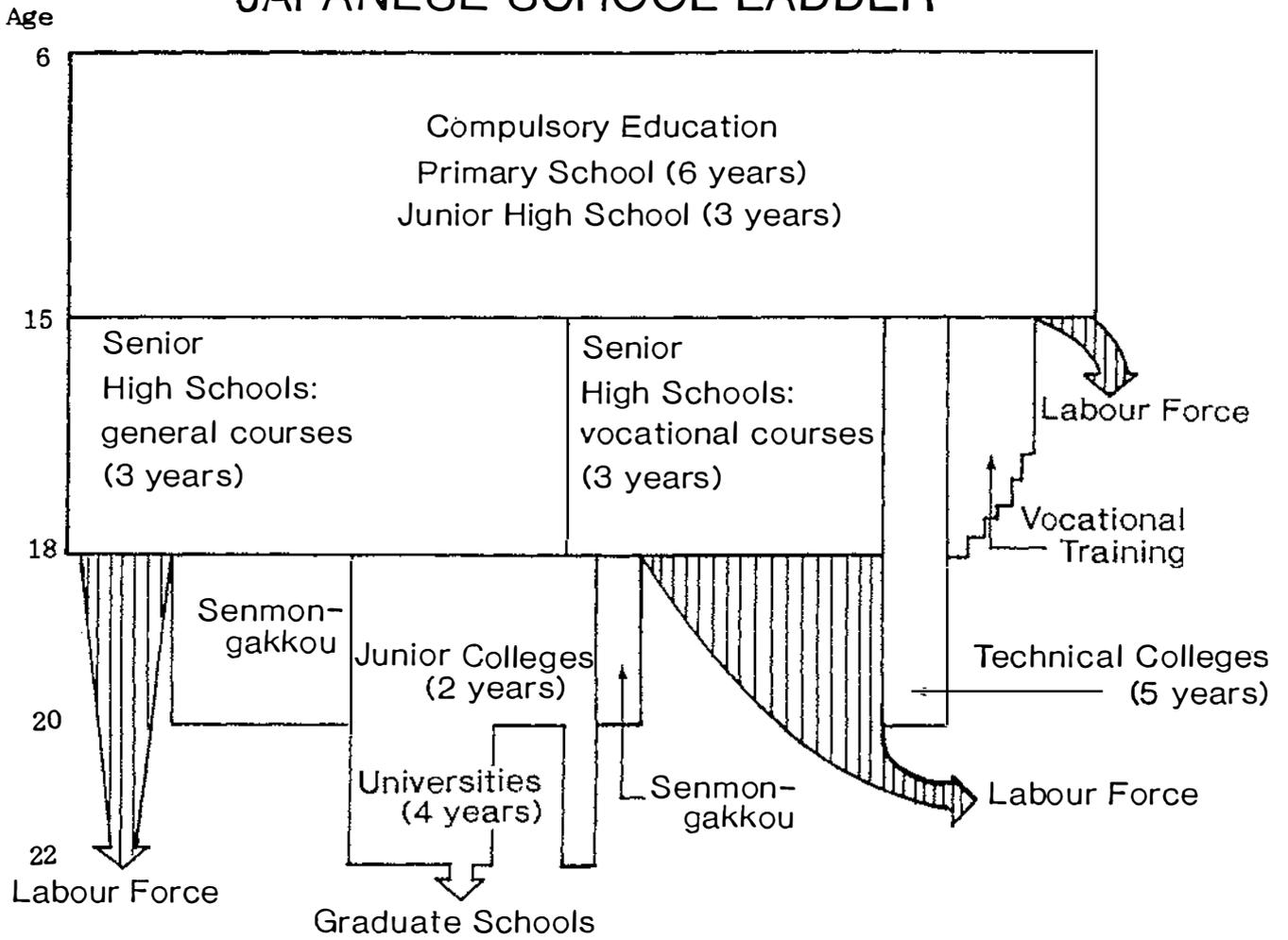
documents, he said, "Well, ask Mr. Ishida [the deputy-head of DGLAS] about it, and he will let you have them. I will mention the matter to him today. But, you didn't ask me about this, and I won't know that you have them, OK?"

There are limitations to the methodology. Firstly, since I did not have access to students' homes, the study was conducted at the level of the school. This restriction was imposed by the school as a condition of my access to the field. The study therefore had to rely on the student's description of his/her family and that of his/her home room teacher, that is the actors' interpretations of the family. Secondly, due to the translation, the study was not able to convey the vivid and subtle nature of the actors' comments and accounts, which have been presented as excerpts, as Willis (1977) did so successfully in his work on the "lads". Among the students, language patterns varied. They all spoke a particular "high school language" in the Saki-dialect, a subset of the larger regional dialect. In addition, some students were more conspicuous than others in their use of *shitamachi* language. Some students, both boys and girls, used "rougher" expressions (including a variety of swear words); a small number were able to use *keigo*; while many more incorporated more of a trendy vocabulary into their language. In fact, the different language patterns created a long-lasting first impression and were a good indication of the social relationship existing between the student in question, the person they were addressing and whoever may have been the subject of their conversation. I feel that the translated excerpts taken from students' conversations and interviews do not adequately reflect their colloquial nature. It would be interesting to see how these students' language patterns change after they enter the *shakai-jin* world.

The study relates an examination of ethnographic data to the forces and structures of Japanese society, through Bourdieu's method of inquiry and, in particular, his concepts of habitus, capital (resources) and field. A student's employment-related decisions and the eventual acquisition of a position were examined as a product of the interaction between the student's habitus and available resources in the field of school to work transition in contemporary Japanese society. The field of Japanese schooling provided an interesting combination of resources and conditions in respect of the transition process. The study contributes to bridging a gap between cultural anthropological study and structural-Marxist argument about Japanese schooling, through the study of individual trajectories (within a broader modal trajectory) and the interrelationship between habitus and the various forms of resources.

A research act itself is a product of the researcher's habitus x resources + field. Seen in this light, the study activated that part of my habitus deriving from my Japan-based experiences in interpreting the actors' actions in the field, while using that part of my habitus generated by subsequent experiences outside Japan in further theorising and reporting back to a Western audience.

JAPANESE SCHOOL LADDER



APPENDIX 2
Interview Schedule

1. KO explains the purpose and the confidentiality of the interview.
2. How are you feeling, now that you have obtained a job?
3. KO confirms details relating to the job obtained (the kind of work, the name of the company). The answer obtained indicates how much the student knows about the job.
4. Have you been involved in any club activities? If so, what?
5. Who do you consider "good friends"?
6. What did you want to become when you were about 3 years old? Why?
when you were at primary school? Why?
When you were at junior high school? Why?

I used these questions and the resulting conversation to encourage students to talk about their families and was able to obtain information regarding family members, as well as to gauge the students' attitudes toward their families.

7. Why did you choose the data-processing, the interior-furnishing, the machinery course at Sasaki High/ Imai Tech High?
8. What was your plan in terms of life-after-school when you were in the first year of senior high school? In the second year?
9. What was the June three-party meeting like? What did you say? What did your home room teacher say? What did you think about his/her response?
10. When you examined the RCs what were your criteria for selecting companies?

At this point, the interviewee is requested to arrange 13 cards, each listing a different consideration or factor in the order of the significance that they attached to each of them when they decided on their preferred companies. The cards represented the following criteria: (1) desire from earlier times; (2) the kind of work involved; (3) the company's size (the number of employees and capital); (4) wage; (5) holidays; (6) working hours; (7) the requirement to work overtime; (8) other fringe benefits (insurance, accommodation etc.); (9) the location of the company; (10) the company's prestige; (11) the recruitment examination subjects; (12) the presence of ex-students from the school; and (13) others.

11. Who do you think influenced your decision-making and employment acquisition?

At this point, the interviewee is requested to perform a similar exercise to the one above, but which involves the use of 10 cards marked as follows: (1) parents; (2) brothers and sisters; (3) family relatives; (4) teachers; (5) seniors; (6) boy friend/ girl friend; (7) friends; (8) acquaintances; (9) neighbourhood people; and (10) others. The ordering of the cards was intended to indicate the relative influence of family, friends, teachers and acquaintance in affecting choices the student made. Where the interviewee indicates family as a factor, KO asks particular questions about the family (family's occupation, academic qualifications, etc.).

The majority of the interviewed students found the tasks 10 and 11 difficult exercises and took considerable time to decide on the order of the cards. KO assisted the students in asking questions that were intended to help each interviewee fully examine and clarify their decision-making process.

12. What do you consider to be the most determinant factor in your acquisition of the job?
13. If you were of the opposite sex, what job/ company would you have chosen?
14. How long do you plan to work for the company?
15. What do you want to be doing in 5 years time?
16. What do you want to do before graduation?
17. What is your view of the internal selection system?
18. What do you think the employer wanted to find out about you in the recruitment examination?
19. Have you had any contact with your company since you obtained the job?
20. Which would you prefer, being a student, or being a *shakai-jin*?

APPENDIX 3

An Example of an Interview File

File#\INTRVW\ATSUSHI.IA

Name: Kimura Atsushi

Date of interview:26/1/90

Obtained job: Sanyou Railways; station work (such as ticketing)

* The internal selection requested a change from his first choice.

Junior high: Yama Junior High

Address: 3-3-3, Yama-town, Matsu-ku, Saki-city

Family:

Father: Carpenter/builder (*daiku*). Cut his fingers in a work accident, which made Atsushi decide against a career as a carpenter.

Mother: Part-time work.

Younger brother: 13-14 years old.

School club activities:

Junior high: Soccer

Senior high: Soccer in the first year; Experimental science club (*jikken kagaku-bu*) in the 2nd and 3rd year. I ended up quitting soccer as we did not practice that often.

Close friends:

Toshikazu, Masafumi.

Aspirations at different ages:

At 3: -

Kindergarten: None recalled.

Primary school: Train driver, and then later carpenter/builder (*daiku*), since my father was one. I remember writing this in an essay under the title, "What I want to be When I Become an Adult".

F:flhr/int-byst/+<pre-JH>

Junior High: My father injured his fingers in a work accident. At that time I gave up wanting to be a builder.

F:flhr/int-byst/-<JH>

Transition from junior high to senior high:

Because I could not go to academic high school, I knew that I would have to get a job after finishing high school. I thought that the machinery course would lead to good job opportunities. I did not have any clear idea about what kind of work I wanted, though.

My parents at first suggested that I go to an academic high.

F:prnt/ini-adv/-<JH>

But they later agreed to my wish.

F:prnt/sprt<JH>

I chose Imai Tech High because of my academic marks.

ST:mrks<JH>

I never thought of taking automobile or ship-building courses. My junior high teacher said, "With your marks, it would be difficult to get into an academic high school. Also, it is difficult to get a job after graduating from an academic high school". He also said that I would be able to enter a prefectural technical high. But in the end what influenced me was his comment, "It's better to be at the top of Imai Tech High than to be at the bottom of the prefectural technical high. That way you will reach a better outcome."

S:hrtc/init-adv/+<JH>

Senior high:

I had not known about what I would be studying in the Machinery course before entering the school. I found the courses reasonable, and useful in terms of a future career. I like making shapes with my hands.

At the end of the second year we had the three-party meeting. At that time my mother and I said that I wanted to go to Sanyou Railways.

KO: Why Sanyou Railways?

Atsushi: I talked with seniors from Imai Tech High's Machinery course. One of my seniors came to school to give a talk. I also read "*Shinro Nyuusu*" published by the DGLAS, and found a few articles written by seniors working for Sanyou Railways. I thought that the work there would be *raku*.

S:srrs/int-byst/+

S:DGLAS/info

KO: What do you mean by *raku*? In terms of the content of the work, or working hours?

Atsushi: I don't mean working hours. I had thought that the content of the work would be *raku* in comparison with other jobs, but now I realise I was *amakatta* (yielded to the temptation of ease, underestimating). I happened to see my senior from my junior high who got a job at Sanyou Railways. He graduated from an academic high school. He talked about his work: there were many things he had to remember and learn, and there was shift work etc. That made me feel anxious and worried. Would I be able to handle that?

E:aqntnc/int-byst

KO: Did you decide on Sanyou Railways first, and then tell your parents?

H: Yes. Then they supported me.

June 89: at the three-party meeting.

My mother and I told my home room teacher that I still wanted to apply for Sanyou Railways.

July:

After looking through all RCs, I decided on Sanyou Railways's department of train carriage maintenance. But, Mr. Ide (home room teacher) told me that the department of train carriage maintenance would be too difficult for me. Also he told me that the seniors from Imai Tech High who work there were all from the ship-building course.

So I decided on the station work department of Sanyou Railways.

KO: What do you mean by "difficult"?

Atsushi: My academic marks were not good enough.

S:hrtc/resp-adv/+

My classmates said that I would not be using the machinery skills which I had learned at school for station work. I would have preferred the department of carriage maintenance.

S:clsmt/resp-adv/-

Mr. Ide said that other students were hoping to get *gijutsu* position in the department of carriage maintenance, which would make it difficult for me.

The list of companies submitted by the student in August:

1. Sanyou Railways, the carriage maintenance department, a *gijutsu* position. This was subsequently changed to a station work department position after the internal selection meeting.
2. N Engineering Company, a machinery *gijutsu* position.
3. Nihon Air Brake, a *ginou* position.

The aspects considered significant in decision making:

- 1) The place of work; commuting distance.
- 2) The company size.
- 3) Other attractions of the company. I preferred a railway company.
The kind of work. Not a clerical position. Preferred a job relating to station work or maintenance.
- 5) Wages.
- 6) Desire from earlier times.

KO: How about the requirement to work overtime?

Atsushi: Well, I have no choice--overtime is compulsory until I have been with the company for a while.

Who influenced the final outcome?

- 1) parents. My father is a carpenter/builder and cut his fingers at work. When that happened I decided against becoming a carpenter. Then I started thinking of machinery-related jobs.
- 2) teachers. My junior high school teacher suggested Imai Tech High.
- 3) seniors. When I was a second year student, I read an article by a senior who works for Sanyou Railways. My interest was aroused by what he wrote about the company.

The determining factor:

teachers

If you are of the opposite sex, what would you have done?

Even if I weren't bright, I would not have come to a technical high school. There are many private girls high schools. I would have gone to an academic high and then taken up a clerical position.

ST:gndr

How long do you plan to work for the company?

Until I retire.

What do you want to be doing in 5 years' time?

I want to be a conductor, after being promoted from station work. I wouldn't be married by then... it would be difficult financially. I wonder if I will have any chance of meeting girls.

What do you want to do before graduation?

Nothing particular.

On the internal selection system.

In the end, three of us from this school sat the exam for Sanyou Railways. One ship-building course student went for the maintenance position, and failed. Another ship-building course student and I sat the exam for the station work positions. I am glad that I didn't apply for the maintenance position, since I would have failed. I have always taken a secure path. And this time was no exception.

ST:prsn\#

The employment exam. What do you think the company wanted to know about you?

They tried to see if I was the sort of person who would stay with them until retirement.

Any contact from the company?

I have received monthly company newsletters. In December I went to the company to have my measurement taken for the uniform. They also asked me to read a book which they sent me and to write an essay about what I had read. I filled in a lot of forms also. I went to get a *juumin-hyou* (residence registration form) from the city council and handed it in to the company. Also, as requested by the company, I nominated a *hoshou-nin* (guarantor). My uncle agreed to take the role.

Being a student vs being a *shakai-jin*.

I would like to become *shakai-jin* soon. I have been a student long enough. Being a student is easier (*raku*) than being a *shakai-jin*. We don't have to follow rules so much. You can get away with being late for school, and with sleeping in classes.

KO: Which would you prefer, being a student or being a *shakai-jin*?

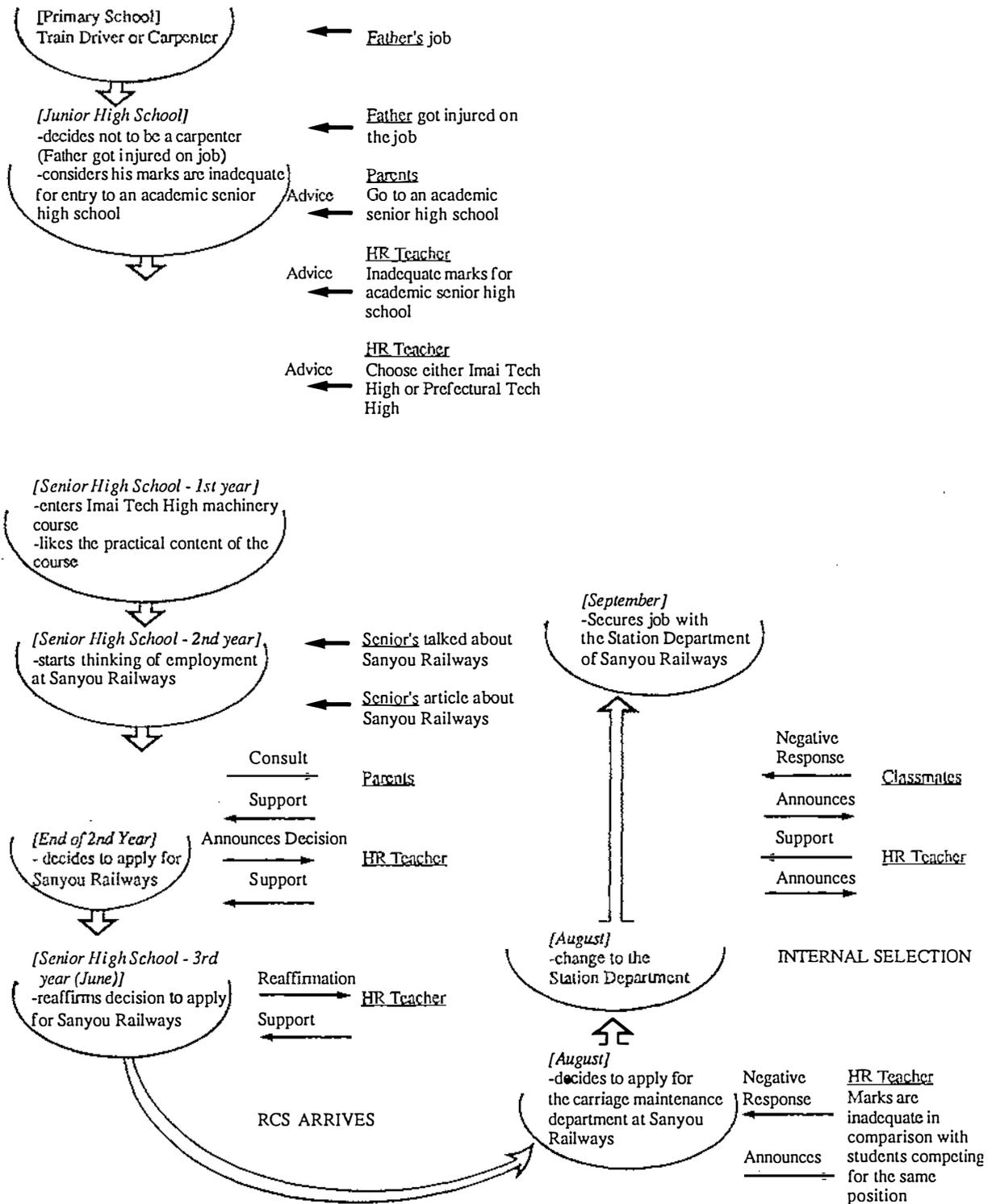
Atsushi: I will prefer being a *shakai-jin*, once I have become a proper *shakai-jin*. But the process of becoming one will be demanding.

KO: What aspects are demanding?

Atsushi: Things like using the proper language when speaking to my boss and seniors. That will make me nervous.

Appendix 4 An Example of An Individual Student's Trajectory Chart

Student: Atsushi



APPENDIX 5

An Example of the Recruitment Card

RECRUITMENT CARD FOR SENIOR HIGH GRADUATES

(For Male/ Female/ Either sex)

(1) Description of Company

Company name *Sakura Engineering Consulting Company*
 Company address *1-12, Yoma-cho, Matsu-ku, Saki-city*
 Job location *The same as above*
 Product or service *Designing, technical drawing*
 Number of employees at job location *34 (23 male and 11 female)*
 Total number of employees *The same as above*
 Company established *1965*
 Capital *3 million yen*
 Union membership available *No*
 Company regulation booklet available *Yes*

(2) Working Conditions

Hours of work *8:45 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.*
 Glide hours available/ unavailable
 Breaks *45 minutes for lunch*
 Shiftwork *Yes/No*
 Overtime *Yes/No*
 If yes, average overtime hours per month *20 hours a month*
 Holidays *Sundays, public holidays, and two Saturdays a month*
 Five days a week *Yes/No Every other week*
 Paid leave *1st year: 6 days 2nd year: 7 days*
 The maximum : *20 days*

(3) Payment

Regular wages Basic wage *78,000 yen*
 Daily rate *Yes/No* If yes, monthly pay calculated on the maximum *23 days*
 Only the first three months of employment
 Skill allowance *37,400 yen*
 Regular wage for commuters *115,400 yen*
 Regular wage for live-in staff *N/A*

Reductions

Tax 5,370 yen
 Insurance 17,426 yen for male, 16,906 yen for female
 Food 9,430 yen (for 23 meals)

Pay day 25th day of each month

Form of payment monthly daily hourly others

Special allowances Commuting allowance up to 20,000 yen
 Incentive allowance 7,800 yen
 Overtime allowance 12,500 yen

Take home pay 123,524 yen for male, 124,044 for female

Bonus

The 1st year: twice a year, totalling 2.5 times of the monthly basic wage

The average thereafter: twice a year, totalling 3.5 times of the monthly basic wage

Annual increment 6,000 yen

Superannuation Available after 3 years of service
 Unavailable

(4) The Available Position Draughtsperson

(5) The Number of Available Positions 8

(6) Job Description

Job description

(1) Design and trace the electrical sequence plan; (2) draw or trace machine parts; (3) draw the structural plan and the survey plan of road, water supply and drainage; (4) draw a cross-sectional drawing of window installation; (5) design by CAD.

Skills and knowledge required Technical drawing skills

Unacceptable physical conditions Dexterity problems

(7) Fringe Benefits

Insurance: health/medical, sickness, redundancy, accident compensation,
 company saving scheme

Accommodation No

Meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

Retirement age 60

(8) Study Support Yes No

If yes, paid while studying?

name of university

tuition fee paid by the company?

(9) Application Procedure

Applications close by *5th September*Recruitment examination date *16th September*Place of recruitment examination *The company site*Method of selection: written tests (general knowledge, Maths, Japanese, English, Social Studies, Essay writing and others); health check interview aptitude test, othersNotification date *7 days later*Reimbursement of the interview cost Yes/No(10) Commencement of Employment *1st April 1991*

(11) Additional information

New employees are requested to take correspondence courses in electrical mechanics and data-processing, in order to sit for the national examinations for certification in these areas. Further, some are requested to attend H University to take up middle-range managerial positions in later years.

There is an overnight trip once a year, social events, sports meetings.

(12) Personnel Officer *Masami Tanaka (tel: 391-1616)*(13) Managing Director *Satoshi Koike*

(14) Schools Contacted

Imai Tech High, Saki-city Commerce High, Prefectural Tech High

(15) Company Registration Number *2801-005612-0*

(16) Turnover of new employees in the last three years

1989: 5 employed, none left

1988: 4 employed, none left

1987: 2 employed, one left

SASAKI HIGH

HOME ROOM CLASS	NAME	SEX	USE OF FAMILY ENKO	USE OF SCHOOL RESOURCES RC	X-HELP	SPECIFIC FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES						SCHOOL PERFORMANCE			EMPLOYMENT DETAILS			
						GAISEKI	BURAKU	SINGLE-PARENT	TUITION EXEMP	CITY S/SHIP	LIVING ASSIST	ACADEMIC PLACING (out of 166)	SPORTS CLUB	CLUB/CLASS REPS	JOB	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	CAPITAL (hundred million yen)	COMPANY
3D 1	Yumiko	F	√ June			√									Bank Teller	140	17.7	Regional Trading Bank (Korean owned)
2	Fukiko	F	√ Aug										√		Programmer			Software Company (Mitsubishi subsidiary)
3	Junko	F	√ Aug										√		Jimu	2119	41	Pneumatic Brake Manufacturing Company
4	Kaori	F	√ Feb				√	√	√	√					Kitchen Hand	3		Small Barbeque Restaurant
5	Naomi	F	√ Sept									104			Programmer	1658	154	Computer Systems Company
6	Takashi	M		√								30	√		Programmer/Jimu	619	1	Computer Systems and Software Company (Subsidiary of one of the biggest banks in Japan)
7	Tsuneki	M			√							-	√	√	Programmer	38013	1819	Leading Electronics Company
8	Tsuneo	M		√									√		Jimu	2119	41	Pneumatic Brake Manufacturing Company
9	Hiroshi	M		√								95	√		Stockbroker	833	46.5	Stockbroking Company
10	Hiroaki	M		√								135			Programmer	24	0.1	Software Company
11	Kenichi	M		√				√				74			Programmer	68	0.13	Printing Company
12	Kenji	M		√								52			Jimu	2580	271	Local Railway Company
13	Akiteru	M		√				√	√	√	√	60	√	√	Programmer	273	3.8	Chemical Manufacturer
14	Ken	M			√							19			Jimu	4743	4760	Electrical Power Supply Company
15	Mari	F		√	√	√						84			Programmer	85	1.4	Computer Systems & Software Company
16	Naoko	F		√				√		√		71		√	J & P & O (note below)	290	0.07	Data-processing Company
17	Kazue	F		√					√	√		99			J & P & O	290	0.07	Data-processing Company
18	Yoshiko	F			√			√	√			-			Jimu	35	1.37	Coastal Shipping Company
19	Kyouko	F		√				√	√	√	√	38			Jimu & Operator	619	1	Computer Systems & Software Company (Subsidiary of one of the biggest banks in Japan)
20	Etsuko	F		√					√	√		44			Jimu	355	1.5	Engineering Service Consulting Company
21	Sumie	F		√					√	√		23			Jimu	4095	153	Freight Forwarding Company
22	Shouko	F		√								53			Keyboard Operator	182	0.1	Data-processing Company
23	Kayoko	F		√								111	√		Keyboard Operator	182	0.1	Data-processing Company
24	Mikako	F		√								19			Jimu	273	3.8	Chemical Manufacturer
25	Sayuri	F		√				√				137			J & P & O	290	0.07	Data-processing Company
26	Masako	F		√				√				46			Jimu	619	1	Computer Systems & Software Company (Subsidiary of one of the biggest banks in Japan)
27	Miya	F		√				√				28			J & P & O	290	0.07	Data-processing Company
28	Hisako	F		√						√		1	√		Jimu & Programmer	2418	79	Manufacturer of Rubber Industrial Belts
29	Chika	F		√	√	√			√	√		48			Bank Teller	140	17.7	Regional Trading Bank (Korean owned)
30	Kazuko	F		√								24			Programmer	280	0.2	Office Automation Equipment Company
31	Jun	F		√								132			Jimu	820	0.8	Engineering Service Consulting Company
32	Yukiko	F		√								29			Jimu	349	5.3	Regional Trust Bank
33	Tamami	F										-		√	Jimu			Post Office
34	Hosoko	F		√								5			Jimu	2119	41	Pneumatic Brake Manufacturing Company
35	Haruka	F			√							57			Jimu	50	0.3	Saki-City Port Company
36	Miho	F		√								61			Jimu	820	0.8	Engineering Service Consulting Company
37	Yumi	F		√				√	√	√		16			Jimu	22030	1407	Steel Company
38	Mayumi	F		√								22			Programmer	280	0.2	Office Automation Equipment Company
39	Midori	F													4 year university			
40	Rumi	F						√							2 year colleges			
3C 41	Megumi	F		√		√						4			Jimu	44820	2500	Mitshubishi Heavy Industries
42	Terumi	F		√	√							156			Nurse Trainee	61	-	Surgical Clinic
43	Tomomi	F		√								6			Jewellery Craftsperson	186	0.5	Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company
44	Makiko	F		√								11			Jimu	1059	10	Pharmaceutical Retailer
45	Yuuko	F		√								12			Jimu	1280	0.1	Fashion Apparel Company
46	Kayo	F		√								121			J & P & O	290	0.07	Data-processing Company
J & P & O = Jimu, programmer & operator																		

IMAI TECH HIGH

SPECIFIC FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES													SCHOOL PERFORMANCE					EMPLOYMENT			DETAILS				
HOME ROOM	NAME	SEX	ENKO	USE OF FAMILY RESOURCES	USE OF SCHOOL RESOURCES	RC	X-HELP	GAISEKI	BURAKU	PARENT	SINGLE-TUITION	CITY	LIVING	ASSIST	1ST YEAR	2ND YEAR	3RD YEAR	NO. OF ABSENT DAYS	SPORTS CLUB	CLUB/ REPS	JOB	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	CAPITAL (hundred million yen)	COMPANY	
3I	1 Masayoshi	M	√ Aug							√	√	√			-	-	-				Gijutsu	48	0.05	Engineering Consulting Company	
3I	2 Chieko	F	√ June												-	-	-				Jimu	47607	1738	Mitsubishi Electric (a leading electronics company)	
3MA	3 Youchi	M	√ Aug												73	57	64	0	√		Panelbeater	8	-	Panelbeating Workshop (family-owned)	
															OUT OF	OUT OF	OUT OF								
															40	37	37								
3I	4 Kenichirou	M		√						√	√	√			27	19	30	0			Jewellery Craftsperson	1165	68	Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company	
	5 Hisashi	M		√						√	√				7	16	28	21			Forklift Operator	60	0.2	Forklift Hire Company	
	6 Hironobu	M		√											5	5	5	2			Factory Trainee	17664	666	Kawasaki Heavy Industries	
	7 Takahiro	M		√								√			6	4	4	0	√		Gijutsu	5950	111	Major Department Store Chain	
	8 Tutomu	M		√											32	27	16	6			Draughtsperson	263	0.1	Engineering Consulting Company	
	9 Kontarou	M		√							√	√			2	2	1	0			Stage Set Maker	5800	468	Theatrical Production Company	
	10 Kiyohiko	M		√											26	24	19	0	√		Gijutsu	110	0.1	Office Automation Equipment Company	
	11 Yoshiyuki	M		√											31	25	29	0	√		Draughtsperson	34	0.03	Engineering Consulting Company	
	12 Kengo	M		√											22	32	33	9			Furniture Maker	40	0.2	Custom-made Furniture Company	
																							(Subsidiary of a major department store chain)		
	13 Yasuhiro	M		√	√	√									36	20	26	12			Woodworker	248	0.6	Custom-made Furniture Company	
																							(Subsidiary of a major department store chain)		
	14 Kouji	M		√											35	30	25	3			Chef Trainee	220	0.3	Restaurant Chain	
	15 Hisakazu	M		√											38	37	34	23			Jewellery Craftsperson	1165	68	Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company	
	16 Kazuhiro	M		√						√	√				18	17	32	8			Gijutsu	90	1	Paint and Waterproof Coatings Company	
	17 Soutarou	M		√					√		√	√			22	34	37	13			Dock Worker	4095	153	Freight Forwarding Company	
	18 Hikekazu	M		√						√	√	√			28	12	14	1			Gijutsu	2400	125	Kitchen Design and Manufacturing Company	
	19 Yuuji	M			√				√	√	√	√			20	22	22	0	√		Cycle Mechanic	10	-	Custom-Made Bike Workshop	
	20 Miyako	F		√											13	14	11	6			Draughtsperson	34	0.03	Engineering Consulting Company	
	21 Seiko	F		√											25	21	13	0			Draughtsperson	30	0.3	Woodworking/Cabinet-Making Company	
	22 Yasuko	F		√	√										1	1	1	9		√	Designer	110	0.15	Railway Carriage Design Company	
	23 Manami	F		√											33	31	17	6			Bus Guide	1662	15	Bus Company	
	24 Satomi	F		√							√	√	√		16	35	23	41	√		Jewellery Craftsperson	1165	68	Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company	
	25 Nozomi	F		√						√					11	7	6	0			Jimu	84700	1642	Matsushita Electric (A Leading Electronic Company)	
	26 Youko	F		√											-	-	-	-			Jimu	1924	144	Sportswear Manufacturer	
	27 Akiko	F		√							√	√			8	9	7	0	√		Bicycle Designer	140	3	Bicycle Manufacturing Company	
	28 Mie	F		√							√	√			17	25	20	0			Ginou	1406	52	Liquid Crystal Manufacturing	
	29 Yoshimi	F		√											9	10	8	3			Check-Out Operator	10065	216	Retail Co-operative	
	30 Yumeko	F		√											40	29	36	2			Jewellery Craftsperson	1165	68	Pearl Jewellery Manufacturing Company	
	31 Kasumi	F		√											30	17	18	1		√	Sales Assistant	1720	5	Liquid Crystal Manufacturer	
	32 Kana	F		√											37	28	27	0			Sales Assistant	3601	150	Major Department Store Chain	
	33 Tsuyoshi	M													-	-	-	-	√		4 year university				
															OUT OF	OUT OF	OUT OF								
															115	107	107								
3MA	34 Hidetsugu	M		√																	Maintenance Engineer	2100	8	Toshiba Elevator Company	
	35 Kazuaki	M		√	√					√					46	45	53	3	√		Gijutsu	1071	5	Precision Measuring Equipment Company	
	36 Sukenori	M		√					√						86	51	52	0	√		Ginou	251	2	Semiconductor Manufacturing Equipment Company	
	37 Keisou	M		√											72	62	43	0			Ginou	1406	5	Liquid Crystal Manufacturer	
	38 Shinichi	M		√											9	14	11	0	√		Gijutsu	44820	2500	Mitsubishi Heavy Industries	
	39 Shinya	M		√											67	42	35	6	√		Gijutsu	4198	70	Engineering & Computer Software Consulting Company	
	40 Shuu	M		√						√					14	12	5	0	√		Gijutsu	24200	1150	Sharp Electric (Major Electronics Company)	
	41 Takayuki	M		√											36	26	37	2	√		Gijutsu	512	5	Hydraulic/Pneumatic Engineering Company	
	42 Tamotsu	M		√						√					65	60	56	0			Ginou	29	0.2	Gear-Making Company	
	43 Teruyuki	M			√										91	36	34	1	√		Ginou	1100	12	Building Materials Company	
	44 Yoshitaka	M		√	√	√									25	19	24	0		√	Car Mechanic	246	1	Automotive Dealership	
	45 Atsushi	M		√											29	6	2	0			Train Station Employee	1617	52	Local Railway Company	
	46 Toshikazu	M		√											50	37	55	0			Gijutsu	203	45	Electrical Component Manufacturer	
	47 Takehisa	M		√	√										47	83	105	45	√		Ginou	354	1	Sake Brewing Company	
	48 Yoshikazu	M		√	√										110	103	100	14	√		Ginou	354	1	Sake Brewing Company	

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