

The Tools and The Job

Yuko Morishita
Keio Univ. ESS

Returnees are better than a Japanese person who has never lived abroad. They can speak English; have gold rings from Tiffany and Louis Vitton bags. They drive nice cars and live in big houses. That's a good enough reason to fool this way, don't you think? ... Well, I don't think so.

Why are returnees treated differently? Think about this. In English speaking countries, anybody and everybody, even beggars can speak English. If you are given the chance to live in the foreign country, you too would possibly be able to speak English just like them. The only difference between Japanese who lived in Japan all their lives and returnees is that the returnees are fortunate enough to be given a chance to live in abroad. But right now they have not digested the essential elements of both countries getting the edge in our society. For example, they can get regular students take and they are accepted by good companies just because they can speak English. What the society needs is taking in actual foreigners also speak Japanese. Instead, we need a Japanese person who can contribute to society by interesting their own unique which they have acquired through experiences abroad. But because of the inferiority complex, meaning that we Japanese think that English speaking foreign countries are superior than our country, we come to the conclusion that all people who lived in these foreign countries, no matter what they did their superior.

If returnees have something against their own country, they must try to make a chance instead of just complaining about how pathetic Japan is. They have been educated to say what they think and pursue what they feel is right. In return for the advantage they receive, they must contribute to society by making useful inputs which will improve Japan, at the same time make us understand and be understood by other foreign countries. Think of the possibilities. They could help our country be understood by the other countries and our country would really be able to participate in the world.

I am a returnee. I entered my school through the returnee entrance exam. I learn how to speak English when I was four so I have never experienced the trouble of learning how to speak English. I think I

was lucky but I have missed out on a lot of things that my friends who lived in Japan learned. I can't write Japanese characters as well as they can and I don't know a lot of famous Japanese people that everyone knows as common knowledge. So to sum it up, I don't know Japanese culture properly. But I was lucky enough to learn different things that only the Americans or British know. I know why the British and the Americans love their country, I know why they say everything which they have on their minds, and I also know the bad points of these countries. This is why I am returnee. I am not a returnee because I learn how to drive when I was sixteen, and I am definitely not a returnee because I can watch movies without looking Japanese wordings. I have abilities, knowledge and experiences that ordinary people can never get. I feel that it is my duty to make all this knowledge work for Japan. To make this work, I have to learn more about my culture. And also work closely with Japanese people who haven't lived abroad. The chances are given to me in the sharp of the returnee edge. I must never take this for granted and keep trying to make an improvement. And my wish is for all returnees to join me.

Let's change our country so we can be proud of it. And if you aren't a returnee, in this so called "international society", you are bound to meet one of them sooner or later, please help them be useful to the society. You can be so much help to them by looking at them as a fellow Japanese who is aiming at the same goal as you are. Also, by teaching them about Japanese culture, they can play back to our country. By combining returnee's tools, and your native knowledge of Japan, we will be able to do the job.