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Helping Brazilian People Living in Japan:
Towards a Joint Proposal

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Abstract

At the moment, there are around 270.000 Brazilian people living in Japan. The migratory movement from Brazil to Japan started in the decade of 80. Initially, the migrants came to Japan without their families. From the revision of the Japanese immigration law, in 1990, Japanese descendents up to the third generation (sansei), as well as their consorts, could come and work legally in Japan. In this paper we present initially general information about the dekassegui phenomenon, in relation to the migration of Japanese-Brazilians to Japan. Next, we report on the problems and difficulties experienced by the Brazilian people living in Japan, as they have been described in several sources. Then we mention several actions and initiatives directed to or motivated by the dekassegui movement: events, courses, associations, etc. Due to the importance of the Education theme in the context of the migration Brazil-Japan, a session has been dedicated to the problems related to the Education of the dekasseguis' children. After reporting on the problems and difficulties, we discuss a proposal aiming at helping the dekasseguis with a view to give them conditions to fight for better working conditions, and also to provide some support related to the education of their children.

1. Introduction

As described by Prof. Ninomyia in [4], the emigration of Japanese people to Brazil started in 1908. From that year until 1993, when the Japanese International Cooperation Agency — JICA announced the official closing of the emigration process, a total of near 250.000 Japanese people emigrated to Brazil. Considering now all the Japanese people living in Brazil, up to the descendents of 5th generation, one talks about a Japanese-Brazilian community of

approximately 1,4 million of people.

In the decade of 80, more precisely in 1985, started the movement in the opposite direction, from Brazil to Japan. Initially, only the Japanese immigrants living in Brazil, that is to say, those ones who had Japanese nationality could migrate to Japan. Later, the migration process involved also Nikkei with Brazilian nationality. In 1990, the Japanese immigration law was revised. That revision allowed the children (nisei) and the grandchildren (sansei) of the Japanese, as well as their consorts (spouses and husbands) to work legally in Japan, being eligible for a visa with a special status, namely as “long-term residents”.

According to Ninomyia in [22], one of the positive aspects of the migration Brazil-Japan is the fact that the dekasseguis have in Japan an income much higher than the values they could have in Brazil. Another good aspect is the contact of the dekassegui with the Japanese language and culture, of special importance if he or she is a descendent, as the result of this interaction could be of value later to the community in Brazil. In the opposite direction, the dekasseguis, as people from Brazil, take with them to Japan elements of the Brazilian culture, “the idiom, the sport, and the arts and entertainment of Brazil”. One could also enumerate as positive aspects the following facts pointed out by Prof. Lili Kawamura in her book [28]. First, the migration to Japan has represented the input of significant amount of financial resources to Brazil. Second, the migration has contributed to diminish the pressures over the Brazilian work market, taking into account the economical crisis faced by the country at the moment, on account of which not enough work positions are available. Moreover, the worker has the opportunity to become acquainted with the Japanese model of organization of the work, even though in a limited way, which can be of importance taking into account for instance the introduction of this model in western countries [28].

Several negative aspects can also be mentioned, associated to the dekassegui phenomenon. Among them: disintegration of their families, accidents in the work and occupational diseases, car accidents, involvement in criminality, unemployment and problems with the Education of their children. One could also consider as a negative aspect the fact, mentioned in [28], that the migratory process can represent, in middle and long-terms, the lost of Brazilian professionals, educated by the Brazilian schools, who could take part in projects oriented to the national (Brazilian) development. Notice that significant parcel of those migrants have inclusive higher education formation [28].

In this report general information about the dekassegui phenomenon, concerning the migration from Brazil to Japan, is presented. Then a discussion of the most common problems faced by the Brazilian people in Japan, as reported in a number of documents, is included. Next, one reports on several actions and events, held either in Brazil or in Japan, motivated by the dekassegui phenomenon. In the sequel, several aspects concerning the Educational problems faced by the Brazilian children in Japan are discussed. Then a proposal of a project aiming at helping children with respect to their difficulties in getting adapted to

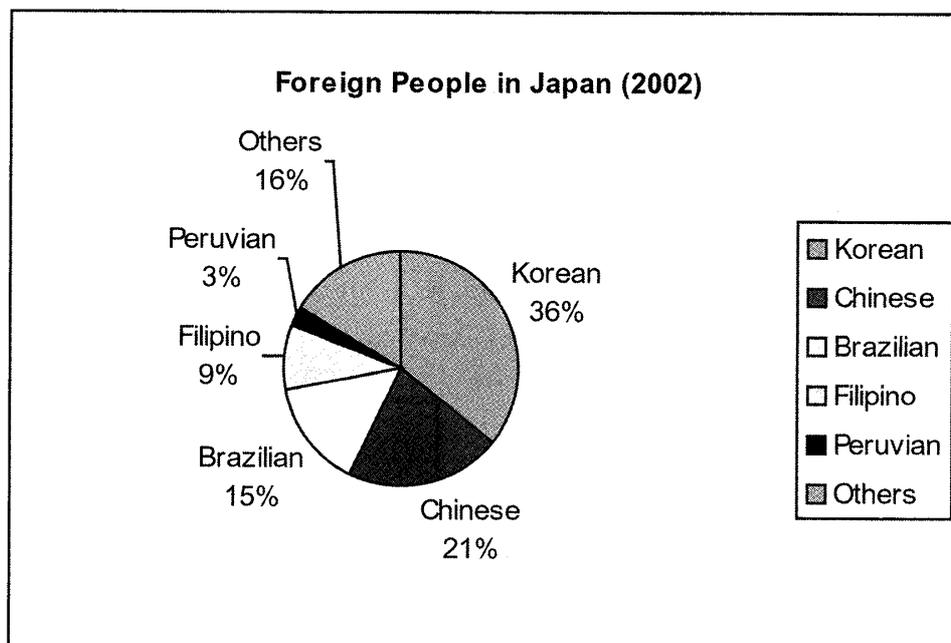
the Japanese schools (and also in getting readapted to the Brazilian ones when they return to Brazil) is outlined.

2. General Information

According to Prof. Ninomiya, in his lecture in the “Encontro de Colaboradores” [1], there are around 270.000 Brazilian resident in Japan. Nowadays the Brazilian represent the third contingent of foreigners living in Japan, following the Koreans and the Chinese [4]. According to the article in [12], the number of visa issued monthly by the Japanese Consulate in Sao Paulo is 3000¹, including the tourism visa. The table and graphics in the sequel gives information about foreign people in Japan. (All the tables and graphics included in this section were structured based on the data given in [32]).

The graphic in the sequel shows the growth of the Brazilian population in Japan in the last

Nationality	Population	Percentage
Korean	632,405	35.6%
Chinese	381,225	21.4%
Brazilian	265,962	15.0%
Filipino	156,667	8.8%
Peruvian	50,052	2.8%
Others	292,151	16.4%
Total	1,778,462	100.0%

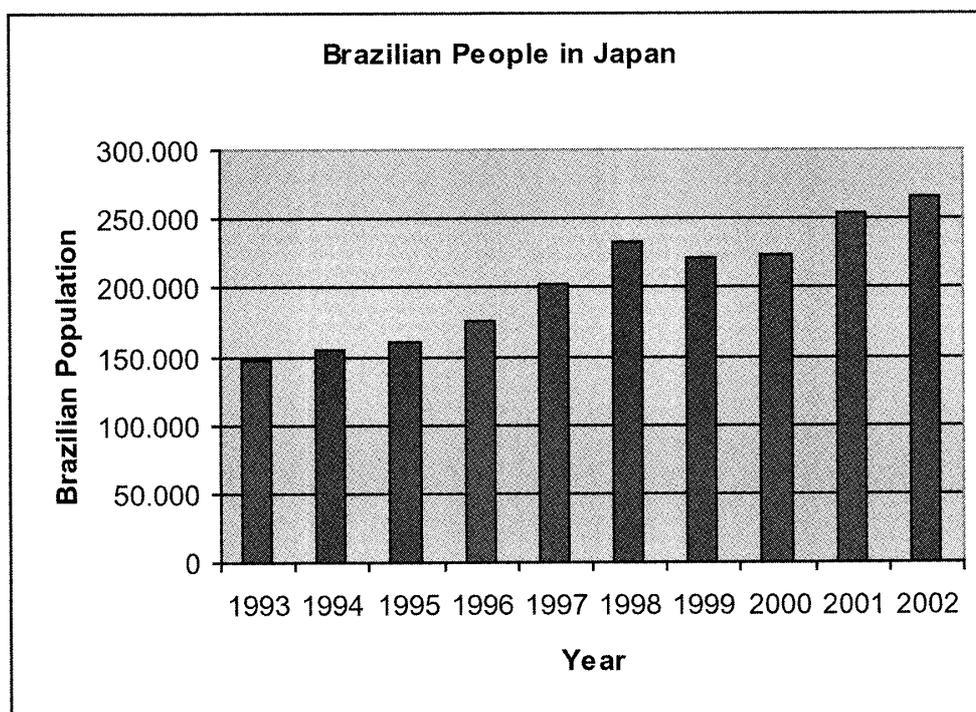


¹ Most of the issued visas are for people going to work in Japan

ten years. According to [32], the total of Brazilian people in Japan in 2002 were 265,962, 54% of this amount being men and 46%, women.

According to [28], foreigners working in Japan normally are supposed to supply the lack of manual labor in the small and medium-sized Japanese enterprises, mainly in the sectors of electronic products and of auto-parts. The intermediation between the workers and the enterprises to which they work is normally made by enterprises called as brokers. This intermediation has caused lots of complains on the part of the workers: they argument that several of the brokers are “exploiters of the foreigner's work”. Examples of complains are: improper charges, omission in case of work accidents and retention of documents [28]. With the recruitment of foreign workers through the brokers, the companies in which they work become free of the direct responsibility over them.

Notwithstanding the problems related to the labor broker system, as pointed out in [35], many workers prefer to be employed through them, for a number of reasons. For instance, the brokers provides, besides the employment, housing and even other services, communicating with the workers in their mother language. Besides, in case of unemployment, as the brokers keep contacts with several companies in Japan, they normally have conditions for transferring the workers from one company to another. The paper enumerates some reasons why the broker system is also convenient to many enterprises. For instance, through the broker system, those companies can obtain all the labor force they



need at once at the moment it is necessary in the company. Besides, it is easy to get rid of them.

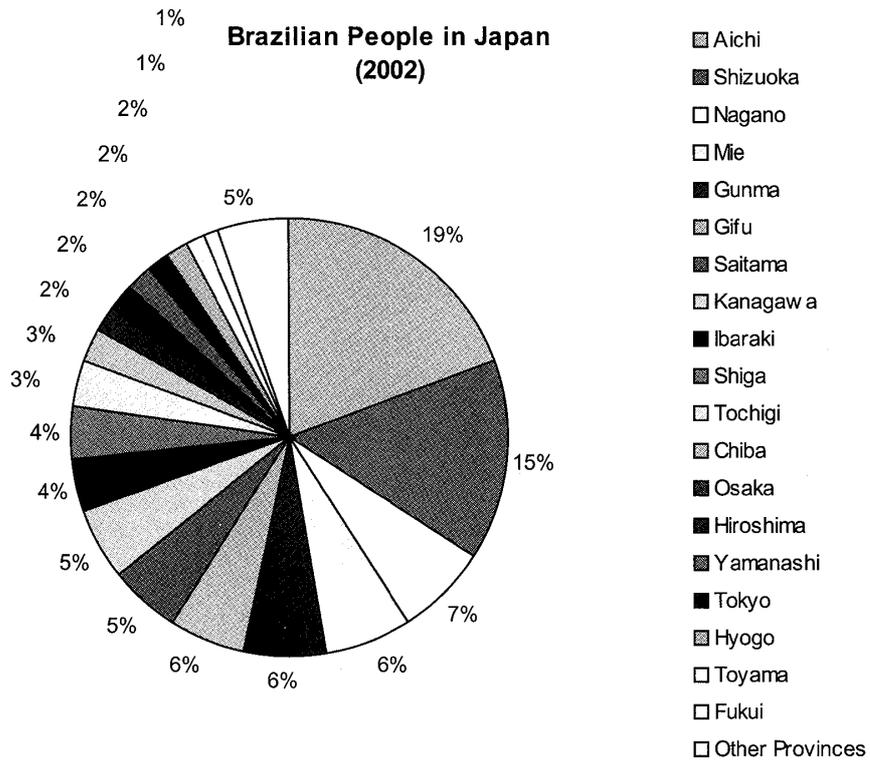
Yet with respect to the composition of the contingent of Brazilian migrants in Japan, it is mentioned [28] that it is heterogeneous with respect to both the cultural formation (influence of the Japanese culture) and the professional experience. On the other hand, the Brazilian immigrants to Japan exhibit the following common characteristics: they are young (18-45 years old), they have a high productive potential and they are not experienced as factory workers (non-qualified).

The table below shows the distribution of the Brazilian people in the several Provinces in Japan, in the year of 2002. Only the Provinces with more than 2000 Brazilian inhabitants were explicitly mentioned. The table includes also information on the number of children in two age ranges in each Province.

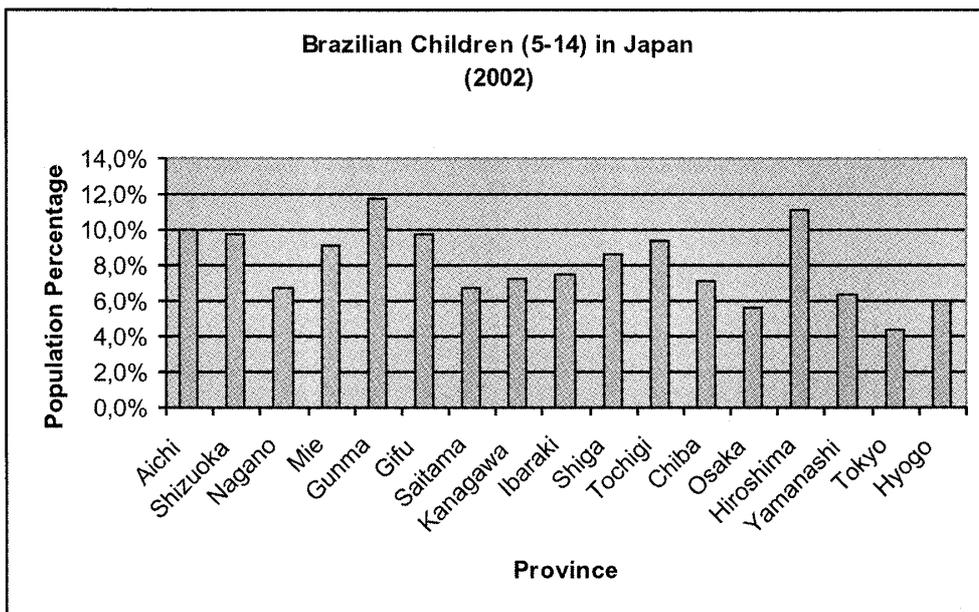
Province	Population	0-14 years old	5-14 years old
Aichi	51,546	9,140	5,164
Shizuoka	39,409	6,891	3,821
Nagano	17,830	2,370	1,198
Mie	16,737	2,735	1,525
Gunma	16,239	3,199	1,903
Gifu	14,929	2,514	1,455
Saitama	14,088	1,719	945
Kanagawa	13,650	1,819	984
Ibaraki	10,974	1,417	826
Shiga	10,182	1,554	875
Tochigi	8,624	1,427	812
Chiba	6,674	808	477
Osaka	5,265	532	297
Hiroshima	5,060	903	560
Yamanashi	5,046	621	323
Tokyo	4,915	399	218
Hyogo	4,292	443	259
Toyama	3,832	630	330
Fukui	2,674	453	214
Other Provinces	13,996	1,364	836 ²
Total	265,962	40,938	23,022

The graphic in the sequel allows a better visualization of the distribution of the Brazilian people in the several Provinces in Japan.

² This number was obtained considering the total of 23022 of children aged 6 to 14 years, living in Japan in 2002 [32].



The graphic in the sequel shows the percentage of children among the Brazilian people, in the provinces with more than 4000 Brazilian inhabitants in 2002.



According to [1], among the Brazilian children (0 to 15 years) in Japan, only near 63 % are currently enrolled in either Brazilian or Japanese schools. From the other 37%, who are out of the school, near 47% had difficulties with the Japanese Language.

The article [3] presents some figures about criminality in Japan. In the year 2001, the total number of people arrested in Japan was 542.115. From these, 7.160 were foreigners. Among the foreigners, 958 were Brazilian. The percentage of Brazilian underage people was 77.5% (first semester of 2001) and 76.8% (first semester de 2002). According to Ninomyia [1], the number of children arrested in Japanese correction Institutions is 136. From these, 20 were surprised in situations of small robberies.

According to the Communication Advisory Board of the Ministry of Education of Brazil [33], there are 60 Brazilian schools in Japan, acting in the Basic Education. The website of the Brazilian embassy in Japan relates 33 schools, from the 60 ones, already recognized by the Brazilian government (<http://www.brasemb.or.jp/portugue/info/escolas.html>). From those schools, 16 are associated through the “Association of the Brazilian Schools in Japan” (<http://www2.ocn.ne.jp/~pitjapao/aebj/index.html>). The distribution of the Brazilian schools over the Provinces of Japan is as shown in the table below.

Number of schools	Provinces
8	Aichi
6	Shizuoka
5	Gunma
3	Gifu
2	Ibaraki, Mie, Nagano, Saitama, Shiga
1	Tochigi

In the article about unemployment in Japan [2], it is mentioned that now near 15.000 Brazilian are unemployed in Japan.

3. A Brief Characterization of the Difficulties

In this section we will focus on some of the documented problems and difficulties faced by the dekasseguis and their families, when they go to Japan or when they return to Brazil. The educational problems will be considered separately in another section.

According to Prof. Ellen F. Woortmann [30], from the University of Brasilia, the Japanese tradition, even though that it is not so strong as before, through the kinship organizes the migration towards Japan. Therefore, the principle of the primogeniture and authority of the father directs the process of migration of the dekassegui people. The author characterizes the dekassegui phenomenon as one that closes the “circuit” started in 1908, being marked by the “continuity of the struggle for better life conditions”. The author points out yet that it is

not a movement without conflicts, mainly for those dekasseguis who did not assimilate integrally “the ethic and esthetics standards of the Japanese culture”.

The Brazilian Society of Nikkei Researchers reports, in one of its informative bulletin, the accomplishment of the event “Reality of the Dekassegui Movement (Opportunity or Risk?)” [11], on March 20th, 2003. In that event the lecturers emphasized that most of the difficulties faced by the dekassegui people are in the areas of Education, Social Welfare, Crime and Unemployment. Unfortunately, the involvement of Brazilian people in crimes in Japan has contributed to increase the distance among the Brazilians and Japanese [28].

As observed in the article [15] the dekasseguis normally belong to the middle class in Brazil. In arriving in Japan they go to the lowest social class. According to the teacher Eunice Akemi Ishikawa, from The International University of Kagoshima, most of them work in Japan as a non-qualified³ workman, being employed for services classified as 3K, where each K is the initial of a Japanese word: “Kitsui”, meaning heavy; “Kitanai”, meaning dirt; and “Kiken”, meaning dangerous [16]. Due to the high level of education and professional qualification, the majority of the Japanese workers normally have conditions to exert the qualified functions in big and well-known enterprises [28]. It is important to stress that, in this aspect, the migration to Japan is not an isolated case. As pointed out in [28], the great majority of the Brazilian people who migrate to other places, such as United States and Europe, also work as non-qualified employees.

It is appropriate to point out here that a great challenge for the Brazilian workers in Japan, according to [28] is to develop strategies in order to change their condition of non-qualified workman. Due to their socio-cultural formation, they are influenced by a prejudice against the manual labor activities, which contributes to their difficulties in accepting this kind of work in Japan. The prejudice against manual labor is due to the relationship between this kind of work and the reminiscences of the slavery of the black people in Brazil.

Due to the growth of the number of Brazilian in Japan, one can see the development of a special infrastructure, directed to those people. In this way, one can find, especially in the areas with a great concentration of immigrants, stores of Brazilian products, Brazilian restaurants, Brazilian schools, travel agencies, etc., devoted to serve the Brazilian people living in Japan [28]. Therefore, this kind of business opens other opportunities of employment for Brazilian people in Japan. In this way, we can see, for instance, Brazilian people working as teachers in the Brazilian schools, acting in the Press, and also working as assessors in the public schools. In this last function, they help with the communication between the students and their parents from one side and the schools on the other side. Moreover, on account of the necessity of communication between Japanese and Brazilian, new perspectives of employment for the bilingual workers (Japanese-Portuguese) appeared.

3 Non-qualified positions are also occupied by Japanese workers, but there is no enough labor force only among the Japanese people.

The development of this infrastructure resulted from the efforts of the immigrants themselves. However, according to [28], each kind store normally has the guarantee of a Japanese owner, who is the real investor. This infrastructure contributes to make it easier the daily life of the Brazilian people in Japan. On the other hand, it raises difficulties for the integration of the immigrants to the Japanese society, increasing the distance between the Brazilian and Japanese people. A rare possibility is the promotion of Brazilian workers from the temporary status to the permanent one, in Japanese companies. This situation has occurred to those workers who achieved a notable position, mainly when acting as intermediates between the companies and the other Brazilian employees.

The work in [31], dealing with the Dekassegui phenomenon, approaches the population movement as an element of the Capitalism. In this way, the dekassegui phenomenon is related to the mobility of the work, that meaning, the possibility of the man to sell his/her work force, migrating “in accordance with the rules established by the Capital”. As pointed out in [28], the international migration represents the “human face of the globalization”, in which the worker is a “member of the global work and of the world-wide work store”. This search of work in other nations leads the workers to a multicultural coexistence, with the insertion in “new work standards, new social relationships and new cultural standards”.

According to [31], this kind of migration is essentially provisory, and as a consequence it evidences the lack of a place where the involved people could “fix their roots”. Yet, according to the author, the migration of workers from Brazil to Japan assumes an ethnical character, as it involves essentially the Japanese descendents. One of the reasons pointed out for this preference is the fact that the Japanese descendents could get more easily adapted to the Japanese culture and society. As mentioned in [28], this kind of “selective migration” normally has occurred in countries with a tradition of emigration, such as Italy, Germany, and Portugal.

The cultural shock is the main difficulty faced by the dekasseguis in Japan, and it is also the reason for or it is related to the other difficulties faced and mentioned by those people. In [28], the author, in relation to the insertion of the migrants in the Japanese society, refers to the migration Japanese-descendents from Brazil to Japan as a movement to “a world culturally so close, due to their Japanese ascendancy, and, at the same time, so distant, due to their western formation”. The cultural differences cause difficulties to the immigrant in several aspects of the life in Japan. For instance, the cultural shock is felt in the world of the work, in the relationship with the Community, and in the Education of the Children. In [29] one calls the attention to the fact that the differences start with the language: most of the Japanese descendents in Brazil have the Portuguese as their “maternal language”.

In addition to the language factor, many other behavior forms are different when compared to the Japanese culture. The paper includes a wide discussion concerning the cultural shock faced by the dekasseguis in Japan. The Japanese descendents are, by a

number of factors, usually referred to as Japanese in Brazil [28]. And in Japan, they are not taken as Japanese, but as Brazilian. In this way, as observed in [15,30], the dekasseguis leave for Japan with their nationality compromised by the cultural shock. Surprisingly maybe, it is in Japan that they begin to learn what means to be in fact Brazilian. It is interesting to notice at this point that, according to [28], the Japanese employers, taking into account inclusive the high availability of labor force, started to give preference to those ones who have knowledge of the Japanese language and of aspects of the Japanese culture. Nowadays, due to the position of distinction of Japan in the worldwide scenery, it is observed among the young people, Japanese descendents or not, a greater interest for the Japanese language [28].

Related to this point, the article [17] emphasizes that one of the points of great dissatisfaction among the dekasseguis is the “duality of identity”: being referenced as Japanese in Brazil and as foreigners (“Gaijins”) in Japan. From the consideration of several aspects of the Japanese immigration to Brazil, one relates the differentiated treatment received by the nikkeis with their own behavior and attitudes, arguing that the foreigner should look for the complete integration with the society in which he is living. It is interesting to notice that the question of the identity of the migrants appears also in other contexts. For instance, lots of Brazilian people migrated to Paraguay due to the construction of the Hydroelectric of Itaipu. Those migrants (cf. [34], appud [28]) are neither Brazilian (due to the lost of their rights) nor Paraguayans, as they were not integrated to the Paraguayan society.

In [18] one points out that the conclusions of the Seminars and Lectures about the dekassegui phenomenon are always directed to the psychological damage caused by both the cultural shock in Japan and by the separation of the dekasseguis from their families. A critical point neglected in the researches, according to that article, is the fact that the dekasseguis are not aware of the difficulties faced by their ancestral when they arrived in Brazil, in terms of their adaptation to the country, at the beginning of the Japanese immigration. As pointed out in [28], the first Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil in a hostile context. Also, during the Japanese migration to Brazil, the State itself adopted a discriminatory position, with the interest in the “whitening” of the Brazilian people, through the preference for the European immigrants.

Another problem reported about the dekasseguis is the return syndrome. In accordance with the website of the Brazilian Association of Dekasseguis — ABD (in Portuguese: “Associacao Brasileira de Dekasseguis”) [8], the initial symptoms of this syndrome are irritability, lose of concentration and strong anxiety. Other symptoms mentioned with respect to the psychological problems of the dekasseguis are: depression, isolation, sleepiness, speech disorders, articulation problems (joints), sleeplessness and paresthesias. According to the work [20], the main cause of the return syndrome would be the difficulty in the readaptation of the dekassegui. Moreover, the psychological conflicts would be related to the

crisis of the identity of the dekassegui himself/herself. As observed in [28], the psychological manifestations as well as other diseases (like gastritis, ulcers, high blood pressure) are related to the “complex and contradictory context” found by the dekasseguis in Japan, when compared to their previous cultural background.

The article [19] mentions that, according to Rui Hara, president of the ABD, this problem, observable in the dekasseguis upon returning to Brazil, is motivated by the circumstances of their lives in Japan. The syndrome happened more frequently at the beginning of the migration Brazil-Japan, when most of the migrants traveled unaccompanied of their families. Nowadays, as most of them go to Japan with their families, the problem still exists, but not in the same proportion as before. The juridical problems are substituting the psychological ones: juridical actions have been motivated by problems such as false employment offers and accidents in the workplace.

The article [14] reports the position of the Pedagogue Elisa Koyama, responsible for the teaching of the Portuguese language for children frequenting a Japanese school in Aichi, according to whom the Brazilian children in Japan have difficulties in “projecting a professional dream”. According to the Pedagogue, the move to Japan meant, for the children, a rupture with several elements, of importance for the “healthy physical and mental development”. She observes yet that children from families with solid religious values are usually more determined with respect to the future.

4. Some Implemented Actions

In this section we present several events and actions concerning the dekassegui phenomenon, with respect to the migration Brazil-Japan.

As noticed in [5], in February 2003 was held in Tokyo a Symposium on the Brazilian Community in Japan, organized by the Japanese Government. Some of the themes discussed in the event were education, employment and social insurance. Among the participants of the event were the Brazilian teachers: Prof. Kazuo Watanabe and Prof. Massato Ninomyia (USP — University of Sao Paulo); the Japanese teachers: Prof. Yasushi Iguchi (Univ. Kansei Gakuuin), Prof. Kazuaki Tezuka (Chiba University) and Prof. Shigehiro Ikegami (Faculty of Culture and Arts of Shizuoka; and the superintendent specialist of the Juvenile Training Center of Niigata.

The article [6] reports the meeting of the Consular Coordination Brazil-Japan, accomplished in June 2003, in Tokyo. For the first time since the beginning of the dekassegui phenomenon, the Japanese government received a Brazilian delegation to discuss the main problems faced by the Brazilian community in Japan. A total of thirteen points of the bilateral relationship were discussed. Among them was the theme of social welfare. Education was one of the most important topics discussed in the meeting, occupying great part of the meeting.

In [7] it is reported the Latin-America Center of Homigaoka, intended to help Brazilian

people living in Japan. It was founded by Hiroyuki Nomoto, assistant-professor of the Department of Social and Human Studies of the Metropolitan University of Tokyo. His research team elaborated two proposals to the local government and society: the creation of conditions so that all foreigners could learn the alphabets Hiragana and Katakana, and the use of Hiragana and Katakana above all Kanjis (Furigana) in public places. Besides other activities, the Center acts in the area of Education and provides a Japanese Language teaching course.

The Brazilian Association of Dekasseguis — ABD [8] was founded on August 18th, 1997, as the AAD: Association for Support of the Dekasseguis. Later, on October 30th, 2000, it was transformed into the ABD. Yet in 1997, the ABD organized the Symposium “Mental Health and Education of the Dekasseguis”. One of the lectures of the Symposium had as its theme “the Return Syndrome”, one of the documented problems faced by the Dekasseguis, discussed in the previous sections. Related to this problem, the website presents, under the theme of Psychological Approaches, a general orientation about the psychological problems: how to identify them, when to look for help, and recommendations to the people who are leaving for Japan.

In August 1998, the Department of Health of the AAD organized the “Symposium on the Japanese Culture”. Among the approached themes, one can mention: Psychological Prevention of the Dekassegui, Ijime — Mechanisms and Prevention, Mental Health from the Medical Point of View, Pride and Honor versus Shame and Fear of Failing, and Cultural Differences between Japanese and Brazilian people. Yet in August, several Japanese University Teachers visited the Association. From the University of Tsukuba: the teachers Yokuo Murata, Fumio Nakagawa, Hiromi Ehara and Hisatoshi Tajima. Their concern was to analyze the readaptation problems faced by the school-age children when returning to Brazil, after frequenting Japanese schools. From the University of Tokoha Gakuen: the teachers Jandyra F Maeyama and Sampei Suzuki. They were interested in concluding a research on the Education of the Dekasseguis' children. From the University of Asahi: the teachers Ananda Kumara and Yoshio Yoshida. They went to Brazil to accomplish a research on the condition of the Dekasseguis who returned from Japan.

In March 2000, the ABD [8] organized the “II Symposium on the Japanese Culture”. The purpose was to discuss the cultural differences between Brazil and Japan. Several of the themes considered in the 1998 edition were approached again in the 2000 Symposium, and new ones were included, such as “The Psychiatric Aspects of the Dekasseguis”. In August of the same year, the following teachers, from Japanese Universities, visited the ABD. From the Universidade de Tohoku: the teacher Lúcia Yamamoto. She is one of the members of a team that investigated the Dekassegui phenomenon in Brazil, China and Peru. From the University of Sophia: the teacher Chiyoko Mita. She was interested in knowing the positive and negative aspects that could be pointed by the dekasseguis, about the period in which

they lived in Japan and after returning to Brazil.

The Consulate General of Japan at Rio de Janeiro organized several lectures, some of them addressing the Dekassegui phenomenon. In the Consulate website one can find, for instance, the text of the lecture given by Prof. Kazuaki Tezuka concerning the juridical problems involving the work of Brazilian in Japan [9]. This lecture was presented in August 2002. The website includes also an article related to another lecture, presented by the Prof. Ninomyia, about the Japanese immigration [4].

As reported in [10], from October 29th to 31st 2003, it was held in Tokyo the 43rd Convention of the Nikkei and Japanese people living abroad. In the event, several of the difficulties faced by the Dekasseguis, as, for instance, the problems related to the social welfare, social security and education were analyzed. The article mentions that, according to the organizers of the Convention, it is estimated that in the next 50 years Japan will need near 600.000 immigrants. Considering that the preference is for the Nikkei people, it is important to keep alive the Japanese culture in the countries where the Nikkei people live. As already mentioned, there are near 1,4 million of Nikkei people living in Brazil.

The CIATE — Center for the Information and Support for the Worker Living Abroad [13], is a non-profit organization, headquartered in Sao Paulo and presided by Prof. Ninomyia. It was established in October 1992 and since then has been providing “information and advising services”, about several aspects of the Japanese society and culture, to the Dekasseguis and their families, in any of the three phases: before they go to Japan, while they live there, and after their return to Brazil. During the 10th anniversary of the center, it was accomplished an International Symposium [38], in which several aspects of the migration Brazil-Japan were discussed.

As pointed out in [28], among the Brazilian people in Japan is predominant an individualist attitude. This is related to the Western Education, which emphasizes the independency and the self-expression as basic values (cf. [38] appud [28]). In a general way, as mentioned in [28], the peculiarities of the relationship among the Brazilians themselves, and also among them and the other Latin American migrants, have been causing difficulties to their mobilization for the defense of their rights. Besides, the dekassegus normally do not have a history of participation in mobilizations in Brazil.

5. Educational Concerns

According to [16], the main problem of the Brazilian children in Japan is the condition of life of their parents, since in Japan they are foreign workers, working temporarily and in a condition of instability, and having the intention of returning to Brazil. Eva P. Bueno, teacher of Spanish and English Communication in the Mukogawa Women's University, in Nishinomiya, calls the attention to the point that those parents, with a working journey of up to 14 hours per day normally do not have conditions for dealing with the problems of their

children [21]. Notice that normally the woman migrant is also inserted in the work market, and, in this way, she has few time left to accomplish the requirements of the schools.

It follows some general information about the Japanese school system, as presented in [28]. The school system can be characterized by the indication 6-3-3-4, where each number represents the number of grades in each of the levels of teaching. The basic education comprehends 9 years: 6 years of primary school (elementary school) and 3 years of a gymnasium course (junior high school). The system is serialized and the enrolment of the children is based on two criteria, namely: age and residence. The basic education is compulsory to the Japanese children, but the senior high school education is optional. Notwithstanding this fact, according to [37], 95% of the students continues their studies in that level. The Japanese school system “stresses uniformity and homogeneity” [37] and the conception of the school system meets the principles of the organization of the work [28]: solidarity among the workers of a team, living together with the spirit of competition and cooperation among the teams, for the benefit of the enterprise. Fundamental factors for the success of the student are the harmony and the high productivity of the class (team).

The frequency to the Japanese school can represent a good opportunity for the establishment of a friendship relationship among the Brazilian and Japanese mothers, who have children in the same grade [28]. Also, the Brazilian families normally depend on the support of the Japanese families of the classmates, since the information from the school is provided in Japanese. The author also calls the attention for the fact that the parents normally give value to the study in Japanese schools, but they fear the “cultural abyss” that can be gradually established between them and their children.

As mentioned by Prof. Ninomyia in [4], children less than 10 years old normally adapt more easily to the Japanese schools, and can accompany the studies in the school. But children who are 10 years old or more, due to the difficulties with the Japanese language, normally present difficulties in the adaptation to the Japanese schools. In Japan the grade in which a child will be enrolled, as mentioned above, is determined by the age of the child. And a child enrolled in the 4th grade will have to read materials from the school in which Chinese characters (Kanjis), besides Hiragana and Katakana, are used.

As pointed out in [28], the learning difficulties of the Brazilian children in Japanese schools are related to the following aspects: contents, lack of domain of the communication in the Japanese language, teaching and learning method and the philosophy of education. In relation to the basic education, the author observes that, due to the difficulties in communication, the Brazilian students have a reasonable performance in subjects in which the domain of the language is not so important, involving for instance “experiments and demonstrations”, like Mathematics, Sciences and Music. The learning of the language is easier for the children in first grades of the elementary education. Brazilian children in general have difficulties with humanities, since the contents and form of such subjects do not take part in the universe of

those children. In the final grades, the Brazilian children have difficulties in almost all subjects, as not only the language as also the contents become more difficult for them. The author emphasizes that these difficulties occur even if the student dominates the language or frequents special classes (for the learning of the reading, writing, conversation and school ethics). The older the children are, more difficulties they have in relation to the adaptation to the Japanese schools.

In relation to the aspect of the philosophy of the Education, one can establish a basic comparison between the Japanese and Brazilian school systems [28] in the following terms. The school system in Brazil follows a technicist orientation, in which one gives a greater importance to the technical instruction than to the general education. In this way the families have the main responsibility for the aspects of the general educational and of the formation of the character. On the other hand, the Japanese schools aim at the integral formation of their students, being responsible for the general education of the children and teenagers.

As already mentioned, there are now 60 Brazilian schools in Japan. On average, the monthly fee in those schools is US\$ 400 per child. This value is expensive for most of the parents. This aspect becomes critical also in the case of parents with more than one child in school age and also in the case of unemployment of one or both of the parents. Therefore, due to the problems with the Japanese language, fear of discrimination and abuse, and the high prices of the monthly fees in the Brazilian schools, many children felt unmotivated to follow the studies and drop out of the school [1]. Turning to the problem of dropping out of the school, it has been associated to the increase of delinquency among the young people in Japan [4,21,22]. The law that obliges Japanese children to frequent the elementary school does not apply to the foreigners living in Japan.

According to Ninomyia [22], due to the efforts made by the teachers, volunteers and counselors, the problems in the schools related to discrimination have diminished. In the work [28], with respect to the problem of integration of the Brazilian children in Japanese schools, one argues that the strategies adopted up to now to deal with the problem are far from a general solution, corresponding to specific actions implanted by the schools, having “an emergency and provisory character”. From the analysis of some mentioned actions, there are some indications that the emphasis given by the school to these actions is dependent on the number of foreign children in that school. Also, the integration of the Brazilian children is accomplished following a “Japanese vision of the question” [28], without considering aspects of the Brazilian culture. We can argue, at this point, that many of the difficulties faced by the children and their parents are related to the lack of knowledge of the Japanese Culture in general and of the philosophy of the Education in Japan.

With respect to the repressive practices, as mentioned in [28], even the Japanese students, when they violate the rules, they receive some reprimand. These practices are associated to a conception of education according to which the school and its members “integrate a great

family”. Yet, according to the author, the Japanese classmates take the reprimand of the foreign students as an attitude of the teacher associated to the interest for the moral formation of the pupil. But, for the Brazilian students, this practice is associated with violence.

Yet, in relation to the Brazilian schools, besides the problem of the high costs for the parents, they face other problems, like dropping out of students and the move of students from one school to another: due to the unemployment or changes in the local of work; and technical and didactical problems: related to the lack of materials, room or specialized professionals [28].

According to [16], most of the children who conclude the elementary education in Japan do not ingress in the high education courses in Japan. The main reason for that, according to the author, is given by the fact that even though they are normally fluent Japanese speakers, only a few master the aspects of reading and writing of the Japanese language. As a consequence, most of those young people ingress in the marketplace as non-qualified workers, just like their parents did before.

Prof. Ninomyia in [4] stresses the importance of the Education for the next generations of descendents. According to him, at the moment, efforts should be concentrated towards avoiding “the dropping out of the school and, consequently, the delinquency”. In [1] he calls the attention for the importance that the Japanese immigrants in Brazil gave to the Education of their children. As a result of this emphasis, one can mention, for instance, some figures from the University of Sao Paulo (USP), with near 60,000 students (at the undergraduate and graduate levels). At USP, 12% of the students are Japanese descendents. With respect to the teach staff, 8% is formed by Nikkeis.

Besides the heavy work journey, another reason pointed out by the parents to delay any concern about the education of their children is the temporary stay in Japan. Against this argument one can mention, at first, the fact that the tendency of definitive fixation of Brazilian families in Japan is increasing [1]. According to the article in [24], the children cannot depend on the transitory condition of their parents, under the risk of the irreversible distortion of their “intellectual and emotional formation”, up to the situation in which they will not be able to recognize their identity neither as Brazilians nor as Japanese.

Also of concern nowadays is the problem of readaptation of the children to the Brazilian schools when they return to Brazil. The article in [23], reporting on this problem, includes some positions of the Sociologist Lili Kawamura, according to whom, the children are encountering in Brazil problems similar to the ones faced when they were enrolled in Japanese schools. The readaptation problems occur due to the difficulties in communication, as the children are not familiar with the language, and to the cultural shock. To deal with the readaptation problem, some parents have made an option to enroll their children in schools that allow a gradual (re)adaptation, including, for instance, “reinforcement classes of the

subject matters in Japanese language”.

As mentioned above, children less than 10 years old normally adapt themselves to the Japanese schools. On the other hand, as pointed out in the article [25], they “lose their identity” with Brazil, since they became integrated to the Japanese culture. Those children, according to [22], are “forgetting the Portuguese or do not want to study the Portuguese language”. This has been a matter of concern for the “Brazilian Embassy, Consulates, Educators and parents”. At the beginning of the Japanese immigration, the parents considered of utmost importance to teach the Japanese language to their children. On the other hand, one verifies that the newest generations in general are “loosing the Japanese language”. A similar problem is now taking place in Japan with respect to the Portuguese language [22].

Besides the Brazilian schools in Japan, the Brazilian students in Japan have one alternative of distance education (<http://www.angloamericano.g12.br/cier/>). According to the school website, for the modality of individual study, the studies are to accomplished at home, “under the supervision of the families and advised by the Pedagogical Team of the Course”. As one can see, the support of the family is essential. For the students beyond the regular school age, there are exams promoted by the Brazilian Embassy, directed to the adult education studies.

Before ending this section, it is convenient to mention some books related to the thematic of this report. In this way we make a reference to the books [26] and [27]. These ones have as their main concern the Japanese Education System.

We end this section with a question posed in [28]: “Which school is appropriated to the cultural and professional formation of the children of the international migrants?”, motivated by the discussion in the sequel. On one hand one can see, in Japan, the establishment of an educational network between Brazil and Japan, on account of which some schools receive didactic materials from other schools from Brazil, following the methodology of those schools. The problem is that those schools in Brazil are far from the reality experienced by the students in Japan. On the other hand, in the Japanese schools the methods of teaching as well as the contents are dissociated from the universe of the Brazilian students.

6. Towards a Joint Proposal

From the information about the *dekasseguis*⁴ phenomenon, one can conclude that one of the most important problems to be attacked is the one related to the Education of their children. As the researches point out, children with 5 to 6 years old can adapt themselves more easily to the Japanese school system. On the other hand, they become “more Japanese than Brazilian” and probably will become illiterate in Portuguese. As a consequence, they will have difficulties in their readaptation to the Brazilian schools. It is interesting to notice

4 Personal observation of one of the authors.

that some parents are worried about this problem in Japan. At least two evidences of this fact can be mentioned⁴. In Yuki city, some parents take their children to private lessons on the Portuguese language. The lessons are given on Saturdays and Sundays. Another evidence is given by the periodic meeting of Brazilian children in Yokohama, so that they can keep alive the Portuguese language.

Children older than 9 years old have difficulties in adapting themselves to the Japanese schools. In that case the most important reason is the lack of knowledge of the Japanese language. Due to their age, they are enrolled in the fourth grade.

In both cases, however, even if they conclude the elementary education, most of them have difficulties in following their studies in the High education level in Japanese schools. The problem is that even if they can communicate fluently in Japanese (spoken language), most of them cannot read or write in Japanese. In this way, supportive materials, emphasizing the Japanese writing system, could be of value to those students.

From the considerations of [28] about the adaptation of the Brazilian children to the Japanese schools, some specific research points could be identified, with a view to investigating the reasons for the difficulties of the children in those points and proposing the development of supportive materials to help in their understanding. One point would be related to the difficulties of the children with humanity subjects. Another point is the fact that in the final grades, the children have difficulties in almost all subjects, due to the complexity of the Japanese language and of contents.

For the dekassegui people in general, with respect to their difficulties in the market place, as well as to their integration to the Japanese society, a starting point to help them would be to provide some materials on the Japanese language, which could be made available through the web. The web site should include also information about the Japanese culture and society.

From the previous considerations, we are thinking about the development of a short-term proposal, devoted to the dekassegui people in general, and of a long-term proposal, intended to help with the education of their children. They are briefly discussed in the sequel.

Our short-term proposal: to help the dekassegui people, in a general way, a web site could be proposed and developed aiming at providing (i) information about the Japanese culture and society; (ii) support with respect to aspects of the Japanese language. With respect to the implementation of (i) and (ii), the web site should include links to other web sites containing pertinent information, since one can find lots of information on the web about both aspects.

Research problem: appropriateness of making available through the web of information about the Japanese culture and society, as well as, about the Japanese language, to help Brazilian people living in Japan with their adaptation to the Japanese society, as well as to provide them with subsidies for better employment conditions.

Research questions:

What kind of contents should be provided in the web, to help the Brazilian people in Japan with respect to both their adaptation to the Japanese life and the development of communication skills?

To what extent the material made available can help the Brazilian people living in Japan with respect to their difficulties in:

- (i) Communicating in the work place?
- (ii) Getting adapted to the Japanese society and culture, being able to live together with the Japanese people?
- (iii) Improving their working conditions?

General steps:

1. Identification of websites of interest and establishment of guidelines for their classification.
2. Assembling information about the Japanese society and culture – contents for the website.
3. Conception, implementation and divulgation of the first version of the web site.
4. Intermediate evaluation and identification of corrections or modifications.
5. Introducing the modifications and iterating the process (continuous improvement).

Trying to make use of what is already available on the Web, one could start by analyzing the materials reachable from the Merlot Web site (<http://www.merlot.org/Home.po>). There one could find, for instance, links for lessons on the Japanese language, materials for supporting the teaching of Japanese, “Japanese study aids”, among others. The “Japanese study aids” material, for instance, provides interesting “movies” about the Kanjis (stroke order, phrases, audio, etc.). The available materials are normally in English: for that reason, they are not appropriate to be used directly by the majority of the Brazilian people living in Japan. In this way, the web site could include a link to those materials and appropriate explanations in Portuguese.

Besides providing “links” and specific information (clarifications, explanations), the web site should include at least some basic facilities for promoting an interaction with its users. One should think more carefully about this (potential) interaction, since the data obtained from the “users” are of fundamental importance for the research. With the development of the research, one should think also about the establishment of a “virtual community”, a forum for the discussion of the problems faced by the Brazilian community in Japan.

Our long-term proposal: to start the development of didactic materials, to be made available through the web, to support (i) the Brazilian children in Japan with respect to the Japanese elementary educational system: contents, methods, social and cultural aspects; and (ii) the Brazilian children returning from Japan, with respect to the Brazilian elementary educational system.

The question of the education of the dekassegui's children is obviously a complex matter.

The search of solutions should involve the collaboration of educators, computer science and communication professionals, among others. Also, one should interact with the Brazilian professionals who work as assessors or volunteers in the Japanese schools, intermediating the relationship between the school, the children and their families. Obviously such professionals could provide valuable information about the adaptation of the Brazilian children to the schools, evidencing, for instance, the points in which they have more difficulties, in relation to both, contents and cultural aspects.

Research problem: appropriateness of making available through the web didactic materials to help Brazilian students with their problems in relation to both their adaptation to the Japanese school and society, and their (re)adaptation to the Brazilian school and society.

Research questions:

What is the most appropriate form for providing contents, to support children with adaptation/readaptation problems, through the web?

To what extent the material made available can help the Brazilian children in Japan with respect to their difficulties in:

- (i) Learning contents in the Japanese schools?
- (ii) Getting adapted to the Japanese society and culture, being able to live together with their Japanese classmates?
- (iii) Going to the other levels of the Japanese school system?

Also, to what extent the material made available can help the Brazilian children returning from Japan with respect to their difficulties in:

- (i) Mastering the basics of the Portuguese language?
- (ii) Knowing the contents approached in the Brazilian schools?
- (iii) Getting adapted to the Brazilian schools, society and culture, after returning to Brazil?

General steps:

1. Assembling information about both the Japanese and Brazilian elementary educational systems.
2. Defining the scope to be worked at first (first module).
3. Investigating forms of presentation of the contents.
4. Conception, implementation and divulgation (first module).
5. Intermediate evaluation and corrections or modifications.
6. Definition of the next module and iterating the process.

7. Preliminary conclusions

In this paper we have presented general information about the dekassegui phenomenon, in relation to the migration Brazil-Japan. We have also discussed the problems and difficulties

faced by the Brazilian people in Japan, given special emphasis to the problems related to the education of their children. Some actions directed to or motivated by the dekassegui phenomenon have also been presented.

In terms of the proposals with a view to trying to help the Japanese-Brazilian in their difficulties in Japan, we thought about two lines of action. First, a short-time proposal, aiming at providing some support through the web with respect to their difficulties with the Japanese language. This proposal has been classified as a short-time one taking into account the intent of making some information available soon: maybe initially only providing links to specific websites devoted to the study of the Japanese language, accompanied with some explanations and clarifications. But, one should have as clear that a methodology of continuous improvement should be adopted.

With respect to the problems related to the Education of the dekasseguis' children, we made a long-term proposal, intended to provide didactic materials, through the web, which should be supportive to them in their difficulties in the school. This proposal has been classified as a long-term one as it refers to a more complex matter. To its accomplishment, professionals of several areas, such as Computer science, Education, etc. should collaborate among themselves. Also, Brazilian people who work in Japan as assessors or volunteers in Japanese schools should be involved in the discussions about the contents of such website.

In both cases, it would be essential to establish some form of interaction with the users of the web sites, so that the developers and researchers could have a feedback in relation to the materials made available.

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