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Abstract

The need for the internalization of higher education in Japan stems from a number of international factors, including increasing competition in the global market of educational services of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and the domestic necessity to make Japanese students more competitive within the global human resource market as active participants in international business and research. The case study in this chapter focuses on one aspect of the internationalization process taking place in Japanese HEIs—curricula change. In particular, this chapter discusses how a private university in Tokyo is addressing the problem of global human resources development by the introduction of a compulsory course, English Discussion. By using an example of an innovative English course, the discussion outlines how one university is implementing curricula change, which aims to assist Japanese students to develop their communication skills and help them become

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cosmopolitan Japanese. This chapter first outlines the general framework, organization, and aims of the English Discussion Course (EDC). The second section then discusses the influences of the Japanese cultural context and challenges that Japanese students face taking this course. In particular, the discussion focuses on the importance and difficulties of integrating communication skills and critical thinking within the course. The final section discusses the overall potential outcome of the program for global human resource development, as implemented by the university. The chapter ends by suggesting how some of the existing challenges for students and teachers can be addressed. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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