NEW Voices

New Voices Volume 5:
A Journal for Emerging Scholars of Japanese Studies
in Australia and New Zealand

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The Japan Foundation, Sydney
Shop 23, Level 1 Chifley Plaza
2 Chifley Square, SYDNEY NSW 2000
Tel. (02) 8239 0055, Fax. (02) 9222 2168
www.jpf.org.au

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Japanese names are written surname first, except where the person concerned has adopted Anglo-European conventions. The long vowel sound in Japanese is indicated by a macron (e.g. *kōtsū*), unless in common use without (e.g. *Tokyo*).

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Foreword

This year we celebrate the small, yet gratifying milestone of producing a fifth issue of *New Voices*, showcasing the depth and breadth of Japanese Studies scholarship being undertaken by Honours and Masters students in our region.

Launched in December 2006, *New Voices* aims to support early career researchers and postgraduate students in Japanese Studies to share their research interests with as wide an audience as possible.

In the past five years, the scope of *New Voices* has been continually expanded to provide a more accessible and effective platform for emerging scholars and now invites submissions from Honours and Masters students from both Australian and New Zealand universities. I hope that *New Voices* acts as both a resource for general readers interested in Japanese Studies and as a valuable support for emerging scholars based in Australia and New Zealand to continue their research and interest in Japan.

I'd like to thank the following people for their assistance on this issue of *New Voices*: our Guest Editor, Dr Mats Karlsson for his helpful advice and support during the editorial and publication process; members of the editorial advisory board, for kindly offering their time and expertise to review the articles; Sayuri Tokuman and Susan Yamaguchi for editorial assistance; and finally the 7 contributors and their supervisors without whose interest and enthusiasm this project would not have been possible.

Nao Endo
Director, The Japan Foundation, Sydney
December 2011

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Introduction

2011 has been a good vintage for postgraduate Japanese studies in Australia and New Zealand, as I hope that the arrival of *New Voices Volume 5* will amply show. Focusing on subjects such as modern and classical literature, language studies abroad and cross-cultural identity formation, this year's entries illustrate the depth and width of research within the discipline in our hemisphere. It is interesting to note that the scholarly study of Japan continues to attract excellent young students despite the economic downturn that has characterized the domestic scene in Japan over the past two decades. Japanese studies, in other words, is still going strong in our part of the world. For Japan itself, the threefold catastrophe of March 11 has made an imprint on all aspects of cultural and socio-economical life. It is to be expected that the ongoing situation in Japan will be reflected in forthcoming contributions to *New Voices*.

For us in academia publications are our lifeline. Even for established scholars it is easy to despair and to feel like an academic version of Willy Loman when we experience a temporary drain in the publication pipeline. This urge to see your own words and thoughts in print is gradually felt from the early stages of postgraduate studies. Postgraduate study can at times be a solitary endeavor that requires lots of perseverance before you get a glimpse of the light at the end of the tunnel. One of the notorious agonies of PhD research is that you may sometimes feel it takes ages before your thoughts meet the printed word and thereby actual readers. Put differently, you feel the need to verify your academic existence continuously, not only at a projected moment years ahead.

In offering a forum for emerging scholars to meet their readers, *New Voices* eminently fills a void in the lineup of academic journals catering mainly to already established scholars. You may think that the agony described above belongs to the past and does not apply to the Internet age when you are only a mouse click away from expressing yourself to the world in print. In my experience, though, it works the other way around. Exactly because everyone can now communicate freely and "publish" on the Internet, established platforms for peer-reviewed scholarly articles have actually become increasingly important. At a time when a rapidly increasing amount of "unauthorized" discourse swirl around in cyber space, carefully scrutinized and edited texts make an important difference. The completion of a PhD degree is sometimes likened to receiving an academic driving license. The degree is a litmus test that guarantees that the holder is qualified to conduct critical inquiry. As the guest editor of *New Voices Volume 5*, I would hereby like to congratulate the authors presented in this volume for having received their P-plates.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Editorial Advisory Board, the panel of experts who reviewed the articles submitted to the journal and provided invaluable advice for the authors in revising their papers. On behalf of the authors and the Japan Foundation, I would like to extend my gratitude to Dr. Olivier Ansart, Dr. Tomoko Aoyama, Prof. Hugh Clarke, Prof. Nanette Gottlieb, Dr. Christine de Matos, Dr. Jun Ohashi, Dr. Matthew Stavros, Dr. Carolyn Stevens, Dr. Rebecca Suter and Dr. Alison Tokita, for donating their time and expertise in support of *New Voices*. My thanks also go to Sayuri Tokuman and Susan Yamaguchi at the Japan Foundation, Sydney for coordinating the submissions and publication process for the journal.

Dr Mats Karlsson
The University of Sydney
Editor, *New Voices Volume 5*

On the Journal's review process and format

Submissions to this issue of *New Voices* were peer reviewed by an editorial board of independent academic experts to meet the HERDC requirements for refereed journal status. The successful submissions are published online and are universally accessible at: http://www.jpf.org.au/newvoices.

Several of the essays, however, were chosen by the editor and advisory board to also be published in a physical journal format, which was distributed to universities and libraries across Australia and to the Japan Foundation's 22 overseas branch offices. The selection of these essays was based not only on quality but on an attempt to provide readers with representative examples of Honours and Masters scholarship in several disciplines at a variety of Australian universities.

Nakagami Kenji's 'Writing Back to the Centre' through the Subaltern Narrative: Reading the Hidden Outcast Voice in 'Misaki' and *Karekinada*

Machiko Ishikawa
University of Tasmania

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to give a post-colonial reading of selected narratives by Nakagami Kenji (1946-1992). Nakagami was the first Akutagawa Prize winning novelist from Japan's outcaste Burakumin group. Through the production of narrative about this subaltern community, Nakagami confronted the exclusionary systems of hegemonic Japanese thought and the structures created by these systems which deny the principle and lived experience of 'difference'. Borrowing the post-colonial concept of 'writing back' to the hegemonic centre from the work of Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back*, this article will analyse Nakagami's 'Misaki' (1976, The Cape), and its sequel, *Karekinada* (1977, *The Sea of Withered Trees*). The principal focus will be on Nakagami's representation of the hidden voice of those on the margins of Japanese society.

This approach will position the Burakumin as 'subalterns' to the mainstream Japanese society on the basis of Antonio Gramsci's view of the group. The analysis of 'Misaki' and *Karekinada* will begin with an investigation of Kishū Kumano as a site on the margins of mainstream Japanese society. In analysing these two novels as subaltern narratives, close attention will be given to Nakagami's use of intertextuality particularly with oral *kishu ryūritan* folklore.

Keywords

Introduction: Nakagami Kenji and Post-Colonial Theory

The aim of this thesis is to give a post-colonial reading of selected narratives by the Burakumin writer, Nakagami Kenji (1946-1992). Nakagami was the first Akutagawa Prize winning novelist from Japan's outcaste Burakumin group and also the first post-war born writer to win this prestigious award. Through the production of narrative about this subaltern community – that is, a community of subordinate rank through

contingencies such as class, gender, location, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion[1]
– Nakagami confronted the exclusionary systems of hegemonic Japanese thought and
the structures created by these systems which deny the principle and lived experience
of 'difference'. My general project is to foreground Nakagami's insistence on 'difference'
as a strategy to dismantle the exclusionary hegemonic thought which produces
discrimination in society.

In terms of the relationship between the mainstream society and the outcaste
Burakumin group, we can consider a post-colonial reading as one that examines
Burakumin cultural elements – in this case, the texts of Nakagami – and how these have
been shaped by resistance to the exclusionary socio-political processes of mainstream
Japan. In *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin
note that the term 'post-colonial' is used to explain all of the cultural elements that have
been affected by the European imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the
present day.[2] It can be argued that mainstream Japan has taken an attitude similar to that
of imperialism towards minority groups, including the Burakumin, the group of which
Nakagami was a member.

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin also explain the common features of post-colonial
literature:

> [Post-colonial literatures] emerged in their present form out of the experience
> of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the
> imperial power, and by emphasising their differences from the assumptions of
> the imperial centre.[3]

Nakagami's literature emerged from the present circumstances of the Burakumin
through their experiences as marginalised outcastes. In his writings, the 'difference' of
the Burakumin is also depicted by 'foregrounding the tension with the [central] power',
and by 'emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the centre'.

The focus of the analysis to follow will be Nakagami's Akutagawa Prize winning
story, 'Misaki' (1976, The Cape), and its sequel, *Karekinada* (1977, *The Sea of Withered
Trees*). These two stories are part of the fictional trilogy known as the *Akiyuki saga*
(The Akiyuki Saga): 'Misaki',[4] *Karekinada* and *Chi no hate, shijō no toki* (1983, *The
Ends of the Earth, Supreme Time*). The trilogy takes its name from the eponymous

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1   See Guha, *Subaltern Studies 1: Writing on South Asian History and Society*, vii, and Said, 'Foreword', *Selected Subaltern Studies*, vi.
2   Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*: *Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*, 'Introduction', p. 2.
3   *Ibid.*
4   'Misaki' (The Cape) which is one of four short stories in a book, *Misaki*.

protagonist, generally acknowledged as modelled to some extent on Nakagami himself. Nina Cornyetz asserts that, in terms of contemporary intellectual, political, historical, narratorial, and philosophic criteria, the human dramatic narratives of the *Akiyuki saga* are without a doubt the best of Nakagami's fictional texts.[5] Each of these works is set in a peripheral slum-like community of the Kumano region of Kishū, which is the writer's own birth place.

This approach will position the Burakumin as subaltern to the mainstream Japanese society. It will also interpret Nakagami's critique of the mainstream as 'writing back' to the hegemonic centre from which the illiterate Burakumin had once been excluded. Drawing on a statement by Salman Rushdie (b.1947), a writer whom Nakagami regarded as a peer,[6] to the effect that 'the Empire writes back to the Centre', Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin argue that 'writing back' is the way in which postcolonial – that is, subaltern – writers and texts respond to and engage with mainstream literature. Noya Fumiaki points out that, since Nakagami's narratives were set in Kumano, i.e. the 'dark side' of Japan,[7] his material spontaneously contained characteristics of 'postcolonial' literature. Noya holds Nakagami in high esteem for the latter's representation of marginality in novels written during the 1970s prior to the theorising in Japan of any post-colonial critical perspective.

The analysis of 'Misaki' and *Karekinada* provided below will begin with an investigation of Kishū Kumano as a site on the margins of mainstream Japanese society. Knowledge about Kishū Kumano is essential to a reading of Nakagami's narratives because this material provides background to the subaltern status of the writer's characters by depicting the 'otherness' of this area, long regarded as on the periphery of Japan. In analysing these two novels as subaltern narratives, close attention will be given to Nakagami's use of intertextuality with non-mainstream oral *kishu ryūritan*[8] folklore from Kishū Kumano which contain traces of subalternity.

Motives for Writing of 'Misaki' and *Karekinada*

Because of the writer's background, scholars often interpret Nakagami's literature as representative of the Burakumin experience. However, it should be noted that this background was not known when Nakagami's work first came to public notice in 1976 with 'Misaki'. In fact, Etō Jun (1932-1999), one of Japan's most influential post-

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5   Cornyetz, 'An Ambivalent Masculinist Politics', *Dangerous Women, Deadly Words: Phallic Fantasy and Modernity in Three Japanese Writers*, p. 206.
6   In his interview with an Indian novelist Usha Subraminian, Nakagami regards Salman Rushdie as his 'raibaru'. In Japanese, this term signifies a 'peer' rather than 'rival'. See Nakagami, 'Interview: Usha Subraminian', *America, America*, p. 215.
7   Noya, 'Nakagami Kenji to sekai bungaku' (Nakagami Kenji and World Literature), *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō: bessatsu*, p. 32.
8   See Section '*Kishu ryūritan*: The Hidden Outcast Voice'.

war literary commentators, proclaimed *Karekinada*, to be the culmination of seventy years of Japanese naturalist literary expression.[9] The nature of Nakagami's writing, in common with that of post-colonial literature, confronts the hegemonic power to discriminate against the socially oppressed, particularly the Burakumin. Initially read as narratives of a peripheral slum-like community of Kishū Kumano, however, 'Misaki' and *Karekinada* were not regarded as representations of Burakumin society until 1978, the year Nakagami made his Burakumin background public.

Recognition of this point is critical when analysing the writer's primary motive for text production. In his first published works, at least, Nakagami focuses on a representation of the silenced voice of the oppressed rather than engaging with *buraku mondai* (Burakumin issues). Most preceding novels about Burakumin – such as Shimazaki Tōson's *Hakai* (1906, *The Broken Commandment*) and Noma Hiroshi's *Seinen no wa* (1971, *A Circle of The Youth*) can be read as novels addressing Burakumin issues.[10] Unlike these non-Burakumin writers, Nakagami avoids using the term, Burakumin, to depict the marginalised people. Nakagami despised this term, which he regarded as regulated by the hegemonic power of the government, the Buraku Liberation League and some 'money-making' contractors who promoted the dismantlement of the *hisabetsu buraku* (Burakumin districts),[11] including his own birth-place.[12] For him, the use of the term signifies the exercise of the same political power as those who devised the post-war policy of modernisation. In other words, Nakagami regarded narratives by these non-Burakumin writers which engaged with Burakumin issues as strengthening the structure of the hegemonic centre.

Kishū Kumano: 'The Country of Darkness' where the Losers have Settled

In his travel journal, *Kishū: kinokuni, nenokuni monogatari* (1978, *Kishū: A Tale of the Country of Trees and Roots*), Nakagami portrays the Kishū region, which consists of Wakayama Prefecture, Mie Prefecture and Nara Prefecture in the Kii Peninsula, as 'the nation of darkness' where the 'losers' have settled.[13] The word, 'losers', implies political

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9   Etō, 'Bungei jihyō: Showa 52 nen 2 gatsu' (Literary Comment February 1973), *Gunzō Nihon no sakka 24: Nakagami Kenji*, pp. 142-45.

10   See Watanabe's argument in "Akiyuki to roji" (Akiyuki and the *roji*), *Nihon kindai bungaku to <sabetsu>* (*Japanese Modern Literature and <Discrimination>*), pp. 133-58.

11   *Hisabetsu buraku* literally means 'discriminated community – hamlet'. In contemporary Japan, hamlet areas (*buraku*) which are the focus of status (or caste) discrimination are called *hisabetsu buraku*. This term came into use in Japan in the late 1950s and was adopted by the media and in academic circles in the 1970s. Today, the term *dōwa chiku* (assimilation areas) is also used as a way of referring to *hisabetsu buraku* and these terms are used interchangeably. More precisely, *dōwa chiku* refers to *hisabetsu buraku* which have been designated by administrative agencies as being areas to which *dōwa* policies are directed. Excluding Hokkaido and Okinawa prefectures, there are six thousand such designated areas in Japan. People born in these areas are estimated to number about three million. Of six thousand *hisabetsu buraku* areas, a 1987 government survey designated four thousand six hundred and three as *dōwa chiku*. Consequently it is generally acknowledged that there are more than one thousand *hisabetsu buraku* which, for a range of reasons, remain undesignated and lie beyond the application of the government's *dōwa* policies. See Teraki, 'The Buraku Question'.

12   Nakagami and Takahashi, 'Roji to shinwateki sekai no kōgaku', *Nakagami Kenji hatsugen shūsei 5*, pp. 87-106.

13   Nakagami,'Shūshō: yami no kokka' (Epilogue: The Nation of Darkness), *Kishū: kinokuni, nenokuni monogatari*, p. 292.

losers who were regarded as the socially stigmatised such as ancient exiled nobles, rebellious farmers and modern anarchists and socialists. The expression, 'the nation of darkness', also suggests Nakagami's view of Kishū as a site that is juxtaposed against the hegemonic centre of Japan, the nation that operated under the brilliant auspices of the sun goddess. Kishū is geographically situated in a site that is the inverse of the ancient capital, Kyoto, where the Emperor, who is the symbol of *hare*, purity or glory, once lived.[14] Traditionally, Kumano was known as a spiritual spot for healing fatal diseases such as leprosy. It was thus depicted in folklore and myth as a sacred yet ominous realm of death and revival inhabited by the marginalised and ostracised.[15] Nakagami's representation of Kishū resonates with the etymology of Kumano which means 'field of bears' and 'hidden country'.

His essay, 'Watashi no naka no nihonjin – Ōishi Seinosuke' (1977, A Japanese Man on my Mind – Ōishi Seinosuke), also displays Nakagami's view of Kishū Kumano as a place that was historically 'left out in the cold' by the hegemonic centre:

> Kumano was the place to which the Emperor Jimmu came for *Tōsei* (the conquest of the East) and where, according to the *Kojiki* (712, *Record of Ancient Matters*), 'a large bear (could be seen) faintly moving around; then it disappeared. Then Kamu-Yamatö-Ipare-Bikö-Nö-Mikötö (the Emperor Jimmu) suddenly felt faint; his troops also felt faint and lay down.'[16] Kishū Kumano is always in darkness. Although situated close to the culture of the Kinki area, it is under the shadow of the Yamato Court. Through the Edo period and into the last days of the Tokugawa Shogunate, and even after the Meiji Restoration, the Kishū clan could not find their way into the halls of power. While it might sound exaggerated, Kumano has always been left out in the cold despite being featured in Japanese history since the time of ancient myth.[17]

The *Kojiki* was compiled in 712 to justify the hegemony of the imperial families of the time.[18] Donald L. Philippi, the English translator of the *Kojiki*, notes that reference to the 'large bear' (*kuma*) signifies that the unruly deities of the Kumano mountains appeared in the form of a bear and cast a spell over the Emperor Jimmu and his men. When Jimmu was revived by a magic sword, the deities of Kumano were 'magically

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14 Nakagami, 'Fūkei no mukō e' (Beyond Scenery: A Trip to Korea), *Nakagami Kenji zenshū 15*, p. 63.

15 Nakagami and Tomioka, 'Hatsunetsu suru Ajia' (Feverish Asia), *Nakagami Kenji hatsugen shūsei 5*, pp. 233-34. Also see Karlsson's discussion on Kumano in 'Introduction', *The Kumano Saga of Nakagami Kenji*, pp. 2-4.

16 Descriptions in parentheses are my annotations in this citation. I cited Philippi's translation of the *Kojiki*, retaining Philippi's macrons. See Book Two, Chapter 49: 'Emperor Jimmu and his troops sink into a mysterious slumber. As Taka-kurazi, obeying a dream, presents a sword to Emperor Jimmu, the unruly deities of Kumano are magically quelled.' *Kojiki* (*Record of Ancient Matters*), p. 167.

17 Nakagami, 'Watashi no naka no nihonjin – Ōishi Seinosuke', pp. 41-42.

18 See 'Kojiki', *Daijisen*, p. 960. The narrative of *Jimmu tōsei* is also written in *Nihon shoki* (720, *The Chronicle of Japan*). In this thesis, however, I focus on the *Kojiki* narrative which Nakagami cited in his essay, 'Watashi no naka no nihonjin – Ōishi Seinosuke', *Yume no chikara*, pp. 41-47.

quelled'.[19] In the *Kojiki*, the people of Kumano are described as 'men with tails'. Philippi cites commentary suggesting that the early Japanese believed that indigenous people who lived in the mountains, given their 'primitive' stage of cultural development, were animal-like and were therefore referred to as having tails.[20]

Nakagami's view of Kumano ambivalently resonates with the derogatory assumptions made by those that conquered the people who fled to and were exiled or executed in Kumano. Noting that the Kii Peninsula, on which Kumano is located, is 'a peninsula of darkness,' Nakagami observed that it was 'no mystery'[21] that Kishū Kumano was the home of various groups who had rebelled against the hegemonic powers. This included those who fled to Kumano after being defeated in the *Saika ikki* (1577-1585, The Riot in Saika), an uprising in Saika against Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582). The rioters were a group among believers of *Jōdo shinshū*, derogatively referred to as the *Ikkō shū* by the other Buddhist sects in Japan. This riot leader was a son of the governor of Saika Castle, Saika Magoichi (16th century), whose followers, armed with guns and trained in the art of *ninja*, were once of the most advanced military troops of the time.

The *Roji*: The Site of Subaltern Narratives

As previously noted, Nakagami avoids using modern terms related to the Burakumin in the *Akiyuki saga*. Kasuga – one of the *hisabetsu buraku* of Kishū Kumano that is the setting for the saga – is referred to as the *roji* (alleyway), a place occupied by people who live 'like insects or dogs.'[22] This peripheral community includes long-standing residents and new comers such as Koreans and drifters. One of the main subjects of the *Akiyuki saga* is the dismantlement of the *roji* – the Burakumin homeland – during the modernisation and urbanisation of peripheral areas throughout Japan that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. Nakagami's *roji* birth place, the Kasuga *buraku*, along with the hill that divided it from the developed area of Shingū City, was demolished as part of 1969-1979 Special Measures for *Dōwa* (social integration) Issue legislative reforms. Witnessing the dismantlement of his homeland, Nakagami wrote the *Akiyuki saga* between the mid 1970s and the early 1980s.

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19   This part is written in the *Kojiki* as follows: 'At the very time that he (Jimmu) received that sword, all of the unruly deities in the KUMANO mountains were of themselves cut down'. Philippi notes in an annotation that 'the magic power of the heavenly sword was in itself sufficient to vanquish immediately all the unruly deities'. See Philippi, Book Two, Chapter 49, entitled 'Emperor Jimmu and his troops sink into a mysterious slumber. As Taka-kurazi, obeying a dream, presents a sword to Emperor Jimmu, the unruly deities of Kumano are magically quelled', *Kojiki*, p. 167.
20   Philippi, Book Two, Chapter 50 entitled, 'On the way from Kumano to Yamato. Emperor Jimmu is guided by a giant crow. The local earthly deities come to greet him', *Kojiki*, p. 170.
21   Nakagami, 'Watashi no naka no nihonjin – Ōishi Seinosuke', pp. 41-42.
22   Nakagami, 'The Cape', *The Cape and Other Stories from the Japanese Ghetto*, pp. 15-16.

We have noted that at the time of publication of both 'Misaki' and *Karekinada*, Nakagami's Burakumin background had not yet been made public.[23] The terms '*hisabetsu buraku*' and 'Burakumin', therefore, never appear in these narratives. Nevertheless, through the use of the term *roji*, the text successfully conveys to the reader the marginalised circumstances of the people in Kumano, the 'hidden country' of ancient texts.

The 'Matrilineal' Family Narrative: Writing Back to the Mainstream

The ambivalence of the protagonist towards his complicated family relationships is a driving force behind the tragedy of the *Akiyuki saga*. Akiyuki's family background overlaps with and has a number of clear parallels to Nakagami's own. In this saga, Nakagami repeatedly narrates the past traumatic events of the 'matrilineal' family to explain the conflict that besets Akiyuki's family and also in order to display the significance of the past for the present. A summary of Akiyuki's family history is given below (See also Appendix: Akiyuki's Family Tree).

Akiyuki's mother, Fusa,[24] had five children with her first husband who was a resident of the *roji*. After the death of both her first husband and a son, she met 'that man' (Hamamura Ryūzō) who drifted into the community from the outside. Ryūzō, who was said to have been the arsonist who had set light to some areas of the *roji*, was condemned by members of the community as an '*uma no hone*' (horse's bone).[25] While Fusa was pregnant with Akiyuki, Ryūzō was arrested for gambling. Fusa left Ryūzō after discovering that he had made two other women pregnant. Akiyuki – and his two half-sisters, Satoko and Tomiko – were born while Ryūzō was in a prison. When Ryūzō returned to see his three-year-old son for the first time, Akiyuki refused to acknowledge the man as his father. After leaving Ryūzō, Fusa met a new man named Takehara Shigezō. When Akiyuki was seven, Fusa and her youngest son moved to live with Shigezō and his son in a neighbouring town. Akiyuki's eldest half-brother, Ikuo, and half-sister, Mie, remained living in the *roji*. Ryūzō also returned to the *roji* where, through the dishonest exploitation of land, he established a successful lumber business. As a result, the *roji* residents scornfully referred to him as '*hae no kuso nō*' (the King of Fly Shit).[26] When Akiyuki was twelve, the behaviour of his half-brother, Ikuo, became violent and he often threatened to kill Fusa and Akiyuki. Amid rumours that Ikuo and Mie were having an incestuous relationship, Mie eloped with her brother's friend. Ikuo committed suicide at the age of twenty-four.

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23 'Misaki' was published in 1976. Nakagami made his Burakumin background public in 1978. In 'Misaki', there is no particular place-name except Kishū to describe where Akiyuki's family lives. In *Karekinada*, many accounts of the geography, history and folklore of Kumano can be found.

24 In 'Misaki', Akiyuki's mother is called 'Toki'. Nakagami renamed her 'Fusa' in *Karekinada* and *Chi no hate shijō no toki*.

25 Nakagami, *Karekinada*, p. 27. *Uma no hone* (horse's bone) is a derogatory expression for a person of unknown background or parentage. See 'uma no hone', *Kōjien*, p. 228.

26 Nakagami, *Karekinada*, p. 27.

In the opening of 'Misaki', Akiyuki, too, is twenty-four years old and working in a road construction gang run by his brother-in-law's office in the *roji*. Ryūzō, whom Akiyuki calls 'that man', keeps watching him. Akiyuki's indignation towards Ryūzō is heightened when he hears a rumour that Ryūzō keeps his own daughter, Satoko, as a mistress.

Nakagami 'writes back' to the mainstream family ideology through the depiction of Akiyuki's 'matrilineal' family. As seen in the essay on his own family referred to above, Nakagami regards the 'matrilineal' family as deviating from the mainstream family i.e. the family of patriarchal society. From the viewpoint of modern Japanese family ideology, Fusa and Ryūzō are depicted as parents whose family suffers because they fail to function as the ideal pair of a respectable patriarch and *ryōsai kenbo* (good wife wise mother).[27] The patriarchal family ideology on which these ideals are founded emerged as a part of the modern Japanese social hierarchy which saw the Emperor as the 'father' of the nation-state.

In his reading of Nakagami, Karatani Kōjin draws a line between the symbolic emperor system (*shōchō tennōsei*) and the system of emperor as the head of the nation state (*kindai tennōsei*). In the pre-modern era, with the *shōchō tennōsei*, the emperor was little more than a figure head. At the outset of the Meiji era, however, the introduction of the *kindai tennōsei* saw the emperor become the constitutional head of state. It was this system that instituted the modern patriarchal family system. In spite of the reforms which saw the end of the *kindai tennōsei* and a return to a form of the *shōchō tennōsei* in the post-war era, the pre-war hegemonic family ideology has persisted until today.[28]

In the context of the *shōchō tennōsei* as practiced during the Tokugawa Shogunate, both the Imperial family and members of Burakumin society were considered political losers by the hegemonic centre. Citing Ishio Yoshihisa, Karatani argues that the Kishū Burakumin originated from the segregation of rebels subdued during the *Ikkō ikki*[29] by Oda Nobunaga and his successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598). Later, the Tokugawa Shogunate instituted the segregated class as a social outcaste group.[30] The contemporary operation of the *shōchō tennōsei* today positions the imperial family and the Burakumin at the vertical extremes of heaven and earth in terms of social status. Nevertheless, since both are excluded from the mainstream as embodiments of difference, Nakagami sees the relationship between the two as 'horizontal'.[31]

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27   The joint ideology of patriarchy and *ryōsai kenbo* was introduced to establish an ideal Japanese family in the process of modernisation during the Meiji era. See Koyama,'Ryōsai kenbo shisō no seiritsu' (Establishing an Ideology of Good Wife Wise Mother), *Ryōsai kenbo to iu kihan* (*The Normative Standard of Good Wife Wise Mother*), pp. 57-60.

28   Karatani, 'Hisabetsu-buraku no "kigen"' (The 'Origin' of Hisabetsu Buraku), *Sakaguchi Ango to Nakagami Kenji* (*Sakaguchi Ango and Nakagami Kenji*), pp. 244-51.

29   The riots by the believers of *Ikkō shū* were called *Ikkō ikki*. *Saika ikki* is one of the *Ikkō ikki*. *Ikkō ikki* were a frequent occurrence in the 16th century. See 'ikkō ikki', *Daijisen*, p. 161. Also see my discussion of *Saika ikki* in the section of "Kishū Kumano: 'The Country of Darkness' where the Losers have Settled".

30   Karatani, 'Hisabetsu buraku no "kigen"', *Sakaguchi Ango to Nakagami Kenji*, pp. 244-51.

31   Nakagami, 'Nihon no futatsu no gaibu' (The two exteriors of Japan), *Nakagami Kenji zenshū 15*, p. 584.

While the 'otherness' of the imperial family, however, is coded in and thereby validated by the Constitution, Burakumin 'otherness' is regarded as flawed. Through depicting the subaltern family on the periphery of Japanese society in the *Akiyuki Saga*, Nakagami displays the exclusionist ideology of the Japanese mainstream. He also successfully brings the narrative of this subaltern group into mainstream discourse.

The Repetitive Narrative of Family Tragedy: Intertextuality with Ancient Myths

The *Akiyuki saga* narrative is underlain by a repetition of family tragedy. When depicting the conflict in Akiyuki's family, Nakagami draws on forms that the author regards as providing narrative archetypes of family tragedy, including Western myths, Japanese myths and *kishu ryūritan* narratives from Kishū. In 'Misaki', for example, Nakagami references the tragic Greek tale of Electra, who helped her brother, Orestes, kill both their mother and their mother's lover who had murdered their father.[32] Nakagami explained that he wished to depict Akiyuki's sister, Mie, as a Japanese Electra and the brother, Ikuo, as an inverted Orestes.[33] Ikuo, who kills himself rather than seeking revenge, is defined as an 'inverted Orestes' while Mie can be interpreted as a sister who unconsciously manipulates her brothers (Ikuo and Akiyuki) in order to subvert and metaphorically kill her mother. We might note that in the *Akiyuki Saga*, however, Mie's matricidal tendencies are overshadowed to some extent by the protagonist's Oedipal desire for patricide.

A main theme of the *Akiyuki Saga* is the son's constant challenge against the paternity. The narrative of the struggle for supremacy by the patriarch is a key element of the cyclic repetition of the family. The *Akiyuki Saga* can be interpreted as representing the conflict between maternity and paternity, a conflict that continually impacts upon the protagonist. The rejection of the three patriarchs – Ryūzō, Ikuo and Akiyuki – by the matriarch Fusa suggests a narrative of their defeat by the maternal society of the *roji*. For them, affiliation with the hegemony of the *roji* (i.e. mother) signifies an attempt to gain its power of 'production' and 'fertility'. However, their ambivalence towards the 'mother' implies a simultaneous desire for matricide as retaliation for their exile from the supremacy of the patriarch.

Many critics have noted various aspects of Akiyuki's sensibility for 'the repetition of family tragedy'.[34] In this power struggle between the matriarch and patriarch,

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32   See Sophocles, 'Electra', *The Internet Classics Archive*.

33   Nakagami, 'Fūkei no mukō e: Kankoku no tabi', *Nakagami Kenji zenshū 15*, pp. 60-61.

34   See Yomota, 'Kishu no shūen' (The End of Nobility), *Kishu to tensei: Nakagami Kenji*, pp. 154-55; Watanabe, 'Majikasa ni tsuite (Of Closeness)', *Itoshisa ni tsuite (Of Affection)*, pp. 21-27; Iguchi, 'Kakusei to datsuryoku – Nakagami Kenji (Revival and Languor – Nakagami Kenji)', *Kiki to tōsō: Ōe Kenzaburō to Nakagami Kenji (Crisis and Fight: Ōe Kenzaburō and Nakagami Kenji)*, pp. 85-89 and Karatani, 'Sanjussai, Karekinada e' (At the Age of Thirty, to the Straits of Withered Trees), *Sakaguchi Ango to Nakagami Kenji*, pp. 263-67.

fratricide is a constant theme. In 'Misaki', when a cousin, Yasuo, murders his brother-in-law, Furuichi, Akiyuki instinctively links the mortal relationship between the pair to his own relationship with the now dead Ikuo. In *Karekinada*, too, the inevitable repetition of this narrative is depicted through Akiyuki's identification with Ikuo, and his murder of his younger half-brother Hideo, his father's favourite son. Akiyuki realises that, by this act, he has repeated Ikuo's intent towards himself:

> Akiyuki thought of Ikuo. Ikuo was his half-brother. When he thought of this fact, he was astonished to realise that at the time [when Ikuo was trying to kill him] Ikuo had the same feelings and circumstances that he himself had now. Standing in the dusk and soaking in the sunlight which still remained in the sky, he felt his eyes shining gold. I will kill you [Hideo], Akiyuki thought. Ikuo had thought [the same thing] at that time. Ikuo's eyes at that time were Akiyuki's eyes now.[35]

Akiyuki's abrupt (*toppatsu-teki*)[36] murder of Hideo occurs on the night of the *bon* festival, the night on which the traditional dance ballad of *Kyōdai shinjū* (a brother and sister double suicide) is sung. After killing his half-brother, Akiyuki identifies himself with both his eldest brother (Ikuo), who wanted to kill Akiyuki, and his younger brother (Hideo), whom Akiyuki kills.[37] Ultimately, however, through his murder of Hideo, Akiyuki realises that, rather than being murdered by Ikuo, he has killed himself. (*Ikuo no kawari ni Akiyuki wa, Akiyuki o koroshita*).[38]

Incest is another cyclic theme of the narrative. Towards the end of 'Misaki', Akiyuki buys a prostitute who is rumoured to be his half-sister, Satoko. Even though he is unsure whether or not she is his real half-sister, Akiyuki and Satoko's narrative repeats the incest narrative of Ikuo and Mie. We will see that Akiyuki's committing incest is a deliberate strategy to outrage his father.

As when he committed incest with Satoko, Akiyuki expects Ryūzō's paternal anger to be unleashed by news of the death of his favourite son, Hideo. Akiyuki further expects that Ryūzō will express remorse for his own lustful life that has resulted in the failed offspring that commit these heinous acts. However, Akiyuki's incestuous and fratricidal challenges to Ryūzō's authority are all in vain. Although Akiyuki wishes to break away from and deny his family genealogy, it is clear that, in spite of Akiyuki's role in Hideo's death, Ryūzō bears no malice towards his murderous son.

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35 Nakagami, *Karekinada*, pp. 111-12.
36 *Ibid*., p. 258.
37 Nakagami, in fact, discusses this in terms of the Biblical tale of Cain and Abel. See his interview with Zimmerman in 'In the Trap of Words: Nakagami Kenji and the Making of Degenerate Fictions', *Ōe and Beyond: Fiction in Contemporary Japan*, pp. 133-34.
38 Nakagami, *Karekinada*, p. 264.

The family tragedies and characters depicted in the *Akiyuki saga* echo the local folklore about the subversion of morality such as an incestuous brother and sister's double suicide and riots (*ikki*) by rebellious samurai. It is useful to examine Nakagami's use of such subaltern (Burakumin) folklore in his family narratives in greater detail.

Kishu Ryūritan: The Hidden Outcaste Voice

The issue of repetitive traumatic human relations is linked to Nakagami's representation of Kishū Kumano as a 'country of darkness' with a cyclic history of marginalisation by the hegemonic centre since the time of ancient myth. This is particularly evident in his use of subaltern folklore, *kishu ryūritan* (legends of exiled nobles, criminals and pilgrims),[39] which tell of tragic relationships and also of political defeats by the hegemonic centre.

Many features of *kishu ryūritan* resonate with the history of subaltern groups identified by Antonio Gramsci, as 'necessarily fragmented and episodic'.[40] Gramsci continues as follows:

> There undoubtedly does exist a tendency [towards] unification in the historical activity of these groups but this tendency is continually interrupted by the activity of the ruling groups [...]. Subaltern groups are always subject to the activity of ruling groups, even when they rebel and rise up. [...] Every trace of independent initiative on the part of subaltern groups should therefore be of incalculable value for the integral historian.[41]

Gramsci's focus on subaltern history evokes Nakagami's focus on *kishu ryūritan*. For Nakagami, *kishu ryūritan* has 'incalculable value' because it resonates with the 'trace' identified by Gramsci that contains the hidden voice of those, like the Burakumin, who have been marginalised by 'the activity of the ruling groups'. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin support Gramsci's claim that, in spite of the fact that it is the elite narrative that becomes the 'official' version of history, the history of the subaltern classes is as complex and as significant as the history of the dominant classes.[42]

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39   *Kishu ryūritan* (*kishu* '貴種: noble', *ryūri* '流離: wandering', *tan* '譚: narrative') is the theme of narratives and folktales about wandering (often exiled) gods, nobles, criminals and pilgrims. The term was firstly applied by Orikuchi Shinobu (1887-1953), in his *Nihon bungaku no hassei Josetsu* (1947, *An Introduction to the Emergence of Japanese Literature*) to identify narratives of gods who were wandering in an *utsuho bune* (a hollow ship). See 'kishu ryūritan' in *Nihon daihyakka zensho*. In *Kōjien*, the term is defined as stories about wandering noble heroes who overcome difficulty with help from animals or women. Examples of the genre include the *Kojiki* narratives of Okuninushi-no-mikoto, Yamato-takeru-no-mikoto, the Hikaru-genji stories given in the 'Suma' and 'Akashi' chapters of *Genji monogatari* (*A Tale of Genji*) by Murasaki Shikibu (11th century), in addition the story of Odysseus in *The Odyssey*. See 'kishu ryūritan' in *Kōjien*, p. 575.

40   Gramsci, 'Notes on Italian History', *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p. 54.

41   *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

42   Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, p. 216.

In Nakagami's narratives, there are numerous 'episodic' *kishu ryūritan* about those vanquished in political battles who fled to and then remained in, or who were exiled to or executed in, Kishū Kumano. These include the tales of Arima-no-miko (Prince Arima) (640-658),[43] the 12th century Taira clan (*Heike*)[44] and the losers of the 15th and 16th century *Ikkō ikki*. These and similar tales have been passed down from generation to generation as a confirmation of the social stigma experienced by these individuals and groups. By adapting 'episodic' Burakumin folklore in his narratives, Nakagami 'writes back' to the hegemonic centre and its 'official' history which has excluded the 'voice' of the subalterns.

This section will discuss Nakagami's use of these folk narratives – which comprise the area's rich oral history – in *Karekinada*. Particular emphasis is given to the *Kyōdai shinjū* song and the 16th century legend of the rebellious samurai and defeated leader of the *Ikkō ikki*, Saika Magoichi.

Kishu ryūritan 1: Kyōdai shinjū

Until the 1970s, the *Kyōdai shinjū* folksong, which depicts the tale of an incestuous brother and sister, was sung during the *bon*[45] festival in Kasuga *buraku*.[46] In his essay 'Fūkei no mukō e: Kankoku no tabi' (1983, Beyond Scenery: A Trip to Korea), Nakagami explains his use of *Kyōdai shinjū* in *Karekinada*:

> Although when writing I was unaware, I regard *Karekinada* as a novel that breaks the secret code of the *Kyōdai shinjū* dance ballad. I myself probably comprehend the *Karekinada* narrative through interpreting the *Kyōdai shinjū* text.[47]

In summary, the *Kyōdai shinjū* ballad gives an account of a brother, Monten, who lives in Kyoto and who falls in love with and wastes away pining for his sister, Okiyo, who lives in Gōshū (the traditional name of Shiga prefecture). Although initially shocked when she learns of her brother's love, Okiyo eventually agrees to sleep with her brother on the condition that he kills her husband who is a mendicant monk. In the end, Monten commits suicide in Kyoto after mistakenly killing Okiyo who pretends to be the monk. The murder occurs in Gōshū on the Seta Bridge, a metonym for the border between the centre, i.e. life, and the periphery, i.e. death. The words of the song are as follows:

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43 Arima-no-miko (Prince Arima, 640-658) is the son of the Emperor Kotōku. He was convicted of high treason and executed in Kii. The *Manyōshū* (8th century, *The Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves*) features two short poems composed by Prince Arima immediately before he dies. See 'Arima-no-miko', *Daijisen*, p. 90.

44 The Taira clan (*Heike*) came into power in the late Heian era and was overthrown in 1185. See 'Taira', *Daijisen*, pp. 1616-17.

45 *Bon* is a Japanese Buddhist festival that takes place in August during which people show respect to the dead. See 'bon', *Kōjien*, p. 2224.

46 Zimmerman, 'Brother-Sister Love and the Creation of Akiyuki', *Out of the Alleyway*, p. 86.

47 Nakagami, 'Fūkei no mukō e: Kankoku no tabi', *Nakagami Kenji zenshū 15*, p. 60.

Here in Nishijin town in Kyoto,
Monten, the brother, is twenty-one,
Okiyo, his sister, is nineteen,
Brother Monten falls in love with his sister

Pining for her, he then falls ill
Eating only two of three meals each day
Then two become one
Until he no longer consumes even one full meal

Okiyo, Okiyo
Mother calls her daughter again and again
Do you call me, Mother?
Please visit your brother who lies so ill

At her mother's request, Okiyo visits her brother
Quietly slides open the indigo-coloured door
Taking three steps forward and one step back
She prostrates herself before her brother, hands palms down on the floor

How do you feel, my brother?
Should I call a doctor? Should I bring medicine?
Monten, however, replies
I need neither a doctor nor remedy

A night with you, my sister, will make me well
On two pillows and three futon
My illness would be cured with a night spent together
Only one night – I beg you – dear Okiyo

Hearing her brother, Okiyo is shocked
Whatever do you ask, my brother?
Since we are siblings
People who heard this would call us beasts
If our parents heard this they would kill us
If my friends heard this, I would be deeply ashamed
There is a suitable woman to become your wife,
There is a suitable man for my husband, too

My nineteen year old husband is a wandering priest
If you kill this man
We will sleep together forever
I will be your wife for evermore

Upon saying this Okiyo departs
She dresses her hair and makes-up her face
Then puts on a white silk kimono
From the wardrobe that was a gift from her parents

Donning her long black over-kimono
She three times winds the simple obi about her waist
Tying firstly a knot at the front
That she then briskly spins to the back

Stepping into her simple sandals
And taking her long bamboo flute
She walks across Seta Bridge playing the flute
Her face concealed completely by the straw hat of a wandering priest

Spying this figure, Brother Monten thinks
That must be my sister's husband
I must kill him to make Okiyo mine
He fires six shots at the form on the bridge

As the shots ring out a woman screams
Who are you? Forgive me!
Cries Monten, rushing to her side
He removes the hat to see the face

His sister Okiyo has sacrificed herself
My sister deceived me
If I now die, too, we can end our lives together
Here in Nishijin town, in Kyoto, there were a brother and sister
What a pitiful tale of double suicide[48]

Kyōdai shinjū is a variation of the *Gōshū ondo* which is the generic name of a *bon* dance ballad with a particular rhythm and melody, variations of which are still sung in many areas of Japan today. The words of *Gōshū ondo* vary from area to area and are generally modified to accord with local context. As Nakagami himself has noted, however, *Kyōdai shinjū*, the *Gōshū ondo* of Kasuga, is not a song about Kasuga.[49]

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48   Nakagami, *Karekinada*, pp. 217-18.
49   Nakagami, '"Kyōdai shinjū" no kaidoku' (Interpretation of 'A Brother and Sister Double Suicide'), *Nakagami Kenji to Kumano*, pp. 86-87.

When considering this uncharacteristic element of the Kasuga *Kyōdai shinjū* it is useful to have some knowledge of the geographic relationship between Kasuga, Shingū, Gōshū and Kyoto. As previously noted, Kasuga was one of the *hisabetsu buraku* in Shingū. Shingū is a central city of the Kumano region, an area isolated from the ancient capital by forests and mountains. Gōshū is a province that borders both Kyoto in the north and Kumano in the south and is traditionally known as a commercial area with a good water supply from Lake Biwa.

The interpretation of the *Kyōdai shinjū* ballad requires some understanding of the economic development of Meiji Japan, particularly the emergence of the silk industry. Nakagami points out that *Kyōdai shinjū* was probably brought to Kasuga by *jokō* (factory women) who worked in silk factories in Gōshū.[50] As the principal source of Meiji era wealth, the silk industry was a central feature of Japanese nationalism in an era which saw Japan struggle to achieve parity with the imperialist nations of the west.[51] A former *jokō* recalled, 'We were often told (by the minister): "You (*jokō*) are the treasure of our country; Japan would be ruined without you because the silk industry constitutes the foundation of the Japanese economy."'[52] Initially, *jokō* were drawn from daughters of the elite. However, when increasing production saw the size of factories expand, the need for *jokō* ballooned.[53] As a result, many daughters of poor families, including the peasants of Kumano, were recruited as labour in the silk factories which, as production increased, became increasingly oppressive workplaces.[54] Production continued into the post-war era, with Nakagami's eldest sister (a model for Akiyuki's eldest sister, Yoshiko) sent to a silk industry town in the 1950s. For Kasuga people, whose daughters often worked as *jokō*, *Kyōdai shinjū* perhaps had local significance through the evocation of a separated family or lover. Furthermore, Okiyo's self-sacrifice for her brother resonates with the *jokō*'s self-sacrifice for her family and the nation.

While girls from impoverished families later comprised the silk factory labour force, in the early years of the industry 'factory girls' were the daughters of high-status families, proud of their contribution to the modern nation-state.[55] Given the way that *keigo* (honorific language) is used in the narrative, we can read *Kyōdai shinjū*, too, as a *kishu ryūritan* of the brother and sister from the Kyoto aristocracy: the heir of the family, Monten, who leaves for Gōshū to commit murder for his incestuous love for his sister, and Okiyo, who is sent to the mills and who sacrifices her life for her

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50 *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.
51 Tamanoi, 'Factory Women', *Under the Shadow of Nationalism: Politics and Poetics of Rural Japanese Women*, pp. 85-114.
52 *Ibid.*, p. 107.
53 *Ibid.*, p. 86.
54 Nakagami, '"Kyōdai shinjū" no kaidoku', *Nakagami Kenji to Kumano*, p. 86.
55 Tamanoi, p. 86.

brother.[56] To Nakagami, this tragic third person narrative gives the viewpoint of the community and the consequences for those who deviate from the norm by violating this social taboo.[57]

Nakagami interprets *Kyōdai shinjū* as a 'reverse' of the well-known *kuniumi* (birth of the country) narrative from the opening section of the *Kojiki*, which tells of the birth of Japan following the marriage of the god, Izanagi,[58] and goddess, Izanami. This couple can, in fact, be considered as a brother and sister pair because they were born at the same time from heaven. In spite of the high status of the brother and sister in the *Kyōdai shinjū* narrative, Nakagami interprets the song as one of a failure of *kuniumi* by a Burakumin brother and sister:

> When sung in the *roji* i.e. *hisabetsu buraku*, the *kuniumi* [narrative], which is performed by a brother and sister, becomes the narrative of a double suicide. In trying to give birth to a country, the couple give birth to a narrative that tells that they must die. The country to which this brother and sister give birth can be called an inverted country of darkness or a country in reverse.[59]

In the *Akiyuki Saga*, the sense of failure encapsulated in *Kyōdai shinjū* is depicted through Ikuo's death.[60] Ultimately, Ikuo dies without being able to establish his own family.

In *Karekinada*, Akiyuki uses his transgression of the incest taboo to confront his father, hoping to invoke paternal ire:

> Akiyuki spoke as though he were delirious, 'I fucked Satoko.' Akiyuki waited for the man let out a raging moan of pain [...]. This was, after all, his father. As the father, he should whip Akiyuki, knock Satoko down.

> 'It can't be helped. It happens all the time,' the man said. He laughed in a low voice. 'Don't worry about such things. Even if you two made a baby, even if it were an idiot child, it can't be helped. Although, if you have an idiot child, it's not easy for the mother.'

> 'I'll give birth to the idiot,' Satoko said.

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56   Nakagami, who seems to have been unaware of the early involvement of girls from wealthy families in the silk industry, dismisses the use of *keigo* in this song as 'bad' (*mecha kucha*) grammar. Nakagami,'"Kyōdai shinjū" no kaidoku', *Nakagami Kenji to Kumano*, p. 88.
57   *Ibid.*, p. 89.
58   Izanagi is the father of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, who is worshiped in Shintō as the founding ancestor of the imperial family. See 'Izanagi-no-mikoto' in *Kōjien*, p. 116.
59   Nakagami, 'Monogatari no keifu: Orikuchi Shinobu' (A Genealogy of Narratives: Orikuchi Shinobu), *Nakagami Kenji zenshū 15*, p. 215.
60   We might also note that this failure is encapsulated through the nervous breakdown of the sister, Mie, and her inability to give birth to Ikuo's offspring.

'Do it, do it. It doesn't worry me if you have an idiot. I own land in Arima. One or two idiot grandchildren will be no trouble.'[61]

As noted by a number of critics, Akiyuki's incest can be considered as a substitute for patricide.[62] Yomota Inuhiko, for example, points out that Akiyuki justifies his incest with Satoko as his offence against his father. This is because, for Akiyuki, committing incest implies a violation of his father's biological order and a negation of Ryūzō as the paternal origin.[63] Akiyuki expects to be reproached by his father for breaking the incest taboo. This is in accordance with the words of *Kyōdai shinjū*: 'if our parents heard of this, they would kill us'.[64] However, Ryūzō laughs and observes that, because he owns a vast expanse of land in the Arima region of Kumano,[65] he doesn't care even if the pair have a child.

Kishu-ryūri-tan 2: Saika Magoichi

Nakagami applies a *kishu ryūritan* of a rebellious samurai to depict this outrageous father, Ryūzō. Arima is the setting of the *kishu ryūritan* of Saika Magoichi, the leader of the *Saika ikki*, one of the major riots by the Kishū *Ikkō-shū* subjugated by Nobunaga.[66] In the *Akiyuki Saga*, Nakagami gives Magoichi the family name of Hamamura, in order that this figure might have a direct connection to Ryūzō whose family name is also Hamamura. In the narrative, Nakagami embroiders the *kishu ryūritan* of Magoichi in order to depict Ryūzō's obsession with establishing a 'legitimate' origin for himself as Magoichi's descendant. The legend is located in Arima which, in addition to being the site of land owned by Ryūzō, is also the location of the 'underworld' in the myth of Izanagi and Izanami:

These mountains, these fields, were nothing more than stories fabricated in the fevered imagination of Hamamura Ryūzō, the King of Flies, the man with the big body and the snake eyes. Izanami died when her private parts were burnt as she gave birth to the god of fire. The cave in which she was interned after her death is less than five minutes by car from Ryūzō's Arima land.[67] The underworld of this myth is here. It is around this area. The man had built a monument there.

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61   Nakagami, *Karekinada*, pp. 145-50.
62   Yomota, 'Kishu no shūen', *Kishu to tensei: Nakagami Kenji*, p. 169; Watanabe, 'Majikasa ni tsuite', *Itoshisa ni tsuite*, pp. 19-26; Iguchi, 'Kakusei to datsuryoku – Nakagami Kenji', *Kiki to tōsō: Ōe Kenzaburō to Nakagami*, pp. 85-89, and Karatani, 'Sanjussai, Karekinada e', *Sakaguchi Ango to Nakagami Kenji*, p. 254.
63   Yomota, 'Kishu no shūen', *Kishu to tensei: Nakagami Kenji*, p. 169.
64   Nakagami, *Karekinada*, p. 216.
65   Arima is the name of a town in Kumano City in Mie Prefecture. There is a description of Arima and the legend of Saika Magoichi in Nakagami's *Kishū*. See 'Arima', *Kishū: kinokuni, nenokuni monogatari*, pp. 139-48.
66   *Saika ikki* (The Riot in Saika) was an uprising against Nobunaga by believers of *Ikkō shū* (*Jōdo shinshū*) led by the son of the governor of Saika Castle, Saika Magoichi. In 1570, the principle temple of the *Jōdo shinshū* denomination, Ishiyama-hongan-ji, clashed with Nobunaga. Magoichi took sides with the temple and rioted against Nobunaga. The riot was subdued in 1585 by Nobunaga's successor, Hideyoshi. See 'Saika ikki', *Nihon daihyakka zensho*.
67   The cave, traditionally said to be the grave of Izanami, is in Hanano-iwaya Shrine and is dedicated to Izanami and her fire-god son, Kagutsuchi-no-mikoto. See *Hana-no-iwaya jinja* (*Hana-no-iwaya Shrine*).

That stone monument was his penis, eternally erect. It was his wish for immortality which would never wither or decay. […] In his mind, there was Magoichi who was defeated, whose villages in Ikkō shū were burnt to the ground and whose followers – including women and children – were murdered by Oda Nobunaga's troops. Magoichi came limping down the mountain with a small group of followers. […] To the light, to the sea. It was the wish of the man's forefather. The uprising had been a clash between those who believed and those who didn't. The Buddha was with the vanquished. The place where there was light and sea was the final paradise where one could live with the Buddha.[68]

For Ryūzō, the Arima property signifies that he has inherited Magoichi's will to establish a '*futsukoku*' (the pure land for followers of the Buddha).[69]

In the 'underworld' of the *kishu ryūritan*, all the conventions of mainstream society are inverted. Magoichi was a defeated hero, lame in one leg and blind in one eye.[70] Ryūzō's acceptance of 'idiot' children who are born from incest is in opposition to the original *Kojiki* myth of *kuniumi*, in which Izanagi and Izanami refuse to accept imperfect children who are instead floated away downstream by their parents.[71] Philippi suggests that the deformed or unworthy children that Izanagi and Izanami reject are the result of the parents erring in the ritual of conjugal intercourse.[72]

Ryūzō, however, is depicted as a man who laughs away traditional narratives which were established through the conventions of the hegemonic centre. The death of the couple in *Kyōdai shinjū* demonstrates the penalty demanded by the centre from those who transgress. Ryūzō, however, rejects these hegemonic narratives in favour of establishing his own glorious nation by affiliating with Magoichi, the defeated hero of the Arima *kishu ryūritan*, in a way that removes the usual stigma of subalternity attached to that hero. In this sense, Ryūzō's ambition resonates with Gramsci's assertion that the history of subaltern groups is of equal value to the authorised history of the mainstream.

Like many elites, Akiyuki's father re-invents his own history – as Magoichi's ancestor – by bribing local historians to fabricate proof of the legend. This proof involves creating a false 'cycle' of a subaltern association with the *roji* and also the creation of a false genealogy of Arima. Having identified the traces of subalternity in his background, he then re-interprets these traces to signify success in his own domain. Through

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68   Nakagami, *Karekinada*, p. 161.
69   *Ibid.*
70   *Ibid.*, p. 267.
71   'Book One, Chapter 2, The Seven Generations of the Age of the Gods Come into Existence', *Kojiki*, p. 48.
72   Philippi, 'Appendix A: Additional Note 4', *Kojiki*, p. 399.

depicting the affiliation by the subaltern characters in the *Akiyuki Saga* to the various *kishu ryūritan*, Nakagami effectively 'writes back' to the hegemonic centre which has marginalised Kishū Kumano.

As evident from his characterisation of Ryūzō, Nakagami regards Burakumin oral folklore such as *kishu ryūritan* as conveying the trace of Burakumin subalternity imposed by the centre. He later confirms this view after a trip to Ise, the home of Japan's principal shrine. Following a visit to the shrine library, where he found over two hundred thousand books containing records of the activities of past royal families, Nakagami became convinced that imperial authority in Japan rested upon the 'written word', declaring that 'the emperor reigns the country by thousands of words and letters.'[73] Since the tradition of writing literature such as *waka* (Japanese poetry) and *monogatari* (tales) had been monopolised by the nobility since ancient times, Nakagami regards the illiterate Burakumin as a people who had long been abandoned by tradition.[74]

As a novelist who uses the Japanese language, Nakagami reveals his ambivalence towards the writer's imperative of making use of the 'written word' which, since the time of the *Kojiki*, has been traditionally used to justify and reinforce the hegemony of the centre. As a Burakumin novelist, Nakagami considers that using the 'written word' to 'write back' to the hegemonic centre is paradoxical. This is because the act of writing naturally implies a celebration of the same hegemonic centre that marginalised the Burakumin.

Nakagami considers, on the other hand, that Burakumin oral culture is independent from the emperor's sovereignty over written language.[75] He asserts, furthermore, that the 'spoken word' such as folklore has the 'mythical function' to challenge the written word and the system that the emperors of ancient times established by compiling the book of mythologies.[76] The fact that, unlike the usual *Gōshū ondo*, *Kyōdai shinjū* was not modified to the local Kasuga context suggests the socio-historical complexity of relations between the *hisabetsu buraku* and the centre. While the song's *keigo* implies an elite background to the tragic couple, the brother's incestuous love for his sister strongly interrogates the hegemonic family system that is also subverted by family relations in the *roji*. Through giving voice to the plight of Monten and Okiyo as expressed in this *kishu ryūritan*, and in portraying the tragic consequences of Monten's love, Nakagami also reveals the hidden voice of the subaltern members of the *roji* and the oppressive social penalties they incur.

73　Nakagami, 'Ise', *Kishū: kinokuni, nenokuni monogatari*, p. 189.
74　Nakagami, 'Watashi wa <nihonjin> nanoka' (Am I <a Japanese>?), *Nakagami Kenji hatsugen shūsei* 6, p. 340.
75　Nakagami, 'Ise', *Kishū: kinokuni, nenokuni monogatari*, pp. 193-94.
76　Nakagami, 'Mono to kotoba (Things and the Word), *Nakagami Kenji to Kumano*, p. 23.

Conclusion

Borrowing the post-colonial concept from *The Empire Writes Back* of 'writing back' to the hegemonic centre, the paper analysed Nakagami's 'Misaki' and *Karekinada* with an emphasis on his representation of the hidden subaltern voice. This analysis began with a discussion of the importance of understanding the 'otherness' and long-established marginality of the Kishū Kumano region in which the narrative was set. For Nakagami, fictional representation of the lives and stories of the people from this area – particularly those who live in the dispossessed area he refers to as the *roji* – was a strategy to reveal the hidden subaltern voice.

As previously noted, another important subject of the *Akiyuki saga* is the dismantlement of the *roji* – the Burakumin homeland – during the modernisation and urbanisation of peripheral areas throughout Japan that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. Nakagami's work often displayed his view that dismantlement of the *hisabetsu buraku* in the name of urbanisation did not signify the effacement of discrimination. Rather, this process merely made Burakumin more invisible. Despite modernisation, the Burakumin are still stigmatised as 'subaltern'.

Nakagami's narratives critique the mainstream ideology that seeks to exclude social 'difference' and efface 'otherness' such as the Burakumin presence. Nakagami's use of intertextuality with the oral *kishu ryūritan* folklore and literary canons in his narratives displays the 'difference' between the silenced subaltern voice and the mainstream conventions which have produced the marginalised since ancient times. As Gramsci notes, subaltern narratives include the trace of the oppressive activity of the mainstream. Through the process of 'writing back' to the hegemonic centre, Nakagami seeks both to preserve 'difference' from effacement by the mainstream society and to make audible the silenced subaltern voice.
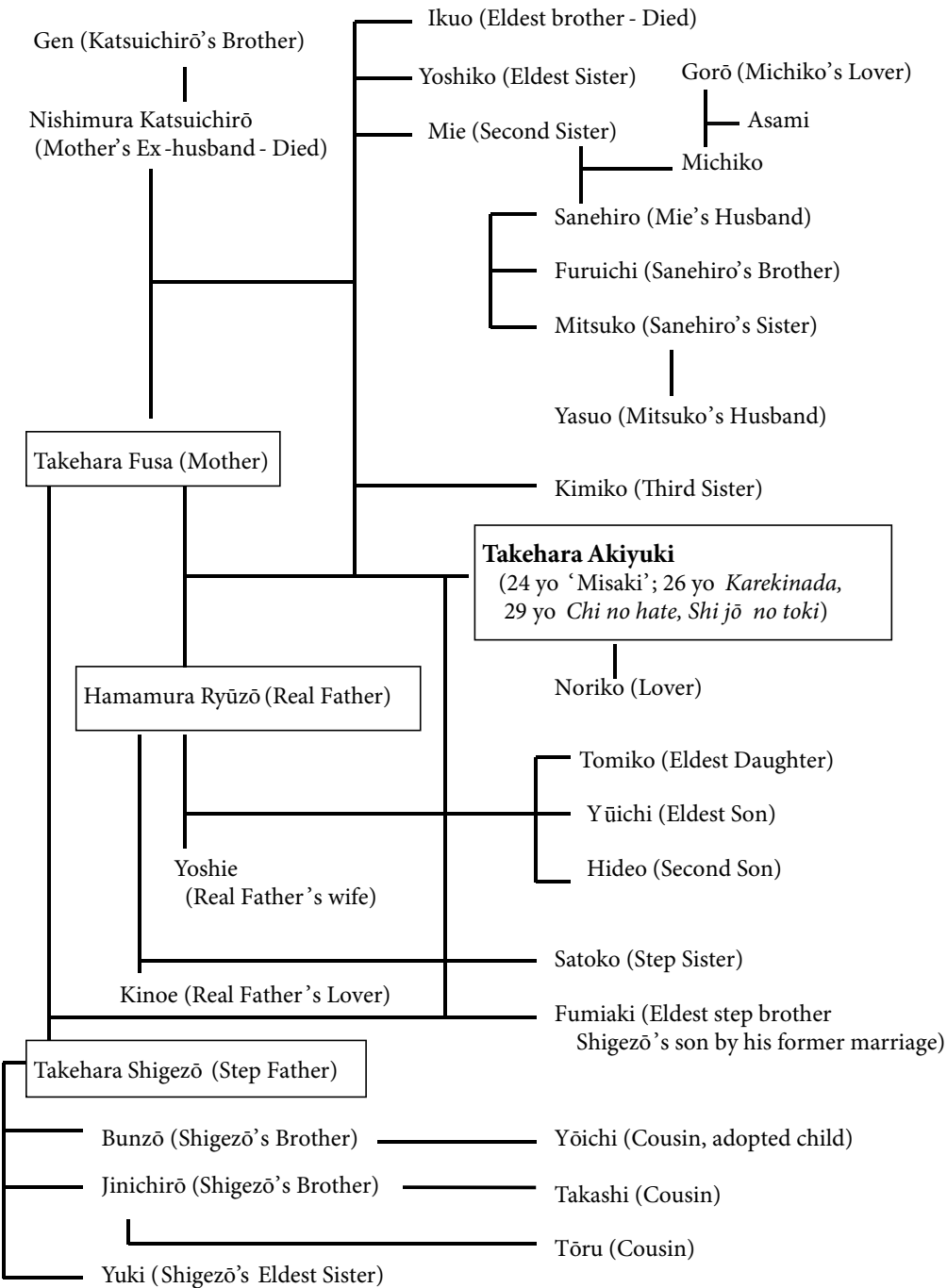
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Appendix: Akiyuki's Family Tree

Gen (Katsuichirō's Brother)

Nishimura Katsuichirō
(Mother's Ex-husband - Died)

Ikuo (Eldest brother - Died)

Yoshiko (Eldest Sister)

Gorō (Michiko's Lover)

Mie (Second Sister)

Asami

Michiko

Sanehiro (Mie's Husband)

Furuichi (Sanehiro's Brother)

Mitsuko (Sanehiro's Sister)

Yasuo (Mitsuko's Husband)

Takehara Fusa (Mother)

Kimiko (Third Sister)

Takehara Akiyuki
(24 yo 'Misaki'; 26 yo *Karekinada*,
29 yo *Chi no hate, Shijō no toki*)

Noriko (Lover)

Hamamura Ryūzō (Real Father)

Tomiko (Eldest Daughter)

Yūichi (Eldest Son)

Hideo (Second Son)

Yoshie
(Real Father's wife)

Satoko (Step Sister)

Kinoe (Real Father's Lover)

Fumiaki (Eldest step brother
Shigezō's son by his former marriage)

Takehara Shigezō (Step Father)

Bunzō (Shigezō's Brother)

Yōichi (Cousin, adopted child)

Jinichirō (Shigezō's Brother)

Takashi (Cousin)

Tōru (Cousin)

Yuki (Shigezō's Eldest Sister)

The impact of study abroad on Japanese language learners' social networks

Rikki Campbell
Monash University

Abstract

Study abroad is commonly believed to be an ideal environment for second language acquisition to take place, due to the increased opportunities for interaction with native speakers that it is considered to offer. However, several studies have challenged these beliefs, finding that study abroad students were disappointed with the degree of out-of-class interaction they had with native speakers. It is therefore important to gain an understanding of the study abroad context and the factors that promote and constrain opportunities for second language (L2) interaction.

This paper examines the complexities behind six Japanese language learners' interaction and social relationships with native speakers through analysis of their social networks before, during, and after a study abroad period in Japan. It also compares the networks that were formed in an urban and a regional setting in Australia. The paper concludes with a discussion of the benefits of study abroad and offers several implications for foreign language teaching and study abroad program development.

Keywords

Study abroad, social networks, Japanese learners, L2 interaction

Introduction

It is commonly believed that one of the best ways to learn a foreign or second language is to develop friendships with native speakers and to communicate with them using that language.[1] There is also a widespread belief that students studying abroad will be immersed in the target language and culture, providing ample opportunities to meet and interact with native speakers.[2] Study abroad is therefore considered an ideal environment for second language acquisition (SLA) to take place. However, several studies now exist that have challenged these common beliefs, and thus there is a need for further research into the study abroad context, and how it impacts learners' interaction with native speakers once they return to their home country.

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1   Kurata, 'Foreign Language Learning and Use', p. 6.
2   Segalowitz & Freed, 'Context, Contact and Cognition', p. 174.

A possible means of examining the complexities behind students' interaction and social relationships with native speakers is through analysis of their social networks, which Milroy defines as 'the informal social relationships contracted by an individual'.[3] An increasing number of studies investigating social network development in study abroad contexts now exist.[4] Kurata has also examined changes in learners' social networks that occurred after various sojourns in Japan.[5] However, her participants were not limited to study abroad students, and, consequently, the nature of the study abroad experience and its impact was not explored.

The current study thus focuses on the following research questions:

a) What are the characteristics of Japanese language learners' networks before, during, and after study abroad?

b) What factors influence network development with native speakers whilst on study abroad?

c) How does the study abroad experience impact Japanese language learners' social networks and interaction with native speakers once they return to their home country?

Literature Review

Although a comprehensive review is beyond the scope of this paper, the following sections briefly introduce relevant findings firstly pertaining to study abroad, and then regarding language learners' social networks.

One area of particular interest in the study abroad literature is the role that learner interaction with native speakers has in cultivating language proficiency.[6] Whilst Lapkin *et al.*,[7] Regan,[8] Isabelli-Garcia[9] and Hernandez[10] have found that interaction

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3   Milroy, 'Language and social networks', p. 178.
4   See for example, Kato & Tanibe, 'Tanki ryuugakusei no gakushuu nettowaaku'; Pearson-Evans, 'Recording the journey: Diaries of Irish students in Japan'; Amuzie & Winke, 'Changes in language learning beliefs'; Ayano, 'Japanese students in Britain'; Isabelli-Garcia, 'Study Abroad: Social Networks, Motivation and Attitudes'.
5   Kurata, 'Communication networks of Japanese language learners and second language acquisition'.
6   See for example Segalowitz & Freed, *op. cit.*; Magnan & Back 'Social interaction and linguistic gain during study abroad'; Isabelli-Garcia, *op. cit.*
7   Lapkin *et al.*, 'A Canadian interprovincial exchange'.
8   Regan, 'The acquisition of sociolinguistic native speech norms'.
9   Isabelli-Garcia, *op. cit.*
10   Hernandez, 'The relationship among motivation, interaction, and the development of second language oral proficiency'.

with native speakers contributed to language gain, Freed,[11] Segalowitz & Freed,[12] and Magnan & Back[13] found that although a study abroad period could lead to gains in oral proficiency, it was not correlated with interaction with native speakers. However, these researchers have suggested that the duration of one semester or less was probably not long enough for their participants to significantly invest in the kind of social relationships that provide the interaction necessary to enhance SLA.

The issue of study abroad students grouping together with other students who share the same native language, and using their L1 to communicate, is also frequent in the study abroad literature.[14] Several of these studies have found that this impedes development of friendship with host nationals and also subsequent SLA.[15] Ayano discovered that for Japanese students studying abroad in Britain, it was difficult to establish closer relationships with British students whilst maintaining those with other Japanese students. She suggested two main reasons behind the problem: the lack of opportunity for developing relationships with native speakers, and too much density within the Japanese network.[16]

Several studies have also found that student dormitories, where study abroad students are often housed, are unsupportive of L2 use.[17] This environment usually offers students ample contact with other L1 speakers, which means that in the most extreme instance, students only use the target language during class and in limited circumstances outside of it.[18] Although many study abroad organisers also try to facilitate learners' native speaker interaction and socialisation into the target community through homestays, student disappointment in homestay experiences that did not offer extensive opportunities for linguistic and social interaction is frequent.[19]

Conversely, participants in several other studies claim that the homestay experience greatly contributed to their improvement in speaking skills in the target language.[20] Tanaka suggests that although the study abroad context offers greater opportunities for L2 interaction outside the classroom compared to at-home settings, 'it is up to the students whether they utilise the opportunities'.[21]

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11 Freed, *op. cit.*
12 Segalowitz & Freed, *op. cit.*
13 Magnan & Back, *op. cit.*
14 See for example Tanaka, 'Japanese students' contact with English outside the classroom'; Kato & Tanibe, *op. cit.*; Pearson-Evans, *op. cit.*; Amuzie & Winke, 'Changes in language learning beliefs'.
15 Kato & Tanibe, *op. cit.;* Pearson-Evans, *op. cit.*
16 Ayano, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
17 Rivers, 'Is Being There Enough?'; Mendelson, 'Hindsight Is 20/20'; Tanaka, *op. cit.*
18 Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 493.
19 Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 'The Homestay Component of Study Abroad'; Rivers, *op. cit.;* Isabelli-Garcia, *op. cit.;* Kinginger, 'Language learning in study abroad'.
20 Magnan & Back, *op. cit.;* Hernandez, *op. cit.*
21 Tanaka, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

A number of studies regarding Japanese learners' networks in Japan offer some interesting findings. It has been found that participation in a variety of activities will assist development of close and mutual relationships with native speakers.[22] Morofushi found that by participating in club activities, tutoring, and buddy systems offered by universities, exchange students in Japan generated mutual engagement with native speakers.[23] Kato and Tanibe also found that participation in university clubs was a key facilitator for network development, along with activities outside of university, such as homestays and short courses.[24]

Networks with compatriots, on the other hand, have been found to impede the establishment of networks with native speakers and subsequent improvement of Japanese language.[25] Pearson-Evans also found that whilst conational friends in Japan provided solidarity and support, this network reduced motivation to adjust to the host culture and was a 'stumbling block' for the pursuit of Japanese friends. However, when students did develop relationships with the Japanese, they acquired a deeper understanding of Japanese language and culture.[26]

Finally, Kurata has investigated the influence that a sojourn in Japan has on the various characteristics of Japanese language learners' networks in an Australian university setting.[27] She found that students' social networks after a sojourn were larger in size, included a wider variety of members with a multiplexity of relations and activity types. It was also found that students used Japanese more frequently within their social network after their sojourn and formed more equal relationships with their interactants. Furthermore, students in this study maintained contact with their networks in Japan, which provided valuable sources for friendship, Japanese language input and output, and also proved beneficial in dealing with difficulties in written Japanese.[28]

Although Kurata argues that an in-country experience therefore has a positive influence on learners' development and maintenance of social networks in both the abroad and home contexts, she does not address reasons behind these changes in depth. Thus, a deeper examination of learners' experiences whilst abroad could help gain a better understanding of which particular aspects of study abroad are most influential.

22   Umeda, 'Ukeire kikan o motanai hi-nihongo bogowasha no nettowāku zukuri'; Tomiya, 'Nihonjin to kekkonshita gaikokujin josei no nettowāku'.
23   Morofushi, 'Communities of practice and opportunities of developing language socialization', pp. 49-50.
24   Kato & Tanibe, 'Tanki ryūgakusei no gakushū nettowāku'.
25   *Ibid.*
26   Pearson-Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
27   Kurata, 'Communication networks of Japanese language learners and second language acquisition'.
28   *Ibid.*, p. 108.

The criteria of network analysis

In order to analyse Japanese language learners' social networks prior to, during, and after a study abroad period in Japan, I utilise Boissevain's[29] criteria for network analysis. Specifically, focus will be placed on:

Structural criteria:

1) Network size – the total number of links in a network;

2) Density – measurement of the potential communication between the individual network participants;

Interactional criteria:

3) Multiplexity – diversity of links or 'role relations' within a network that arise from participation in a number of different activity fields;

4) Frequency and duration of interaction – indication of the investment of the people in the relation.

As this research focuses on L2 learners, attention will also be given to two additional criteria that are not covered in Boissevain's framework: 5) language of interaction and 6) channels for interaction.

Methodology

Informants

The informants in the present study consist of six Japanese language learners who have studied Japanese to the intermediate-advanced level. Two informants, Luke and Alice, attended a university in regional New South Wales, and the remaining four informants attended an urban university in Melbourne, Victoria. The intermediate-advanced level was chosen as students should have the proficiency necessary to engage in interactive contact outside the classroom.[30]

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29   Boissevain, 'Friends of friends'.
30   Freed, 'Language learning in a study abroad context', p. 465.

Table 1 below outlines the backgrounds of the informants in further detail. Attention must be drawn to the fact that whilst the informants from the university in Melbourne all returned from their study abroad period in 2010, the informants from the regional university, Alice and Luke, returned in 2006 and 2009 respectively. In the original study, Alice's data was discussed in terms of two intervals: two years and five years post-study abroad. Due to space limitations however, only her two-year data will be discussed in this article. Luke experienced nine months of full time work in Japan prior to commencing university, and his case presents a longitudinal example of how networks may evolve over repeated visits to Japan.

Table 1 – Informant background

	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice	Luke
Age	25	21	23	21	26	23
Gender	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female	Male
Ethnicity and other languages spoken at home	Born in Australia to Cambodian parents, speaks Cambodian at home	Born in Australia to Vietnamese mother and Chinese father, speaks English at home	Caucasian Australian, speaks English at home	Korean-Australian (migrated to Australia when 10), speaks Korean at home	Caucasian Australian, speaks English at home	Caucasian Australian, speaks English at home
Australian university	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban	Regional	Regional
Approximate length and level of formal Japanese study prior to study abroad	• Two years at university • Lower intermediate (Japanese 4[1])	• Two years at university • Lower intermediate (Japanese 4)	• VCE and one and a half years at university • Upper intermediate (Japanese 7)	• One year at university • Upper intermediate (Japanese 8)	• One year at TAFE and one and a half years at university • Lower intermediate (Japanese 3)	• Six months intensive course in Japan (two nights per week) and one private lesson per week • One and a half years at university • Intermediate (Japanese 5)

Length and purpose of trips to Japan prior to study abroad	• Nil	• 2006 Two week high school study trip	• 2003 Three week holiday with family	• Nil	• 1999 Two week cultural exchange programme	• 1999 Two week soccer tour in Saitama • 2006-2007 Nine months working at Wedding Company
Details of study abroad program in Japan	• One year 2009-2010 (4th year of university) • University in Osaka	• One year 2009-2010 (3rd year of university) • University in Saitama	• One year 2009-2010 (2nd year of university) • Female only university in Tokyo	• One year 2009-2010 (2nd year of university) • University in Tokyo	• One year 2005-2006 (2nd year of university) • University in Hiroshima	• One year 2008-2009 (2nd year of university) • University in Hiroshima
Relevant informant history post study abroad	• 2010-2011 Japanese 9, 10 & 11, full time student at Australian university	• 2010 Three week travel with group of four friends in Japan • 2010-2011 Full time student at Australian university but no longer studying Japanese	• 2011 Japanese 11, full time student at Australian university	• 2010 Japanese 12 & Advanced reading at Australian university • 2011 Five days individual travel in Japan • 2011 Full time student at Australian university but no longer studying Japanese	• 2007-2009 Japanese 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8 at Australian university • 2010 Three months working at an information desk at Ski Resort in Nagano • 2011 Currently working, no longer studying at university	• 2009-2010 Japanese 7 & 8 at Australian university • 2010-2011 Three months individual travel in Japan • 2011 Currently working, no longer studying at university

1 Each level represents one semester of study at university; Japanese 1 is the lowest and Japanese 12 the highest.

Background questionnaire

Prior to interviewing the informants, they were required to complete a simple questionnaire to provide basic personal information as well as details about their Japanese language learning history and visits to Japan.

Semi-structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews were carried out in order to obtain detailed information about the characteristics of informants' social networks and their study abroad experience. The questions were designed to elicit information concerning out-of-class interaction with Japanese speakers before, during, and after the study abroad experience in Japan, and to gain an understanding of the time they spent abroad and how this influenced their behaviour and beliefs. The interviews were approximately one hour in length, carried out in English and were audio-recorded and transcribed soon after completion.

Data Analysis

In the initial stages of data analysis, transcripts of the interviews were analysed for observable themes and reoccurring patterns to generate possible categories for coding the informants' out-of-class interaction and network development. These emerged from the data as well as previous literature, and included categories such as 'context for network development' and 'features of social interaction'. Comparative analysis of the informants' data was then employed to examine the factors relating to the informants' network development. This helped determine which factors were more generalisable, and which were more idiosyncratic in nature. Finally, Boissevain's[31] model of social network analysis was used as a framework to guide the analysis and discussion of the informants' networks prior to, during, and after study abroad.

Results

The following sections introduce the characteristics of the six informants' social networks with native Japanese speakers before, during, and after their study abroad period in Japan. As outlined in the methodology, prior to his study abroad experience, Luke had spent nine months living and working in Japan. The significant impact on his subsequent networks in both Australia and Japan means his data cannot be directly compared to the other informants and will thus be discussed as a separate case study.

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31 Boissevain, *op. cit.*

Characteristics of social networks pre-study abroad

Structural Characteristics

The informants' networks pre-study abroad are depicted in Figures 1, 2 and 3 below. Gender is indicated with a double-lined box for male, and single-lined box for female. The figures also indicate the relationships between the informants and their network participants, or the activity fields where they first met.

Introduced through university study abroad coordinator

Risa

SUSAN

Michiko

Introduced through an Australian friend

Susan's network in Australia pre-study abroad

Met at university enrolment day

Miki

HANNAH

Aki

Went to same high school

Hannah's network in Australia pre-study abroad

ADAM

Chiya

Previous homestay sister in Japan

Adam's network in Japan pre-study abroad

Figure 1 – Urban university informants' networks pre-study abroad
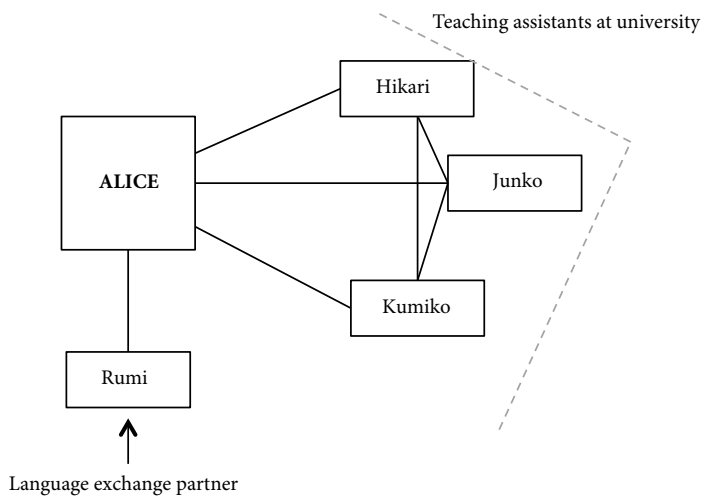
Figure 2 – Alice's network in Australia pre-study abroad
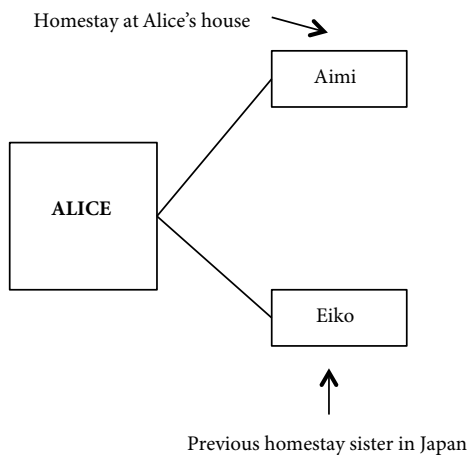
Figure 3 – Alice's network in Japan pre-study abroad

As can be seen, the informants' networks pre-study abroad were relatively small (Steve had zero network participants). Whilst it was anticipated that informants living in a city with a greater Japanese population would have larger Japanese networks than the regional informants, it was actually an informant from the regional university, Alice, who had the largest number of network participants. A key difference in opportunities for network development is that students at the regional university appear to establish closer relationships with their Japanese teaching assistants.

Alice's network in Australia was also denser than those of the urban informants', and she mentioned that her interaction generally occurred within a group of teaching assistants and students. She also had a language exchange partner, however, which indicates that she had opportunities for one-on-one communication. The sparseness of the urban informants' networks indicates that their interaction would occur as one-on-one communication.

Interactional Characteristics

In terms of 'multiplexity', data revealed that the social relations most informants had with native speakers prior to their study abroad were uniplex, that is, covered a single role as friend. For Alice, however, the teaching assistants were key persons in her network and held two different social roles concurrently, as language tutors and as friends.

The frequency of contact between the informants and their network participants in Australia is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Frequency of interaction with network participants in Australia pre-study abroad

Frequency	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
More than once a week	-	-	0	1	0
Once a week	-	-	0	0	1
Two or three times a month	-	-	1	0	3
Once a month	-	-	0	0	0
Several times a year	-	-	1	1	0
Rarely	-	-	0	0	0

It can be seen that the informants who had native speaker network participants in Australia all interacted with at least one of them several times a month or more. Analysis of the interview data indicates that regular routine and locational proximity are two factors likely to impact frequency of interaction. Furthermore, Adam and Alice both indicated that they interacted with their network participants in Japan several times a year.

Table 3 shows how long, on average, the informants spent with their network participants in Australia when they came into contact with them prior to study abroad. Each of these informants met with at least one of their network participants for one to two hours or more, indicating substantial engagement.

Table 3 – Duration of interaction with network participants in Australia pre-study abroad

No. of network participants	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
< Thirty minutes	-	-	0	1	0
Thirty minutes – one hour	-	-	0	0	0
One hour-two hours	-	-	2	1	1
Two hours-three hours	-	-	0	0	3
> Three hours	-	-	0	0	0

Concerning channels for interaction, Susan and Alice only mentioned having face-to-face interaction with their network members in Australia prior to study abroad, whilst Hannah also mentioned having Facebook contact with her friend from high school. As shown in Table 4 below, there was a trend to use either half English-half Japanese, or more English when conversing with the majority of network participants. For Susan and Hannah, this appeared to be reflective of their lack of confidence in using Japanese.

Table 4 – Language use with network participants in Australia pre-study abroad

Language used	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
Both always used Japanese	-	-	0	1	0
Both mostly used Japanese	-	-	0	0	0
Both used half-half	-	-	0	1	1
Both mostly used English	-	-	2	0	3
Both always used English	-	-	0	0	0

In regards to networks in Japan, Adam only interacted with his network participant via emails written in Japanese. Alice interacted with her two network participants in Japan via emails and letters, however these were written primarily in English. Alice explained that this was because English was the language their relationships were based on, as she had met both of these people before she commenced her Japanese studies.

Network development during study abroad

Contexts for network development

During their study abroad periods in Japan, it seems that the informants' opportunities for network development with native speakers were concentrated around several key contexts; student dormitory, homestay, university tutor system, university classes, and university clubs/circles.[32]

During their time abroad, Steve and Susan both lived in dormitories housing Japanese and international students, whilst Adam, Hannah and Alice lived in dormitories exclusively for international students. The latter informants' opportunities for meeting native speakers were immediately constrained by institutional rules regarding who could reside in the dormitory, which meant that they only developed foreigner networks in this domain. Furthermore, the data indicates that because study abroad students all share a similar situation, they have an instant rapport, which meant that it was much easier for the informants to develop friendships with other study abroad students compared to Japanese native speakers. Susan commented that she hardly ever saw her two Japanese neighbours, and although Steve claimed to make two Japanese friends in the dormitory, most of his time was spent with the other study abroad students.

Adam, Steve and Alice participated in short-term homestays during their study abroad. For Steve, the homestay experience appears an important factor in his network development with native Japanese speakers, and he remained in contact with his homestay family at the time of the interview. Adam mentioned that he did not maintain contact with his family as they did not have internet access. Alice commented that she 'got put with a really really old family and it was just strange', and did not maintain contact with them either.

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32   An extra-curricular 'circle' in Japan is similar to a club, however less serious or competitive in nature.

Steve and Alice both participated in a tutoring system that was offered by their universities. Steve commented that 'their role was to mainly help you with your Japanese work. But sometimes you didn't have any work that you needed help with, so you just talked, or we'd have coffee'. For both of these informants, it appears that this type of program offers a beneficial starting point for network development and interaction with local students as they both met other Japanese students through their tutors.

For study abroad students in Japan, two different types of classes are generally offered by universities: Japanese language classes, and other 'regular' classes open to local and study abroad students. Whilst Adam, Alice and Steve claimed to make several local student friends from regular classes, Hannah and Susan did not enrol in any classes with local students and so did not have any opportunities for network development in this domain.

With the exception of Steve, all of the informants took part in university club or circle activities with the goal of making native speaker friends and accessing opportunities to use Japanese. These activities were especially important for Hannah and Susan, as this was where they appeared to make all of their native speaker friends and was their primary source for Japanese interaction. Susan mentioned that she received 'the impression that Japanese people don't even make friends outside their circle… it really tended to be that your circle or your club was like your social group'.

Structural Characteristics

The informants indicated that it was very difficult to recall the names of all the local students they were in contact with during their time abroad, making it impossible to give entire network figures. In terms of density, however, a few trends emerged.

Firstly, participation in clubs/circles led to the development of especially dense sections of networks. The informants claimed to interact exclusively within the club/circle and did not meet up outside of those events, indicating the high frequency of group interaction. Whilst Alice and Steve claimed to interact with their tutors one-on-one, Steve mentioned that it was common for many of the study abroad students and their tutors to have lunch together on campus.

Compared to the local student networks, however, the foreigner networks developed during their study abroad period had exceptionally high density. Alice, for example, stated that because they lived together and attended the same classes, study abroad students are 'constantly lumped together, and it's really difficult to break out of that

social group'. The high density of the foreigner networks may have impacted the degree to which they engaged with Japanese native speakers, reflecting the findings of Ayano.[33]

Interactional Characteristics

Whilst Hannah only seemed to develop uniplex relationships with her local friends in Japan, it appears that the majority of informants managed to develop at least some relationships with local students that were multiplex in nature. Steve, for example, held multiplex roles with one network participant as classmate, close friend, and travel companion. He also had a part-time job in the international building at university, where he knew Riko as one of the exchange program staff, as well as his boss. Adam developed one local relationship through another international student, and this local friend then became a classmate whom he would often see outside of class.

It appears that increased frequency and duration of interaction with network participants whilst in Japan was important for the development of more meaningful relationships. Susan, for example, indicated it was because she saw her Tennis Circle members frequently that she developed friendships she still maintains today. In contrast, Alice explained that the class-like, rigid structure the Basketball Club applied to their events and members' social lives 'did not click' for her and, because she had other social engagements, her attendance diminished over time.

Hannah stated that she felt as though she was really bonding with the other members of the *Shamisen*[34] Circle during the longer periods of time spent together after going to a *nomikai*,[35] talking in a relaxed atmosphere. Furthermore, Hannah and Steve both mentioned that it seems to take a lot longer to establish friendships with Japanese than it does with Westerners. This supports Neustupný's claim that a more intimate level of friendship with the Japanese 'can only be entered on the basis of a long and well-established contact'.[36]

During the study abroad period, it appears that whilst the informants' primary means of interaction with native speakers was face-to-face, the use of mobile phones was also common. Adam commented that 'emailing or texting was always a big part of the Japanese youth culture', and all of the informants except Hannah claimed to utilise such channels with their network participants in Japanese.

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33 Ayano, *op. cit.*
34 Japanese string instrument.
35 Drinking party.
36 Neustupný, 'Communicating with the Japanese', p. 49.

Examination of the data indicates that language use with native Japanese speakers varied from informant to informant. Hannah and Susan both used Japanese exclusively with their Japanese network participants, and Adam also tried to use predominantly Japanese. Steve also claimed to use predominantly Japanese, with the exception of two network participants who practiced English with him and used half English, half Japanese. Alice however had a different experience, as outlined in her interview excerpt below:

> 'I thought that I would have to speak Japanese to get by but it just did not work like that… I think I tried for the first few months [to use Japanese with native speakers], like I tried really hard but then I just stopped fighting it. Because you know I just realised that I'm there for a year, I really should be able to get something out of this'.

Alice's tutor always spoke to her in English, and she also explained that whilst the 'regular' classes afforded opportunities for network expansion, because they 'could be run in either English or in Japanese, a lot of the kids in there were pretty heavily into studying English'.

In regards to the foreigner networks that existed, a recurring theme was that English was generally used when interacting with students of Western countries, and Japanese was used when interacting with students from Asian countries. Adam frequently socialised in a small group with a Korean and Chinese friend who also lived in the dormitory, where they only used Japanese as this was the stronger language between them. Susan and Hannah, however, indicated that the majority of their foreign friends were more comfortable with using English and that it was important to be able to truly express their emotions in their native language.

Characteristics of social networks post-study abroad

The following section gives details of the characteristics of the informants' social networks post-study abroad. As the informants have spent different durations of time post-study abroad, however, this must be taken into consideration when interpreting results.

Structural Characteristics

The size of the informants' networks post-study abroad is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Number of Japanese network participants post-study abroad

	Steve	**Adam**	**Susan**	**Hannah**	**Alice**
University	Urban	Urban	Urban	Urban	Regional
Time post study abroad	1 year	1 year	6 months	1 year	2 years
Network participants in Australia	3	1	1	3	6
Network participants in Japan	11	3	7	6	1
Total	14	4	8	9	7

As expected, all of the informants' social networks with Japanese people increased in size after their study abroad. Whilst informants' networks in Australia did not appear to increase as much as anticipated, there was a significant increase in the number of network participants in Japan, which were primarily facilitated through their study abroad experiences. Alice is an exception, however, claiming that whilst she tried to maintain contact with the friends she made on study abroad initially, 'it never really stuck'. She made most of her close Japanese friends after she returned from study abroad, and although she no longer has the largest total network size post-study abroad, she still has the largest number of network participants in Australia, despite being at a regional university with a smaller local Japanese community.

Alice observed that the small number of Japanese students at this university meant they 'kind of needed to expand their group but still keep it somewhat comfortable'. Furthermore, the high density within the native speakers meant, in the case of Alice's conversation partner, that 'she just needed someone she could vent to without having to worry about the other Japanese finding out'. It therefore appears that because the Japanese community at the regional university was so small, it may have been more important for native speakers to seek out non-Japanese interactants, thus enhancing opportunities for Japanese learners to develop native speaker networks.

The interview data suggests that there are a number of different contexts for learners to meet Japanese native speakers at the urban university, however, that students' individual situations impacts the degree in which they utilise these opportunities. Adam

mentioned that post-study abroad he doesn't use as much Japanese as he'd like to, and that if he were still studying Japanese, he would make more effort to interact with native speakers outside the classroom.

Furthermore, Steve and Susan both mentioned that they were busy with other commitments. However, Susan did sign up for the university language exchange program, which offers her opportunities to use Japanese outside the classroom. Hannah also appears to have a higher level of L2 commitment than the other informants. She stated that post-study abroad, 'I started to be very active in Japanese community, in small meetings, seminars, I tried to engage as much as possible'. She also facilitated the commencement of a Japanese-English conversation group that is held weekly at the university and also attends a conversation club in the city, where there are people that she regularly meets but does not contact outside of club hours.

Figure 4 below depicts the urban university informants' networks with Japanese native speakers in Australia post-study abroad.

Adam's network in Australia post-study abroad

Steve's network in Australia post-study abroad

Susan's network in Australia post-study abroad

Hannah's network in Australia post-study abroad
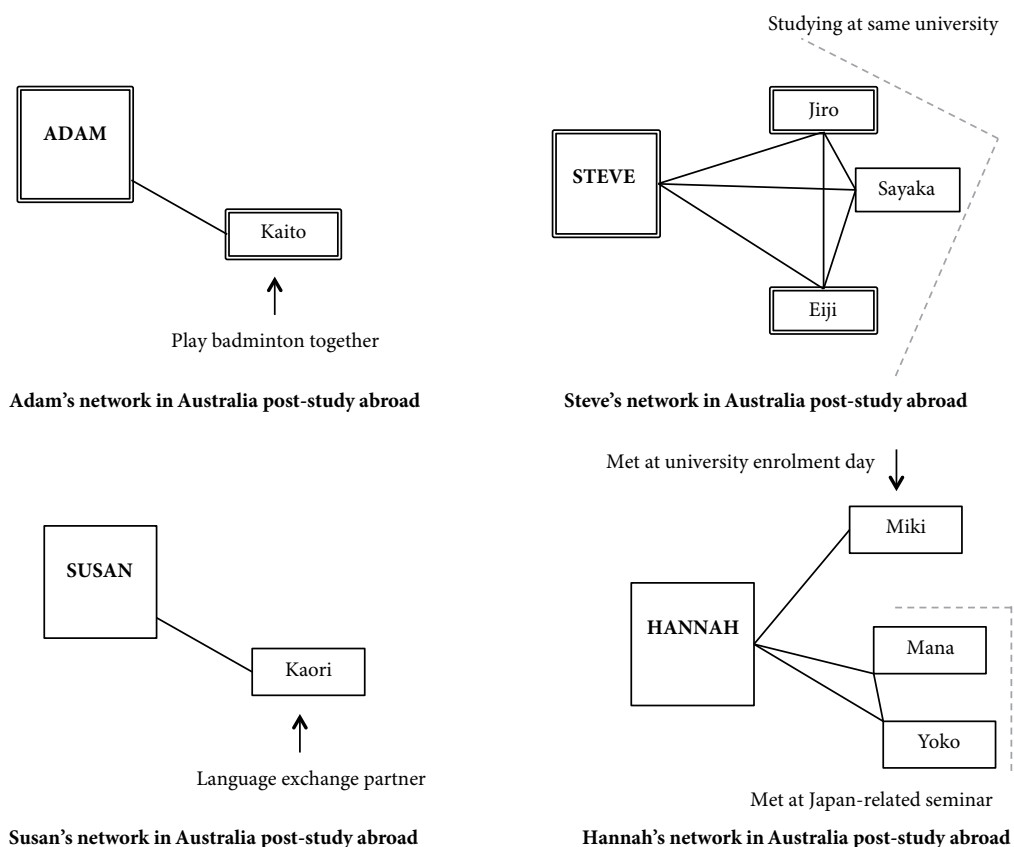
Figure 4 – Urban university informants' networks in Australia post-study abroad

Whilst Adam and Susan's networks remain sparse and only offer opportunities for one-on-one interaction, two of Hannah's network participants knew each other, as did all of Steve's, indicating a higher likelihood of group interaction that they did not have access to pre-study abroad. As depicted in Figure 5 below, Alice developed a relatively dense network after she returned to Australia. Maya appeared to be a key person in Alice's network development, as she 'just kept meeting Japanese people through her'. It therefore appears that in regional areas where the Japanese communities seem to be particularly dense and tight-knit, forming a relationship with one key person may initiate quite rapid association with a number of other contacts.
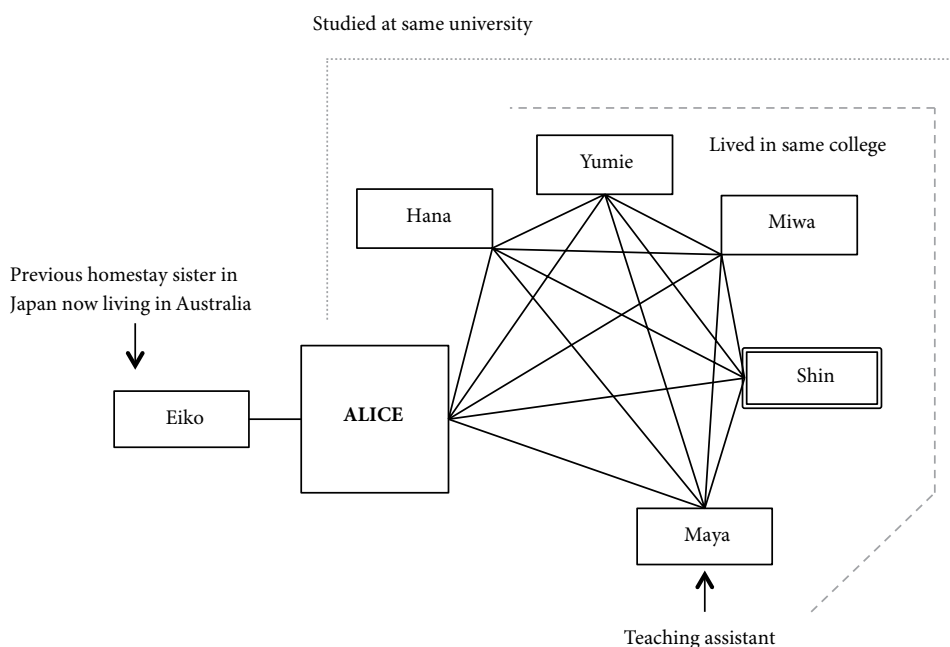
Figure 5 – Alice's network in Australia post-study abroad

Hannah's, Steve's and Susan's networks in Japan post-study abroad are shown in Figure 6, 7, and 8 respectively. For each of these informants, the study abroad period enabled them to develop and maintain dense networks with native speakers in Japan that they did not have beforehand.
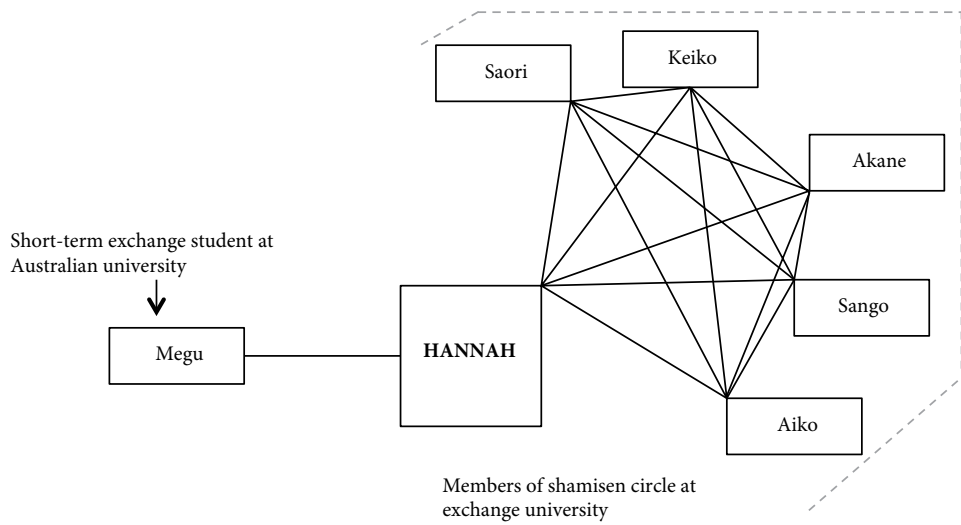
Figure 6 – Hannah's network in Japan post-study abroad
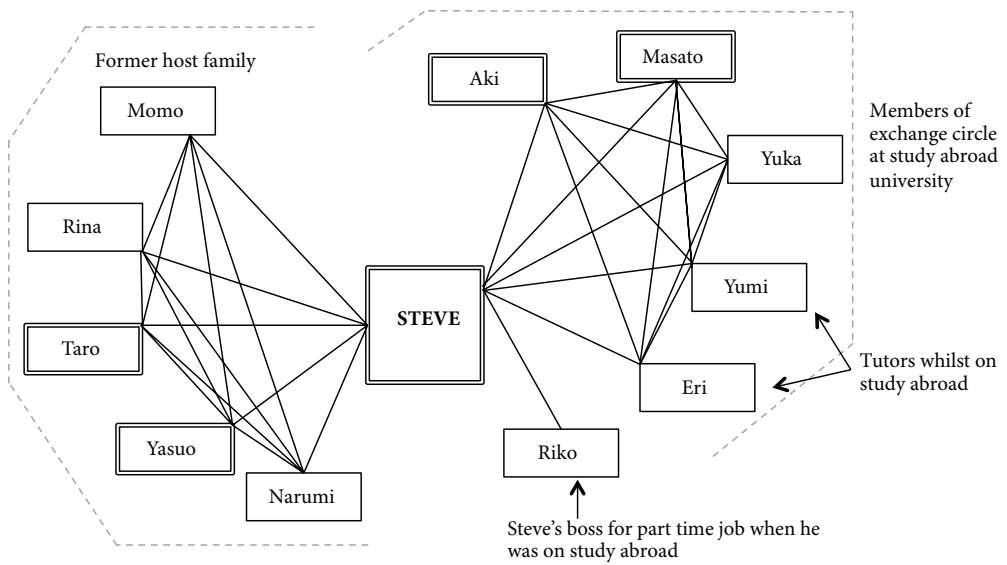
Figure 7 – Steve's network in Japan post-study abroad
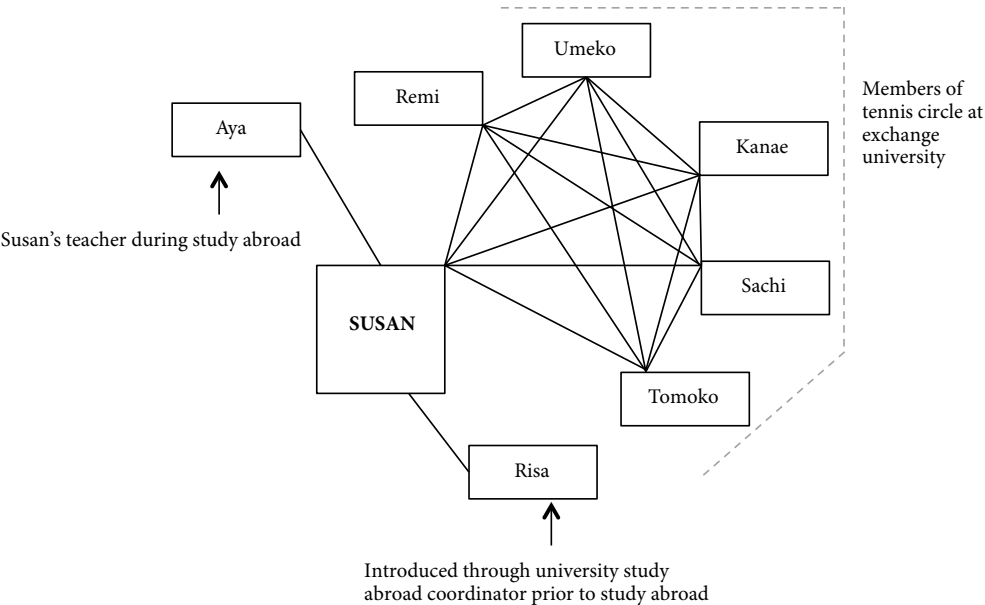
Figure 8 – Susan's network in Japan post-study abroad

However, Adam and Alice only maintained contact with a small number of people in Japan. Their networks in Japan post-study abroad appear to remain sparse, and of similar configuration to their pre-study abroad networks, as shown in Figure 9 and Figure 10 below.
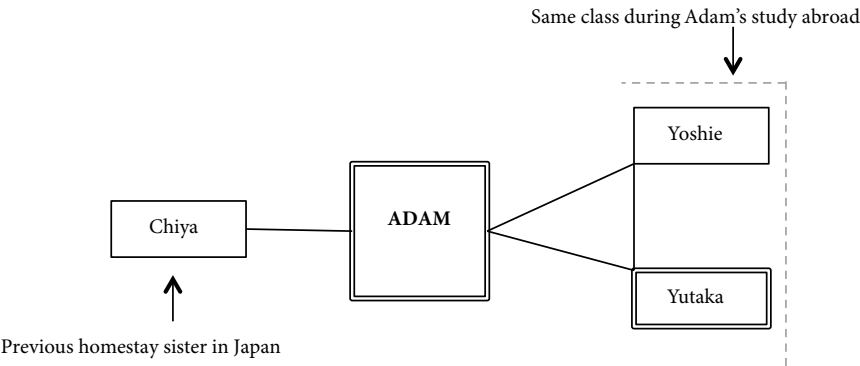
Figure 9 – Adam's network in Japan post-study abroad

Homestay at Alice's house

Aimi
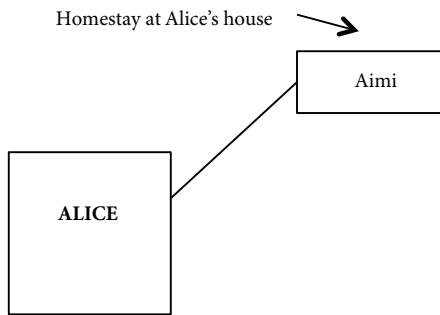
ALICE

Figure 10 – Alice's network in Japan post-study abroad

Interactional Characteristics

With the exception of Alice, the social relationships developed with native speakers in Australia post-study abroad appear to remain uniplex. As previously shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5, the majority of the informants' relationships were formed within the university setting with fellow students. Adam, Hannah and Steve's network participants only appeared to have the social role of friend or acquaintance, whilst Susan's network participant was a language exchange partner. Four of Alice's network participants held multiplex roles of close friend and neighbour, and one also held simultaneous roles of close friend, neighbour, and teaching assistant. The other informants however, maintained contact with network participants in Japan who had multiplex roles, which suggests an affordance offered by the study abroad environment that may be more difficult to achieve in Australia.

As shown in Table 6 below, with the exclusion of Hannah, all of the informants have more frequent contact with their network participants post-study abroad than they did pre-study abroad.

Table 6 – Frequency of interaction with network participants in Australia post-study abroad

Number of friends	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
More than once a week	0	0	0	0	5
Once a week	3	0	1	0	0
Two or three times a month	0	1	0	0	0
Once a month	0	0	0	0	0
Several times a year	0	0	0	3	1
Rarely	0	0	0	0	0

Hannah explained that she now meets one of her network participants from pre-study abroad times less frequently, as they no longer attend the same university campus. Alice claimed to meet her network participants the most frequently, which may have been facilitated by the fact that the majority of them lived in the same university residence. This suggests the advantage of locational proximity for more frequent contact, as described in Tooby & Cosmides.[37]

As shown in Table 7 below, the most frequent duration of interaction was for between one and three hours, which shows a general increase compared to the pre-study abroad duration of contact. Alice is shown to have had interaction with one of her network participants for less than thirty minutes at a time, however, a lack of proximity meant this interaction was via letters or emails.

Table 7 – Duration of interaction with network participants in Australia post-study abroad

No. of network participants	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
< Thirty minutes	0	0	0	0	1
Thirty minutes- one hour	0	0	0	0	0
One hour- two hours	0	0	1	3	0
Two hours- three hours	0	1	0	0	2
> Three hours	3	0	0	0	3

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37 Tooby & Cosmides, 'Friendship and the banker's paradox', p. 136.

With the exclusion of Alice, the informants' frequency of interaction with network participants in Japan is also significantly higher post-study abroad.

Table 8 – Frequency of interaction with network participants in Japan post-study abroad

Number of friends	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
More than once a week	0	0	0	1	0
Once a week	0	0	3	4	0
Two or three times a month	4	2	0	0	0
Once a month	0	0	2	1	0
Several times a year	6	1	1	0	1
Rarely	1	0	0	0	0

The overall consensus was that the informants' contact was more frequent with most of their network participants in Japan immediately after they returned from study abroad, and gradually became less frequent. The majority of the informants claim to interact with their network participants in Japan equally or less frequently than those in Australia, which may be due to easier access to local networks.

The varying nature of interaction with network participants in Japan limits a comparison of the duration of interaction with these network participants. Table 9 below, however, indicates the wide range of channels for interaction utilised for maintaining contact.

Table 9 – Channels for interaction with network participants in Japan post-study abroad

Type of activity	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
Only email	0	0	1	1	0
Only letter	1	0	0	0	0
Only Facebook	0	1	2	0	0
Letters and emails	0	0	0	0	1
Facebook and twitter	0	0	0	4	0

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Facebook and letters	0	0	0	1	0
Facebook and email	0	0	3	0	0
Facebook and Skype chat	0	2	0	0	0
Facebook, email and Skype chat	5	0	0	0	0
Facebook, email and letters	5	0	0	0	0

Although Alice only maintained contact via emails and letters, the other informants claimed to make use of CMC, including Facebook and Skype. Compared with the informants' channels for interaction pre-study abroad, it can be seen that the study abroad period may have offered a gateway into L2 online interaction with native Japanese speakers.

Facebook appears to be the most common channel for interaction amongst the informants, not only with Japanese network participants, but also with study abroad peers. In the past half-decade, Facebook has quickly risen as a social service utilised by university students for both the maintenance and development of a range of social ties.[38] Hannah explained that being on Facebook means 'keeping in contact with people, not necessarily talking to them for a long time'. As the informants are highly likely to be using Facebook to interact with other people locally, and throughout the world, this may incidentally lead to maintenance of contact with Japanese network participants. The dynamics of Facebook therefore merit further investigation that was beyond the scope of this study.

In regards to the informants' interaction with network participants in Australia post-study abroad, it was primarily, if not exclusively, face-to-face. Alice was the only informant to mention utilising any other channel for interaction, which included phone calls, text messages, emails and Facebook.

All of the informants indicated that they returned from study abroad with a higher level of confidence in both themselves and their Japanese abilities. Hannah for example explained:

> 'I guess I feel more comfortable about how to approach a Japanese person, what kind of phrases or level of politeness I need to use. I mean if you feel confident in the language, the more comfortable you feel to interact with the person from that country'.

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38   Ellison *et al.,* "The benefits of facebook "friends"".

This also relates to the reoccurring theme of improved sociolinguistic and cultural competence, which meant the informants were better able to relate to Japanese students in Australia once they returned.

The informants' language use with their network participants in Australia is also shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10 – Language use with network participants in Australia post-study abroad

Language used	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
Both always used Japanese	0	0	0	3	4
Both mostly used Japanese	0	0	0	0	0
Both used half-half	0	0	1	0	0
Both mostly used English	3	1	0	0	1
Both always used English	0	0	0	0	1

All of the informants use more Japanese within their networks post-study abroad. Steve however stated that 'if Japanese have come to Australia, especially to learn English… I try to use English, unless they want to speak to me in Japanese'. Alice also claimed to leave the language choice up to her interactants for the same reason, however, the majority of her network participants preferred to use Japanese with her.

The data shown in Table 11 below, however, indicates that Steve, Adam, and Hannah claimed to maintain contact with their network participants in Japan using only Japanese, as did Susan for all but one of her network participants. In this case, Susan explained that because her interactant emailed her in English, she would also respond in English.

Table 11 – Language use with network participants in Japan post-study abroad

Language used	Steve	Adam	Susan	Hannah	Alice
Both always used Japanese	11	3	6	6	0
Both mostly used Japanese	0	0	0	0	0
Both used half-half	0	0	0	0	1
Both mostly used English	0	0	0	0	0
Both always used English	0	0	1	0	0

A case study of a frequent sojourner: Luke

Luke offers an interesting addition to the other five informants as he has made multiple sojourns in Japan. The following sections will trace his network development with native Japanese speakers over four different periods.

Period 1: Working in Japan

It appears that Luke's experience working at a wedding company in Japan had a significant impact on his networks with native speakers. During this period, his main network development was formed around two key domains: work and his homestay families. As Luke did not know any Japanese before this experience, it appears that his younger host sister and a work colleague had important multiplex roles. Both spoke minimal English and would help him with his Japanese, indicating roles of language tutor alongside host sister/colleague, and friend. Importantly, Luke did not mention having access to co-nationals, and stated: 'If I'd been in a situation like a study abroad where I was put like in the same situation as a bunch of foreign students, I would've gone and spoken English'.

Period 2: Post-working in Japan, pre-study abroad

Figure 11 below depicts Luke's network that he maintained in Japan after his working holiday. Luke claimed to maintain contact with his homestay family almost weekly via email and Skype, and with three of his workmates and three clients via email several times a year.
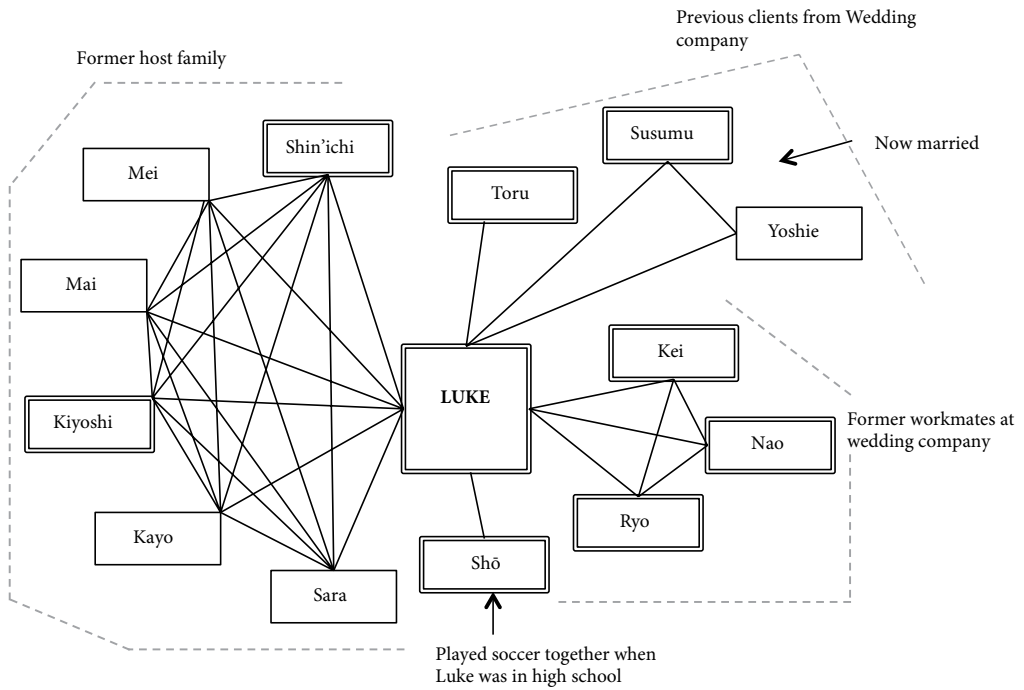
Figure 11 – Luke's network in Japan post-working holiday

Figure 12 below depicts the network that Luke developed in Australia after his return.
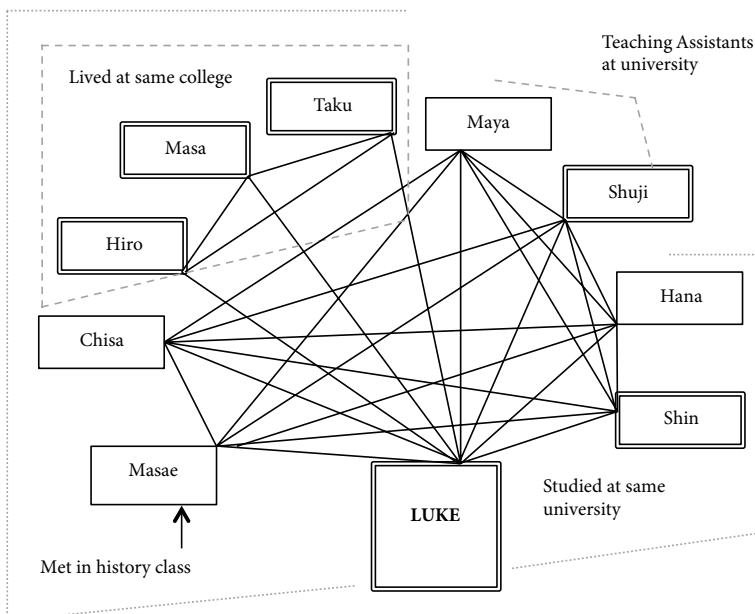

Figure 12 – Luke's network in Australia post-working holiday

It can be seen that the majority of his relationships were formed at his university, and the relatively high density of the regional university's Japanese community was, once again, a benefit. This meant that after an initial Japanese contact was made, many others were introduced to Luke through this key person. Like Alice, Luke also developed multiplex relationships with two of the Japanese teaching assistants at his university. Luke also mentioned that working in Japan taught him 'a lot about how to get along with Japanese people and communicate well', which may also explain why he developed a much broader network than Alice pre-study abroad.

Luke claimed to participate in a wide range of activities within his network, and to meet with all the network participants several times a week, for a duration of twenty minutes to several hours depending upon the activity. In terms of language usage, Luke would initially use English, but once his network participants knew he could speak Japanese, they tended to primarily use Japanese.

Although this network for Luke is considered pre-study abroad, it offers insight to the impact of an in-country experience in Japan, and thus more closely equates to the other informants' post-study abroad networks. The following two periods indicate how his networks in both Australia and Japan continued to change with subsequent sojourns.

Period 3: Study abroad

As Luke's study abroad experience was his second long-term sojourn in Japan, his experiences were somewhat different to those of the other informants. He indicated that having been to Japan before and being able to speak a fair amount of Japanese meant that he did not fall into the 'comfort zone' of primarily socialising with study abroad peers and using English. He stated: 'before I went on study abroad, I thought, "I'm going to go to Japan and study Japanese. I'm going to do my best to hang with Japanese and use as much Japanese as possible"'.

Luke indicated however that the dormitory was a major social setback during the study abroad period. Despite living amongst both local and international students, he said that the dormitory was a 'Japanese friend desert'. Furthermore, his classes were with other study abroad students, and he commented that 'the only way you could avoid sort of being in that situation where you're only speaking English is if you're rude and ignore everyone and don't hang out with them'.

Luke did, however, gain entrance into a Japanese social group quickly, and it appears that the support of the study abroad network was not as important for him as it was for the other informants. He claimed to socialise with six of his closest Japanese friends almost daily, often meeting in-between or after classes. One of these friendships developed into a romantic relationship, and Luke claimed to spend a significant amount of time at his girlfriend's house. He was the only informant to have a Japanese relationship of this nature, where his girlfriend was likely to hold multiple social roles.

Luke also played in a futsal league once a month, where he met two of his closest friends. However, he stated that 'they were so lazy they never turned up', and were thus 'friends outside of that'. Conversely, he said that although the Soccer Circle he joined 'trained and played together on weekends… those guys in that circle were sort of exclusively friends within soccer, not really outside'. Furthermore, Luke also claimed to receive phone calls and messages on his phone from his prior-homestay family, and visited them as well as his former colleagues and clients a few times during holidays.

With the exception of his girlfriend, therefore, it appears that the majority of Luke's relationships formed during study abroad were uniplex in nature. However, they all seem to be very close and mutual, which correlated with frequent and prolonged interaction. Whilst there was a general consensus amongst the other informants that it was 'easier to form relationships with other foreign students as opposed to working on getting relationships with Japanese people' (Alice), this did not appear to be the case with Luke. He stated that he did not feel there was 'too much difference in the nuances between Australian and Japanese people', and that during study abroad, he made two of the best friends he has ever had.

Period 4: Post-study abroad

As outlined in the methodology, Luke had just returned from a subsequent three-month holiday in Japan not long before his interview. Luke's current network maintained in Japan post-study abroad is shown in Figure 13 below.
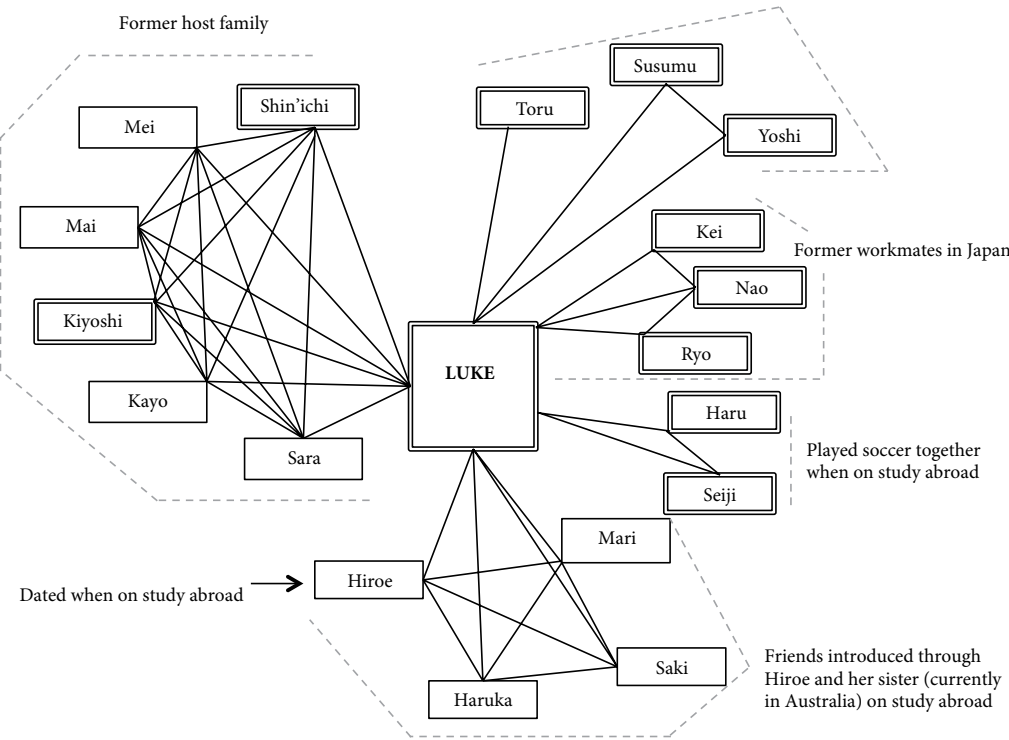
Figure 13 – Luke's network in Japan post-study abroad

It is evident that Luke has established a significantly large network in Japan maintained through frequent contact and repeated sojourns. He explained that 'it's got to the point now, when I'm in Australia it's not for extended periods of time, like I'm always itching to get back to Japan and meet up with those guys'. Looking back at Figure 12, however, it is interesting to note that Luke no longer maintains contact with any of the network participants he had at his Australian university, except for Maya who remains in Australia. Whilst he did not indicate the reason why, one explanation could be that he did not return to university after his study abroad. Another could be that perhaps the earlier relationships in Australia were due to locational convenience, whereas the ones developed during his sojourns in Japan were based more so on similar interests.

Figure 14 below indicates that Luke's current network in Australia is relatively small compared to that in Japan.
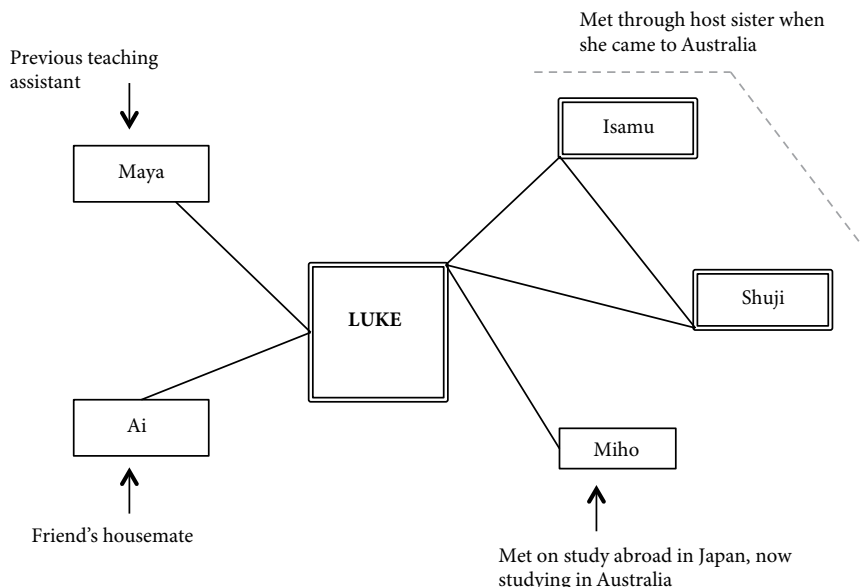
Figure 14 – Luke's network in Australia post-study abroad

This network is also less dense in nature, and each of the relationships are uniplex. Furthermore, it appears that Luke currently has less frequent interaction with these network participants than he does with the majority of his participants in Japan. When concluding his interview, Luke stated:

> 'I guess interaction with friends is a huge, a big part of my maintenance of Japanese. Especially Skype and talking on the phone, there's really no substitute for a conversation… if I've got any queries over certain grammar or any sort of Japanese questions I've always got those guys I can just send an email to or ask them on Skype "what's this mean?" or "is this right" or whatever'.

Luke's continued maintenance of contact with his former host family, work colleagues, and friendships developed in Japan reinforces the importance of utilising modern technology to maintain networks established whilst abroad. His case has exemplified how networks may evolve over time, and that they offer ongoing opportunities for friendship development and Japanese use and learning.

Concluding discussion

This study has investigated how characteristics of Japanese language learners' networks with native speakers differ before and after a study abroad period in Japan. Although the results show that the informants each offer unique cases, there were a few overall trends. Whilst all of the informants' total network size increased after their study abroad period, (with the exception of Luke after his first trip to Japan), their networks in Australia did not expand or increase in density as drastically as anticipated, and Susan's actually decreased in size. The urban informants' networks also appear to remain uniplex post-study abroad.

There was, however, an overall increase in informants' frequency and duration of interaction, as well as more frequent use of Japanese post-study abroad. It was also found that the informants' time spent in Japan lead to perceived increases in linguistic, sociolinguistic, and cultural competence, higher confidence in themselves and their Japanese capabilities, and greater empathy with Japanese students studying in Australia. These factors may have contributed to more effective Japanese interaction. However, all of the informants indicated that they respect the fact that Japanese students are in Australia to learn English, which sometimes compromised their degree of Japanese usage. Negotiation of language choice in interaction, therefore, appears to be an important factor for analysis, but was beyond the scope of this study.

Comparing this group of informants' post-study abroad networks to those of Kurata's[39] informants', it would seem that Luke's network in Australia post-working holiday may be more representative of students' returning from an in-country experience. It could be due to various individual factors such as discontinuation of Japanese study, or prioritisation of other commitments, that the other informants' networks did not expand as much as one would expect. All of the informants' current networks in Japan, however, are considerably larger than pre-study abroad, which is one of the most significant findings of this study.

The network participants in Japan were found to provide ongoing sources for Japanese interaction through a wide range of channels including letters, email, Skype and Facebook, which the majority of informants were not exposed to pre-study abroad. Technology therefore plays a crucial role in the maintenance of learner's ongoing overseas networks, and lessens the impact of geographical distance. This is particularly important for students who do not develop extensive networks in Australia.

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39   Kurata, 'Communication networks of Japanese language learners'.

Interestingly, the regional informants were found to have larger, denser, and more multiplex networks, as well as more frequent and prolonged contact with native Japanese speakers than the informants from the urban university. Comments from the informants and personal observations of the researcher suggest that this may be due to the smaller, close-knit Japanese community that exists at the regional university. It could also relate to the culture within the Japanese program, where the smaller community and more informal role of 'teaching assistant' led to different out-of-class behaviour by the teaching assistants.

Furthermore, as individuals are considered to have a limited number of 'slots' to fill within their active network,[40] it could be suggested that in a multicultural city like Melbourne, Japanese native speakers may fill these slots with other native speakers first, and only have minimal vacancies for Japanese learners. When compared to the context of the regional university, this social factor may make it more challenging for urban Japanese learners to enter the Japanese community. However, due to the small sample size, the regional urban contrast may represent entirely individual differences, and should not be generalized.

This study also sheds light on the social factors influencing network development with native speakers whilst on study abroad. Classes with local students, university tutor systems, homestays and participation in university club/circles all afforded opportunities for network development. More frequent and prolonged interaction and participation in a wide range of activities also seemed to assist development of more mutual and multiplex friendships. Student dormitories, classes specifically for international students, and highly dense foreigner networks on the other hand were all found to constrain opportunities for network development with native speakers. Whilst the cohesion of the study abroad group may have impacted the informants' network development with native speakers, it also seemed to provide solidarity and support for the informants in a foreign environment. Interestingly, it was also found that networks with international students of Asian backgrounds promoted Japanese usage, whilst networks with other Westerners appeared to diminish such opportunities with the preferential choice of English usage.

This research has a number of implications for foreign language teaching and study abroad program development. As interaction with native speakers has previously been shown to promote SLA,[41] it is suggested that language teachers ought to assist students in creating opportunities and developing strategies to foster native speaker

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40   Tooby & Cosmides, *op. cit.,* p. 136.
41   Isabelli-Garcia, *op. cit.*; Hernandez, *op. cit.*

networks outside the classroom. One way would be to try to incorporate activities that facilitate interaction with native speakers into their class content, such as requiring students to interview a native speaker and report back to the class.

This study has reiterated the importance of study abroad, and it is strongly suggested that all language learners be encouraged to participate in such programs. However, it appears that there are some program factors that could be improved to better facilitate study abroad students' network development with native speakers. In terms of residential situation, it is suggested that, if possible, study abroad students ought to be placed in housing that is not exclusively for international students, and that some form of activity could be organised to better initiate interaction between local and international students.

In terms of classes, it is also suggested that students be required to take at least one class a semester that is open to both local and international students, and that within these classes there is a group-work component. Whilst it is clear that some universities already have tutor or buddy systems established, these also appear to be a beneficial starting point for students' network development, and should be encouraged at all universities.

Finally, when students return from study abroad, as well as being encouraged to maintain contact with their native speaker networks in Japan and develop new networks in Australia, they should also be encouraged to introduce their successors to potential networks in Japan by utilising CMC. Furthermore, study abroad offices could also help initiate contact between Australian and Japanese exchange students from the partnering universities before students arrive at their host institution.

In conclusion, this study has highlighted the importance of study abroad for Japanese language learners, and how it may impact learners' development of native speaker networks and out-of-class interaction once they return to their home country.

However, as the data relied on self-report methods derived from six informants, generalisations to the wider Japanese language learning community need to be treated with caution. There is therefore a need for further research using larger samples of participants from a broader range of contexts.

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Writing the *irogonomi*: Sexual politics, Heian-style

April Sprague
University of Sydney

Abstract

Promiscuous "connoisseurs of love" (*irogonomi*) such as the fictional Genji and the semi-legendary Ariwara no Narihira have come to define popular perception of Heian period sexual politics; that is, their names have become shorthand for male privilege over women. In this article I will complicate established ideas regarding male promiscuity and privilege in the Heian period through an examination of *Tales of Ise*, *Tale of Lady Ochikubo* and *Tale of Genji*. I argue that, although women's status as linchpins in the practice of "marriage politics" rarely translated into women's individual empowerment, men's reliance on marriage politics placed restrictions on men's sexuality in ways that are rarely acknowledged by modern scholarship.

Keywords

Heian period, male sexuality, literature, *irogonomi*, Genji

Approximately one thousand years ago, during the flowering of Japanese culture in the Heian period (794–1185), aristocratic women composed vernacular poetry, diaries, and works of fiction that have survived the test of centuries to become staples of classical literature. Although works such as *Makura no sōshi*, *Kagerō nikki*, and the poetry of Ono no Komachi and Izumi Shikibu have been the subject of much scholarly attention, *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji*) by Murasaki Shikibu emerges as the great representative work of the period.

In this article, I call for a re-reading of male sexuality and patriarchy in mid-Heian literature. For my study, I have selected two male-authored texts, *Ise monogatari* (*Tales of Ise*) and *Ochikubo monogatari* (*Tale of the Lady Ochikubo*), and one female-authored text, *Genji monogatari*.[1] I have identified two particular models of male sexuality present in these works: the better-known 'promiscuous' *irogonomi*—a 'connoisseur of love'—and the rarely acknowledged monogamous type.

First I will briefly introduce necessary background information on the Heian period. I will then examine *Ise monogatari* in light of the phenomenon that Mostow has

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1   Mostow and Tyler (*The Ise Stories: Ise Monogatari*, pp. 3-4) note that Katagiri Yōichi's "three-stage" theory of composition (Narihira wrote an *Ur*-text prior to 880, which was expanded upon mid-tenth century, and a final addition made early eleventh century) is now widely accepted. *Ochikubo monogatari* is generally dated to the second half of the tenth century, and *Genji monogatari* is dated to the early eleventh century.

dubbed 'the poem that kept her man.'[2] Despite the fact that the 'hero' of *Ise monogatari*, Ariwara no Narihira, is seen as the archetypical *irogonomi*, I will demonstrate several instances of 'poem-induced' monogamy that call into question the assumption that the ideal man was always polygamous.

I will go on to examine *Ochikubo monogatari*. The hero Michiyori rises magically through the ranks of the bureaucracy despite his refusal to engage in marriage politics. Instead, he remains steadfastly faithful to Lady Ochikubo, a political nobody. In light of the pervasive marriage politics of the time, *Ochikubo monogatari* should be seen as an attempt to deny, to literally re-write, women's vital role in men's political careers.

I will conclude with *Genji monogatari*. It is *Genji monogatari* that provides the strongest rebuttal of the 'pseudo-monogamy myth,' by depicting monogamy as being out of the power of even the most influential courtier to promise, no matter how much he personally loves his bride. Likewise, *Genji monogatari* complicates the male fantasy of *irogonomi*, by depicting the disasters that arise when Genji neglects to do his duty by his high-ranking wives and lovers.

In conclusion, I argue against the tendency of scholars to see masculine sexuality as monolithic, unproblematic, and always powerful. As property-owners, linchpins in the system of marriage politics, and especially as authors of prose, women were able to affect materially and ideologically male sexuality.

Introduction

Aristocratic women of the Heian period seem to have enjoyed more economic independence than their mediaeval counterparts. In Heian Japan multiple inheritance, in which the inheritance was divided between several heirs, was the norm, and women could and did inherit.[3] William McCullough has suggested that inheritance of residential property in particular was often matrilineal, and even when the bequest was made by a father, daughters were often preferred over sons.[4] Nevertheless, with a few rare exceptions, inheritance was the only way aristocratic women could own property.[5] The primary means of wealth and property acquisition and accumulation for aristocratic men was through the 'stipendiary lands' granted to them as government officials. Despite female participation in government in the Nara period, by the Heian

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2   Mostow, 'The Amorous Statesman and the Poetess: The Politics of Autobiography and the *Kagerō Nikki*'.
3   Tonomura, 'Women and Inheritance in Japan's Early Warrior Society', p. 592.
4   McCullough, 'Japanese Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period', pp. 118-24.
5   Wakita and Gay, 'Marriage and Property in Premodern Japan from the Perspective of Women's History', pp. 80-81.

period women were almost entirely excluded from the bureaucracy and thus denied access to the main avenue for acquiring and accumulating wealth.[6] Indeed, although a woman might inherit a house, she may nevertheless find herself without the means to maintain such an extensive property. Hence, no doubt, the popular literary figure of the neglected wife (or widow, or orphan) languishing away in her dilapidated house, itself masked from view by the untended, overgrown garden. On the other hand, a woman (or rather, a woman's father) was usually expected to provide economic and political support for her husband.

The Bureaucracy and Rank[7]

The Yōrō Code of 757 established nine major ranks for subjects (one being the highest) which were divided into senior and junior; ranks four to eight being additionally subdivided into senior upper and lower and junior upper and lower.[8] Men of the court were divided into three broad groups, which were, in descending order of importance: *kugyō* ('senior nobles'), *tenjōbito* (courtiers who had been granted individual permission by the reigning emperor to enter the 'courtier's hall' of the emperor's private residence at the palace), and *jige* ('gentlemen of low rank').[9] Under the provisions of the Yōrō Code, a man's first rank was awarded on the basis of his father's or grandfather's rank, and whether or not his mother was the principal wife.[10] In practice, however, these rules were bent, especially for the sons of regents.[11]

The office of regent—usually titled *sesshō* for a child emperor, and *kanpaku* after the emperor's coming-of-age—was not covered by the Yōrō Code.[12] The 'Fujiwara regency,' as the period in which members of the Fujiwara clan almost exclusively held the regent position is known, commenced with Fujiwara no Yoshifusa (804–872), who was named *sesshō* in 866.[13] Yoshifusa set the pattern followed by successive Fujiwara regents of marrying his daughter(s) to the emperor and exerting his control as father-in-law and maternal grandfather to the emperor. Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027), the most powerful of the Fujiwara regents, was at one point in the year 1018, the maternal grandfather of two emperors (Go-Ichijō and Go-Suzaku) and father-in-law of three

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6   Fukutō and Watanabe, 'From Female Sovereign to Mother of the Nation: Women and Government in the Heian Period', p. 15; *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

7   William McCullough and Helen Craig McCullough's translation of *Eiga monogatari* currently provides the definitive study of rank and office in the Heian court. See Appendix A 'Some Notes on Rank and Office' in McCullough and McCullough, *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period*, pp. 789-832. For the sake of consistency, I have used the McCulloughs' nomenclature for bureaucratic titles throughout, and have given preference to their English translations when individual authors have differed with them.

8   *Ibid.*, p. 790.

9   *Ibid.*

10   *Ibid.*, pp. 791, 794.

11   *Ibid.*, p. 794.

12   *Ibid.*, p. 795.

13   McCullough, 'The Heian Court, 794-1070', p. 49.

emperors (Ichijō, Sanjō, and Go-Ichijō).[14] As McCullough notes, much of Michinaga's success stemmed from his fertile wives (who collectively gave him eight daughters), and his daughters' ability to bear the emperors male heirs.[15] Thus, for Fujiwara courtiers of the dominant Northern branch of the clan, female offspring became very important for aspiring, and reigning, regents.[16]

Marriage Customs

Heian Japan was a polygynous society: men could marry multiple spouses concurrently, while, strictly speaking, women were only allowed to take one spouse at a time. The Yōrō Codes maintain a strict hierarchy between a man's (single) wife and (potentially multiple) concubines but in practice it appears that the distinction between a main wife (often identified by the appellation *kita no kata*) and secondary wives was not strong.[17] The usual marital residency pattern for secondary wives was duolocal, in which the wife maintained her own residence and her husband 'commuted' to her.[18] In the tenth century, duolocal marriage appears to have been relatively common for main wives as well, although by the eleventh century uxorilocal marriage, in which the husband resides in his wife's house, was probably the norm for principal wives.[19] Given the rise in popularity of uxorilocal marriage in the latter part of the Heian period, a woman's contribution of a place of residence for her husband appears to have been a valuable one. Michinaga's grand mansion at Tsuchimikado belonged, in fact, to his wife Rinshi's family.[20] It was also common for a man to rely on his wife and father-in-law for other forms of economic and political assistance; as Michinaga is quoted as saying in *Eiga monogatari*, 'a man's wife makes him what he is'.[21] In fact, politico-economic self-interest was no doubt a large factor in deciding a man's primary spouse. Virilocal marriage, in which a wife moved into her husband's home, was rare because such an arrangement usually denoted a woman's inferior social status and inability to provide a suitable residence in which to receive her husband. Virilocal marriage is thus popular in Heian fiction, precisely because it represents a 'love' (or at least, economically disinterested) marriage of a courtier to a low-ranking or poor woman.[22]

Unless the groom was exceptionally young (boys underwent their coming-of-age ceremony as young as age twelve, and were sometimes married at this time), a

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14 *Ibid.*, p. 70.
15 *Ibid.*, p. 71.
16 Okada, *Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in the Tale of Genji and Other Mid-Heian Texts*, p. 164.
17 McCullough, 'Japanese Marriage institutions', pp. 127-28.
18 *Ibid.*, p. 134.
19 *Ibid.*, pp. 108, 114.
20 Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of 'the Tale of Genji'*, p. 48.
21 McCullough, 'Japanese Marriage institutions', p. 126.
22 Nickerson, 'The Meaning of Matrilocality: Kinship, Property, and Politics in Mid-Heian', p. 432.

man first courted his wife-to-be. A prominent part of courtship was the exchange of letters and poetry; prospective partners were (ostensibly) judged on the quality of their calligraphy, the cleverness of their verses, and the colours and quality of paper used for the missives. The exchange of letters might last for some months before the groom visited the bride. The groom visiting three nights in a row—arriving at sunset and leaving at dawn—constituted a marriage, and on the third morning, the groom stayed on until broad daylight, when he was ritually 'discovered' by the bride's parents and partook of special 'third day' cakes.[23] While this sort of marriage might seem a private affair, given the conveyances used by Heian gentleman (ox-drawn carriages and so on), the fact that courtiers had an entourage of attendants with them, the relatively small size of the capital, and the speed with which gossip travelled, the three-night ceremony actually constituted a very public affair.

Ise Monogatari

> A boy and a girl…once used to play together beside a well. […] [T]he boy had set his heart on marrying the girl, and she too was determined that she would be his wife, and refused to agree when her father tried to betroth her to someone else. …[Eventually] their wishes came true and they became man and wife.
>
> Some years later the wife's father died, leaving her without support, and the husband, tired of living with her in poverty, took to visiting a woman in the district of Takayasu in Kawachi Province. The wife saw him off with so little apparent resentment that he began to suspect her of having a lover. One day, pretending to set out for Kawachi, he hid in the shrubbery and watched her. After making up her face with meticulous care, she recited this poem, staring into space: 'Shall you be crossing / Tatsutayama / Quite alone by night?'
>
> His heart swelled with love for her, and his visits to Kawachi ceased.
>
> – Section 23, *Tales of Ise*[24]

Ise monogatari is the oldest extant example of the *uta monogatari* 'poem tale' genre and one of the major works of literature of the Heian period. Most standard extant versions consist of 209 poems organized into 125 discrete narrative sections. Occasionally characters are identified by name, but for the most part they remain anonymous, referred to as simply *otoko* 'man' or *onna* 'woman'. According to certain interpretations,

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23 McCullough and McCullough, *op. cit.*, p. 297, n. 158. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 439.
24 McCullough, *Tales of Ise: Lyrical Episodes from Tenth-Century Japan,* pp. 87-89.

the nameless *otoko* of the various tales are said to be one and the same person, the famous poet Ariwara no Narihira (825–880). (In fact, Narihira is only explicitly named once in the entire tale).[25] Nevertheless, references in *Genji monogatari* and *Sagoromo monogatari* (c. 1100) to *Ise* under the alternative titles *Zaigo ga monogatari* and *Zaigo chūjō no nikki*—clear references to Narihira, the 'fifth Ariwara son' (*zaigo*) who occupied the post of Middle Captain (*chūjō*) —suggest that by the late Heian period Narihira was accepted as the protagonist of the tales, and that the work was regarded as his non-fictional diary.[26] Combined with the fact that many, in fact most, of the tales concern love affairs, it is not unreasonable to assume that Narihira's current reputation as a great *irogonomi* was already well established by mid-Heian.

Many scholars see the semi-fictional Narihira of *Ise monogatari* as the inspiration for the great gallant of Heian literature, 'Shining' Genji.[27] Nakamura Shin'ichirō identifies Narihira as a 'representative' (*daihyōsha*) of *irogonomi* and a 'Japanese aesthetic Don Juan'.[28] It is precisely this model of male sexuality, the *irogonomi*, that has come to dominate contemporary perception of the Heian period.

Scholars of *Ise monogatari* have generally read the promiscuity of Narihira as an expression of his cultural refinement. That is, an *irogonomi* pursues sexual relations with many women not out of politico-economic self-interest, but because he appreciates the 'pathos' (*mono no aware*) inherent in elegant love affairs.[29] Or, as Haruo Shirane additionally notes, 'amorous heroes' such as the semi-fictional Narihira seek love as a reaction to the marriage system of the day:

> In an age when court marriage was usually an arrangement between families, a contract in which the opinions of the bride and groom were of little consequence, it comes as no surprise that the hero of the *Ise monogatari* should discover love outside the institution of marriage. The amorous hero is not simply a libertine or rake; he pursues a certain woman because he is genuinely interested in love, beauty, and poetic sensitivity—so often ignored in marriage.[30]

Additionally, Nakamura states that the 'form of love' (*ai no katachi*) known as *irogonomi* is 'the ideal of love produced by the Heian period, in which the civilisation of our country [Japan] attained the highest sensuous refinement'.[31] However, I wish

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25   Even this sole reference is believed to have been the product of later editing. Bowring, 'The Ise Monogatari: A Short Cultural History', p. 406.
26   McCullough, *Tales of Ise*, p. 61, p. 199 n. 60; Mostow and Tyler, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
27   Schalow, 'Five Portraits of Male Friendship in the Ise Monogatari', p. 447.
28   That is, a '*nihonfū no biteki Don Juan*'. Nakamura, *Irogonomi No Kōzō: Ōchō Bunka No Shinsō*, p. 25. All translations of Nakamura's work given in this article are my own and so I include the original text for reference purposes.
29   *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.
30   Shirane, 'The Uji Chapters and the Denial of the Romance', p. 118.
31   '*Waga kuni no bunmei ga mottomo kōdo na kankakuteki senren ni tōtatsu shita Heian jidai no unda ai no risō de aru*'. Nakamura, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

to complicate Nakamura's assertions that the promiscuous *irogonomi* represented the ultimate ideal of masculine sexuality in the Heian period. A close reading of the literature suggests another valid model of sexuality in which monogamous behaviour becomes the site of expression of refined aesthetic sensibilities. In order to explain this latter model, I would like to introduce the literary trope that Joshua Mostow has labelled 'the poem that kept her man'.[32] The conceit that a woman could retain or renew a man's romantic affections with a single, well-penned poem bears further investigation. By examining the deployment of 'the poem that kept her man', I also hope to demonstrate the way in which monogamous behaviour was also a site for the expression of refined aesthetic sensibility, for in reaffirming his love for the poetess, a man concedes her superior aesthetic sensibilities; to be unmoved by her poem is to be boorish and uncultured.

In *Ise monogatari*, we see examples of male infidelity that are portrayed as a rational, self-serving choice. Section 23, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, describes a situation in which a man and woman marry despite her father's objections, but when her father dies and deprives her of economic support, her husband starts visiting another woman. (I would like to note that even if we follow the interpretation that Narihira is the protagonist of the tales, there are some *otoko* that are clearly unidentifiable with him, such as the man, a son of an itinerant peddler, in Section 23).[33] In this case, it is not the man's desire to be seen as a worldly, cultured *irogonomi* that causes his 'infidelity' but the fact that he is no longer willing to live in poverty as his wife can no longer financially keep him. As I have previously mentioned, a husband often relied on his wife and her family for economic support; if a woman's father died, she often inherited the house, but generally did not have access to an income. However, one night when he is about to visit his lover, he spies his wife, who chants the poem: 'Shall you be crossing Tatsuta-yama quite alone by night?' His desire for his lover instantly vanishes, and he rushes faithfully back to his wife's side. If the male prerogative to have sexual relations with as many women as he pleased were so ingrained and so unproblematic then one would assume that there should be no reason for him to give up his lover in favour of his wife. Likewise, if the mark of a cultured man was his relationships with multiple women, as Nakamura argues, then the *otoko* of Section 23 should not give up his other lover.

There are numerous other examples of the phenomenon of 'the poem that kept her man' in *Ise monogatari*. Consider Section 22, in which an estranged couple have begun to exchange letters again. The man comes to visit that very night, and recites the poem: 'Would I be satisfied / If I might count / A thousand autumn nights as one / And sleep with you / Eight thousand nights?'. When she replies 'Were we to

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32   Mostow, *op. cit.*, p. 306.
33   McCullough, *Tales of Ise*, p. 58.

make / A thousand autumn nights / Into one, / There would still be things to say / At cockcrow', the text notes that, because of the refinement she displays with this poem, the man thereafter visited her 'more faithfully than ever'.[34] Likewise, in Section 123, a man composes a poem to a woman suggesting that he will 'leave the house / Where I have dwelt / These years' (presumably it is a matrilocal marriage) she replies, 'If it be a wild field / Then I shall be a quail / Calling plaintively– / And surely you will at least / Come briefly for a hunt', the man is 'deeply moved' by her poem and 'no longer felt inclined to leave'.[35]

Perhaps one of the most remarkable points of Section 23 is the attitude towards marriage that it portrays. It has been pointed out that for most of history, for most cultures, marriage has functioned as a contract between families (or a contract between a groom and his father-in-law) that has had much to do with economic and political expediency and little to do with love or emotional attachment. And yet the episode in Section 23 portrays a remarkably 'modern' sensibility. The woman 'loves' the man and refuses to marry the person her father has chosen for her.[36] Their marriage is decided upon between themselves, without familial interference. But here is the rub: when the man starts to neglect his wife and visit the lady at Kawachi it is because his wife can no longer financially keep him, and presumably not because of any change in his feelings towards her personally. Of course, the episode does not enlighten us as to what drew the man to the woman in the first place, only that he was 'determined to have her';[37] it may well have been that the man's initial interest in the woman was mercenary enough. And yet, the man rushes back to his wife's side when she intones the 'Tatsutayama' poem. Presumably, his wife's economic situation cannot have changed for the better; and yet he takes her over the Kawachi lady, who would seem to be the more practical choice, for presumably the Kawachi lady can support him. Should we call the man's renewed fidelity to his wife 'love'? His fidelity is almost definitely not inspired by economic or political self-interest.

Instances such as these have been largely ignored by scholarship. Nakamura insists that men who were loyal to just one woman were considered to be ill, or emotionally immature.[38] However, I would suggest that, rather than reading the actions of the man in Section 23 of *Ise monogatari* as merely the result of emotional immaturity, in reaffirming his loyalty to his partner, this man was in fact acting in accordance with contemporary aesthetic sensibilities.

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34 *Ibid.*, p. 87.
35 *Ibid.*, p. 149.
36 *Ibid.*, p. 88.
37 *Ibid.*
38 Nakamura, *op. cit.*, p. 18. Original passage: '*Heian jidai ni oite ha, ichizu ni chūjitsu na koigokoro wo idaku otoko, hitori no onna dake wo mōmokuteki ni oimotomeru otoko ha, isshu no byō nin, monomania, arui ha kanjōteki ni mijuku na ningen toshite atsukawareta*'.

Finally, I would like to make a closing remark on politics and rank. The fictional Narihira, as the assumed protagonist of most of the tales of *Ise monogatari*, for the most part operates in a political vacuum. Excepting a few episodes in which the fictional Narihira has an affair with a woman who is intended as an imperial consort, resulting in Narihira's exile, Narihira's numerous affairs are untroubled by issues of politics or rank. The real-life Narihira himself never rose past junior fourth rank upper, and never occupied any of the prestigious posts of the bureaucracy, living instead as a 'fashionable gentleman of leisure'.[39] Likewise, the anonymous, rank-less men and women of *Ise monogatari* that I have used as examples of fidelity conduct their love affairs untouched by issues such as bureaucratic promotion. My examination of *Genji monogatari* later in the article will show the problems that occur when really high ranking nobles follow their heart too much. For even though Narihira may have been the model for Genji, I will argue that Genji's actions as an *irogonomi,* as well as his attempts at fidelity, are ultimately restricted, not enabled, by his great rank.

Ochikubo Monogatari

> 'How unreasonable you are!' exclaimed [Michiyori's] foster-mother. 'The Minister [of the Left] has been making all the preparations in great expectation…. How can you reject the proposal which such a noble lord urges on you?… It is the custom nowadays to marry someone whose parents can help one with their favour. …One cannot be permanently happy unless one has the loving care not only of a wife but also of her parents.'
>
> [Michiyori] reddened at this speech. 'Perhaps it is because my ideas are old-fashioned that I do not like those things which are considered polite and up-to-date. I do not wish for success. I do not want the favour of my wife's parents. I shall not give up the Lady [Ochikubo] of Nijō…'
>
> *– Tale of the Lady Ochikubo*[40]

In this section on *Ochikubo monogatari,* I will expand on a concept presented in the previous section on the *Ise monogatari*: that of 'the poem that kept her man.' Donald Keene describes Michiyori, the male protagonist of the tale, as 'a model Heian husband and, that great rarity, a confirmed monogamist'.[41] Michiyori certainly does make a striking contrast with the semi-fictional Narihira of *Ise monogatari* with his countless lovers. However, as I will argue, Michiyori's devotion to his wife, Lady Ochikubo,

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39   McCullough, *Tales of Ise*, p. 42.
40   Whitehouse and Yanagisawa, *The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo: Ochikubo Monogatari*, p. 151.
41   Keene, *Seeds in the Heart: Japanese Literature from Earliest Times to the Late Sixteenth Century*, p. 448.

should not be considered without literary precedent. As I argued in the context of *Ise monogatari*, if an estranged wife or a lover in a precarious position sent her man a brilliantly composed poem, he should properly respond with renewed (if not exclusive) attention to her. Michiyori's absolute commitment to Ochikubo should be understood in light of this phenomenon, and as an extension of it; Ochikubo is a good poet, and also beautiful, sweet-tempered, and a skilled seamstress, and in committing himself to Ochikubo alone, Michiyori is acting in accordance with existing sensibilities.

And yet if we consider the practicality of Michiyori's behaviour in light of his rank, his fidelity to Ochikubo alone and his staunch refusal to marry to his political advantage is not only remarkable, it is impossible. If we examine Michiyori's non-fictional politically successful contemporaries, such as Fujiwara no Kaneie (929-990), and his son, Fujiwara no Michinaga, we find that their political success was irrevocably tied to marriage politics. This introduces my argument for this section: that Michiyori's avoidance of polygyny, and marriage politics in general, should be understood as an attempt to deny, to literally rewrite, women's importance to politics. Ambitious courtiers depended, to a large extent, on their multiple wives for access to powerful father-in-laws, for daughters to present to the emperor and princes, and to a lesser extent for access to cultural prestige. In creating a main character who rises magically through the bureaucracy to the highest rank of Chancellor (*daijō daijin*) by age forty, with only the influence of his father and the favour of the emperor, the author of *Ochikubo monogatari* tries to refute the central role of women in politics. For in reality, political marriage was not something upwardly-aspiring courtiers could avoid; monogamous marriage for love was a luxury that most courtiers could not afford.

Because the tale is not widely studied, and because the storyline of *Ochikubo monogatari* is central to my analysis, I will briefly give a summary of the plot here. *Ochikubo monogatari* is the story of Lady Ochikubo who is so nicknamed after the 'lower room' apart from the rest of the house in which she is forced to live by her stepmother. After the death of Lady Ochikubo's mother—a second-generation princess—and having no maternal relatives to look after her, she moves into the house of her father, the hen-pecked Minamoto Middle Counsellor, and is forced to make all of the fine clothes for the extended family whilst she lives in poverty herself. Michiyori, a low-ranking but apparently influential courtier and favourite of the emperor, begins secretly courting Ochikubo and eventually whisks her away to install her in his mansion.[42] Michiyori rises rapidly through the ranks at court, and never takes any wife but Ochikubo, who gives him many children. The story ends with

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42   Thus, it is a virilocal/neolocal marriage. As mentioned previously, marriages of this type, although a staple of fiction, had little precedent in reality. It is perhaps significant that the couple eventually move to a mansion which Ochikubo inherited from her mother (who inherited it from her father, an imperial prince). Thus, in a way, the love match between Ochikubo and Michiyori is rendered a little less transgressive.

Michiyori being appointed Chancellor (*daijō daijin*), the highest bureaucratic office in the realm, and Lady Ochikubo's daughter is appointed Empress (*kisaki*).

'The Poem That Kept Her Man'

Let us examine Michiyori and Ochikubo's relationship in light of the literary trope presented in the last chapter, 'the poem that kept her man.' Margaret Childs is one of the few scholars publishing in English to treat with *Ochikubo monogatari*, albeit only in passing, in her pioneering work on the nature of love in the Heian period.[43] Childs argues that Lady Ochikubo's main attraction lies in her pitiable situation as a virtual slave to her 'wicked' step mother, and that her beauty and refinement are only secondary attractions, albeit important ones.[44] I agree that it is Ochikubo's sad plight that initially draws Michiyori to her, as evinced by Michiyori's reaction when his foster-brother first informs him of the Lady's existence: 'How pitiful! What she must feel! And she is the daughter of an Imperial Princess too!'.[45] However, it is Ochikubo's poetic skill that secures Michiyori's affections. Consider the episode in which Ochikubo and Michiyori have spent their first night together. Dawn arrives, and it is time for him to leave. Michiyori recites a poem about the rooster crowing, and asks to hear Ochikubo's reply, because otherwise '[he] cannot feel that [they] are lovers'.[46] Ochikubo responds cleverly, reusing the imagery of Michiyori's poem. Michiyori reappraises his opinion of her, and the text notes that 'her voice and reply were charming, and though [Michiyori] had been thinking about her only casually, he now became truly smitten'.[47] That is, the text leads us to believe that before Michiyori heard Ochikubo's reply, he was not serious about her; but now he is completely in earnest with his affections.

Politics and Marriage

Let us examine Michiyori's political career in the world of *Ochikubo monogatari*. Michiyori begins the tale as a Lesser Captain of the Left Bodyguards (*sakon-e no shōshō*). At the start of the second book he is promoted to Middle Captain and additionally bestowed junior third rank, a special honour. Even though the third rank entitled Michiyori to be considered a senior noble (*kugyō*) he is by no means at the top of the court hierarchy. And yet, he is described in the text as 'the first man nowadays[,] [e]ven the [Chancellor],' nominally the most powerful bureaucrat in the realm, 'dare not

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43 Childs, 'The Value of Vulnerability: Sexual Coercion and the Nature of Love in Japanese Court Literature'.
44 *Ibid.,* p. 1061.
45 Whitehouse and Yanagisawa, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
46 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
47 Mostow, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

make a sound in his presence'.[48] Michiyori is next promoted, over the heads of others, to Middle Counsellor (*chūnagon*) and Director of the Left Gate Guards (*saemon no kami*) concurrently. Michiyori, and to a lesser extent his father, are portrayed as being able to engineer office appointments however they choose. By the time Michiyori has become a Middle Counsellor it is only Michiyori's relatives that are being promoted. When Michiyori's father, the Minister of the Left, tires of the duties of his concurrent post of Major Captain of the Left (*sadaishō*), he simply resigns the position to his son Michiyori (who by this time is a Major Counsellor *dainagon*), without consulting anyone in the matter.[49] In turn, Michiyori resigns the post of Major Counsellor to his father-in-law, Lady Ochikubo's father, after consulting with only his own father, who approves the decision by himself.[50]

But how did Michiyori become so powerful? The answer that the text gives us is that he is both the favourite son (and, luckily for him, the only politically ambitious son) of a very powerful courtier, and the favourite of the emperor. However, in reality, paternal influence could only extend so far. It was through marrying one's daughters to the emperor that one secured one's position at the top of the bureaucracy. Many scholars have pointed out that women were, for the most part, political pawns. It is true that, even though women formed the linchpin of the marriage politics system, this rarely translated into women's individual empowerment. However, this does not change the fact of men's reliance on their sisters, wives, and daughters to play the game of marriage politics. As mentioned above, it was through strategic marriage that the Fujiwara hegemony at court was established and successfully sustained. McCullough notes that 'in many cases a man's official and economic position seems to have been determined more by his father-in-law than by his father'.[51] In fact, Michinaga's early political successes owe a great deal to the political connections and wealth of the family of his principal wife, Minamoto no Rinshi.[52] Later, Michinaga's appointment to Minister of the Right over the head of his rival and nephew, Fujiwara no Korechika, has been attributed to his sister Senshi's intervention with the reigning emperor, Ichijō, her son.[53] Even a man like Fujiwara no Kaneie, who never married very highly, married widely and placed his daughters in the 'imperial harem'.[54] Thus, it would seem that, even for a figure like Michinaga, a son of Kaneie who had himself occupied the exalted post of regent, marriage politics was the key to his political success.

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48 Whitehouse and Yanagisawa, *op. cit.*, p. 138.
49 *Ibid.*, p. 215.
50 *Ibid.*, p. 223.
51 McCullough, 'Japanese Marriage Institutions', p. 127.
52 McCullough, 'The Heian Court', p. 71.
53 McCullough, *Okagami, the Great Mirror: Fujiwara Michinaga (966-1027) and His Times*, p. 199. Cited in Arntzen, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
54 All three of Kaneie's long-term wives who appear in *Kagerō nikki*, that is, Tokihime, Michitsuna's Mother, and the Ōmi Lady, all belong to non-prestigious *zuryō* provincial governor's class. Arntzen, *The Kagerō Diary*, p. 206.

On the other hand, when we consider Michiyori, not only does he remain faithful to Lady Ochikubo, and Ochikubo alone, he flatly refuses offers of marriage from powerful courtiers. Consider the passage from *Ochikubo monogatari* quoted at the beginning of this chapter. The Minister of the Left, nominally the second most powerful commoner in the realm, offers Michiyori—using Michiyori's foster-mother as an intermediary—the hand of his daughter in marriage, with the strong hint that, if he accepts, Michiyori 'will be promoted to very high rank in the near future'.[55] Michiyori first refuses his foster-mother's match-making politely, telling her to convey to the Minister that 'I am living with one I love'.[56] When his foster-mother persists in her efforts to marry him off, Michiyori responds with the impassioned speech quoted above: that he cares nothing for success or political connections, he only wants Lady Ochikubo. Michiyori's declaration is even more remarkable given that the Minister of the Left had sent word that he did not object if Michiyori wished to continue to visit the Lady Ochikubo even after his marriage to his own daughter.[57]

Joshua Mostow has labelled male-authored monogatari, of which *Ochikubo monogatari* is just one, 'patriarchal indoctrination'.[58] (Authorship of *Ochikubo monogatari* has traditionally been attributed to Minamoto no Shitagō (911-983), a scholar and one of the 'Thirty Six Poetry Immortals', however, there is no definitive evidence to support this, or any other authorship claims.[59] Commentators do seem to agree that the author was a man). *Ochikubo monogatari* certainly is very didactic in style, with its emphasis on the importance of filial piety and female docility. However, to dismiss *Ochikubo* as merely an attempt to keep or put women 'in their place' is to miss out on an important dimension of the work. If the sole purpose of monogatari was indoctrination, then one might assume that it would be more profitable to inure female readers to polygyny, as opposed to promising monogamy. Furthermore, there are a number of telling passages from *Ochikubo monogatari* that suggest the ways in which polygyny could be problematic for men. Michiyori's mother counsels him against taking more than one wife: 'To keep many ladies is to suffer many troubles. And it is bad for your health'.[60] Likewise, when Michiyori overhears that the handsome Katano no Shōshō has taken an interest in Ochikubo, Michiyori jealously rants about how the Shōshō's letters are so 'effective' that '[e]very woman in the Capital allows herself to be led astray by Katano no Shōshō'.[61] Michiyori mentions that, because of the Shōshō's numerous affairs with married women and imperial consorts, he is never promoted. Presumably the Shōshō

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55   Whitehouse and Yanagisawa, *op. cit.,* p. 146.
56   *Ibid.*
57   *Ibid.,* p. 150.
58   Mostow, *op. cit.*, p. 305.
59   Keene, *op. cit.,* p. 447; Whitehouse and Yanagisawa, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-79.
60   Whitehouse and Yanagisawa, *op. cit.,* p. 112.
61   *Ibid.,* p. 68.

makes too many enemies in high places. And yet it seems peculiar that Katano no Shōshō, the character who most resembles the legendary Ariwara no Narihira, and who pre-empts the great lover Genji, is so roundly despised by the hero of *Ochikubo monogatari*. It is an acknowledgement of the threat that promiscuous men posed to other men.

The motif of faithful husband is not unique to *Ochikubo monogatari*. It is reworked in the great Heian prose work, *Genji monogatari*, in the relationship between Genji and Murasaki. Of course, Genji is not monogamous (especially not in the early chapters) but he comes to lavish most of his time and attention on Murasaki, even though her status is below his. Significantly, however, there is no happy ending for Genji and Murasaki.

Genji Monogatari

In this section I will argue that Genji, the eponymous hero of *Genji monogatari* should be read as an example of the inherent conflict between politics, high rank, and the practice of *irogonomi*. There are strong suggestions that Murasaki Shikibu at least partly modelled Genji on the figure of Narihira from *Ise monogatari*: both characters 'transgress' with an imperial consort, and both go into regional exile.[62] However, in his devotion to semi-orphaned and politically impotent Murasaki, I would argue that Genji also closely resembles Michiyori from *Ochikubo monogatari*. But as I will go on to demonstrate, Genji must contend with politics in a way that Narihira and Michiyori do not, and Genji's actions bring consequences, and carry restraints, that we do not see in *Ochikubo monogatari* or *Ise monogatari*.

In Genji, Murasaki Shikibu seems to have created a perfect Heian courtier. Genji is remarkably beautiful; his robes and the perfume he uses, his poetic mastery, his calligraphy—basically, his personal comportment and mastery of high culture—set him apart from all other men. On the other hand, Genji's amorousness also brings tragic consequences, admittedly less for himself than for the women around him.

Murasaki Shikibu's unwillingness, or perhaps inability, to directly 'punish' Genji for his transgressions against the female characters may be seen as proof positive of the iron grip of the Heian patriarchy. And yet, in reusing such figures as the *irogonomi*, Murasaki Shikibu subtly manipulated the dual glowing andro-centric ideals of 'great

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62   Bowring, *op. cit.*, p. 419. Richard Bowring goes so far as to state that the presence of *Ise monogatari* in *Genji monogatari* is 'so all-pervasive that it may seem stretching a point to isolate specific instances'.

lover' and 'faithful husband.' If the former—a 'Narihira-style' *irogonomi*—can be said to represent male fantasy (freedom from loveless political marriage) and the latter is both male fantasy and 'patriarchal indoctrination' (if you're docile, hard-working, and cultured, then your husband will be faithful to you alone) then Murasaki Shikibu puts the lie to both. Through Genji, Murasaki Shikibu denies both the carefree promiscuity of the *irogonomi* and the promise of fidelity from high-ranking husbands offered up by *Ochikubo monogatari*.

When we compare Genji and the heroes of *Ise monogatari* and *Ochikubo monogatari*, it soon becomes clear that, though Genji's character is borrowed from both, he is no Narihira or Michiyori. Narihira conducts most of his love affairs in the countryside, or at least, in a context unconcerned with politics and the machinations of the court. Michiyori and his romance with Ochikubo is likewise untroubled by politics: Michiyori and his father are simply so influential that politically-advantageous marriage is a non-issue, and presumably Michiyori need not worry about offending the Minister of the Left by refusing to marry his daughter. Genji is in a different situation entirely. The emperor's son by the orphaned, low-ranking Kiritsubo Intimate, Genji is made a commoner despite his father's preference for Genji over his other son by the powerfully-backed Kokiden Consort. In *Ochikubo monogatari* the emperor's favour is enough to raise Michiyori above all the other courtiers, even those who are technically by far his senior. However, in *Genji monogatari* the emperor's love is nowhere near enough to protect his favourite son, just as the emperor's love was not enough to protect Genji's mother from the deadly jealousies of her rivals. Echoing the marriage that Michiyori never made, after Genji's coming-of-age ceremony the emperor marries the young Genji to Aoi, the daughter of the Minister of the Left, and thus the Minister of the Left, not the emperor, becomes Genji's primary political supporter.

As Royall Tyler has argued extensively, rank is an important and all-encompassing theme in *Genji monogatari*.[63] Although aristocratic men were free to make non-binding sexual advances towards women of a lower rank than themselves, excessive devotion to such lower-class women upset the social order, such as in the case of Genji's father's ill-fated love for the Kiritsubo Intimate and the scandal it created at court.[64] Although it appears that a high-ranking man was never seriously expected to be monogamous, if he did keep more than one woman then he owed the bulk of his time and devotion towards a woman of equal rank to him, and a man who married above his rank was expected to be exceptionally considerate of such a wife.[65]

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63 Tyler, 'Marriage, Rank and Rape in the Tale of Genji'.
64 *Ibid.*, para. 12.
65 *Ibid.,* para. 13.

Genji himself becomes involved with a number of very highly ranked women; here, I shall limit the discussion to the three cases of Aoi, Rokujō, and the Third Princess. He also becomes entangled with women who, although of nominally well-to-do birth, have lost their place in the world, such as the ladies Yūgao and Murasaki. That he is involved with such 'lowly' women is not the issue; the issue is that, having involved himself with women of high birth, Genji neglects them for his lower-born lovers.

Genji's politically expedient and loveless marriage to Aoi is ever-present against the foreground of Genji's other liaisons. It is not that Aoi is lacking in her upbringing, or betrays any faults in taste, that keeps Genji away. For, as he remarks:

> The look of [Aoi's residence] and the manner of the lady there [Aoi] were admirably distinguished, for neither could be faulted in any way, and it seemed to Genji that she should be the ideal wife singled out as a treasure by his friends the evening before, but in fact he found such perfection too oppressive and intimidating for comfort.[66]

It is Aoi's extreme pride 'at being the only daughter not just of any Minister but of the greatest of them all, and of no less than a Princess' that leads her to be severe upon Genji's shortcomings as a husband, 'while [Genji] on his side kept wondering why he must defer to [Aoi] so and keep trying to bring her around'.[67] In light of her rank, Aoi should command all of Genji's attentions, but she does not, for Genji rarely visits.

Although Genji is reluctantly but definitively married to Aoi, he begins to conduct an affair with the graceful Rokujō Haven. However, as Royall Tyler points out, the Rokujō Haven—the daughter of a Minister of State (*daijin*) and widow of the deceased crown prince—is not in a position to be treated lightly, and her exalted station demands that Genji, having consummated his relationship with her, publicly recognize her by marrying her.[68] Not only does he fail to do this, but having finally won her over after a long period of her keeping her distance, he often fails to visit at all.

If Genji considers Aoi and Rokujō as burdensome because of the duty towards them that their high rank demands, then the lady Yūgao becomes a prime target for romance because, although not as refined as those two great ladies, as an orphan and apparently of low rank, Yūgao cannot practically make demands of Genji. Charo D'Etcheverry terms such romances between high-ranking courtiers and women like

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66 Tyler, *The Tale of Genji*, p. 35.
67 *Ibid.*, p. 140.
68 Tyler, 'Marriage, Rank and Rape', para. 16.

Yūgao 'mid-ranks romance'.[69] D'Etcheverry argues that Murasaki Shikibu constructs mid-ranks romances as a male fantasy, as such relationships offer a temporary reprieve from loveless political marriages.[70] That Genji should voluntarily spend his time visiting the lowly Yūgao instead of herself angers Rokujō. While ordinarily there is little that a woman in Rokujō's position could do (despite her high rank, she has no close male relative living to 'protect' her), in the fictional world of *Genji monogatari* Rokujō has unconscious recourse to spirit possession in an attempt to right the situation. And, unwittingly, it is Rokujō's living spirit (*ikisudama*) that kills her rival, Yūgao, thus denying the ease and privilege of Genji's 'mid-ranks romance'.

Following Yūgao's death (which Genji does not yet know was caused by Lady Rokujō), when Genji's father prophetically warns him to treat Rokujō with more respect, there is an incident at the Kamo Festival, which leads to Aoi's attendants humiliating Rokujō. Genji's public reverence for his wife at the festival, compounded by his neglect of and refusal to acknowledge Rokujō, exacerbates Rokujō's humiliation. In unconscious retaliation, Rokujō's living spirit once more strikes out, and possesses and kills Aoi. Even with the deaths of Yūgao and Aoi, Rokujō's two main rivals, Genji fails to honour Rokujō in accordance with her station because of his disgust with her involvement in Aoi's death.

Later in the tale, Genji goes on to meet and marry the love of his life, Murasaki. After Genji has been married to Murasaki for around fifteen years, Genji is offered, and accepts, the hand of the Third Princess, favourite daughter of retired Emperor Suzaku. Even though Genji loves Murasaki, whom he has raised himself from childhood to be his ideal wife, in the eyes of the world she does not have the status to match his, as although she is the daughter of a prince, her mother died early and her step-mother prevented her father from fully recognising her. Tyler has called Genji's marriage to the Third Princess a 'thirst for heightened prestige,' for the Third Princess' status can add to Genji's own.[71] In a way, the Third Princess is a trophy wife, for Genji does not care for her personally and laments her youth and lack of cultured polish. And yet, because of her lofty rank, higher than that of Aoi and Rokujō both, Genji is forced to spend time with her, because to do otherwise would invite public censure.

However, when Murasaki falls ill (later discovered to be caused by the now-deceased Rokujō's ghost) Genji cannot bring himself to neglect her, and spends all his time by her side, completely ignoring the Third Princess. This is a fatal mistake, as while he is tending Murasaki, a young courtier slips in and seduces the Third Princess, and she

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69   D'Etcheverry, 'Out of the Mouths of Nurses: "The Tale of Sagoromo" And Midranks Romance'.
70   *Ibid.*, p. 153.
71   Tyler, *The Disaster of the Third Princess*, p. 16.

conceives. The Third Princess, in her guilt and also fading away from illness (also caused by Rokujō's ghost) begs her father, Suzaku, to make her a nun. Suzaku, meanwhile, realises the extent to which Genji has wronged his daughter, and later comes back as a ghost to wreak havoc on Genji's son.[72]

The significance of this episode is its complete denial of the (male) fantasy of monogamy. In Murasaki, Genji has a perfect wife, whom he has reared to his own exacting standards of taste. It is especially after his marriage to the Third Princess (whom he finds 'too dismally dull')[73] that Genji appreciates Murasaki, but by then he is inexorably bound in his duties to the Third Princess. When he neglects the Third Princess, as he really cannot afford to do, despite being the most powerful commoner in the land, it all ends (to borrow the title of Tyler's collection of essays) in disaster.[74]

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have examined the construction of two models of male sexuality in Heian literature, that of the *irogonomi* and that of the pseudo-monogamous lover-husband. Both initially introduced in male-authored literature, Murasaki Shikibu later took up the two models, preserving the fundamental characteristics but altering the finer details in ways that subtly challenged the gendered hierarchies inherent to both models. I have argued that both the *irogonomi* and monogamous lover-husband tropes began, at least partially, as reactions against women's influence in the real world. The *irogonomi* was a reaction against loveless political marriage, and I have argued that the monogamous husband likewise arose as a literary attempt to write women's central role in marriage politics out of the picture. However, when Murasaki Shikibu took up these two models, she depicted the ill-consequences of men's sexual prerogatives in an indirect indictment and a refusal of the fantasies of easy promiscuity as represented by the *irogonomi* or of deliberate and cultured monogamy. Genji is popularly remembered as a model Heian courtier. However, in light of my research, I would argue that Genji is more accurately the sum of the rejection of two fantasies of male sexuality.

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72 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
73 Tyler, *Genji*, p. 592.
74 Tyler, *Third Princess.*

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The Japanese Restaurant as an Exotic Genre: A Study of Culinary Providers' Practices and Dialogues in Melbourne

Iori Hamada
The University of Melbourne

Abstract

This article examines a new mode of 'Japaneseness' emerging through increasing cross-cultural exchanges and interactions since the late twentieth century. Based upon ethnographic data and fieldwork, it demonstrates how Japaneseness is reconfigured through contact with other forms such as 'whiteness' within popular commodity culture. The article analyses the Japanese restaurant in Melbourne as an 'exotic genre' within which the new mode of Japaneseness is informed and constructed. It argues that this mode of the exotic can be distinguished from earlier formations of exoticism that unproblematically locate a subject monolithically within narrow stereotypes, although the old exoticism has not entirely disappeared. Rather than viewing the Japanese restaurant as a cohesive category, this study conceives of it as a cross-culturally implicated formation that challenges a fixed representation of Japaneseness constructed from a single point of view.

Keywords

Japanese restaurants, Australia, cross-cultural representation, Japaneseness, exoticism

Introduction

Japanese restaurants outside of Japan are cross-culturally contested sites: they are situated on the boundaries between the inside and the outside, a homeland and a host-land, a subject and an object, as an institutionalised apparatus informing and constructing a particular mode of 'Japaneseness'. Using ethnographic data and fieldwork, I interrogate the conditions of establishments termed as 'Japanese restaurant' outside of Japan, looking at how providers use such a public space to produce images and representations of 'Japaneseness' in a form that is 'exotic'. The exotic, as a particular form of representation, always arises from a specific point of view. I use the term 'exotic' to frame a specific mode of representation that characterises how the Japanese restaurant is formed and how it functions outside Japan.

Similarly, the phrase 'Japanese restaurant' is employed as a represented idea that rests upon a particular point of view. In this article, I do not intend to use only one

geographic and ideological centre – Japan – to view the Japanese restaurant, nor do I purport that there are authentic representations of the Japanese restaurant by which to judge the particular eating establishments outside of Japan. Rather, my focus here is upon the interrogation into the formation and operation of this institutionalised apparatus in cross-cultural contexts, which requires constant changes in point of view.

Examples in this article are drawn from my in-depth interviews and observations conducted between 2008 and 2011 in Melbourne, Australia. I visited forty-two restaurants that are registered as 'Japanese restaurants' on the Yellow Pages Local Australian Business Directory Online.[1] Twenty-seven establishments were selected from the inner city, six establishments from the inner suburbs and nine establishments from the outer suburbs of Melbourne. I conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews with thirty-two providers, including restaurant owners, managers, chefs, wait staff and whole sellers engaged in the local Japanese food industry for varying periods of time.[2] In this article, I will focus upon two key figures from two Japanese establishments in Melbourne – Keiko, a co-manager of *izakaya* style dining pub CHIKA, and Kanta, a co-owner of café/shop MARU – to demonstrate how the Japanese restaurant in the Australian context provides a site for the production of a new mode of Japaneseness.

The article is structured into three parts: the first part sets the stage for the theoretical principle of Gilles Deleuze's concept of the fold, demonstrating how it relates to the formation and operation of the Japanese restaurant as an exotic genre. The second part situates the theoretical movement of the fold within the framework of 'whiteness' to examine how the Japanese restaurant 'works' in a 'white' Australia. The last part then provides an analysis of my examples of providers' practices and dialogues, to argue that the fold metaphor allows us to understand a new mode of exotic images and representations that characterise the Japanese restaurant in contemporary Australia.

The Japanese Restaurant as an Exotic Genre

From take-away *sushi* shops to newer *izakaya* style dining pubs, the so-called 'Japanese restaurant' has become almost ubiquitous in metropolitan cities around the world. In Australia's second largest city Melbourne,[3] there are approximately 120 eating establishments registered as 'Japanese restaurants', according to the Yellow Pages Local

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1   Telstra Corporation Limited, 'Japanese Restaurants in VIC, Australia', *The Yellow Pages Local Australian Business Directory Online*.

2   Interviews were conducted in Japanese and in English, and most of them were audio recorded with each informant's permission. The data was transcribed and I translated the Japanese interviews into English. Interviews lasted on average one hour, although several lasted considerably longer (two and a half hours to three hours). Pseudonyms are used in this paper to refer to selected informants and eating establishments. For the scope of this article, I am focusing only upon providers but my doctoral thesis includes consumers' viewpoints to demonstrate the interactive nature of the culinary landscape in Melbourne.

3   According to the 2006 Census, there are 3,592,591 residents in Melbourne; 64.2% of its population are born in Australia.

Australian Business Directory Online.[4] Eating out in a Japanese restaurant has become more accessible and desirable in the Australian mainstream market since the late-1990s; it is a popular cultural practice that provides consumers with not only physical, but also socio-cultural pleasures that again feed their desire for cross-cultural exchange.

While there are stereotyped, clichéd exotic images associated with Japanese restaurants (such as waitresses wearing '*kimono*', serving '*sukiyaki*' and playing '*koto*' background music), the contemporary formation of the exotic resulting from ever-increasing cross-cultural movements seems very different. In cross-cultural contexts, the Japanese restaurant is no longer completely 'foreign', but, as James Clifford writes, is 'the "exotic" [that] is uncannily close'.[5] In contemporary Australia, the Japanese restaurant, as a particular gastronomic and cultural institution, is constructed through increasingly intensified cross-cultural movements that occur within and across different cultural contexts. This mode of the exotic is a product of the collapsed distances of time and space through the processes of globalisation, which enables a more flexible construction of representation.

In this study I suggest that the Japanese restaurant functions as an 'exotic genre': it is located and circumscribed in a category of reception that is marketed, consumed and re-produced as 'Japanese' within exoticism. I use this term to highlight a paradoxical nature of the Japanese restaurant; that is, it 'works' by making itself available to the domestic market, while also by being contained within the exotic genre. The concept of genre manifests itself as its own limit; it is this identificatory construction that can 'permit' difference, and yet in doing so, must contain it within the already identified presence that authorises it. Genre can also, however, challenge a form of identification or fixed categories of identity. Linda Hutcheon suggests that 'classifications of genres are paradoxically built upon the impossibility of firmly defining genre boundaries'.[6]

As an exotic genre, the Japanese restaurant operates on a contradictory structure of representation that is 'inside' (familiar and fashionable) and yet at the same time 'outside' (different and strange). This mode of the exotic exists in the folds between notions of 'inside' and 'outside', thereby suggesting a shift in the relationship between perspectives. This shift can potentially disrupt the fixity of these categories, which can be described using a particular metaphor: the fold.

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4 Telstra Corporation Limited, 'Japanese Restaurants in VIC, Australia', *The Yellow Pages Local Australian Business Directory Online*.
5 Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, p. 13.
6 Hutcheon, *The Canadian Postmodern: A Study of Contemporary English-Canadian Fiction*, 1988, p. 22.

The Fold: From Essence To Sensed

In 'The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque', Gilles Deleuze describes a system of complex interactions between the inside and the outside through the metaphor of the fold. Deleuze suggests, deploying Leibniz's monadic theory, that there are constant shifts in perspectives or positionalities. Leibniz's notion of monads, or discrete entities of knowable existence, describes the world as an infinite series of folds. As a perspective, each monad corresponds to one way of seeing the world, whereby the movement of the fold operates as a representational series. The fold produces a separation and a connection, as it unfolds and re-folds. It marks a boundary on a piece of fabric or a sheet of paper while bringing both sides of the divide together. In 'The Fold', Deleuze utilises the Baroque not to refer to a particular historical period, but to characterise it as an 'operative function' that disrupts presumed dichotomies of understanding, such as a phenomenon's 'appearance' and its 'essence'.[7] The model of the 'Baroque House' has two levels, according to 'the pleats of matter' and 'the folds in the soul'.[8] The lower level is opened to the outside world through windows, which represent the five senses. The upper level is a closed, private room, referring to the inner self, or the soul. These two floors are not, however, disconnected; they are 'one and the same world', connecting through the folds that are 'virtual', although potentially actualised in the soul and realised in matter.[9] It is important to note that Deleuze's notion of the virtual is not the same as virtual reality. Whereas virtual reality is thought of colloquially as an idea of imitating reality and reproducing its experience in an artificial medium, the virtual in this case refers to the reality of the virtual; that is, it has 'real' effects, and therefore it is immanent in the actual.[10] Thus, the virtual entails an unfolding that moves the exotic from an inside view into an outside, whereby the distinction between them becomes no longer clear.

The fold metaphor is useful because we can see how the Japanese restaurant is formed and operates as an exotic genre, which is produced through constant movements between the inside and the outside. In the contemporary Australian context, the Japanese restaurant 'works' through the acts of connecting and separating: it can be connected to the mainstream market, while maintaining itself as separate, producing paradoxical effects that are both 'close' and 'different'. Through this two-way movement, the Japanese restaurant becomes intelligible, that is, it 'makes sense' to the dominant clientele, yet at the same time it also functions as a site of 'difference', which can contest authenticity and potentially dislocate fixed categories of identity. The trope of the fold

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7   Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 3.
8   *Ibid*.
9   *Ibid.*, p. 35.
10 Žižek, 'The Reality of the Virtual', *Organs Without Bodies – Gilles Deleuze*.

has the ability to follow a constant shift from object to subject positions as it moves. This flexible movement allows us to find an alternative way to see the Japanese restaurant that can be sensed through bodily experience, rather than being essentialised. It is important to note, however, that the fold is not a free-flowing movement, but rather a dialectical narrative that enables communication between different categories. This containment inherent in the movement of the fold relates to the Japanese restaurant in the Australian context, since while there is de-contextualisation and re-contextualisation in the cross-cultural construction, the Japanese restaurant also always refers to that which is 'Japanese' within the exotic genre.

Using my examples, I aim to demonstrate how the Japanese restaurant provides a site for the production and consumption of Japaneseness within popular commodity culture. The fold metaphor is employed to make visible the constructedness of Japaneseness that is enabled by specific social interactions and institutions that produce the particular representational form. Through the concept of the fold, it also describes how there is a fold between the inside and the outside, the virtual and the actual, and the soul and the body, in the formation and operation of the Japanese restaurant, and how providers attempt to make sense between these categories in the Australian context. What I am suggesting is, then, a conceptual movement from essence, to representation and embodiment, through which to see an alternative mode of the exotic.

The Japanese Restaurant in a 'White' Australia

To understand how the Japanese restaurant functions overseas requires an examination of a specific context where it is placed. Due to the relatively small size of the Japanese-born residents in Melbourne,[11] most of the clientele of local Japanese restaurants are from different cultural and ethnic groups; dominantly from the Anglo-European Australian population, although clientele from Asian-Australian groups are also playing an increasingly important role in the industry. This ethno-demographic condition, which also informs the domestic mainstream market, has impacted how the providers structure their practices within the exotic genre. In other words, the formation and operation of the Japanese restaurant is dependent upon the dominant clientele's expectations and recognitions (or misrecognitions) of what 'Japanese restaurant' is or should be. In my interviews, this was indicated when many of the providers identified their clientele as 'dominantly white Australians', and remarked that they customised

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11   The number of Japanese-born residents in Melbourne is 5,287, according to the 2006 Census. The Japanese-born residents indicate people of Japanese ancestry who are resident in Australia, whether through birth or immigration. The 2006 Census excludes Australian-born persons of Japanese ancestry, and Japanese in Australia as overseas visitors (and would include non-Japanese born in Japan). By comparison, the 2006 Census shows that the Chinese population is 182,550; these are residents who identified themselves as having Chinese ancestry (either exclusively or with another ancestry).

their products and service according to the specific groups of clientele. A Japanese-born owner/head chef of an up-market restaurant in the central business district (CBD), one of my informants, commented that:

> Our business would never work here if we only set to target Japanese customers, who are definitely not many. … Certainly we are designing our business around the needs from our clientele, who are dominantly white Australians [*hakujin no ōsutoraria jin*]. So we make sure that their demands are met in terms of what kind of taste they prefer and what types of Japanese dishes they know and like. So we do have things like *teriyaki* and *yakiniku* that are easily recognisable to those people, while we also have homemade *soba*, which is probably a not so commonly known Japanese dish in Melbourne.

It is necessary to point out that while this ethno-demographic condition constructs whom the providers recognise as the dominant clientele, their recognition does not necessarily reflect the dominant clientele exactly, and instead constitutes a 'stereotype' to whom they conform. I would suggest that this stereotype is about expectations, both on the part of providers and their perceived notion of the consumers' desire, which is also informed by the socio-cultural reality.

In examining how providers act in response to their clientele's demands and perpetuated ideas as to what the clientele expect from the Japanese restaurant, Ghassan Hage's arguments on the white nation fantasy become instructive. Hage suggests that Australia is ideologically and legally built upon a 'white' centre: it is a 'white nation' fantasy that sustains, and is framed through, the popular conception of Australia as a white settler nation.[12] Here, it is important to emphasise that whiteness is not a fixed racial category ascribed to particular skin colours and geographic origins; but rather, as Hage suggests, it is an *accumulated* position that can be taken up within the national (white) discourses.[13] As addressed earlier, the Japanese restaurant gains entry into, and success in, the domestic dominant (white) market through the acts of connecting and separating. It is this paradoxical structure of the Japanese restaurant – which is both inside and outside of the dominant socio-cultural 'norm' – that can deal with consumers' anxiety about, as well as their fascination with, the outside or the 'foreign'. I employ the phrase 'domestic dominant (white) market' to refer specifically to the white dominance that ideologically and empirically contains, and thus sanctions, particular kinds of others within the national space.

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12   Hage, *White Nation*, p. 18.
13   Dyer, *White*, p. 57.

Cosmo-multicultural Consumption: How Do White Australians 'Experience' Multiculturalism?

In further interrogating how this imaginary national space has impacted the conditions of the Japanese restaurant in the Australian context, this section looks at a particular mode of consumption practices that the Japanese restaurant provides a site for. Following Ghassan Hage's notion of white multiculturalism, I argue that the Japanese restaurant becomes commodified specifically for the domestic dominant (white) market, whereby (white) Australians can consume and *experience* Otherness within the national space. This mode of consumption will be also referred to as a form of cosmopolitanism, while locating the Japanese restaurant within the everyday spaces, where multiculturalism is in place.

Multiculturalism in Australia was adopted by the Whitlam Labour government in 1973 after the rescinding of the White Australia Policy. It is therefore a state-run, 'top-down' political strategy, structurally dissimilar to multiculturalism practiced in America that is a minority-initiated, 'bottom-up' policy, against the US government's ideology of the country as a 'melting pot'.[14] Hage argues that multiculturalism in Australia is also a white national fantasy: white multiculturalism allows *some* white Australians to manage 'cultural diversity' through sanctioning the 'Other', and their fears over it.[15] Multiculturalism as 'cultural diversity' uses non-white ethnicities as a way of valorising a white centre, while at the same time superficially valuing 'cultural diversity' where non-white ethnic subjects are involved. Hage suggests that current debates on multiculturalism highlight this point, since their focus is more upon how white Australians experience multiculturalism, rather than what multiculturalism is or is not.[16] In other words, Australia's form of multiculturalism centres on reinforcing whiteness, not other ethnicities, whereby white Australians can *experience* 'cultural diversity' as part of *their* own 'cultural enrichment'.

As a multicultural theme, 'cultural enrichment' relates to cosmopolitan consumption, which is predicated upon an interest in other cultures. This mode of consumption emphasises not merely commodities per se but also consumption experience, whereby consumers are *touched* through the senses. Cosmopolitan consumption is also a classed practice, as it exposes consumers' cultural (and often socio-economic) capacities to appreciate commodities that cannot be necessarily intelligible within their own coding systems. In interrogating the link between multiculturalism in Australian contexts and cosmopolitan consumption, the term

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14   Stratton and Ang, 'Multicultural Imagined Communities', p. 126.
15   Hage, *White Nation*, p. 119.
16   *Ibid.*, p. 18.

'cosmo-multiculturalism', borrowed from Hage, becomes useful. Hage characterises Australia's multiculturalism as 'cosmopolite', referring to the 1988 Fitzgerald Inquiry report where the term cosmopolitanism was utilised to signify multiculturalism. He posits that 'the cosmopolite is a *class* figure *and* a White person, capable of appreciating and consuming "high-quality" commodities and cultures, including "ethnic" culture'.[17] While it is important to highlight that cosmopolitanism is not necessarily a white privilege, Hage's argument is suggestive in a way that shows how cosmopolitanism has become a mode of conceiving multiculturalism in Australia, and how this can enable a shift between 'white' and 'non-white', and subject and object status.

The term cosmo-multiculturalism is relevant to the context of the Japanese restaurant in Melbourne when looking at how it is consumed and experienced within the dominant (white) market. Dining out in a Japanese restaurant in an Australian metropolitan city is linked to 'taste' – not only taste as a sensation, but also taste as an aesthetics that corresponds to particular consumption practices assigned as 'high-class'.[18] It is a classed experience, as well as a popular cultural one, since it is often only available to those with the resources to consume and appreciate what is provided in the site.[19] This mode of consumption practices can be thus thought of as 'cosmo-multicultural' in that the Japanese restaurant is located within popular culture as a sign of cosmopolitanism.

Similarly the term is useful because it can describe a new mode of the exotic that is marketed specifically for (white) Australians, while also maintaining it as 'different' and 'novel'. Although there are issues of commodification and fetishisation surrounding the consumption practices, the frame of cosmo-multiculturalism allows us to see how the Japanese restaurant is being used to 'update' the domestic food spaces, as forming part of (white) Australia. What I am suggesting is a representational shift occurring within commodity culture since the late-1990s: no longer seen merely as 'quaint' and 'foreign', the Japanese restaurant is now perceived as 'high-class' and 'fashionable', thereby becoming marketable today for the new images in (white) Australia.[20] It is this new mode of the exotic that is unfolded into the domestic dominant (white) market, while being

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17   *Ibid.*, p. 201 (original emphasis).

18   Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p. 99.

19   In my interviews with consumers, dining out in local Japanese restaurants was often described as an 'elitist' practice. An Anglo-European Australian social worker in her fifties, for example, characterised the Japanese restaurant as 'an elitist place'. She explained:

   [Japanese restaurants] tend to focus more on quality rather than quantity. It is also relatively expensive so when I eat out I expect the place to provide an authentic dining experience. So it's a bit like elitism, you know. If you dine out at a Japanese restaurant, you would like to have high quality food and service and all that. I have been to a Japanese shop down the road run by probably Chinese, you know, you can kind of tell whether they are Japanese or not, but they just at most put a few lanterns and are very limited in presentation of Japanese aesthetics. Because that's the only Japanese place around here. We have a kind of perception that Japanese products are high quality whereas products made in China are usually not that good.

As her comments suggest, dining out in the Japanese restaurant in contemporary Australia works to produce a sign of cosmopolitanism, closely tied to aesthetic taste and class.

20   Although their research site is Los Angeles, America, ethnographic studies conducted by Ishige *et al.* provide a useful analysis of how the Japanese restaurant outside of Japan was previously represented within exoticism. See Ishige *et al., Rosuanjerusu no Nihon Ryōriten*.

still contained as that which is different. What enables this, I argue, is the providers'
self-conscious insertion of other forms such as 'whiteness' into the exotic, which will be
demonstrated through an analysis of my examples in the following sections.

The *Izakaya*: Folding 'Whiteness' Into a New Exotic

The *izakaya*, as a newly emergent public dining space, exemplifies how the exotic genre
of the Japanese restaurant unfolds into the popular national food spaces, while still
being constrained by the very genre. As author of *Izakaya* Mark Robinson observes,
'the izakaya is overdue to become one of the biggest Japanese cuisine trends abroad
since the sushi bar'.[21] This traditional Japanese dining style, which evolved from casual
eateries, or *niuriya*,[22] in the Edo period (1603-1867), is now appearing as a new exotic
in international urban gastronomic scenes, from New York, to London and Melbourne.

In her column 'Espresso', Melbourne's leading newspaper *The Age*'s chief
restaurant reviewer Larissa Dubecki wrote that 'until recently the notion of the izakaya was
pretty much exclusively known to Japanophiles. Now, it's a mini-trend taking Melbourne
by storm …'.[23] Within the last five years, at least eight *izakaya*-influenced establishments
have opened up, spread throughout the city and inner suburbs of Melbourne. Owner of
three *izakaya*-inspired dining pubs including Melbourne's oldest *izakaya* eatery opened
in 1989, Chris thinks that the *izakaya* is an effective business model because it is still
generally seen as 'novel', yet not completely 'foreign' for local consumers in Melbourne.
This Anglo-European Australian entrepreneur in his thirties, who has been preoccupied
with Japanese cultures from *anime* to *sake*,[24] commented that:

> Japanese *izakaya* style cuisine is a very accessible style of dining. It's like
> Spanish tapas, you know. You can eat lots of small things and you can share
> and, ah, it's very communal. … Niche market, but I think it's getting bigger.
> Four or five *izakaya* style restaurants opened up rapidly over the last year or
> two [in Melbourne]. Definitely it's getting popular.

The *izakaya* 'works' because it can produce 'familiarity' as an exotic effect. As
Chris observes, there are some aspects in the newly emerged dining style that allow a
connection to the dominant (white) market. The sharing of small dishes is one such

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21 Robinson, *Izakaya*, p. 6.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 48-9. Robinson explains that *niuriya* (煮売り屋) 'sold simmered food in broth, then later *sashimi*, *tempura* and other fish and vegetable dishes (meat being against Buddhist percepts)'.

23 Dubecki, 'Espresso', *The Age Online*.

24 Chris took Level 1 and 2 Sake Professional Courses sponsored by the Sake Education between 2007 and 2008. He also regularly visits a number of *sake* breweries in Japan to broaden his knowledge in Japanese *sake* and *shōchu*.

aspect, as it is also characteristic of already existing parts of the local gastronomic scene; namely, Mediterranean cuisines.[25] It is this whiteness that is foregrounded through the act of connecting so that the *izakaya* 'makes sense' to Melbourne's mainstream customer. A wide selection of locally produced wines is also another 'white' aspect that many of the local *izakaya*-influenced establishments use to produce familiarity, as well as novelty and surprise. Of the newest *izakaya*-influenced places CHIKA, for example, features a collection of wines that is all-Victorian, aligned with imported *sake*, *shōchu*, *umeshu* and Japanese beers on their two-page drink list, producing a cosmopolitan fold – that is, 'in' and 'out' – between different localities. The insertion of whiteness into the new exotic is, however, not just a simple hybridity. Whiteness reconfigures (if not being reconfigured by) the Japanese restaurant, in tension against, and in conjunction with, that which is different. Focusing upon the story of Keiko, a co-manager of CHIKA, the next section further examines how the movement of the fold can describe the formation and operation of the Japanese restaurant within the domestic dominant (white) market, and how providers strategically incorporate whiteness into Japaneseness to produce a new mode of the exotic.

Keiko from CHIKA: Sensing the Exotic, Making Sense of the Logic of the *Izakaya*

Keiko, a Japanese-born woman in her forties, migrated to Australia in 1983. When she first arrived in Melbourne, Keiko started off working part-time as a waitress in a traditional *teppanyaki* restaurant in the CBD. In my interview, she recalled that working at a Japanese restaurant back then was merely for sustaining her study at university and art practice. Despite her initial intention to keep pursuing her art practice in the new destination, Keiko ended up staying in the local Japanese restaurant industry, expanding her professional horizon from being a casual wait staff to being a restaurant manager over the past twenty years. After working in Melbourne's oldest existent Japanese establishment, where traditional Japanese foods such as *sushi* and *tempura* are served in a modern, relatively formal atmosphere, Keiko decided to set up a new dining space in the city with her business partners; Adrian, an Anglo-European Australian restaurateur, and Tetsu, the Japanese-born former manager of Adrian's high-end Japanese-influenced European restaurant SPIRAL. With them, Keiko developed her business ideas and ultimately opened an urbane *izakaya* dining pub CHIKA on a main street in the CBD in 2009. In the interview, she described:

> It was something we had been working on for five or six years. Adrian and I
> started discussing new restaurant plans, and then Tetsu came in because he

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25   Mallos, 'Mediterranean Influences', pp. 16-18.

was working in Adrian's restaurant at that time. … There were a couple of hiccups on and off on its way, but we kept pushing it and trying to make it happen. … We were pretty clear on what we wanted to do, something that is Japanese, but definitely contemporary one, um, something that is yet to be seen in Melbourne.

Keiko's reasons to initiate the project lie in her desire to update the old images that have been used to represent the Japanese restaurant in Melbourne. Keiko said:

After all, anywhere you go in Melbourne, you'll find a traditional Japan [*toradishonaru na nihon*]. That's fine, but we also need something new, something that can show what's really happening in contemporary Japan. [Food culture in] Japan has gone further, but restaurants here do not seem to be keeping up with it. So we kind of felt that it's time to show people a newer Japan [*motto atarashii nihon*]. We've had enough *sushi* and *teriyaki* chicken here so we decided to do something different to what they usually think is Japanese food.

Rather than repeating clichéd images (such as, '*sushi* and *teriyaki* chicken') circulating in the popular commodity culture, Keiko's desire is to produce new images that reflect the presentness of Japan's food culture, bringing a break into the tradition that places the Japanese restaurant *outside* time – perpetually 'present'. In this sense, CHIKA can be understood as a site for Keiko to re-represent the Japanese restaurant *with* time, and therefore *con*temporary.

In addition to her continuous dialogues with her business partners, what made this desire 'realised' in the matter was a book; Mark Robinson's *Izakaya*. Keiko explained:

Then, we came across a book called 'Izakaya' written by an Australian guy living in Tokyo. The book was quite inspirational to develop our ideas about what kind of Japanese restaurant we wanted to do and could work here [in Melbourne]. The book is about different types of *izakaya* in Tokyo, all of which have their own styles. It's a great book. It shows some photos of the actual spaces, the history of each *izakaya* and also some of their recipes that they're actually using in the sites.

In fact, we made trips to Tokyo to visit those places featured in the book and see what they're like. The trips were a bit crazy. Since our time was limited, we hopped from one *izakaya* to another each night and tried different foods and drinks, talked to people there and got some recommendations from them as to what to check out. But it was great fun because we got a lot of ideas from the trips, which became really useful when we designed the architecture, the interior, the menu and so on.

Robinson's book thus has 'real' effects that allowed them to actually visit the *izakaya* places featured in the book, physically experience what they're providing and ultimately materialise their ideas into their own *izakaya*. It is this movement, I suggest, that characterises the formation of CHIKA through which to fold between 'virtual' and 'actual' spaces – from the virtual (book) space, to the actual *izakaya* spaces in Tokyo and the everyday food space in Melbourne.

The movement of the fold also has the ability to describe the operations of CHIKA within the domestic dominant (white) market. As addressed earlier, the Japanese restaurant in the Australian context functions as an exotic genre, since it is separated as that which is 'different' while being unfolded into the Australian national framework. This paradoxical structure characterising the Japanese restaurant is pertinent to the operations of CHIKA, where both 'closeness' and 'difference' is produced as effects of the exotic.

Designed by a renowned Melbourne architecture firm run by Adrian's father, this new *izakaya* creates an atmosphere of urban cool, strategically incorporating whiteness into Japaneseness. Its industrial minimalist aesthetic is manifested through concrete walls, the building's metal beams running through the ceiling and marble-topped tables reflected on an about three meter-high mirror placed at the end of the tunnel-like basement space. Male and female staff wearing black uniforms, red sneakers and colourful headscarves, most of who are Japanese-born in their twenties and thirties, are busily yet quietly attending to their middle to upper class clients, to the beat of a soundtrack such as soul, reggae and rock music. Their regular dinner menu comes in a *washi* paper scroll listing small dishes of foods and drinks ranging from imported Japanese *sake* to locally grown wines, in both English and Japanese. Their behind-the-bar open kitchen functions as a central pit, producing elaborately presented small dishes, such as deep-fried sweet corn fritters with a pinch of green tea sea salt, small rectangular pieces of *wagyu tataki* served with soy sauce dressing and *wasabi* mayonnaise, and salted grilled kingfish heads. To meet the demands for vegetarian options, they also have relatively diverse choices of vegetarian dishes, such as lightly steamed crunchy seasonal vegetables with a dipping sauce made from a *yuzu* citrus chilli *koshō* spice and sour cream, and sesame stir-fried Japanese *eringi* mushrooms.

CHIKA translates the *izakaya*, which is conventionally a cheap, casual drinking place, into something chic and high-class, closely tied to aesthetic taste and class. Their relatively high-priced foods (from AU$5 to AU$33 per dish) and drinks (from AU$25 for a 400ml bottle to AU$220 for a 720ml of the most premium) can suggest that they strategically limit their clientele to socially and economically privileged groups who are able to consume and appreciate other cultures. Not only is dining out in CHIKA a cultural experience, but also a classed one, thereby producing a sign of cosmopolitan consumption.

What the consumers can gain in exchange for the prices are, then, cosmopolitan pleasures, with which the other can be sensed, rather than being simply objectified, through bodily experience. To make this cosmopolitan consumption possible, CHIKA folds whiteness, which is represented through the local markers (such as, the wines and the architecture), into Japaneseness as a way of making sense of the other.

While the fold into whiteness works to connect CHIKA to the dominant domestic (white) market, there is also a separation, through which CHIKA can differentiate it from other places. Their use of a 'different' logic within the site most explicitly illustrates this. In the interview, Keiko said that 'there is a logic ['*rojikku*'] of the *izakaya*, a way to experience and understand this form of dining'. Highlighting 'sharing dishes' and 'repeating orders' as the underpinning elements of the logic, she described how CHIKA operates to maintain 'difference' within the dominant (white) market:

> When it comes to dining style, people here [in Melbourne] still have, ah, sort of like, an entrée-first-then-main mindset. But the *izakaya* doesn't work like that. At *izakaya*, you share dishes. … You order three or four dishes at a time, and then repeat it until you've had enough.

As Mark Robinson illustrates, within the logic of the *izakaya* customers are expected to 'order small-dish delicacies throughout the evening, perhaps in the beginning sharing just a couple of items. The menu is like a road map and the diners are at the wheel, calling out orders as the mood takes them'.[26] Whereas course meals set temporal and spatial grids that allocate an individual diner in a fixed location, the 'tablescape' of the *izakaya* can become messy, as foods, drinks, utensils and other elements constituting the space constantly cross over between physical and symbolic boundaries through sharing. This tablescape also works in tandem with the acts of ordering. The *izakaya* is structured through a 'play' mode with a repeat option (albeit different each time), rather than through a set course to follow: it is in the course of 'events' that human agency can spontaneously act and react, thereby enabling a move from essence, to representation and embodiment.

As a 'different' logic, the *izakaya* dining system, which operates at CHIKA, can be 'foreign' to the dominant (white) clientele. Keiko described that:

> People here ['*kocchino hito*'] sometimes don't get it. I'm like, 'Guys, you don't need to order everything in the first place'. But they do. That's what they usually do. When they get the table they order and that's it. After that, they put the

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26   Robinson, *Izakaya*, p. 8.

menu aside and forget about it until we come to take it away. But, that kind of logic doesn't work in *izakaya*. … So I let them order whatever they want, but then I tell them that 'I'll bring this and this first so see how it goes'.

How she described that the 'different' logic may not make sense to the clientele suggests not only the limitations of their own, but also the potential for a shift from object to subject status, since the logic can become subjectified through the senses. In Keiko's comments, this is illustrative when she used the word '*kankaku*', which loosely translates as 'feeling' or 'sense(s)', to explain how making sense of the logic of the *izakaya* requires the body to sense it. She said:

> In *izakaya*, you eat, drink, share, communicate ['*komyunikeito shinagara*'] and have a good time. So there are a lot of different things that can happen at the same time [in *izakaya*], but this kind of feeling ['*kankaku*'] is what makes an *izakaya* really an *izakaya*, I guess. That's very much how the *izakaya* works. So I've found it quite different to what people would usually expect from Japanese restaurants here [in Melbourne], but this kind of feeling ['*kankaku*'] is really, ah, the core essence of the *izakaya* that we're kind of trying to get across.

In her comments, the word '*kankaku*' refers to a necessary basis for understanding a supposed essence – 'what makes an *izakaya* really an *izakaya*'. However, the essence expressed by the word '*kankaku*' is not necessarily rendered as a fixed site; but rather, it is flexible enough that it can be embodied through the senses, thereby blurring the distinction between object and subject. This is the new mode of the exotic that I have argued through the fold metaphor; the exotic that collapses between the essence and the senses, and therefore enables shifts from essence, to representation and embodiment.

Kanta From MARU: 'From Head To Hands and Heart'

Along with the current *izakaya* boom, there is another new type of Japanese establishment appearing in the local food spaces: 'soul food' cafés. Café/shop MARU run by a Japanese-born couple Kanta and Tamaki is a new addition to the long-established café culture,[27] as well as the Japanese restaurant industry, in Melbourne. They interpret those seemingly separated types of eating establishments in a way that produces new images of Japaneseness. Since opening its doors in a laid-back inner suburb in Western Melbourne in 2008, MARU has offered the local clients a new outlook of contemporary Japan. Veering away from popular images associated with modern Japan (Japan the

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27   See Frost, Laing, Wheeler, and Reeves, 'Coffee Culture, Heritage and Destination Image: Melbourne and the Italian Model', pp. 99-110.

'rapid', the 'high-tech' and the 'consumerist'), Kanta and Tamaki re-present a slower, handcrafted and post-consumerist Japan through their aesthetic expression of a 'less-is-more' lifestyle. In my interview, Kanta said:

> This place is about reflecting elements of what we love and what we care about. There are three concepts that are especially valued in this space, which are 'style', 'food' and 'living'. We understand each concept in relation to our body and soul, using key words like 'head', 'hands' and 'heart', to suggest a happy life that we think needs all of these. That is, using not only your head but also your hands and heart makes it possible to feel, touch and treasure beautiful, little things in your everyday life.

The café owner, who is also an architect originally from Tokyo, transformed a warehouse into the café/shop space that caters to the local residents and workers who are dominantly Anglo-European Australian. This refurbished warehouse located in a backstreet operates two parts as one, folding whiteness into Japaneseness. The front part is the café dining area, where four members of the MARU team, comprising Kanta, Tamaki, another Japanese-born chef and an Anglo-Australian male waiter perhaps in their twenties and thirties, are moving in and out of the open kitchen, dividing (or connecting) the whole space. Different styles of furniture – new, old, wooden, metal and plastic tables and chairs – were sourced from a combination of second hand stores and a contact in Denmark, crossing over between different time-space boundaries. Instead of *sushi* and *tempura*, MARU serves Japanese *karē raisu* (curry with rice) and cold *soba* noodle salad and other simple, unpretentious, everyday Japanese dishes, along with Western basics such as sandwiches, albeit through their own interpretation. On Saturday mornings they provide a Japanese home-style breakfast plate, consisting of Tamaki's grandmother's style *miso* soup, brown rice, *tamagoyaki* egg rolls, potato salad, cold *ohitashi* steamed spinach, grilled salmon, and if requested, *maccha* muffins with red bean *azuki* paste inside. The other part at the back is a shop, featuring handcrafted Japanese products, such as *tenugui* cotton towels, ceramics, lacquer-ware, drinking glasses, recycled paper tote bags and toy robots, decorated with pieces of Danish designer furniture.

Although it is added to the local café culture, MARU does not seem to be completely *added up to* it; but rather, it functions as an exotic site, producing effects that are both 'fashionable' and 'different'. Their home-style Japanese breakfast and carefully selected Japanese handcrafted domestic items particularly indicate this, as their 'everydayness' and 'domesticity' is encountered anew in the contemporary Australian context through translation and displacement. It is notable, however, that their exoticising of the space is not the same as a self-Orientalising process, which is intended

to reverse self-other positions or insist other's uniqueness. Instead, MARU refers to the self that has already taken the influence of the 'West' other, thereby suggesting shifts in perspectives and the production of subjectivity. Furthermore, the whiteness constituting the space is not a single, unified identity; rather, they compose different white identities (such as, the local white consumers, the white waiter, the furniture from Denmark and the Japanese style Western *yōshoku* food) through their strategic use of aesthetics, predicated upon the 'less-is-more' lifestyle. In this sense, at MARU, whiteness functions neither to supplement Japaneseness nor to reverse exoticism (that is, whiteness exoticised by non-whiteness); but rather, it serves as a site to re-work Japaneseness through a discursive exchange of meaning.

To make sense of this new mode of the exotic, MARU deploys materials as a medium, as well as a subject, in their representation; food and other cultural products function to represent a particular life style that values a 'less-is-more' mentality, with which they associate slower, handcrafted and post-consumerist images of Japan. Aesthetics also play an integral part in this meaning making process, since it produces sensory effects and thus can enable a move between representation and embodiment. It is also worth mentioning that MARU's utilisation of aesthetics does not let form (that is, how Japan looks) be placed over content (that is, a Japanese lifestyle); but rather, form (the outside) works as a necessary part of content (the inside) that it contains. In the interview, Kanta said that:

> All of the products are selected because of their quality. They can endure the demands of everyday use. So it's not just about aesthetics, but it's also about practicality and how they can make our everyday life more enjoyable and sophisticated.

While the comments imply their attempts to produce a certain identity or 'interiority' for Japaneseness through the display of these traditionally made Japanese domestic products, their practices do not necessarily hierarchise the categories of content and form; instead, they fold between them, again allowing a shift from essence, to representation and embodiment.

This conceptual movement can also describe their formation of Japaneseness through which to represent an immediate experience of a Japanese lifestyle that at the same time *others* in the dominant domestic (white) market. Kanta's following comments demonstrate how the perception and consumption of the new mode of the exotic requires the operation of all the senses, thereby possibly disrupting the fixity of subject and object positions. He said:

Instead of presenting just one aspect of Japanese culture, we wanted to show different elements that can express a certain life style that we value. So we designed our café in a way that people can sense that, and, if they like, they can even take some home and enjoy them through materials in their own life space.

The comments suggest that consumption practices unfold (or expand) the popularity of the exotic into the outside of the site. In this regard, MARU operates as an informed site through which to produce the new mode of the exotic that can *touch* the consumers and thus create potential empowerment, or agency, in their representation.

Conclusion

My attempts to see the Japanese restaurant within the frame of a white Australia argue for the possibility of other forms of representation and identity being structured within the frame. Through the theoretical movement of the fold, I aimed to find an alternative to a unified, unchanging form of Japaneseness that locates an object and a subject in fixed positions. Framing the Japanese restaurant in the Australian context as a site of the fold thus allowed us to expose its constructedness and how the social apparatus functions to produce the new form of Japaneseness that can be sensed, rather than being essentialised, within exoticism. The fold metaphor provides a useful lens through which to demonstrate that the providers' practices are structured within the frame of the domestic dominant (white) market, as well as informing it. Seeing their desire for the new form of Japaneseness through the theoretical lens also offers an effective way to understand why they absorb whiteness into their products and practices, while at the same time maintaining them as 'different', and how the ambivalent desire for a connection and a separation lies in the formation and operation of the Japanese restaurant in contemporary Australia. While this study concentrated only upon the incorporation of whiteness into Japaneseness, my ethnographic examples illustrated that Japaneseness can be re-worked through cross-cultural interactions, and hence the production of the new formation of representation can contain the possibility of positive agency for its subjects.

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Gendered Characteristics of Female Learners' Conversational Japanese

Maki Yoshida
Monash University

Abstract

This study examines gendered characteristics in four female Japanese language learners' discourse practices in a communicative setting, where they interact with native Japanese speaking friends in a JFL context. Focusing on the relationship between gender ideologies and discourse practices, I explore the extent to which learners are aware of gender ideologies in the Japanese community and how these ideologies are influential in their discourse practices in the particular setting. In addition, how native speakers of Japanese evaluate gender-differentiated features produced by the learners during the interaction is investigated.

Qualitatively-approached, this study revealed that each learner possesses a unique character in their utterances and perceptions, reflecting their individual awareness of gender ideologies and their negotiation of language use against the backdrop of social expectations. At the same time, a lack of such awareness emerged as an issue which kept them from fully and actively engaging in exploring their subjectivities. In addition, this study pointed out that native Japanese speakers utilised gender ideologies as the basis for their judgements on learners' gendered features in their interaction.

Keywords

Gender, Identity, Ideology, JFL, Contact Situation

Introduction

Among the many languages utilised for communication, Japanese is one language where gender differences are prominent.[1] A great variety of linguistic features as well as paralinguistic features in Japanese distinguish the gender identity of the speaker or the referent to some degree.[2]

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1   Reynolds, 'Gengo to sēsa no kenkyū – genzai to shōrai'; Abe, 'Mottomo sēsa no aru gengo – gengo no sēsa no tajūkōzō'.

2   Ide, *Onna no Kotoba Otoko no Kotoba*; Shibamoto, *Japanese Women's Language*; Mizutani and Mizutani, *How to be Polite in Japanese*; McGloin, 'Sex difference and sentence-final particles'; Okamoto, 'Social context, linguistic ideology, and indexical expressions in Japanese'; Iwasaki, *Japanese.*

A traditional approach to gender differences has been to categorise various features of the Japanese language into men's and women's language. Studies interested in such categorisation of gendered Japanese claim that men's language is linked with images of authority, roughness, and straightforwardness; while women's language expresses femininity by giving speech an impression of kindness, gentleness and softness.[3] Such gender differences have been identified in various features such as pronouns, vocabulary, frequency in the use of honorifics, pitch height, intonation, and sentence-final particles (SFPs).[4]

Recent focus on gendered language has shifted toward varieties in actual discourse practices, not simply tied to traditional categories of men's and women's language. These studies utilise empirical data rather than researchers' introspection, which former studies were likely to rely on,[5] to examine speakers' discourse practices in relation to identities. Consequently, a great number of variables in actual speech have been identified.[6] In addition, how gendered features in speech of this era differ from that of previous decades has also received attention, with some studies indicating neutralisation of gender differences in Japanese.[7]

Despite wide interest in gender differences in Japanese as a first language, few studies have been conducted on aspects linked to learners of Japanese, especially those who are studying Japanese as a foreign language (JFL). Thomson and Iida, for example, conducted a consciousness survey on gender differences in Japanese on a large scale, targeting learners at universities in Australia.[8] They established that awareness of gender differences varied among the students, as did their perceptions of them. Furthermore, they found that learners are willing to learn about differences on the whole, contrary to the authors' expectations. They concluded that elements such as the learner's level, their backgrounds, and the length of time in Japan influenced the result. Similarly, Asada investigated learner's awareness towards gender differences in Japanese, focusing on SFPs.[9] Comparing perceptions of some SFPs between learners of JFL and native speakers of Japanese of their own age, he concluded that learners were aware of the gender differences that these SFPs indicated and that these perceptions were similar to those of native speakers. He further examined how learners utilise SFPs in their conversation

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3   Ide, *op. cit.*

4   Ide, *op. cit.*; Shibamoto, *op. cit.*; Iwasaki, *op. cit.*; Ohara, 'Shakai onsēgaku no shiten kara mita Nihonjin no koe no kōtě', 'Finding one's voice in Japanese: a study of the pitch levels of L2 users'.

5   Okamoto and Shibamoto, 'Introduction'.

6   See Abe, 'Lesbian bar talk in Shinjuku, Tokyo'; Okamoto, '"Tasteless" Japanese: less "feminine" speech among young Japanese women', 'Social context, linguistic ideology, and indexical expressions in Japanese'; SturtzSreetharan, 'Japanese men's linguistic stereotypes and realities: conversations from the Kansai and Kanto regions', 'Gentlemanly gender?: Japanese men's use of clause-final politeness in casual conversations'.

7   Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*

8   Thomson and Iida, 'Nihongo kyōiku ni okeru sēsa no gakushū – Ōsutoraria no gakushūsha no ishiki chōsa yori – '.

9   Asada, 'Daini gengo to shite no Nihongo no otoko kotoba, onna kotoba – danjosa wo shimesu bunmatsu hyōgen ni oite no Nihongo gakushūsya no sansyutsu, juyō nōryoku – '.

amongst other learners in a rather controlled setting. Participants in his study were provided with certain topics to talk about and were instructed to communicate in *da*-style: one of the speech styles where more gendered-SFPs are expected to appear. According to Asada, despite learners' awareness of gender differences in SFPs, very few SFPs appeared in their production.[10]

Previous studies have examined gender differences in Japanese from different perspectives. Although the importance of interrelating gender, language and identity has become more recognised in the area of gender studies,[11] be it first, second, or additional language(s), such an approach in relation to learners in the JFL setting has received little attention to date. In addition, the actual language use of learners of Japanese concerning gender differences has been relatively unexplored utilising qualitative methods. Motivated by this rationale, this study investigates gendered characteristics in learners' discourse practices in a communicative setting, where they interact with native Japanese speaking friends in a JFL context. Moreover, this paper aims to examine the setting qualitatively in order to obtain deeper understandings of learners' gendered language choices expressed in their discourse. Specifically, the following questions are addressed:

1. What kind of gendered features occur in Japanese discourse in the setting of interaction between advanced learners of Japanese and their native Japanese speaking friends?

2. How do the native speakers evaluate the learners' gendered discourse in their interaction?

3. How aware are the learners of Japanese gender ideologies?

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10   *Ibid.*
11   Piller and Pavlenko, 'Introduction: multilingualism, second language learning, and gender'; Okamoto and Shibamoto, *op. cit.*

Conceptual Framework

The present study employs Nakamura's Dynamic Model of Language and Gender Studies as a means to investigate the (non-)appearance of gendered features in communicative settings (see Fig. 1).[12]
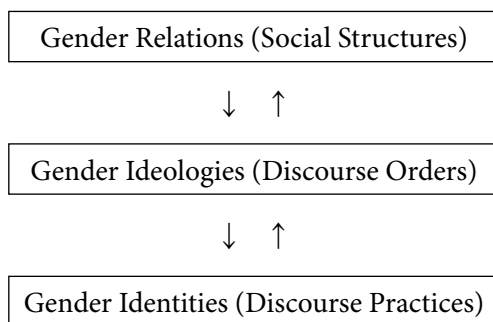
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┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Gender Relations (Social Structures)   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                 ↓    ↑
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Gender Ideologies (Discourse Orders)   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                 ↓    ↑
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Gender Identities (Discourse Practices) │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 1: Dynamic Model of Language and Gender Studies[13]

This model conceptualises the dialectic relationship among three facets of language and gender.[14] Nakamura defines gender relations (social structures) as the gender-related power structures in society; gender ideologies (discourse orders) as gender-related categories, social subjects, social relationships, and conceptual frameworks, which have been historically constituted and ordered by previous discourse practices; and gender identities (discourse practices) as a variety of gender-related identities that subjects actively (re)construct in discourse practices.[15]

According to Nakamura's model, so-called 'men's language' and 'women's language' function as gender ideologies in the community where the language is spoken. Previous studies have identified gendered features in Japanese and classified these features into these two categories, namely male and female language. In this study, I draw on Shibamoto's traditional framework in order to examine characteristics of gendered features appearing in the target setting.[16] Among the categories in which she indicates the appearance of gender-differentiated features in Japanese, the current study focuses on choice of verb endings, pronouns, lexical forms, and SFPs. In addition, the form of request/command is included as another feature where gender differences emerge in Japanese.[17]

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12 Nakamura, 'The dynamic model of language and gender studies'.
13 Nakamura, *Ibid.*, p. 13.
14 *Ibid.*
15 Nakamura, '"Let's dress a little girlishly!" or "Conquer short pants!" Constructing gendered communities in fashion magazines for young people', p. 135.
16 Shibamoto, *op. cit.*
17 Ide, *op. cit.*

Nakamura argues that these gender ideologies consist of stereotypical images of how men and women should talk, which have been historically formed by members of the community.[18] Therefore, they do not necessarily conform to how men and women actually talk, by which she concludes that such language categories formed as a result of gender ideologies should be distinguished from actual discourse practices. She further indicates that gender ideologies play a role in restricting and providing resources to individuals in their discourse practices. As a consequence of these gender ideologies being considered 'the norm'[19] in the community, one expresses oneself by either accepting or resisting the social expectations as an active agent by constructing one's identities and relationships.[20] She argues that individuals do not follow gender ideologies submissively but negotiate their language use vis-à-vis hegemonic norms. Such negotiation, therefore, accounts for variations in their everyday discourse practices beyond simple binary categories of 'men's language' and 'women's language'.

By distinguishing gender ideologies and discourse practices and shedding light on the negotiation of language use by individuals, the Dynamic Model of Language and Gender Studies enables the current study to explore the gendered characteristics of learners' discourse practices at multiple levels. In the present study, I am interested in the extent to which learners are aware of gender ideologies in the Japanese community and how these ideologies are influential as resources and restrictions in their discourse practices in a particular context, namely, conversations with close native speakers of Japanese. Although the model is not specifically addressed to learners of Japanese, I apply the framework on the basis that learners are learning gender ideologies as one aspect of Japanese, which would influence their speech in some form.

Methodology

Participants

The present study involves four pairs, with each pair consisting of a learner of Japanese at the advanced level and her close native Japanese-speaking friend. Although unintended, all of the participants employed in this study were female. They were enrolled in an Australian university at the time the study was conducted. I focused on learners at advanced levels since these learners are expected to be more familiar with a wider variety of different conversational language features in Japanese, compared to those at lower levels. The background of these pairs is presented in Table 1 below.

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18   Nakamura, 'The dynamic model of language and gender studies'; '"Let's dress a little girlishly!" or "Conquer short pants!" Constructing gendered communities in fashion magazines for young people'.
19   Nakamura, '"Let's dress a little girlishly!" or "Conquer short pants!" Constructing gendered communities in fashion magazines for young people', p. 135.
20   Okamoto, '"Tasteless" Japanese: less "feminine" speech among young Japanese women', p. 321.

Procedure

Three different kinds of methods were employed in this study for data collection: questionnaires, audio-recording of an interaction, and semi-structured interviews. Learners were asked to fill in a short questionnaire regarding their language background and previous Japanese study. In order to examine what kind of gendered features appear in interactive settings, I asked the participants to converse about any topic while having their conversation audio-recorded for approximately ten minutes. I was not present at the time of the recording to avoid influencing the conversation of the participants.

Immediately after the recording, the informants participated in a face-to-face interview with the researcher individually, which lasted 40 to 90 minutes. The first half of the interview employed a stimulated-recall interview method in order to investigate perceptions by the participants towards gendered features which occurred in the recorded conversation. Neustupný advocates this kind of interview, which he calls a 'follow-up interview', arguing that it is a valuable method to understand the participants' cognitive processes in 'contact situations'.[21] According to the author, in many cases these processes are not observable at the surface level.[22]

Immediately following the stimulated-recall interview, a semi-structured interview was conducted to explore the role that gender ideologies play in the participants discourse practices. I aimed at examining how aware learners were of these gender ideologies and their influence in the communicative setting. In addition, learners were asked about the construction of these ideologies. Finally, gender ideologies that native speakers of Japanese possess were focused on as well, in order to investigate to what extent they utilised these ideologies when they evaluated gendered features in learners' discourses in the preceding stimulated-recall interview.

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21   Neustupný, 'The follow-up interview', p. 31.
22   *Ibid.*

Table 1: Background of the Participants

Background Details [1]	Pair 1		Pair 2		Pair 3		Pair 4	
	Sophie	Yuri	Olivia	Megumi	Eva	Yoko	Zoe	Risa
Age	21	23	32	20	21	33	21	19
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
Home language	Korean	Japanese	English	Japanese	English	Japanese	English	Sinhala and Japanese
Japanese level [2]	Advanced	Native speaker	Advanced	Native speaker	Advanced	Native speaker	Advanced	Native speaker (Bilingual)
Length and purpose of stay in Japan	5 days: university holiday 1 year: university exchange program	23 years	3 months: pre-university holiday 1 year: university exchange program 2 years: university exchange program 1 month: data collection for research	18 years	3 weeks: university holiday	31 years	16 days: high school exchange program	16 years
First meeting	Japanese seminar		language exchange program		language exchange program		volunteer program [3]	
Length of friendship	1 month		2 weeks		1 year		1.5 months	
Frequency of contact	a few times in 1 month		a few times in 2 weeks		once a week		once a week	

1   All names are pseudonyms.
2   'Advanced' refers to the fact that the participant has completed Japanese units of advanced level at a university in Australia.
3   They participated in a volunteer program in which they teach English to refugees.

Data Analysis

The current study identified several gendered features in Japanese that appeared in learners' discourse practices. This section closely examines each feature, indicating the background against which these characteristics appeared and how these articulations were evaluated by the learners' native Japanese speaking interlocutors. Subsequently, data in relation to gender ideologies and learners of Japanese will be presented.

Choice of verb endings

Japanese language can be broadly categorised into two levels of speech in daily conversation: polite speech and familiar speech.[23] Mizutani and Mizutani reveal that most sentences end in *desu/masu*-style (i.e. polite form) in polite speech, which is generally used in conversations between acquaintances or strangers.[24] On the other hand, sentences in conversations between good friends or family tend to end in *da*-style (i.e. plain form). Although these two styles are not gender-exclusive features, previous studies associate more polite speech with women.[25] In addition, the style in which learners conversed is of essential importance to this study since more gender differences in Japanese appear in *da*-style.[26] Table 2 shows participants' overall choice of verb endings in their discourse practices.

	Pair 1		Pair 2		Pair 3		Pair 4	
	Sophie	Yuri	Olivia	Megumi	Eva	Yoko	Zoe	Risa
desu/masu-style	✓	✓					✓	✓
da-style			✓	✓	✓	✓		

Table 2: Participants' choice of verb endings

As Table 2 presents, two pairs chose *desu/masu*-style, and the other two used *da*-style as the basic style of their speech, which was consistent within each pair.

In relation to the choice of verb endings, learners revealed their stance on which style they chose in the setting. Sophie and Zoe claimed that they nearly always

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23 Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*
24 *Ibid.*
25 Ide, *op. cit.*; Shibamoto, *op. cit.*; Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*
26 Ide, *op. cit.*; Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*

used *desu/masu*-style when they communicate with native Japanese speakers because they did not want to be rude. According to Sophie, the possibility to be offensive to her interlocutors increases when she speaks in *da*-style. In addition, she further mentioned that during her one-year university exchange, it was difficult to switch her speech style from *desu/masu*-style to *da*-style as she became closer to her friends. She said that in the end, this resulted in her retaining *desu/masu*-style. She revealed that almost all of her Japanese friends were female, and that both Sophie and her Japanese friends conversed in *desu/masu*-style all the time. Although Zoe had not resided in Japan for a long period, she has a commonality with Sophie in that her Japanese friends were female only, and she also communicated in *desu/masu*-style.

Different from these two learners, Olivia, who chose *da*-style as the basic style of her speech, established a rule about choices of verb endings through her long term residence in Japan and changes her speech style according to interlocutors. She revealed that she communicated with Megumi in *desu/masu*-style at first, and then altered it to *da*-style shortly, learning Megumi's casual personality. Similarly, Eva described her experience where the speech style changed from *desu/masu*-style to *da*-style as she became closer to Yoko.

Native Japanese speakers evaluated the speech styles of their respective addressees in varying ways. Yuri and Risa, whose interlocutors predominantly conversed in *desu/masu*-style, perceived the style as polite. However, Risa's response carried certain connotations. She had experience teaching Japanese as a second language and knew that learners were more familiar with *desu/masu*-style because it was the basic style which most textbooks employed. Therefore, Zoe's speech style projected her as a 'learner' to Risa.

Megumi, likewise, referred to her positioning of Olivia as a 'learner' on Olivia's choice of *da*-style, though it was rather positive in this case. Megumi explained that several learners even at advanced levels sometimes did not understand her Japanese if it was in *da*-style; therefore, learners who can speak in *da*-style, including Olivia, gave her the impression that their Japanese level was more advanced. Similar to Risa, she maintained that learners who were learning Japanese in class only, would use 'textbookish' formal speech, even in conversation. Without mentioning the 'learner' category, Yoko evaluated Eva's *da*-style speech favourably as well. She commented that she changed her speech style from *desu/masu*-style to *da*-style after the first meeting with Eva because she wanted to become a closer friend. She appreciated Eva's choice of verb endings because, according to her, it shortened the psychological distance between them.

As the participants' choices of verb endings and the trajectories towards choices of the basic speech style in this study illustrate, employing *desu/masu*-style or *da*-style in each pair on the whole corresponded to the addressees' usage, that is, the style choice was reciprocal.

Pronouns

All learners as well as native Japanese speakers used *watashi* 'I' for first-person pronouns in their interactions. While a number of first-pronouns are either exclusively masculine or feminine, *watashi* is employed by both men and women.[27] However, Ide indicates that women use the feature in a wider range of contexts.[28] According to her, *watashi* appears in semi-formal or informal women's speech; in contrast, the feature is more likely to be identified as formal in men's speech.

As found in previous studies, learners used *watashi* in informal conversation with their friends. Regarding the choice of learners' first-pronoun, no native Japanese speakers commented that they thought about or noticed the feature during their conversations. However, Megumi, who occasionally used *atashi*, a less-formal feminine first-pronoun,[29] pointed out that *watashi* sounded formal. Risa likewise evaluated *watashi* as very formal and revealed that she subconsciously adjusted to Zoe and used *watashi*. *Uchi*, another feminine informal first-pronoun, which she normally used when conversing with her friends, did not emerge because of Zoe's use of *watashi*.

Lexical forms

Several gender-related lexical forms were identified in the learners' discourse. Sophie and Zoe attached the honorific prefixes 'o' and 'go' to a number of nouns e.g. *oishasan* 'doctor', *oyasumi* 'holiday', *oyōfuku* 'clothes', and *gokazoku* '(your) family'. These prefixes function to 'express the speaker's respect, modesty or politeness'.[30] Although the feature can be employed by both men and women, previous research suggests that the form appears more often in women's speech.[31] Native Japanese-speaking interlocutors evaluated the learners' usage of this feature as polite.

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27 Shibamoto, *op. cit.*
28 Ide, *op. cit.*
29 *Ibid.*
30 Makino and Tsutsui, *A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar,* p. 344.
31 Ide, *op. cit.*; Shibamoto, *op. cit.*; Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*; Iwasaki, *op. cit.*

Contrary to the case above, where the learners strove for beautification of their lexical items, Olivia used the slang term *maji* 'serious' in her speech in line (4) below:

Extract 1

(1)   Megumi: *Sono kōhaku de, aka wa, akagumi wa onna no hito nan da kedo, de, shirogumi wa otoko no hito no shingā, shingā.*
[In that *Koohaku*, the red is, the red team is for women, and the white team is for male singers, singers.]

(2)   Olivia: *Ā.*
[Okay.]

(3)   Megumi: *Sorede, dotchi ga katsu ka mitai na no wo tōhyō de maitoshi yaru n da kedo, koko sūnen zutto shirogumi, dansē chīmu ga katte ru, zutto.*
[And we vote for one team to decide a winner every year, but the white team, the male team has been winning in the past several years, always.]

➤   (4)   Olivia: *Hē, maji de?*
[Gee, seriously?]

(5)   Megumi: *Sō, zettai.*
[Yeah, absolutely.]

In relation to this lexical choice, Olivia commented that she doubted that she was thinking about how she was using the feature at the time of conversation. Yonekawa defines this lexicon as a shortened version of the more standard word *majime*.[32] According to him, this lexicon is one of those beyond the range of polite Japanese which learners of Japanese would not learn from textbooks in class. He recommends that some of these vocabulary 'require precisely the right moment and situation, and will perhaps be more useful as part of your passive vocabulary rather than the active'.[33] Given that previous studies indicate that women tend to use politer words,[34] slang would not be considered to be 'women's language'. Megumi described her evaluation toward Olivia's articulation in the following way:

Extract 2

I notice this feature every time (Olivia)[35] uses it because the vocabulary is rather masculine, and is not a word that I would use. It sounded strange when I first heard it, but I am getting used to it recently.

32   Yonekawa, *Beyond Polite Japanese: A Dictionary of Japanese Slang and Colloquialism*, p. 119.
33   *Ibid.*, p. 9.
34   Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*
35   Words in parentheses in extracts hereafter refer to the fact that they were edited by the researcher in order to enhance comprehensibility or assure participants' anonymity.

The above extract illustrates that Megumi noticed Olivia's utterance *'maji'* during their conversation. In addition, her impression towards the usage has shifted from negative to neutral over time, though she still noticed when the lexicon was articulated, even after hearing it several times.

The forms of request/command

Among a range of command forms in Japanese, several types are categorised as 'men's language', reflecting a rough and straight-forward impression.[36] Eva produced one of these masculine command forms in line (6):

Extract 3

    (1)   Yoko: *Nichiyōbi wa nani shita kke? Nichiyōbi wa toshokan ni kite…*
                           [What did I do on Sunday? I came to the library…]

    (2)   Eva: *Ē? Mata toshokan?*
                           [Gee, the library, again?]

    (3)   Yoko: *Asainmento no…*
                           [For an assignment…]

    (4)   Eva: *Ē? Benkyō bakkari.*
                           [Gee, you're into studying.]

    (5)   Yoko: *Ieieie, date uchi de shinai mon.*
                           [No, no, no, because I don't study at home.]

➤   (6)   Eva: *Uso <u>yūna</u>.*
                           [Don't tell a lie.]

    (7)   Yoko: *Honto, honto.*
                           [I mean it, I mean it.]

Upon hearing this utterance which was replayed in the stimulated-recall interview, Eva claimed that she uttered it naturally and had no comment on the usage.

Different from Eva, her interlocutor Yoko did notice the feature during their conversation. Yoko revealed how she felt about Eva using the command form as follows:

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36   Ide, *op. cit.*; Suzuki, 'Josēgo no honshitsu – Tēnēsa, hatsuwa kōdō no shiten kara –'.

Extract 4

(Eva) sometimes uses this kind of masculine speech. I got surprised when I heard these expressions for the first time. I felt like 'oh, she's a woman, but using masculine speech'…it was rather negative impression. But the impression has changed because I hear these usages many times, and I now understand it's her way of speaking…though I notice the feature even now when I speak with her.

As the extract above demonstrates, Yoko's stance towards Eva's masculine speech by the learner has changed from 'surprise' to 'acceptance'. However, use of this feature still attracts her attention, similar to the case of Megumi and Olivia in the previous section.

Sentence-final particles

A number of SFPs are employed in conversational Japanese to express the speaker's modality, that is, feelings and attitudes with respect to the listener.[37] Apart from Zoe's usage, these features appeared in participants' discourses to some degree, regardless of the use of *desu/masu*-style or *da*-style. However, SFPs in the latter style project gender differences prominently. Among several gender-related SFPs that were identified in previous research, Olivia, who conversed in *da*-style, produced two kinds of SFPs in her conversation. The first SFP is indicated in turn (2) below:

Extract 5

(1) Megumi: *…ninjin toka burokkorī toka, akirakani nama nanoni, sonna mono tabe nagara aruite ru kara, 'e? usagi?' toka tte omo tte*

[…I see people eating carrots, broccoli etc. on my way. (These vegetables are) obviously raw, but people are walking, eating them. So I thought "Huh? (Are they) rabbits?"]

(2) Olivia: *Sō yo, takusan taberu to yoru demo mieru, iya, uso da kedo*

[That's true. Eat a lot (of vegetables), and you can see even at night. No, just kidding]

(3) Megumi: *Hahahaha*

[Hahahaha]

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37 Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*

Olivia accounted for this usage, describing that she thought '*sō yo*' was the *da*-style of '*sō desu yo*' in *desu/masu*-style. In fact, changing '*sō desu yo*' to '*sō yo*' not only altered the speech style, as she recognised, but also gave a feminine impression to the articulation. The SFP '*yo*' is neutral since both men and women use the feature.[38] However, in Olivia's case, SFPs used with the omission of the assertive copula '*da*' is categorised as feminine speech.[39]

Another SFP which previous research classifies as 'women's language' was identified in Olivia's speech in line (2):

Extract 6

(1) Megumi: *Hōmusutei no toki wa terebi atta n da kedo*
[I had a TV when I was home-staying.]

(2) Olivia: *Ā, hōmusutei shite ta no?*
[Oh, were you home-staying?]

(3) Megumi: *Sōsō, saisho no ichi nen wa hōmusutei da tta*
[Yeah, yeah, I was home-staying during the first year.]

Olivia accounted for this usage, indicating that she used the feature simply to ask a question. Although not an exclusively female feature, Makino and Tsutsui, and Mizutani and Mizutani claim that SFP '*no*' in an interrogative sentence, as seen in Olivia's discourse, is employed more often by women.[40]

In relation to the appearance of these two features in Olivia's discourse, Megumi reported that she felt nothing during or after their conversation.

Learners' awareness of gender ideologies

When asked about characteristics of gender differences in Japanese, Sophie, Olivia, and Eva described four different types of features: verb endings, pronouns, lexical forms, and SFPs. They explained how gender differences appeared in each category and what kind of image these features projected. In accordance with previous studies on gender differences in Japanese, they indicated that those classified as 'women's language' gave

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38 Ide, *op. cit.*; Shibamoto, *op. cit.*; Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*; McGloin, *op. cit.*
39 Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*; McGloin, *op. cit.*; Suzuki, *op. cit.*; Iwasaki, *op. cit.*
40 Makino and Tsutsui, *op. cit.;* Mizutani and Mizutani, *op. cit.*

the impression of politeness and softness, whereas 'men's language' sounded rough. In addition, all of them were aware to some degree of social expectations on them as females to employ 'feminine' speech. Moreover, they pointed out deviant usage of gendered features where women employ 'men's language' and vice versa. However, Zoe revealed that she did not recognise such differences, except for having a broad idea that women spoke more politely, and a few SFPs that she noticed were peculiar to men.

Regarding the learners' different understandings of gendered features of Japanese, three main mediums were identified that provided learners with these ideologies: experience in Japan, popular culture, and Japanese classes. These are further explored in the following sections.

Gender ideologies and experience in Japan

As Table 1 demonstrated, all learners have stayed in Japan for varying lengths and for different purposes. Sophie indicated that her experience in Japan enabled her to notice that women actually use politer language than men in general and promoted her understanding of gender differences in Japanese when interacting with both genders. Such observation did not occur in her home country where she had female Japanese friends only. She shared an episode where her consciousness towards gender differences was raised:

Extract 7

I once said '*hara hetta*', not knowing the nuance the word had. Then my friends laughed and told me the word didn't suit me, and then I realised that was not a word for women. I remember this experience well because I got embarrassed.

She further explained that she made sure not to use that kind of masculine speech thereafter.

Similar to Sophie, Olivia experienced a prolonged stay in Japan on a university exchange program for three years altogether, interacting with Japanese people (predominantly male) whose ages ranged from their mid-twenties to their sixties. She observed a great amount of not only linguistic features but also paralinguistic features and behaviour such as tone of voice and clothing which were conspicuous in relation to certain women. Moreover, she described an incident where the topic of gender-related language occurred in a conversation with her colleagues as follows:

Extract 8

(My colleagues) praised my Japanese as being beautiful…when I said 'Oh, I wish I could say things like (men's language)'…they said it was good that I didn't talk like that…they said…it's good you don't because that would not be nice.

Contrary to Sophie, Olivia revealed her disappointment to hear that she was not supposed to use masculine speech.

Although both Eva and Zoe have been to Japan as well, they explained that they did not recognise gender differences in Japanese during their in-country experiences. Eva explained that the trip she took during a university holiday was rather a sojourn where her main interactions with native speakers were as a customer and the Japanese salespeople spoke in *desu/masu*-style. Zoe also did not notice gendered features during her sojourn experience in Japan for different reasons. Unlike the other three learners, she stayed in Japan on a high school exchange with her Japanese at a beginner level. She was hardly able to converse on a sentence level, resulting in her communicating with simple words, utilising a dictionary. This may in part help to explain Zoe's lower level of recognition of gendered features.

Gender ideologies and popular culture

As a means of mediation of gender ideologies, popular culture plays a significant role. All learners except Zoe answered that at the time this study was conducted they interacted with Japanese language through popular culture such as TV dramas, TV variety shows, anime, and comics. In the case of Sophie, she started watching Japanese anime and dramas as a hobby before entering university and beginning to study Japanese. According to her, these mediums familiarised her with various aspects of conversation including gender differences in various contexts. Olivia likewise reported that she noticed gendered features when she heard casual conversations in *da*-style through these media. Similar to Sophie, Eva developed her interest in anime when she was in early secondary school. According to her account, through this she became accustomed to masculine speech since most of the characters in anime were male.

Given that gender differences in these media are emphasised to the extent where they do not conform to actual language use in everyday conversation of this era, as Mizumoto argues, it is reasonable that learners promoted gender ideologies through popular culture in some form.[41]

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41   Mizutomo, 'Terebi dorama to jitsushakai ni okeru josē bunmatsushi shiyō no zure ni miru jendā firuta'.

Gender ideologies and Japanese class

Apart from the out-of-class activities indicated above, Japanese classes provided all learners with information on gender ideologies to some degree. Olivia shared her experiences when she and her classmates were taught gender differences in Japanese in class; teachers gave a dialogue that contained both male and female types of speech, of which each gender employed different pronouns and SFPs. In addition, she mentioned that teachers taught students that women speak politely and cautioned them not to sound like the opposite gender because it was a bad practice. When asked her attitude at that time, she once again expressed her dissatisfaction at the constraint for her not to employ 'men's language'. Correspondingly, Eva explained that she learned gender differences in the same way as Olivia, including the caveat on usage from teachers. However, several teachers actually pointed out that her way of speaking was quite masculine.

Zoe scarcely recognised differences between men's and women's speech in comparison with the other learners in this study, as indicated before. However, she accounted for an instance where she did notice that Japanese women were speaking much more politely than men when she watched a video about the use of honorifics in the workplace. In addition, Zoe described a case in which she noticed masculine SFPs when Japanese comics were covered in class. However, she retained a vague idea about these SFPs because the focus of the class was not on these features and so she did not try to discover characteristics of these segments.

Discussion

Occurrence of gendered features in learners' discourse practices

As indicated earlier, a range of gender-related features were located in the learners' conversational speech. These features varied in character depending on the learner in terms of degree of frequency and whether they were 'men's language' or 'women's language'. With relatively similar objectives to the current study, Asada investigated learners' production of SFPs, which is the only comparable study available to date.[42] He argues that no significant deviation from 'women's language' was observed in discourse by female learners of Japanese in his study. Although a number of differences in the settings of these two studies should be taken into account, the findings of my study conform to his claim only if paying attention to SFPs. However, several other gendered features, which were masculine enough to surprise or cause a feeling of strangeness to the learners'

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42   Asada, *op. cit.*

interlocutors, also appeared in this study. In addition, the current study identified two feminine SFPs that did not appear in or were not the focus of Asada's study.[43]

In relation to the (non-)appearance of gendered features, the current study examined learners' awareness of 'men's language' and 'women's language' as a result of gender ideologies and also considered how these ideologies had been established. This study revealed that the degree of awareness and mediums through which this awareness had been constructed varies depending on learners' backgrounds and experiences. Regarding to the extent to which learners recognise these ideologies, I propose that various factors are related: learners' level of Japanese, their length of stay in Japan, interaction with popular Japanese culture, and exposure to gendered features in Japanese classes. The first two factors are congruent with the findings of Thomson and Iida's study in which learners' perceptions towards gendered features were surveyed quantitatively.[44]

Gender ideologies and learners' language negotiation

The qualitative approach of the present study resulted in a deeper understanding of how gender ideologies affect learners in different ways. Not all female learners in this paper employed 'women's language' because they were women.

For Sophie, it was natural for her to use 'women's language' because she prefers politer language. As seen from the case where she accidentally used masculine speech and felt embarrassed, 'men's language' did not match her account of her character. She claimed that women using 'men's language' sounded rough; therefore, she made sure not to use speech which was associated with men. This illustrates that she made her language choice according to her personality, being aware of what kind of discourse is expected of her. In accordance with her account, Sophie's utterances were polite on the whole, as evaluated by her interlocutor, with no masculine speech identified.

Olivia expanded her awareness of gender ideologies through different kinds of media, with her extended stay in Japan being the most prominent channel. However, she was particularly different from Sophie in that she held admiration for 'men's language'. Language peculiar to men was perceived by Olivia as different from that of women which she sensed was similar to the style of speech in the textbooks and thus felt boring; therefore, men's speech was appealing to her. Despite her appreciation of masculine speech, she expressed her hesitation to produce these features because of

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43   Asada, *op. cit.*
44   Thomson and Iida, *op. cit.*

social constraints. Olivia knows that for her, as a woman, employing masculine speech is socially unacceptable through her experiences where native Japanese speakers pointed this out. As a result of weighing resistance against acceptance of the norm, she decided to follow the latter. However, there appeared to be a discrepancy between this decision and her actual discourse practices in her interaction, as masculine features did in fact occur. She acknowledged the possibility that 'men's language' might sometimes accidentally appear in her speech since most of her friends in Japan were male, and they influenced her discourse. It could be assumed that such a case arose in the present study, reflecting the fact that she was conversing in *da*-style with a friend whose personality she considers as very casual. A setting like this may have emancipated her from consciously monitoring her speech trying to be in accordance with the social expectations.

With respect to masculine speech, Eva shared a commonality with Olivia in that both of them were accustomed to 'men's language' to some degree. Whereas Olivia familiarised herself with this style through interaction with male Japanese friends, most of Eva's knowledge or awareness of gender differences are mainly derived from anime. Eva claimed that she heard masculine speech to a great extent through this medium, which resulted in her subconsciously using these features, as seen in Olivia's case. Different from the above two learners, she explained that even though she knew her way of speaking was masculine, as several teachers had pointed out, she did not intend to change her style. She does not deliberately use masculine features, rather they are produced naturally beyond her control. In addition, she commented that she does not mind her masculine mannerisms, though unintended, because they do not conflict with the image she wants to project. Correspondingly, masculine speech occurred in her discourse practice.

In contrast to the three learners described above, Zoe had not experienced significant negotiation of language choice in regards to gender-related features in Japanese, and had limited awareness of gender ideologies. Her consciousness was directed towards conversing politely on the whole so that she did not offend her native Japanese interlocutors.

As seen from the four learners' cases above, gender ideologies are influential in learners' discourse practices in that these ideologies play a role in providing learners with resources for them to negotiate their language use. Moreover, these ideologies that project the social norms in Japan function to restrict their discourse practices as well, as seen in the case of Olivia, who wanted to use 'men's language' but tried not to because of social expectations. Gender ideologies influence learners' discourse practices as they utilise gender ideologies as a means to express themselves according to their personalities and their relationships with those with whom they interact.

These negotiations of language use by learners being influenced by gender ideologies demonstrate that Nakamura's Dynamic Model of Language and Gender Studies applies not only to native Japanese speakers but also to learners of Japanese to some degree.[45]

By indicating 'to some degree', I argue that the gender ideologies that learners are aware of are incomplete and that how much negotiation occurs depends on the extent of their awareness of these concepts. Some are more familiar with the ideologies of one gender's category, while the others recognised little gender difference in Japanese. In addition, several learners were not aware of the nuances of gendered features and how their interlocutors judged these utterances in their interactions. Considering these aspects, each learner's discourse practices may greatly transform their character as they accumulate awareness towards gender ideologies.

Marked masculine speech and unmarked feminine speech

Examining how native Japanese speakers evaluated gendered features in learners' speech, one commonality among them emerges. That is, masculine speech produced by the female learners was considered marked by their female Japanese interlocutors, while feminine speech was unmarked. The native speakers utilised gender ideologies to evaluate learners' gendered features. Native speakers' comments on masculine features are common in cases where the learners' usage deviated from the norm that 'men's language' is not for women. In addition, the stimulated-recall interviews revealed that native Japanese speakers noticed masculine features during their interaction, even after they had heard learners conversing in similar masculine speech, while feminine speech was unnoticed. Although native speakers' evaluation of female learners' masculine speech had changed from negative to neutral, these language uses remained marked.

Here, one question arises: what are gender ideologies that are so central to one's language negotiation and its evaluation? Regarding how these ideologies have been constructed, Inoue associates establishment of the concept of Japanese 'women's language' with the early 20th century, where Japan underwent unprecedented social reform: Meiji Restoration.[46] Striving towards modernisation (or Westernization), the government endeavoured to promote women's education under the principal of 'a good wife and wise mother'. The language that those educated 'modern' women employed was stereotypically represented and circulated in the rapidly-developed print media of the era, which as a result obtained the status of 'women's language'.[47] According to

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45 Nakamura, 'The dynamic model of language and gender studies'.
46 Inoue, 'Gender, language, and modernity: toward an effective history of Japanese women's language'.
47 *Ibid.*

Inoue, this 'women's language' involved imagining and was chosen at the discretion of writers at that time; therefore, it is '*no one's* language' but 'disembodied language'.[48] That is what Nakamura calls 'women's language' being created.[49] Despite absence of the real voice, this 'women's language' gradually consolidated its social position as hegemonic gender ideology, reflecting control at societal level. With growing nationalism during and after the following world wars, a claim was made that the feature was peculiar in Japanese; hence superiority of Japan and its language.[50] In addition, 'women's language' was embellished with praise such as traditional and beautiful, and resulted in far more dissemination in the community.

Considering the dialectic relationship among social structures, gender ideologies, and discourse practices, these three aspects do not remain static but dynamic. It is true that gender ideologies have been transforming, reflecting the change in the structure of Japanese society as Nakamura indicates.[51] However, in accordance with Iwasaki's argument, deviant usage of gender-related language is marked, even today, where neutralisation of gender differences in Japanese is considered to be in progress.[52] That is to say, though being transformed, there still exist dominant gender ideologies, and following and reproducing these ideologies is considered to be 'correct'; therefore, as Yukawa and Saito argue, shelters the speaker from criticism.[53] Discourse becomes marked because it conflicts with hegemonic ideologies. In addition, it is women who are more bounded with the norm and carry social expectations on their shoulders to employ 'traditional and beautiful women's language'. Not only men or the relatively aged who are generally seen as critical of the non-normative language use by women,[54] but also female friends, as seen in this study, could be the agents who maintain such normative ideologies by accepting them rather than actively subverting.

Marked learners' speech

In addition to masculine and feminine categories, one more key category emerged with respect to native speakers' evaluation of learner's gendered features. That is, the category of 'learner'. Despite all learners who participated in this study being at advanced levels, most native Japanese speakers consciously or subconsciously adjusted their speech to help the learners comprehend their conversation.

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48 *Ibid.*, p. 411.
49 Nakamura, *Onna kotoba wa tsukurareru.*
50 *Ibid.*
51 Nakamura, '"Let's dress a little girlishly!" or "Conquer short pants!" Constructing gendered communities in fashion magazines for young people'.
52 Iwasaki, *op. cit.*, p. 303.
53 Yukawa and Saito, 'Cultural ideologies in Japanese language and gender studies'.
54 Cf. Okamoto, '"Tasteless" Japanese: less "feminine" speech among young Japanese women'.

Whether learners employed the *desu/masu*-style or *da*-style may hinge on the relevance of the category of 'learner' in the interaction. While conversing in *desu/masu*-style shelters learners from being rude, as Yuri and Risa indeed evaluated the style as polite, it may also keep learners from achieving a breakthrough to develop familiarity with their interlocutors. Indeed, three native Japanese speakers, Megumi, Yoko, and Risa, suggested that they favoured conversing in *da*-style with friends. In contrast with their interlocutors' expectations, Sophie and Zoe, even at their advanced levels, retained the *desu/masu*-style with a firm commitment to being polite.

The perception of their addressees as 'learners' by the native Japanese speakers poses a question as to how they evaluated learners' gendered features. To be more precise, the existence of the category of 'learner' may have affected the way native speakers evaluated learners' speech. As indicated earlier, variety in discourse practices, that is, speech that does not necessarily conform to the norm, has been reported in several studies. Indeed, all native speakers in the current study acknowledged this deviant usage of gendered features, indicating several female friends of theirs actually used 'men's language'. The point is, despite the fact that they were familiar with this non-normative usage to some extent, learners' masculine speech was marked.

When her rather masculine language use in her conversation with the learner was pointed out, Megumi explained that the usage was a slip of the tongue and she usually would not use such speech. Interestingly, the exact same speech pattern appeared again later in the interaction. She was the one who evaluated her addressee's masculine feature as sounding strange. Although it is unsure if her use of masculine features was simply subconscious or she was performing by her minimising of these features during the interview to meet the 'social desirability' criteria,[55] i.e. women should not use 'men's language', this instance is worth taking into account. As Thomson argues, native Japanese speakers have a tendency to expect learners of Japanese to speak 'correctly'.[56] In the context of these findings, native Japanese speakers' perceptions towards their addressees as 'learners' may have affected their evaluation of learners' masculine gendered features in a rather negative way.

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55 Dörnyei, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
56 Thomson, 'Who is to say "Your Japanese is incorrect"? Reflection on "correct" Japanese usages by learners of Japanese'.

Implications

Providing learners with knowledge

SFPs appeared to be perplexing features for several learners regardless of whether they were gendered or not. Olivia and Zoe explained that they used a guessing strategy when certain SFPs occurred in native Japanese speaker's discourse when they were conversing. Both of them maintained that Japanese classes did not sufficiently focus on these features, which as a result made them unsure of the meaning or uncomfortable in producing the forms themselves. Although difficult to verify the reliability of their accounts, their concern may reflect the actual condition to some degree, considering most classes would employ *desu/masu*-style where fewer SFPs occur. In addition, SFPs would not cause communication breakdowns as these features mainly express speakers' modality. That is, learners can hold a conversation without understanding the SFPs used. For these reasons, SFPs may not have been given significant attention in classes.

Concerning SFPs and the learners' JFL curricula, Olivia showed her willingness to learn the features because according to her 'conversation without SFPs means there is no flavour to the language in a way.' Similarly, Zoe noticed her classmates using the features, which she thought made their discourse sound natural. She also confessed that she struggled with a feeling of inferiority in the class because many of her classmates had resided in Japan for long periods, and there was a wide gap between their Japanese proficiency and hers. According to her, use of SFPs was one of those differences.

Learners may develop their desire to project their individualities utilising language, as their level of Japanese proceeds. Although there would be various ways, providing knowledge of SFPs as a tool would be one effective way to achieve such an aim. Moreover, Japanese classes would benefit learners if they convey not only knowledge but also opportunities to actively think about the feature, as Thomson and Otsuji point out.[57] Discussing variety in discourse practices beyond traditional 'men's language' and 'women's language' may raise learners' consciousness towards gender differences in Japanese, which would lead them to negotiate their subjectivities in utilising these features.

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57   Thomson and Otsuji, 'Bijinesu Nihongo kyōkasho to jendā no tamenteki kōsatsu'.

Providing learners with contexts

Assuming that gender differences appear more in the *da*-style, as former studies indicate, limited exposure to the style could be one reason that keeps learners from familiarising themselves with gender differences in Japanese. Although various complex factors influence one's choice of speech style, native Japanese speakers may employ *desu/masu*-style as a result of adjusting to the learners' style or learners' not being able to communicate in *da*-style, as several native Japanese speakers in the current study indicated. In addition, the classroom context is fixed for teachers and students and it is where *desu/masu*-style is mostly employed. Consequently, I would argue that the classroom context should not be static but dynamic.

A number of methods to bring context into the classroom have been explored. These include projects that involve native Japanese speakers in the community,[58] visitor sessions where peers at advanced levels participate,[59] and popular culture such as anime[60] and J-pop.[61] As a result of these forms of media being incorporated into the classroom, learners obtain exposure to various contexts which lead them to use and produce different speech styles, eventually increasing awareness of gender ideologies. These designs would provide learners with opportunities to adjust their speech style, depending on their interlocutors, beyond learners' relying frequently on *desu/masu*-style speech. In addition, authenticity of these resources may also enhance learners' motivation and lead to out-of-class learning.

Conclusion

The present study focused on what kinds of gender-related features female learners at advanced levels produce when they converse with native Japanese-speaking friends. Individual discourse practices revealed that each learner possesses a unique character in their utterances, reflecting their individual awareness of gender ideologies and their negotiation of language use against the backdrop of social expectations. The existence of such norms provided learners with a resource for their discourse practices, allowing them to choose forms that aligned with their identities, however, the norms functioned as a restriction to some degree as well. At the same time, a lack of awareness of gender ideologies emerged as an issue which kept them from fully and actively engaging in exploring their subjectivities which negotiating language use would result in. In addition, this study pointed out that native Japanese speakers

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58   Imura, 'Chiki shakai no Nihongo washa no shien sanka ni yoru chūkyūsha muke purojekuto'.
59   Thomson and Masumiso, '「Senpai ga kimasu！」– I reberu kyōdō no sēka'.
60   Makino, 'Nihongo・Nihon bunka kyōiku to anime –『Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi』no bāi – '.
61   Iida, 'Kashi bunseki de shiru Nihon – J-pop no kōsu yori'.

utilised these ideologies as the basis for their judgements on learners' gendered features in their interaction.

Although the present study obtained interesting insights, several issues remain as limitations, mostly concerning the interview methodology. As indicated earlier, Sophie and Zoe were sensitive to politeness and not being offensive to a great extent when native Japanese speakers were concerned. Therefore, I, as a native Japanese speaking interviewer, may have affected the way they responded i.e. they might have censored information. The same applies to the native Japanese speaking participants. As gender ideologies socially privilege women using 'women's language' and relegate women employing 'men's language' to a deviant categorisation, participants may possibly have 'performed' for the researcher if they perceived the format of the audio-recorded interview as being rather formal.[62]

Despite several limitations, the current study resulted in interesting findings on gender characteristics in learners' conversational Japanese, several of them having not been explored thus far. Since all participants in this study were female by chance, further research targeting male pairs and mixed-gender pairs will be required to deepen our understanding of the topic. In addition, one single learner's gendered language variation depending on interlocutors, contexts, or mediums may be another focus that calls for investigation.

Comprehending gender differences in Japanese is demanding for learners of Japanese since these differences not only concern linguistic or paralinguistic features but also involve social expectations and variations depending on context. Moreover, these differences are dynamic in nature, reflecting ever-changing characteristics of society. Native Japanese speakers, who centre themselves in Japanese society, are well aware of gender ideologies since these ideologies are imbued through a lifetime of experience such as education at school or home. Consequently, gender ideologies are one aspect that learners need to develop to a high level of awareness. Particular attention must be paid to those in a JFL setting who lack exposure to these ideologies. Incorporating this aspect of language into the classroom in a non-traditional, creative way may result in great opportunities for learners to reflect on Japanese language, society, and their subjectivity as a user and learner of Japanese.

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62   Block, 'Social constraints on interviews'.

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"Girls are dancin'": *shōjo* culture and feminism in contemporary Japanese art[1]

Emily Jane Wakeling
University of Queensland

Abstract

This article explores the gender-transgressive expressions found in *shōjo* culture in order to highlight the potential for feminist analysis in the prevalence of the *shōjo* motif in contemporary Japanese art. *Shōjo* culture is a fascinating cultural space, within contemporary Japanese culture, which fosters creative expressions of gender that negate or make complex hegemonic categories. Departing from stereotypes of Japanese girls, this article will pay particular interest to an emerging wave of figurative contemporary art practices in which the figure of the *shōjo* is utilised for a new generation of feminist critique. Aoshima Chiho, Kunikata Mahomi, Takano Aya, Sawada Tomoko and Yanagi Miwa are among the current artists who feature the *shōjo* motif in contexts that foreground female subjectivities found paralleled in *shōjo* culture. These works will then be contextualised in the greater picture of current trends and themes in global contemporary feminist art.

Keywords

shōjo, feminism, gender, contemporary art

Introduction

This article will examine the prevalence of the *shōjo* (girl) motif as an emerging trend in contemporary Japanese art and analyse its significance to new discourses in feminist art. In the closed, girl-only space of *shōjo* culture, girls negate and make complex the dominant gender stereotypes that exist in contemporary Japanese society through creations of gender that transgress hegemony. In the past two decades of contemporary art, transnational (especially Asian) perspectives have become more conspicuous. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the recent trends of contemporary feminist art, in which anti-sexist themes frequently intersect with other identity politics to find more inclusive and pluralistic expressions. Found throughout the practices of many young Japanese artists, the *shōjo* motif is key to understanding some of Japan's best recent contributions to contemporary feminist art.

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1   The title, *Girls are dancin'*, is taken from a key collection of young female photographers edited by Iizawa Kohtaro. In the book, Iizawa celebrates the fact that, despite the many pressures of the contemporary urban environment, girls are still "dancing". (Iizawa, *Shutter and love: girls are dancin' on in Tokyo*.)

The present age—the global age—is a prevailing paradigm for the production, exhibition and reception of what is broadly called contemporary art.[2] The Asian contemporary art boom of the past two decades, of which Japan has been one of its leaders, exemplifies how international—or rather, global—contemporary art has become.[3] As Asian artists gain more and more presence on the world stage, and the world stage has increasingly been opened to the Asian region, Japan has strengthened its relationship and identity as a part of Asia. While Japan is one of the earliest Asian regions to be exposed to European and American Modernism, the effect is by no means a simple one-way importation of Western art to the East. As Jen Webb recognizes, contemporary art does not always succumb to Westernisation as a "totalising force".[4] Rather, "local cultures have always been supremely good at picking up just enough of a colonising or influencing culture to enhance their own practices and worldviews".[5]

The cultural construct of girlhood in Japan typifies the country's typical absorption of foreign cultural influences and embracing it as uniquely "Japanese". In its hybridity and historical progression, it is unique. *Shōjo* culture originates with the Meiji government's push for modernisation in light of the country's new interactions with the West. The Girls' Higher School Order, implemented in 1899, lead to the national spread of girls' schools and high literacy among girls. The schools' homogenous physical space was complemented by the development of text-based and illustrative magazines made specifically for girl readers. As it was then and is now, the school environment and the emergence of girls' fiction had mutually reciprocal influences on building the girls' identity as *shōjo*.[6]

The Japanese term "*shōjo*" is particularly useful to gender discussions of the Japanese girl. It is a way of referring to someone as feminine, but with a distinct suggestion of youth. Kotani Mari defines *shōjo* as the 'juvenile existence....prior to the adoption of adult femininity'.[7] The *shōjo* is 'free and arrogant, unlike meek and dutiful *musume* [daughter] or pure and innocent *otome* [maiden]'.[8] "Daughter" and "maiden" both suggest the presence of a male authority in determining the girl's identity, while the concept of *shōjo* has neither of these connections.

In contemporary Japanese society, the figure of the *shōjo*, if not simply dismissed, is heavily scrutinised by broader Japanese society. Words like "infantile", "selfish", "superficial" and "unproductive" are typically used to criticise the social role of

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2   Webb, 'Art in a Globalised State', p. 30.
3   Turner, '*Art and Social Change: Contemporary Art in Asia and the Pacific*'.
4   Webb, 'Art in a Globalised State', p. 37.
5   *Ibid*, p. 36.
6   Kawasaki, 'Osaki Midori and the Role of the Girl in Shôwa Modernism', p. 294.
7   Kotani, 'Doll Beauties and Cosplay', p. 55.
8   Aoyama, 'Transgendering *Shôjo Shôsetsu*: Girls' Inter-text/sex-uality', p. 53.

shōjo.[9] Writers such as the widely quoted Japanese sociologist Ôtsuka Eiji have shaped stereotypes by discussing the *shōjo* as representing 'an exotic and longed-for world of individual fulfillment, decadence, consumption and play'.[10] It is only in the closed world of *shōjo* culture that girls negate these wide-held stereotypes.

The exclusivity of *shōjo* culture is one reason why a *shōjo*'s gender transgressions are typically not a politically didactic public statement. The intriguing, even paradoxical politics evident in young Japanese women's lives are a potent source of artistic critique. They are a generation who are described by feminist curator Kasahara Michiko as having little awareness or contact with women's rights campaigns in comparison to their awareness of its very public backlash in the media.[11] While "feminist" per se is not a wide-spread political allegiance for Japanese youth, some characteristics of *shōjo* culture share in common tactics found in contemporary - or what is called "third-wave" - feminism.

Similarly, contemporary feminisms reflect a similarly subtle or ambiguous politics. Second-wave feminism is generally regarded as one of the largest political movements of the twentieth century, but in the past two decades, feminist discourse has clearly shifted and adapted to intersect with the emergence of many other identity politics such as post-colonialism, queer theory and globalism. This shift to a third-wave of feminism is present in many contemporary feminist art works being made today. In a globally outward-reaching contemporary art world, the 'freewheeling pluralism'[12] of contemporary art responds to the pluralistic politics of third-wave feminism.

This article will introduce six young Japanese contemporary artists. Their use of the girl motif will be subject to some brief textual analysis before going on to present the discursive framework used to understand the importance of the girl motif in Japan and the world today.

Shōjo motif in contemporary art

The *shōjo* motif is a distinct, recurring graphic figure found in many contemporary Japanese artists' works within the last two decades. The artists chosen for mention in this article are far from the only current Japanese artists interested in the *shōjo* motif, but what differentiates them from others is their use of the *shōjo* motif in reference to the gender-transgressive expressions found in *shōjo* culture. A celebration of femininity

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9   Orbaugh, '*Shōjo*', p. 459.
10   Ôtsuka in Kinsella, 'Cuties in Japan', p. 244.
11   Kasahara, 'Contemporary Japanese Women's Self-awareness', p. 96.
12   Heartney, *et al.*, *After the Revolution: Women Who Transformed Contemporary Art* (2007), p. 12.

and girlishness is one theme that overlaps in third-wave feminist thought and *shōjo* culture. By assembling arguments about the gender-transgressive nature of *shōjo* culture along with the prevalence of the *shōjo* motif in contemporary Japanese art, it is possible to contextualise the *shōjo* motif in the world stage of contemporary feminist art.

The *shōjo* motif is seen frequently in art, but some of the most prominent uses of the *shōjo* motif in contemporary art exist decidedly outside of a feminist dialogue. Some exploit the well-known schoolgirl stereotype. For example, Araki Nobuyoshi is widely known for his particular use of women and girls in his photography. Sado-masochist scenarios, as found in his *Sexual Desire* series, and a schoolgirl uniform variation in the *BONDAGE* series, are purposely, unashamedly, objectifying. From the highly staged to the seemingly spontaneous, Araki is a narrative agent who points the camera at what "catches his eye". In Ozaki Manami's words, 'we [the viewer] are always aware that it's him that is looking'.[13]

Aida Makoto often depicts violence as he explores various representations of *shōjo*. His *Harakiri School Girls* combines two Japanese stereotypes – the samurai and the schoolgirl, to eroticise the exotic picture of ritual suicide that has often horrified and intrigued the West. Cute girls in short uniforms wink at the viewer while inflicting fatal violence on their bodies and spraying blood in a style reminiscent of traditional Japanese ritual suicide. *The giant member Fuji versus King Gidora* (1993) appropriates a famous erotic *ukiyo-e* woodblock print of the embrace between a female pearl diver and an octopus,[14] but combines it with additional appropriations of a monster from the *Godzilla* films and a girl character from a famous *anime* series to produce an especially violent rape spectacle. In a video performance, the artist masturbates to the word *girl,* written in pink pen on a wall. Aida identifies the sexualisation of *shōjo* in contemporary Japanese culture and makes comment through an exaggeration of his powerful position as a man and "pervert".

Six artist profiles

The following artists' works exemplify the artists' awareness—even self-consciousness— of the proliferation of girl images in contemporary Japanese visual culture, but negate dominant cultural perspectives on the topic. Specifically, these artists use the *shōjo* motif to reference elements of *shōjo* culture that focus on her subjectivity over the male gaze. These young women 'present approaches to female gender and identity that have little in

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13   Ozaki, 'Shanshinjinsei: Nobuyoshi Araki's Photo Journey', p. 18.
14   *The Dream of the Fisherman's Wife* c.1820 by Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849).

common with such objectifying and otherwise predominant tropes'.[15] They go beyond the sexual objectification of *shōjo*, as seen in the work of Araki, or ironically presented by Aida, to make reference to the creative uses of the fantastic, girlish aesthetics or gender-transgressive concepts found in *shōjo* culture.

Young, female Japanese artists' careers are almost unavoidably contoured by their gender. Women artists often struggled to find an acceptable place inside Japanese post-war society,[16] and even some recent local art critical frameworks have focused more on young, female artists' femininity rather than the value of their art.[17] However, the increasingly global reception for art from Japan and Asia has meant that women artists can also transcend their often confining, local context. The following artists have had varying levels of success in Japan and internationally. They come from different art schools and different cities, with some cross-over in their influences and mentors.[18] However, despite their separate stories, these artists are all brought together (for the first time in a critical analysis) because they have all treated the *shōjo* subject in a context that is sympathetic to *shōjo* culture. Unintentionally, the selected artists are all women. I do not wish to stress an essentialist argument about the insight women can bring when depicting female subjects, but the chances are these young, female artists have all experienced some aspects of *shōjo* culture personally. Some use this personal background more than others. While the following art work analyses may result in some insight to the artists themselves, the main focus will be the art and the references to *shōjo* culture they provide.

Sandra Buckley declares "aaa, kawaiiiiii!" as the 'rallying cry of the shôjo'.[19] Although not exclusive to *shōjo* culture, *kawaii* (cute) finds a special place with youth and especially girls. When defining the phenomenon of *kawaii* and its role in contemporary Japanese art, Vartanian focuses on how it is not necessarily shallow because 'cuteness, though ostensibly devoid of irony, does not negate darkness, and can in fact be a means to accessing darkness, as characters become loci of emotion and identification'.[20]

Aoshima Chiho, in a sense, illustrates Vartanian's speculations. Through a cute aesthetic (which can double as a *shōjo* aesthetic), including girls with big doe-eyes and small faces, she makes the *shōjo*'s body cute as well as ugly, abject, scary, funny or epic. In *The Divine Gas,* a giant *shōjo* farts clouds on which a Buddha meditates; in *Zombies*

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15   Vartanian, *Drop Dead Cute: The New Generation of Women Artists in Japan*, p. 8.

16   Yoshimoto, *Into Performance: Japanese Women Artists in New York,* p. 2.

17   Borggreen, 'Gender in Contemporary Japanese Art', p. 179.

18   It may be telling that five out of the six artists presented got their break in the art world thanks to the support of established male artists. Aoshima, Kunikata and Takano were/are supported by Murakami Takashi; Yanagi's first international show was at the invitation of Morimura Yasumasa; and to a smaller degree, Miyashita has a connection with Tsuzuki Kyoichi.

19   Buckley, S. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of contemporary Japanese culture,* (2002), p. 250.

20   Vartanian, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

in the Graveyard, the *shōjo* become ghosts and zombies; in *Ero pop* she is half-skeleton and her internal organs have become flowers and hearts; in *Renaissance, Snake Woman* (2001) *shōjo* are being consumed and digested by snakes; and in *Mountain Girls* they amalgamate with the environment around them. When Kotani describes *shōjo* culture as a place of 'aesthetic and sexual magic',[21] she could have illustrated her point with an Aoshima landscape. The physical transgressions and abject presentations challenge what is cute and beautiful about the objectified *shōjo*, and Aoshima makes this point via a flowery, cute *shōjo* aesthetic.

Kunikata Mahomi's violent fantastical imagery expresses anxieties about the vulnerable state of girlhood through a *manga*-esque drawing style. Her colouring is made up of strong, primary colours—mostly in red—combined with a disorienting arrangement of narrative to confront the audience with its disturbing violent content. Kunikata was included in curator and art critic Matsui Midori's exhibition, *The Age of Micropop: The New Generation of Japanese Artists*. The exhibition picks up on the common characterisation of contemporary Japanese artists with 'amateurism, childishness, and cheap-looking production'.[22] Micropop is 'the approach of those who invent, independent of any major ideology or theory, a unique aesthetic or code of behaviour by reorganising fragments that have been accumulated from diverse communicative processes'.[23] It is developed not out in the "world", but from the perspective of one's private room and 'everyday life'.[24] Despite being argued to be marginalised from politics, Kunikata is also described as an artist who:

> …expresses the fantasies of the adolescent feminine unconscious but gives them violent forms….Kunikata adopts their sadomasochism but intensifies the nightmarish atmosphere by placing her adolescent characters in violent situations that involve murder, beheadings, cannibalism, and disintegration. Her works evoke both the horror of losing one's identity and the erotic pleasure of such submission.[25]

Kunikata is not the first artist to critique the relationship between *shōjo*, sexual desire and violence. Aida Makoto, introduced before, is an artist troubled by questions about sex and exploitation,[26] but instead of seeking a visual language outside of dominant patriarchal culture, his art exaggerates and sensationalises his own powerful position as a man. Similarly, Kunikata's *shōjo* are often bleeding, in pain, or dying, but this is where

21   Kotani, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
22   Vartanian, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.
23   Matsui, '*The Age of Micropop: The New Generation of Japanese Artists*', p. 6.
24   *Ibid.*, p. 29.
25   *Ibid.*, p. 51.
26   Maerkle, 'Makoto Aida: No More War; Save Water; Don't Pollute the Sea', p. 133.

their commonalities stop. In contrast, Kunikata foregrounds the *shōjo*'s psychological state, and her personal anxieties.[27] Kunikata makes critique by expressing her own seemingly powerless position as *shōjo*.

Takano Aya's paintings and drawings refer to the girl-only spaces imagined in *shōjo* culture combined with her inspiration from science fiction. As a *Micropop* artist, and a self-confessed science-fiction fan, Takano's art is described by Matsui as works made by an '"adolescent" mind'.[28] Placed in science-fiction backgrounds, Takano's *kawaii shōjo* become like aliens. The artist often has her *shōjo* as 'interstellar immigrants',[29] transiting through environments such as space, the sky, or underwater. In *It was under the Lucid Midday Light* (2001), the *shōjo* floats above the urban sight of power lines. *Yoshi & Meg on the Earth, Year 2036* (2002) is a painting in which two nude, waif-like *shōjo* fall from the night sky past the billboards and skyscrapers of one of Tokyo's urban centres. Contrasting the soft, thin bodies of the *shōjo* against the hyper-urban background shows the vulnerability and shock of these figures. There is a shape in the sky, perhaps a spaceship, which further suggests that they are fantastical aliens in this environment.

Takano visually refers to a fantasy (specifically, science-fiction) convention often found in *shōjo manga* and fictions. In Matsui's words, Takano is a creator of 'subversively feminine visions of Utopia'.[30] Separatist, female-only worlds found in fantastic *shōjo* fiction share in the tradition of feminist science-fiction and depictions of Utopia.[31] Girl-only spaces, as found in *shōjo* fiction and other aspects of *shōjo* culture, are important because they expel the dominant patriarchal hegemony and thus allow for the expansion of the "girl consciousness" and a "community of fantasy". Takano and the aforementioned works of Aoshima Chiho also populate their landscapes exclusively with girls. Matsui reads this as a reference to the subversive qualities of *shōjo* science-fiction, because 'pursuing the question of women's place in an indifferent universe… became an especially vital medium of spiritual healing and empowerment for Japanese adolescent girls'.[32]

Sawada Tomoko works with female identity in all its variable forms, including exploring the various signifiers for *shōjo*. She pushes definitions of what it is to be a self-portraitist through multiple acts of costume or role-play. At first glance, works such as *School Days / A* may look like an entire class of school-age *shōjo* and their teacher,

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27 Lubow, 'The Murakami method'.
28 Matsui, *op. cit.,* p. 49.
29 *Ibid.,* p. 158.
30 Matsui, 'Beyond the Pleasure Room to a Chaotic Street: Transformations of Cute Subculture in the Art of the Japanese Nineties', p. 211.
31 Baccolini, *op. cit.,* p. 13.
32 Matsui, *op. cit.,* p. 51.

but on closer inspection the faces, despite their different hair-cuts and expressions, have a certain sameness that suggests the masquerade that is actually happening: all figures are played by the artist. The *School Days* series brings up the essential role of schools to the formation of early *shōjo* culture and the hidden world of girls discussed by Kotani and Honda.

Sawada's transformations are domestic in their scope—her focus is exclusively on the human, and more specifically, on her many, many variations of the feminine. In her *Costume* series, this transformation is achieved by changing her attire in each photograph to suit different jobs. Eleanor Heartney positions Sawada as one of many artists who 'deal in a humorous way with the multiplication of identity, which might be read as a commentary on the kind of narcissism that makes all other humans an extension of oneself'.[33] This would be the case except for Sawada's more exclusive interest in female representation and 'specific feminine dilemmas'.[34]

Yanagi Miwa consistently has women, and often *shōjo*, as her subject. Yanagi shows a recurring interest in the shifting dynamics of physical age and girlhood in the *My Grandmothers* series. As well as presenting images of ambiguity and contradiction, *My Grandmothers* disrupts conventional images of old age through fantastic narratives. This is achieved by her conscious selection of young women's fantasies of the future that go against the idealised image of the fragile, conceding and conservative elderly woman.[35] Yanagi presents young women—specifically, the *shōjo*—as a status far removed from social conventions such as marriage and child-rearing.

In *My Grandmothers*, real girls and young women are hypothetically projected into the future, as they speculate on what they think (or want) their future to be like in fifty years. As shown in the unexpected visions of the many *shōjo* subjects, the dreams of independence and her opposition to dominant gender conventions remain with them even though they are imagining their lives in their 60s, 70s and 80s. The "old girls" are unmarried and unattached to any conventional family structure, as if still in a state of girlhood. In Linda Nochlin's words, the women have held on to their 'self-determination and pleasure'[36] reminiscent of the *shōjo* lifestyle. To mention a couple of pieces, *Minami* (2000) imagines her older self as the eccentric owner of a Disney-style theme park being tended to by carers, while *Yuka* (2000) enjoys a ride on a sidecar speeding across the Golden Gate Bridge.

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33   Heartney, 'Worldwide women', p. 154.
34   Zohar, *PostGender: Gender Sexuality and Performativity in Contemporary Japanese Art*.
35   Wakasa, 'Miwa Yanagi'.
36   Nochlin, 'Black, White, and Uncanny: Miwa Yanagi's *Fairy tale*', p. 232.

Feminist critic Ueno Chizuko notes that most of the *shōjo* subjects just imagine an extension of themselves 'as they are now'[37] because 'several of the grandmothers appear as cheerfully active and carefree as they are today'.[38] 'As products of Japan's affluent society, these women refuse to relinquish the privileges afforded them as children, even as they approach their thirties. So children they will remain, into old age'. Despite some subjects' active and cheerful appearance, some others show serious cynicism about the future and have accordingly rejected heterosexual reproduction.[39] The expected vision of an 80-year-old granny sharing stories with her grandchildren is absent. So are men, or if they are represented at all, like Yuka's boyfriend on the motorbike, they are as background.

Feminism and Contemporary Art

The artists mentioned above are typical contemporary artists. They move (with varying frequency) between Japan and other locations in order to sustain their international art careers. This, and other stories of successful Asian artists on the world stage, support the image described by Joan Kee of the globally mobile contemporary artist, who moves with relative ease between countries and cultures.[40] In some cases, such as Yanagi Miwa, it has also meant becoming bi-lingual or multi-lingual in order to discuss their work in foreign countries. In a statement that could apply to the hybridity of contemporary Asian art generally, Yanagi considers her art practice to be different to artists who come from a Western background because 'my knowledge of the origins and history of what is referred to as Western fine art, and of modernism, was grafted later on to a base of novel, movie and manga subculture'.[41] Despite this, Yanagi's works have appealed to non-Japanese audiences as a significant part of the 'world stage'[42] of contemporary art and, more specifically, contemporary feminist art.

While its definition is often contested, third-wave feminism has come to shape contemporary feminism and feminist art through its emphasis on concepts such as intersection, contradiction and self-conscious politics. Third-wave feminism is historicised by Carisa Showden as a discourse informed by various notions of "new feminisms", or so-called postfeminism, neo-feminism, etc., that began emerging in the 1980s and found momentum at the start of the 1990s.[43] The 1990s was a time when feminism's interest in sexual and gender difference between men and women made way

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37   Ueno, 'Miwa Yanagi', p. 61.

38   *Ibid.,* p. 61.

39   Ueno points out that, statistically, men die younger than women, so the lack of male peers (i.e. husbands) is accurate as well as socially revealing (*Ibid.,* p. 61).

40   Kee, 'Intersections: Issues in Contemporary Art in Asia', p. 604.

41   Yanagi in ARTiT, 'Interview with Yanagi Miwa', p. 56.

42   Shohat, *Talking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age,* p. 9.

43   Showden, 'What's political about the new feminisms?', p. 178.

for 'an emphasis on the differences *among* women,'[44] shown by the popularity of referring to feminism as a plural, and best articulated with the terms second-wave versus third-wave feminism. By the beginning of the 1990s many theorists and artists were revising how feminist discourses relate to and align with other social and cultural revolutions such as queer studies, anti-racism and the post-colonial movement. Showden describes third-wave politics as:

> …a committed focus on intersectional identities and multilayered discrimination. While intersectionality is not itself a "politics", it is an attempt to shift the epistemological standpoint of feminism, providing a new subject position from which feminist critique is articulated.[45]

In Showden's analysis of the politics behind the new feminisms, she focuses on postfeminism's popularist role as the forerunner for so-called "girlie" or girl power feminism (the catch-cry for iconic 1990s pop group The Spice Girls). It is a movement described as 'the best known and largest group of third wavers'.[46] Girls, as opposed to women, have been embraced as a youth category as well as a state of mind in third-wave feminism. The following is third-wave feminists Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards' definition of girlhood: 'those grown women on *Sex in* [sic] *the City* who in their independence, their bonds with female friends, and their love of feminine fashion invoke a sense of eternal girlhood'.[47] In a key third-wave text, *Manifesta,* girlie feminism is defined as consisting of feminist principles 'based on a reclaiming of girl culture (or feminine accoutrements that were tossed out with sexism during the Second Wave), be it Barbie, housekeeping, or girl talk'.[48] Jennifer Eisenhauer notes how, for a long time, the figure of the girl has been a 'repeatedly othered subject within feminisms,'[49] but in third-wave feminism girls are often positioned as the "daughters" of second-wave feminism. While reference to daughters (in English or Japanese) can imply the seniority of a father over his child, in the third-wave context she comes from a matriarchal lineage. Therefore, as well as being a critique of racial hegemony and Western bias, third-wave 'came to be specifically associated with a "young" feminist generation'[50] of self-described girls. Third-wave feminism is ideally positioned as the discourse for *shōjo.*

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44 Friedman, *Mappings: feminism and the cultural geographies of encounter*, p. 69.
45 Showden, *op. cit.*, p. 167.
46 Showden, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
47 Baumgardner & Richards, 'Feminism and Femininity: Or How We Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Thong', p. 60.
48 Baumgardner & Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future*, p. 60.
49 Eisenhauer, 'Mythic Figures and Lived Identities: Locating the "Girl" in Feminist Discourse', p. 80.
50 *Ibid.*, p. 82.

Gender in *Shōjo* Culture

While Japan's popular culture has often mythologised the figure of the *shōjo* as an embodiment of contemporary Japanese culture's many vices and sexual anxieties, *shōjo* culture operates in a different space that is dictated only by Japanese girls' subjectivities and creative agency. Contemporary *shōjo* culture encompasses many different formats and levels of interaction. It is possible (but outside the limitations of this article) to explore many interesting gender-transgressive aspects of contemporary *shōjo* culture. *Kawaii* style, mentioned briefly above, has been analysed as a female-centred rejection of adulthood.[51] Laura Miller presented cases of girls using photographic technologies, specifically the print-club sticker booths, to resist stereotypes.[52] The famous Shibuya and Harajuku fashion revolutions involve girls who reject mainstream beauty standards in order to stand out.[53] In the world of *shōjo* fiction, including "boys love" genre and science fiction, there exists some outrageous narratives preoccupied with bodily transformation, gender homogeneity, and sexual autonomy.[54]

Shōjo manga is an especially rich subject to draw out girls' expressions of gender transgression. To illustrate with an example, *The Rose of Versailles*—possibly the most iconic *shōjo* manga—was called a "revolutionary romance" by Deborah Shamoon.[55] Its narrative owes in part to the tradition of cross-gender roles already established in *shōjo* favourites Takarazuka Review and Osamu Tezuka's *Princess Knight*. It is about a female protagonist dressed as a male aristocrat (called Oscar), here set in lush, decadent, Rococo France. The "revolutionary" part comes from the way that Oscar, as captain of the royal guard, does not deceive others about her gender/sex. The manga also featured unprecedented "boudoir" scenes. At the time, with this type of content, Ikeda and her peers were pushing the limits of Japan's media censorship laws.[56] Throughout Oscar's various love affairs, with men and women, Ikeda consistently shows Oscar's inability or resistance to identify as either gender.[57] *Rose* signified the start of generations of *shōjo* manga creation and consumption inspired by bold experimentations with gender unlike anything else in contemporary Japanese culture.

The *shōjo* has built a communal space that negates girls' gender roles and its criticisms in the dominant, patriarchal Japanese society. Although the social position of the *shōjo* was determined by the Meiji government's efforts to raise "good wives and wise

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51 Kinsella, 'Cuties in Japan'.
52 Miller, 'Bad Girl Photography'.
53 Kinsella, 'Black Faces, Witches, and Racism Against Girls'; Mackie, 'Transnational Bricolage: Gothic Lolita and the Political Economy of Fashion'.
54 Shamoon, 'Revolutionary Romance: The Rose of Versailles and the Transformation of Shōjo Manga'. Orbaugh, 'Busty Battlin' Babes: The Evolution of Shōjo in 1990s Visual Culture'.
55 Shamoon, *op. cit.*
56 Shamoon, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
57 Shamoon, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

mothers" (*ryōsai kenbo*), the resulting community is only for '*shōjo* interests'[58] and not the interests of future husbands or children. It is located within a broader sphere of "female culture", developed in Japan's often gender-segregated society. Inside the exclusively feminine realm of *shōjo* culture, girls have developed a creative space in which they are often awarded a special level of agency. This, Mari Kotani argued, reflected and fostered a more "pleasant" and independent time of a girl's life not offered to girls or women in the greater society.[59] Kotani also suggested that, even beyond the period of girlhood (defined commonly in Japan as a state of pre-marriage and motherhood), women can still identify with some aspects of *shōjo* culture and continue to pursue their *shōjo* interests. It is the *shōjo*'s distinctive culture existing in defiance of her public association with vice that makes her a subject of intense interest from a gender studies perspective.

Socially, one of the key factors that shapes girls' culture is the bedroom. Honda describes the girls' bedroom as a place where 'she spins a small cocoon around herself wherein to slumber and dream as a pupa, consciously separating herself from the outer world'.[60] The concept of the bedroom is not dissimilar to Virginia Woolf's famous essay, *A Room of One's Own,* in which Woolf espouses a modern woman's need for a room as a symbol of privacy and income.[61] It is an essential space for generating 'new forms of art and of life'.[62] In the cyber age, girls' bedroom culture could also include online formats such as chat rooms and networking sites.[63] Most importantly, the social realm of the bedroom characterises *shōjo* culture as a private space, in which girls are shut away from the outside world. Furthermore, it is a social space in which only those who share similar interests (i.e. other girls or those with a girl consciousness) can participate.

Concluding Statements

Despite the strong creative expressions of gender subversion, *shōjo* culture is far from being perceived as a political movement. Honda explained this when she wrote, 'girls…never assert themselves against those who deride them. Neither do they declare a clear "No" against the everyday order. Instead, they remain self-sufficiently in a corner, where they merely lithely continue to protect their own being'.[64] Her politics are mostly without consciousness. However, within the girl-only community, manga, fashion, and other creative outlets often provide *shōjo* participants with the expressive agency to say, "No". As argued previously, *shōjo* culture may have been created by the

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58 Kotani, 'Alien Spaces and Alien Bodies in Japanese Women's Science Fiction', p. 55.
59 Kotani, 'Doll Beauties and Cosplay', p. 55.
60 Honda, 'The Genealogy of Hirahira: Liminality and the Girl', p. 20.
61 Black, 'Virginia Woolf as Feminist', p. 114.
62 *Ibid.,* p. 115.
63 Reid-Walsh & Mitchell, 'Girls' Web Sites: A Virtual "Room of One's Own"?', p. 173.
64 Honda, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

patriarchal system in pre-war Japan, but it ended up paradoxically being a space that barred the patriarchy to make a subversive culture of 'aesthetic and sexual magic'.[65]

In the very spirit of *shōjo* culture, the critique contained within the works is often a quiet, private protest heard only by other girls. In order to "unlock" the gender critique, one must have knowledge of *shōjo* culture and its preoccupations with gender-transgressive themes such as bodily transformation and girl-only worlds. Curator Kasahara Michiko had her own theory as to the invisibility of feminist expression in contemporary Japanese art, and society generally; 'to defend themselves, the women appear to adopt the values of society, enjoying the benefits while pretending to do what they are told, when in fact they reject those values and seek a haven within a tiny world of their own'.[66] In other words, the women (and by this term Kasahara was especially speaking of the young generation of women/girls) hide their unrest to all but their own culture. Indeed, *shōjo* often appear 'outwardly compliant as their way of dealing with their society when actually they are voiding its values'.[67]

Similarly, the artworks analysed above have been presented in the past with little or no reference to the possibility that they may contain critique. Kasahara's concept of the self-conscious female goes far to explain why feminism is not an overt activism in many contemporary practices in Japan. In fact, some young women artists (including Aoshima Chiho) deny any such political association.[68] Nonetheless, while contemporary Japanese art is hardly ever discussed through feminist discourse, there is at least one key third-wave characteristic, girlishness, in the practices of the featured young female artists who use the *shōjo* motif as a strategy of critique. If girls have a special role in third-wave feminism, then *shōjo* culture—with all its regionally specific gender-defying expressions—can be a potential site for global feminist art.

Literary scholar Takahara Eiri's theory of the marginal girl consciousness also enforces this subversive role of *shōjo*. For Takahara, the *shōjo* is far more than a chronological reading of one's age, gender and social status, but a specific identification with a creative community of girls.[69] It makes explicit the subversive consequences of a rejection of hegemonic gender in favour of the *shōjo*'s subjectivity. *Shōjo* are positioned as champions of fantasy and gender transgression. Despite outside perceptions, gender defiance is rife within *shōjo* culture. Most importantly, a girl consciousness is a peripheral position outside of the dominant gender system. He argues, 'although there

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65   Kotani, 'Doll Beauties and Cosplay', p. 57.
66   Kasahara, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
67   *Ibid.*, p. 101.
68   Kandel, 'Chiho Aoshima: Oops I Dropped My Dumplings', p. 41; Maerkle, 'Miwa Yanagi Makes the Personal Public'.
69   Takahara, 'The Consciousness of the Girl: Freedom and Arrogance'.

is nothing special per se about being a girl, the ability to view the world with the eye of the girl positions the person involved outside accepted gender categories'.[70] The girl consciousness 'is a view that valorises the fantastic… and through her consciousness of this, she will be astounded to discover a world that permits anything imaginable'.[71]

Three themes—Japanese girlhood, contemporary art, and feminism—have been combined here to argue for the important place of the *shōjo* motif in contemporary feminist art. The *shōjo* motif, if understood in its regional hybridity unique to Japan, can be considered a significant example of a gender issue affecting the global scope of contemporary feminist art today. *Shōjo* culture facilitates feminist interpretation due to its creative use of gender transgression in narratives, imagery and practices. The *shōjo* motif's unique function in contemporary Japanese art "speaks the language" of contemporary, third-wave feminism. With her ambiguous, even contradictory, gender politics and creative expressions, the *shōjo* will continue to be at the centre of continuing cultural studies and feminist debate.

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70 *Ibid.*, p. 189.
71 *Ibid.*, p. 193.

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Conversation Analysis of *Boke-tsukkomi* Exchange in Japanese Comedy

Hideo Tsutsumi
The University of New South Wales

Abstract

This article analyses and discusses what Japanese comical exchange called *boke-tsukkomi* is like and how it draws laughter. Conversation analysis and incongruity resolution are used as methods for the examination of the *boke-tsukkomi* examples. This paper will lend itself to further research on the dyadic exchange in the cross cultural context.

Keywords

boke-tsukkomi, *manzai*, comedy, CA (Conversation Analysis), IR (Incongruity Resolution)

Introduction

This paper will analyse and discuss the Japanese comedy exchanges called *boke-tsukkomi*. *Boke-tsukkomi* exchange is a comical verbal battle of words and worldviews between the *boke* player and the *tsukkomi* player.[1] *Boke* literally means "vagueness" and *tsukkomi* "to poke". The *boke* is characterized by his/her out-of-context remarks and the *tsukkomi* by his/her sharp responses to bring back their twisted dialogue to social order. *Boke* and *tsukkomi* are generally translated as "the fool or funny man" and "the sharp man or straight man" respectively. The funny man is defined as 'a man whose job is to entertain people by telling jokes'.[2] The straight man is 'a member of a comedy team who feeds lines to a partner who in turn replies with usually humorous quips'.[3]

This paper will be concerned with the typical verbal exchanges of *boke-tsukkomi* and the straight man and the funny man, as defined above, but not with what their designated roles say or do in their actual performance. For example, the straight man, Bud Abbott, in *Abbott and Costello* in their famous wordplay routine *Who's on First* does not feed any lines to his partner funny man Costello, but it is Abbott himself who fools

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1   Stocker, 'Manzai: Team Comedy in Japan's Entertainment Industry', p. 61.
2   MacMillan Dictionary.
3   Merriam Webster.

Costello by calmly repeating jokey baseball player's names, such as the first baseman called *Who,* as in the following example:[4]

> Costello: Well, then who's playing first?
>
> Abbott: Yes.
>
> Costello: I mean the fellow's name on first base.
>
> Abbott: Who.

We will also look at the exchange of *boke* and *tsukkomi,* and the straight and the funny as adjacency pairs using terminology from conversation analysis (henceforth CA). These pairs then will be examined through the techniques of CA.

The paper will first look into what the exchange of *boke-tsukkomi* in Japanese is like in relation to that of the straight man and the funny man in English. Next, how the *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges cause laughter will be analysed. Lastly, seven types of *tsukkomi* utterances that Abe claims[5] exist will be illustrated. Throughout the paper, incongruity-resolution theory (henceforth IR) will be referred to, which is also displayed in the Funniness Structure Model.[6] In order to support the analysis of the *tsukkomi* lines, superiority theory will also be mentioned.

As a pilot study, this paper seeks to lend itself to further research projects investigating *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges in English contexts. As a preliminary investigation, a recording of stand-up comedy constructed of the *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges is partly transcribed and studied at the end of this paper. The author and his friend performed this Japanese style of comedy in English in front of the English-speaking audience.

Literature Review

Stocker[7] states that the friendly antagonism of *boke* and *tsukkomi* characterise *manzai* team comedy in Japan which is usually said to reflect the distinctive characteristics of the ordinary people in the urban Osaka area. Today's *manzai* is generally based on *shabekuri manzai* - chatty *manzai* between *boke* and *tsukkomi,* which dates back to the 1930s.[8]

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4   Integrative Arts 10.

5   Abe, 'Manzai ni okeru "tsukkomi" no ruikei to sono hyōgen kōka', pp. 52-58.

6   *Ibid.*, p. 49.

7   Stocker, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

8   Stocker, *op. cit.*, p. 57 and Katayama, 'Humor in Manzai Stand-up Comedy: A Historical and Comparative Analysis', p. 215.

As *boke* and *tsukkomi* are different roles, so are their utterance types. Ōshima[9] explains that '(t)he *boke's* role is to make stupid or out-of-context statements and to engage in cognitive misunderstandings', whereas the *tsukkomi* role '...involves making statements to correct or to put down the *boke*'.

CA has its main interests in the context but not the structure of jokes; however, it has great potential to illuminate some significant aspects of humor.[10] Partington[11] makes clear the difference between conversational laughter and humorous laughter: the former is mundane, requires intimate contact and speakers actually laugh more than audiences do,[12] while the latter is based on jokes, comedians are physically and socially distant and typically they will not laugh. As the aim of this study is to find out what is humorous in *boke-tsukkomi* stand-up comedy, its focus will be confined to the latter: humorous laughter. In the CA research into laughter, Glenn[13] says that laughter has its meaning in its placement in the sequence, which comprises its referent, the *laughable,* and the following laughter itself, therefore, the laughter is *indexical.* Consequently, the jokes can be judged if they are funny or not by seeking out their indexical sign: the subsequent laughter. This pair i.e. a laughable utterance and its subsequent laughter is further said to form an adjacency pair.[14] In addition, the last two exchanges of joking interaction before its laughter also form an adjacency pair comprising a serious utterance which can be the joking material and a nonserious utterance which is the joke itself.[15]

An adjacency pair is a structure which CA views as a basic component of interactions. An adjacency pair is defined as 'a sequence of two utterances, which are adjacent, produced by different speakers, ordered as a first part and second part, and typed, so that a first part requires a particular second part or range of second parts'.[16] Adjacency pairs in daily interactions are, for example greeting-greeting, question-answer, request-acceptance/refusal.[17] The adjacency pairs of the straight and the funny can be said to be comprised of the serious utterance – the nonserious utterance, the setup – the joke or, congruity – incongruity. The *boke-tsukkomi* adjacency pair, on the other hand, seems to constitute the joke - the criticism, the misunderstanding – the correction or incongruity – resolution. This incongruity - resolution interpretation might be compatible with one of the various *boke-tsukkomi* exchanging types mentioned by Inoue:[18] *chaos vs. order.* Incongruity creates chaos but resolution puts it back into order.

9   Ōshima, 'Rakugo and Humor in Japanese Interpersonal Communication', p. 105.
10 Attardo, 'Linguistic Theories of Humor', pp. 330-331.
11 Partington, 'The Linguistics of Laughter: A Corpus-Assisted Study of Laughter-Talk', p. 82.
12 Provine, 'Laughter: A Scientific Investigation', p. 27 cited in Partington *op. cit.*, p. 82.
13 Glenn, 'Laughter in Interaction', p. 48.
14 Norrick, 'Conversational Joking: Humor in Everyday Talk', p. 23 and Grindsted, 'Joking As a Strategy in Spanish and Danish Negotiations', p. 168.
15 Norrick, *op. cit.*, p. 25 and Grindsted, *op. cit.*, p. 165.
16 Schegloff and Sacks, 'Opening Up Closings', p. 295; also Schegloff, 'Sequencing in Conversational Openings', cited in Schiffrin 'Approaches to Discourse', p. 236.
17 Wardhaugh, 'An Introduction to Sociolinguistics 4th ed.', p. 296.
18 Inoue, '*Manzai: Osaka no warai* (*Manzai:* Osakan Humor)', p. 33, cited in Katayama, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

Usually the second part of the pair is something expected and preferred according to the first part, just as the answer is preferred to hear in response to the question rather than its absence. However, nonserious responses to serious statements or incongruity to congruity would not be preferred unless the participants are in the play frame, or rather in the context where the non-*bona fide* mode is welcome to enter into the *bona fide* mode. The *bona fide* mode is the ordinary mode where there is no lying, acting, joking or etc., while the non-*bona fide* mode is where what speakers say is not necessarily taken wholly literally or truthfully.[19] Therefore, the second part of the adjacency pair jokes, can or should be unexpected or dispreferred in order to switch from the *bona fide* mode into the non-*bona fide* mode to create the joke.

Furthermore, the second part of an adjacency pair completes the adjacency pair, for example the question-answer adjacency pair cannot be completed without the second part, the answer.[20] Ōshima[21] and Stocker[22] state that the *tsukkomi's* response frames and completes the *boke-tsukkomi* adjacency pair. In the straight-funny adjacency pair, on the other hand, without the funny man's incongruity the straight-funny adjacency pair will not be completed.

IR 'postulates that humor is created by a multistage process in which an initial incongruity is created, and then some further information causes that incongruity to be resolved'.[23] As to incongruity, Shultz explains in detail 'incongruity is usually defined as a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs in the joke'.[24] This incongruity will be resolved by reconsidering the first prediction and replacing it with another interpretation brought by the punchline.[25] Critchley[26] states that 'in order for the incongruity of the joke to be seen as such, there has to be a congruence between joke structure and social structure – no social congruity, no comic incongruity'. This social congruity might be equal to Shultz's 'what is expected'. The mechanism of IR can be illustrated in the Funniness Structure Model Fig. 1.[27]

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19 Raskin 'Semantic Mechanisms of Humor' cited in Partington, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.
20 Norrick, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
21 Ōshima, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
22 Stocker, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
23 Ritchie, 'Developing the Incongruity-Resolution Theory', p. 78.
24 Shultz, 'A Cognitive-Developmental Analysis of Humour', p. 12, cited in Ritchie 1999, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
25 Ritchie, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
26 Critchley, 'On Humour: Thinking in Action', p. 4.
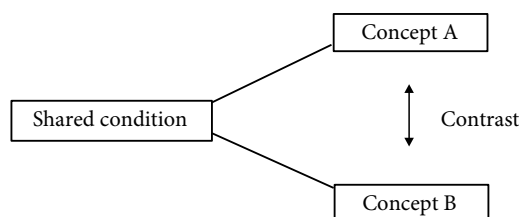27 Abe, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

Figure 1: Funniness Structure Model

Both *Concept A* and *Concept B* derive from a *shared condition*. Applying Shultz's definition of IR cited above to this model, *Concept A* is 'what is expected', *Concept B* is 'what actually occurs in the joke' and *contrast* is the 'conflict'. It is *Concept B* that *boke* and the funny man usually come up with.

Provided that the audience's expectations are relevant to the topic, funny lines are somewhat irrelevant to it. Regarding less relevant statements, Sperber and Wilson[28] argue as follows:

> Precisely because the processing of (55) (*There is a smell of gas*) is governed by the search for relevance, assumption (57) (*The gas company is not on strike*) is unlikely to be made: the processing effort needed to derive (57) is greater than the effort needed to derive (56) (*There is a gas leak somewhere in the house*), and moreover (57) does not lead to rich contextual effects achievable at a low processing cost.

If these three utterances (55, 56, and 57) are arranged as follows, they can illustrate not only the parenthesised incongruity mechanism but also the underlined *boke-tsukkomi* adjacency pair functioning as incongruity - resolution.

(T = *tsukkomi*; B = *boke*)

1. T: Hey, there is a smell of gas. (Shared condition)

2. B: <u>Yeah, the gas company is not on strike.</u> (Concept B)

3. T: <u>You idiot! There is a gas leak somewhere in the house!</u> (Concept A)

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28   Sperber and Wilson, 'Relevance: Communication and Cognition 2nd ed.', p. 152.

We can infer two things from this example: 1) *boke* line 2 avoids the "immediate" relevance, and 2) recipients on the other hand need to take more time and effort to understand the less relevant assumption. Sperber and Wilson[29] state, '(t)he construction and processing of different assumptions will involve different effects and amounts of effort, and hence different degrees of relevance'. Thus if the *tsukkomi's* more relevant line 3 highlights the *boke's* less relevant line 2, it would help the audience process that less relevant assumption, subsequently resolving the incongruity.

An example disputing IR theory is where the audience waits for their favourite comedian Martin Allen's catch phrase *Hello dere*, and laughs at him.[30] The reason why his *Hello dere* causes laughter would be because of the way he says it every time he, as a funny man, appears on the stage.

And also not all incongruous utterances can draw laughter. For example, after someone greets you with *Hey dude*, you start singing *Let it be…* instead of *Hey Jude….* Both *Hey Jude* and *Let it be* are incongruent but *Let it be* is so unconnected that it cannot be resolved. *Hey Jude*, however, can be resolved by means of a pun. Therefore in order to explain humor, IR is not a single monolithic theory and it also needs complementary accounts like the pun to describe a joke.

Superiority theory is another such theory and will help explain the effect of *tsukkomi* when IR theory would not be able to entirely explain it. Superiority theory dates back to Plato saying 'people laugh at what is ridiculous in their friends'.[31] Aristotle[32] maintains that:

> Comedy… is a representation of inferior people, not indeed in the full sense of the word bad, but the laughable is a species of the base or ugly. It consists in some blunder or ugliness that does not cause pain or disaster, an obvious example being the comic mask which is ugly and distorted but not painful.

Thus people might have a tendency to laugh at stupidity or inferiority of someone out of a sense of superiority. The adjective *stupid* is defined as 'lacking in common sense or intelligence'.[33] However, stupid utterances heard in comedies should be created by intentional misunderstanding of the foregoing context.[34] Thus

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29   *Ibid.*, p. 152.
30   Smith, 'Who's who in Comedy', pp. 8-9.
31   Nilsen & Nilsen, 'Encyclopedia of 20th - century American Humor', p. 293.
32   Aristotle, *Poetics*, p. 18-21, cited in Chiaro, 'The Language of Jokes: Analysing Verbal Play (Interface)', p. 7.
33   Collins Pocket English Dictionary.
34   Norrick, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

the recipients of the jokes would laugh at the intentional stupidity of the *boke* or the funny man, who can therefore be regarded as highly-intellectual rather than genuinely stupid in reality.

Abe[35] claims that there are seven types of *tsukkomi* in two categories (the name of each type and category is translated by the author). One category is 'call of attention' in which the *tsukkomi* line adds no comment on the incongruous *boke* line but only calls the audience's attention towards it. The other category is 'comment on content' in which the *tsukkomi* line adds some comment on the incongruous *boke* line. 'Call of attention' includes 1) 'negation', 2) 'echo' and 3) 'silence', while 'comment on content' involves 4) 'correction', 5) 'derivation', 6) 'metaphor' and 7) 'negative reflection'. Each type is illustrated with the examples later.

Data and Methodology

The data come from various sources in both Japanese and English and in both written and spoken modes. The sources are as follows: a book *Nihon Bungakusha Hentairon: Bakushō Mondai* (Japanese Literary People *Perversion-ology* [= study of perversion])[36] which contains the transcript of a comedy duo *Bakushō Mondai's boke-tsukkomi* dialogue on Japanese literary people, a book *Who's who in Comedy*[37] which cites some transcripts of comedians' routines, and an Internet website *YouTube* which holds many comedy video clips. Such audio-visual data are restricted to the *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges so that the paper can pursue its discussion beyond their structure: their humorous elements. Therefore, the straight-funny data are all in the reading text only to compare their structure with that of *boke-tsukkomi*. All the Japanese examples are transcribed in Roman characters and also the author's English translation is provided. Video clips from *YouTube* are cited with their titles and durations. The contributor's screen names are listed in the footnotes. More details including the retrieved date and URL can be found in the list of references.

As the preliminary step for CA, the co-text details of the data will be provided below. The settings in the video clips are at public theaters or the like, and the participants are the comedians and audiences. In the reading text, unfortunately, the settings and participants, i.e. readers and writers cannot be observed. Lengths of the extracted interactions range from 7 to 11 seconds or from 3 to 10 lines, which are restricted to the optimum stretch to argue the main points. Relationships between the

35 Abe, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-58.
36 Bakushō Mondai, '*Nihon Bungakusha Hentairon* (Japanese Literary people *Perversion-ology*)'.
37 Smith, *op. cit.*

participants are unknown but, considering the settings, the audiences and readers would be mostly strangers to the comedians but know of them through multimedia e.g. TV. The comedians are males in both reading and audio-visual examples. Their audiences and readers are unknown but they would be both male and female, and most of them should be old enough to be able to find the comedians' jokes funny as their laughter is heard at least in the video data.

Points of the discussion are fairly restricted to IR due to time and word constraints although there are many other factors in drawing laughter such as regional accents and cultural values. Unlike these two points, IR appears to travel across languages and cultures as seen in the comparison between *boke-tsukkomi* and straight-funny exchanges in the next section.

Although the analysis concentrates on the language, gestures inevitably communicate messages to the audiences in the visual data. Such visual signs are, therefore, parenthesised and inserted into the relevant places in the transcribed text, for example (feeling his crewcut head with his hand) in Ex. 4.

Furthermore, all the utterances in the *boke-tsukkomi* and straight-funny exchanges appear to be designed deliberately to provoke laughter. Thus, naturally occurring utterances, which CA is usually concerned with, strictly speaking, seem to be only the audiences' laughter.

The characteristics of the relationship between the audience and their laughter are that they are given a freedom to choose to laugh or not, and also they are in a situation where they are likely to laugh. This is because they all seem to be in the play frame or non-*bona fide* mode with the comedians and other members in the audience. There is also research supporting this point, which 'indicates that people are 30 times more likely to laugh when they are with others than when they are alone'.[38] In the audio-visual data the audiences are all in a group, hence there is greater probability of laughter than when in a non-*bona fide* yet solitary mode (e.g. watching a comedy film alone). They also need not to laugh at unfunny jokes to save the joker's face.

Now we will search the audio-visual data for the audience laughter to pin down the laughables. Identifying the laughables seems to be as simple as keeping track of audience laughter since the laughter occurs upon its referent being recognised, which

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38   Provine and Fischer, 'Laughing, Smiling, and Talking: Relation to Sleeping and Social Context in Humans', pp. 295-305, cited in Martin, 'The Psychology of Humor: An Integrative Approach', p. 128.

can happen both at the completion and while processing the laughable utterance.[39] Glenn,[40] further points out that the gap between the laughable and the laughter can constitute evidence of the failure of a laughable. In the data, however, some of the *boke's* incomplete laughables seem to be deliberately made irresolvable until the following *tsukkomi* utterance helps it become resolved, rather than to fail halfway through.

Following Abe's[41] seven types of *tsukkomi*, examples from *YouTube* and the author's own experience are provided below. Thus, all of the examples are different from those of Abe,[42] but designed to illustrate each type as precisely as he claims.

A recording of an English *boke-tsukkomi* performance by the author and his friend is also transcribed and studied through the CA techniques. The whole length of the recording is 4:23 minutes but the transcribed examples are only a few fragments of it. Its setting is at a one-time event with a temporary stage in a university college. Participants are inexperienced comedians, including the author and his friend. The audience members stay at the college and come to see their college mates' performances. Relationships between the comedians and the audience are closer than acquaintances as the author also stays at the college, although his friend is a visitor who is totally new to the audience. The comedians are both 25 year old Japanese males and the audience is made up of 18-27 year-olds, including both sexes and various races.

Analysis and Discussion

First of all, the structure of the *boke-tsukkomi* exchange in comparison with the straight-funny exchange will be analysed. The examples used in this analysis are extracted from the reading materials. Secondly, the way the *boke-tsukkomi* exchange draws laughter will be illustrated by looking into three examples from the audio-visual data. Thirdly, the *tsukkomi* types proposed by Abe[43] will be illustrated in the examples the author collected. Finally, the *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges the author and his friend performed in English will be examined and discussed.

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39 Jefferson, Sacks, and Schegloff, 'Preliminary Notes on the Sequential Organization of Laughter', p. 12; Schenkein, 'Towards an Analysis of Natural Conversation and the Sense of Heheh', p. 365; Jefferson, 'Notes on the Sequential Organization of Laughter in Conversation; Onset Sensitivity in Invitations to Laugh' p. 7; Sacks, 'An Analysis of the Course of A Joke's Telling in Conversation', p. 348, cited in Glenn, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
40 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
41 Abe, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-58.
42 *Ibid.*, pp. 52-58.
43 *Ibid.*, pp. 52-58.

Boke-tsukkomi in Japanese and straight-funny in English

Boke-tsukkomi is, as has been mentioned earlier, the typical verbal exchanges in Japanese stand-up comedy called *manzai*. The history of *manzai* dates back to the thirteenth century but the modern dialogue style of *manzai* is said to have started in the 1930s.[44]

According to *The Oxford English Dictionary 2nd ed.*, the word straight man seems to have appeared before 1923[45] and the word funny man before 1861.[46] Now we will look at the *boke-tsukkomi* and straight-funny exchanges respectively.

Analysis of boke-tsukkomi and straight-funny exchanges

Example 1 (*boke-tsukkomi*)

[Excerpt from the book "*Nihon Bungakusha Hentairon: Bakushō Mondai* (Japanese Literary People *Perversion-ology*)"][47]

(T=Tanaka, the *tsukkomi*; Ō=Ōta, the *boke* – They are talking about a pawnshop owner.)

1. T: *Yoku shiruhito ni yoreba, mise ni iku to dare ga tenin de dare ga tenshu ka wakaranai hodo, shisso na minari o shiteita to iu.*
   = According to those who know him well, he dressed so simply when in his shop that you could not tell apart the owner from the clerks.

2. Ō: *Hotondo, suppadaka datta rashii kara na.*
   = Always, he seemed to have been naked.

3. T: *Tsukamaruyo!*
   = He would get arrested!

Example 1 above shows how *tsukkomi* Tanaka and *boke* Ōta exchange their utterances. Line 2 and 3 form a *boke-tsukkomi* adjacency pair constituting incongruity - resolution. The social congruity can be deduced from line 1 that the pawnshop is

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44 Katayama, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.
45 Simpson & Weiner (eds.), 'The Oxford English Dictionary 2nd ed. vol. XVI', p. 819.
46 Simpson & Weiner (eds.), 'The Oxford English Dictionary 2nd ed. vol. VI', p. 273.
47 Bakushō Mondai, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

public and people are usually dressed in public, thus the pawnshop owner is just dressed in simple clothing. To this social congruity (i.e. the pawnshop owner is dressed in his shop) the *boke* line 2 (i.e. Always, he seemed to have been naked) is incongruent. The following *tsukkomi* line 3 (i.e. He would get arrested!) resolves this incongruity, forming IR, by adding the likely effect (i.e. getting arrested) of the cause (i.e. being naked in public) and this clinches the humorous exchange.

Example 2 (straight-funny)

[Excerpt from the book "*Who's who in Comedy*"][48]

(R=Rossi, the straight man; A= Allen, the funny man – Rossi is playing an interviewer and Allen a boxer.)

1. R: What's your trickiest punch?

2. A: Left hook.

3. R: What's so tricky about that?

4. A: I use my right hand.

Example 2 above is a humorous dialogue between Rossi and Allen. Every line (i.e. line 1, 2, 3 and 4) is an integral part of this comic exchange, but line 1 and 3 can be regarded as typical to the straight man Rossi and line 2 and 4 to the funny man Allen. This is because, Rossi feeds Allen line 1 (i.e. What's your trickiest punch?) to elicit a part of the joke from him (i.e. Left hook), and Rossi feeds him again line 3 (i.e. What's so tricky about that?) to let him complete the joke by eliciting his final line (i.e. I use my right hand). This joke (i.e. he uses his right hand to deliver his left hook) is incongruent to the universal rule, i.e. humans cannot use their right hand to deliver their left hook. Allen is a human, and thus he cannot use his right hand to deliver his left hook. Upon hearing the final line (i.e. I use my right hand), most of the recipients should notice the incongruity, find it impossible and resolve it to constitute IR.

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48   Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

Comparisons between boke-tsukkomi and straight-funny exchanges

First of all, both *boke-tsukkomi* and straight-funny have setups in common, which will be described next by referring to the Fig 1. Secondly, both texts shift from congruency to incongruency. In Ex. 1, until line 1(i.e. According to those who know him well, he dressed so simply when in his shop that you could not tell apart the owner from the clerks) the situation seems to be congruent with our common sense. But line 2 (i.e. Always, he seemed to have been naked) appears to be incongruent to what we usually think, i.e. shop clerks are usually dressed in the pawnshop. In Ex. 2, Allen's line 4 (i.e. I use my right hand) is incongruent to what we tend to assume from his previous line 2 (i.e. Left hook); he uses his left hand to deliver his left hook. And these incongruities are to be resolved to achieve IR.

However, while the *boke-tsukkomi* exchange in Ex. 1 shifts back to congruency with the *tsukkomi* line 3 (i.e. He would get arrested!), the straight-funny exchange in Ex. 2 does not. This is typical to *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges and the characteristic of *tsukkomi* as described earlier, talking sense to highlight the preceding non-sense line by *boke*.

Setup

The setup is 'the initial portion of text' composing a joke together with the second part punchline and the setup creates no incongruity but the punchline does.[49] The setups of Ex. 1 and Ex. 2 will be illustrated by using the Funniness Structure Model (Fig. 1).
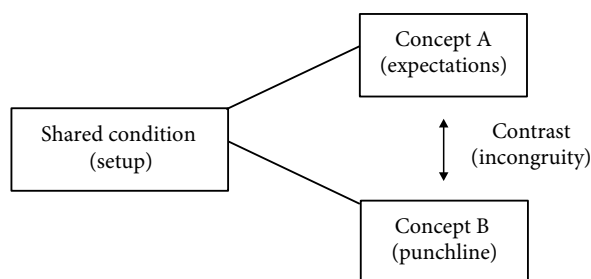
As seen above, 'expectations' and 'punchline' start from the same source 'setup', but contrast against each other to create 'incongruity'.

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49   Ritchie, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

In Ex. 1, the setup is line 1 (i.e. According to those who know him well, he dressed so simply when in his shop that you could not tell apart the owner from the clerks). An example can be like *He was very friendly to the clerks*, however the punchline (i.e. Always, he seemed to have been naked) avoids such expectations. Those expectations and the punchline now make the incongruity.

In Ex. 2, the setup is line 1, 2 and 3 (i.e. R: What's your trickiest punch?, A: Left hook, R: What's so tricky about that?). An expectation can be like *It is so fast,* however the punchline (i.e. I use my right hand) betrays that expectation. Those expectations and punchline now create the incongruity.

Typically setups are provided by *tsukkomi* in the *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges and the straight man in the straight-funny exchanges. However, as seen in the funny man's line 2 in Ex. 2 (i.e. Left hook) which still constitutes the setup, the other part can also participate in setting up the joking material.

And also note that only the setup and the punchline appear on the surface but the expectations and the incongruity lie behind the lines. Since this is the case, we need to guess to some extent what the expectations and the ensuing incongruity would be in order to illustrate how the next *boke-tsukkomi* examples draw laughter.

How the boke-tsukkomi exchange invites laughter

We will now look at the transcribed audio-visual data. This approach will allow us to find laughables which immediately precede the laughter.[50] Thus, if a *boke* line appears immediately before the laughter, the *boke* line will be identified as the laughable (cf. Ex. 3 below). Using this method, three examples will be looked into: 1) a *boke* laughable, 2) a *tsukkomi* laughable, 3) and a combination of *boke* and *tsukkomi* laughable. Parenthesised laughter: (laugh)/(LAUGH) are linked with the Romanised Japanese transcripts, not with the English translations. The role of *tsukkomi*, which is the only difference found between the *boke-tsukkomi* and straight-funny exchanges above, will be discussed in Ex. 3.

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50   Glenn, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

Example 3 (*boke* laughable)

[Excerpt from *YouTube* "*U-ji Kōji 'Nyūgaku Shiken* (high school entrance exam)'"; 1:46-1:57/ 5:57][51]

(M=Mashiko, the *boke*; F=Fukuda, the *tsukkomi*; A=audience – Fukuda plays a student and Mashiko plays an exam monitor)

1. M: Hai, jā ano hajime dakara, chūijikō dake ne. Ano odo no derumon dage kittogu yōni ne, anō keitai denwa do,
    = OK then, to begin with, please turn off everything that makes a sound. Like mobiles,

2. F: Ā.
    = Yes.

3. M: poketto beru do,
    = pagers,

4. F: Iya, motteru yatsu inē be.
    = Well, I think nobody has them [= pagers] anymore.
    A: (laugh)

5. M: ado anō, kumayoge no suzu nanka mo hazushite oite ne.
    = and also bear deterrent bells, please take them off.
    A: (LAUGH)

6. F: Zettai motteru yatsu inē bena.
    = Definitely there's no one with one of them.

    The laughter shown in capitals indicates being more intensified than the one in lower case. Therefore, (laugh) at line 4 is a minor laugh and (LAUGH) at line 5 is a major laugh.

    At line 1 Mashiko starts the announcement (i.e. OK then, to begin with, please turn off everything that makes a sound), and then gives an example of such a device (i.e. Like mobiles). At line 2 Fukuda acknowledges it (i.e. Yes). These two lines are so

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51   Owaraitv, '*Nyūgaku Shiken*'.

far within our expectations, hence no incongruity nor its resolution. However, at line 3 Mashiko gives another example (i.e. pagers) which is incongruous because they are not around anymore. If pagers were still around, the example would be congruous and the audience might not laugh. In response to this incongruous example, Fukuda at line 4 mumbles about it (i.e. Well, I think nobody has them [=pagers] anymore). This mumble brings the incongruous example to resolution, thus IR is clearly achieved before the audience. And since this mumble is immediately followed by the minor laugh at line 4 A, it can be recognised as the minor laughable. Bear deterrent bells at line 5 M are also an incongruous example because it is unlikely that 15 year-old students would bring them to their high school entrance exam. This incongruous example by the *boke* is laughable because the major laugh immediately follows it at line 5 A. Although this incongruity is not explicitly resolved by the *tsukkomi* response before the laughter, resolution of the incongruity might be achieved by the audience themselves. During this short period between the utterance of the incongruous example and the laughter, it is expected that the audience realises that actually the students do not take the bells with them to their exam. In this way, IR seems to be achieved. The following *tsukkomi* line 6 (i.e. Definitely there's no one with one of them) gets no laughter. This indicates that this *tsukkomi* utterance is not meant to provoke laughter by resolving the *boke's* incongruity. It should be there as the unmoving second part of the conventionalized set *boke* and *tsukkomi*. Without this *tsukkomi* part, the dyadic exchange between the *boke* and *tsukkomi* will lack its rhythm and will not move on to the next smoothly.

Example 4 (*tsukkomi* laughable)

[Excerpt from *YouTube* "*U-ji Kōji* '*Tokoya* (barber)'"; 0:15-0:22/ 5:49][52]

(F=Fukuda, the *tsukkomi*; M=Mashiko, the *boke*; A=audience – They are talking about their concerns at a barber they go to for the first time. Mashiko has a crewcut.)

1. F: Sondemo ne yappa anō, hajimete iku tokoya ttsu nowā yappa chotto fuan ssu yone
   = Having said that, it is a bit scary to go to a barber you don't know, isn't it?

2. M: Fuan dayo nē are nē. Nanda ga omoidōri ni nannen janēka do omodde, sugē kowagu /nacchau/ …
   = Yeah, it's scary... Somehow I worry they won't cut it the way I want…(feeling his crewcut head with his hand)

52   Owaraitv, '*Tokoya*'.

3. F: Bōzu dakara kankē nē beyo!
    = It wouldn't matter for a person with a crewcut!
    A: (LAUGH)

Fukuda at line 1 F launches the setup that people usually feel a bit scared about the result of the haircut at a barber they go to for the first time. Those people are meant to be those who have hair longer than a crewcut so that they tend to care about the haircut result. Since Mashiko has a crewcut, it is incongruous to be afraid of the result of his haircut even if at a barber he has never been to (cf. Line 2 M). This incongruity is explicitly resolved by the following *tsukkomi* at line 3 F, constituting IR. This *tsukkomi's* resolution is then immediately followed by the laugh at line 3 A, thus it is identified as the laughable.

Example 5 (both *boke* and *tsukkomi* laughables)

[Excerpt from *YouTube "U-ji Kōji 'Tochigi Manzai 2'"*; 1:48-2:01/ 3:51][53]

(M=Mashiko, the *boke*; F=Fukuda, the *tsukkomi*; A=audience – After Mashiko gets too excited about their region called Kita Kantō, north of Tokyo, Fukuda asks if Mashiko has another topic unrelated to Kita Kantō. At line 1 Mashiko answers yes saying, 'Well, I do have other topics', and then looks like he is going to start talking about something else other than Kita Kantō)

1. M: Iya wadai aru yo iro iro. Ne, kyonen no kure desuka ne, yappa mada yabai
    nyūsu ga ne,
    = Well, I do have other topics. Hey, we had horrible news the end of last year,

2. F: Ā?
    = Yeah?

3. M: dō shimasu kore honto ni.
    = What would you do about that really?

4. F: Nanka yabai nyūsu atta kke?
    = Did we have any horrible news?

5. M: Mada tobogede ome
    = You gotta be kidding again.

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53   Owaraitv, '*Tochigi Manzai 2*'.

6. F: Nani?
    = What?
    A: (laugh)

7. M: Kōsoku dōro no Kitakantō Jidōshadō ga kaitsū shichitta ppe na ome go rā!
    = The expressway called Kitakanto Expressway opened!
    A: (LAUGH)

8. F: Mata Kita Kantō dabe yo!
    = Kita Kantō again!
    A: (LAUGH)

Boke line 7 M is incongruous because the topic has not changed even though Mashiko at line 1 M promises to change it. Since this *boke* line precedes the laugh at line 7 A, it is identified as the laughable. Given this sequence of the incongruity and the laughter, it is assumed that this incongruity is resolved by the audience themselves, comprising IR, before their laughter. The following *tsukkomi* line 8 F explicitly resolves the incongruity, forming IR, and is also followed by laughter at line 8 A. Thus *tsukkomi* line 8 F is the laughable as well. The incongruity that is resolved by the audience themselves and the following *tsukkomi* response is the same and it sounds like the *tsukkomi's* second resolution of the incongruity revives the laughter.

In summary, the laughable *boke* role goes off the track of the foregoing text and context to make a joke and both the laughable and non-laughable *tsukkomi* role brings the topic back on track to keep the comical dyadic exchange going on. In the next section, we will look in detail at how the *tsukkomi* role brings the topic back on track.

Types of tsukkomi

Abe[54] claims that there are seven types of *tsukkomi* in two categories: 'call of attention' and 'comment on content'. 'Call of attention' only functions to draw the audience's attention to the *boke* line. This category includes 1) 'negation', 2) 'echo' and 3) 'silence'. 'Comment on content' literally adds comments on the *boke* line. This category includes 4) 'correction', 5) 'derivation', 6) 'metaphor' and 7) 'negative reflection'.

'Call of attention' in Ex. 6, 7 and 8.

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54   Abe, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-58.

Example 6 (negation)

(Real-estate agent A attends customer B at his office)

1. A: Looking for a room?

2. B: Yeah.

3. A: Do you want to live in a student house or greenhouse?

4. B: Hey!

<div align="right">[Modified from <i>YouTube</i> "<i>U-ji Kōji</i> '<i>Fudōsanya</i> (real-estate office)'";
1:32-1:37/6:09][55]</div>

Tsukkomi line 4 (i.e. Hey!) negates the preceding *boke* part (i.e. greenhouse). According to Abe,[56] negation type, such as "Hey!" in this example, does not have much semantic meaning, but functions as a marker to call the audience's attention to the preceding *boke* line; as if to say offering a greenhouse to a customer to live in is absurd.

Example 7 (echo)

(Real-estate agent A attends customer B at his office)

1. B: (Opens the door) Hi, I'm looking for a room.

2. A: Oh, sorry we're out of pig huts.

3. B: Pig huts?

<div align="right">[Modified from <i>YouTube</i> "<i>U-ji Kōji</i> '<i>Fudōsanya</i> (real-estate office)'";
1:11-1:15/ 6:09][57]</div>

Tsukkomi line 3 (i.e. pig huts?) echoes the incongruous part (i.e. pig huts) of the preceding *boke* line 2. Similar to the negation type, the echo type does not bear much semantic

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55   Owaraitv, '*Fudōsanya*'.
56   Abe, *op. cit.*, p. 52.
57   Owaraitv, *op. cit.*

meaning of "pig huts", but it functions as a marker to call the audience's attention to the preceding *boke* part (i.e. pig huts). According to Abe,[58] the echo type highlights the *boke* part unlike the negation type.

Example 8 (silence)

(A conversation between friends A and B)

1. A: I met this guy Mr. Green today.

2. B: Is he green?

3. A: (silence)

[Brought from the author's experience]

Tsukkomi line 3 keeps silent in response to the preceding *boke* line 2 (i.e. Is he green?). The silence type also does not show any explicit meaning, but it calls the audience's attention to the preceding *boke* line. The silence in response to a question will easily draw attention since the absence of the second part answer is usually dispreferred in question – answer adjacency pairs.

'Comment on content' in Ex. 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Example 9 (correction)

(College mate A greets another B)

1. A: Hey dude.

2. B: (sings) Hey dude, don't make it bad…

3. A: That's Jude!

[Brought from author's experience]

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58   Abe, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

Tsukkomi line 3 corrects the incongruous part (i.e. dude) in the preceding *boke* line 2 by explicitly presenting the correct word (i.e. Jude) in the lyrics of the song *Hey Jude*. This correction type does not only draw the audience's attention to the preceding *boke* line, but also provides the audience with the correct answer (i.e. Jude).

Example 10 (derivation)

(Real-estate agent A takes his customer B to show a room)

1. A: Oh gosh, I forgot the key to the room.

2. B: Really?

3. A: Do you have a 10c coin?

4. B: Can it open it? What a room!

<div align="right">

[Modified from *YouTube* "*U-ji Kōji* '*Fudōsanya* (real-estate office)'";
3:55-4:03/ 6:09][59]

</div>

Tsukkomi line 4 (i.e. Can it open it? What a room!) derives from the preceding *boke* line 3 (i.e. Do you have a 10c coin?). This derivation type once accepts the preceding *boke* line, and then expands it into questions, comments and etc. as in line 4 (Can it open it? What a room!). By so doing, this derivation will illuminate how incongruous the *boke* line is, as if to say 10c coins should not be able to open the key to my new room.

Example 11 (metaphor)

(Real-estate agent A explains to his customer B how far the train station is from the house)

1. B: Is it close to the station?

2. A: Yeah, it only takes 3 minutes.

3. B: So it's like 100 meters, right?

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59   Owaraitv, *op. cit.*

4. A: No, it's 100 kilometers.

5. B: What am I, Superman?

[Modified from *YouTube* "*U-ji Kōji '*Fudōsanya* (real-estate office)'*"; 1:57-2:05/ 6:09][60]

Tsukkomi line 5 is a metaphor (i.e. What am I, Superman?) out of the incongruity (i.e. a human being traveling 100 km in 3 minutes). The metaphor type also once accepts the preceding *boke* line, and then works out a metaphoric comment on it.

Example 12 (negative reflection)

1. A: Do you know Michael Jackson?

2. B: Yeah, Randy's brother, right?

3. A: No one remembers him that way!

[Modified from "Bakusho Mondai"][61]

Tsukkomi line 3 (i.e. No one remembers him that way!) is a negative reflection on the preceding *boke* line (i.e. Yeah, Randy's brother, right?). That is to say, remembering Michael Jackson by his younger brother's name is incongruent to the normal assumptions that people associate him first with his popular numbers or unique dance routines (e.g. *Thriller* or moonwalk). Abe[62] states that negative reflection type functions similarly to the negation type but they are different in that the former adds negative comment to the *boke* line but the latter does not.

Boke-tsukkomi exchange performed in English

Lastly, two examples of the *boke-tsukkomi* exchanges performed in English will be analysed and discussed in Ex. 13 and 14.

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60 *Ibid.*
61 Abe, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
62 *Ibid.*

Example 13 (*boke* laughable)

[Excerpt from *YouTube* "English Manzai"; 1:05-1:15/ 4:24][63]

(T=*Tsukkomi*; B=*Boke*; A=audience – The *tsukkomi* and the *boke* just start off their *manzai* stand-up comedy.)

1. T: Good evening everyone. [Amm… We…]
    A: [Good evening!]

2. T: Oh, thank you.
    A: (laugh)

3. T: We came all the way from Japan.

4. B: [Yeah,] I'm so tired of swimming.
    A: [Phwew!]   [(LAUGH)]
    T: [We didn't swim!]

Boke line 4 is laughable as the laughter follows it. Setup line 3 (i.e. We came all the way from Japan) will make the audience imagine that they came by plane. But the punchline at line 4 (i.e. I'm so tired of swimming) betrays that expectation. Resolution of this incongruous punchline is considered to occur among the audience before their laughter to constitute IR. The following *tsukkomi* at line 4 (i.e. We didn't swim!) gets no laughter as it is swallowed by the laughter, but it completes its *boke-tsukkomi* unit. This *tsukkomi* is negative reflection type as it adds a negative comment on the preceding *boke* part.

Example 14 (*tsukkomi* laughable)

[Excerpt from *YouTube* "English *Manzai*"; 1:35-1:50/ 4:24][64]

(T=*Tsukkomi*; B=*Boke*; A=audience – The *tsukkomi* suggests *Two Idiots* for their comedy duo name.)

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63   Jagkanintesvenska, 'English Manzai'.
64   *Ibid.*

1. T: Um, what about, what about, umm, *Two Idiots*?

2. B: Hey, /the/ plagiarism is not good!

3. T: What! Plagiarism? It's not plagiarism. Why?

4. B: *Two Idiots* is the name of a bollywood movie, right?

5. T: That's *3 Idiots*, you idiot!

6. A: (LAUGH)

The audience might not be able to resolve the incongruity at *boke* line 4 (i.e. *boke* player's intentional false claim that *Two Idiots* is the title of an Indian film *3 Idiots*), hence no laughter follows. On the other hand, *tsukkomi* line 5 (i.e. That's *3 Idiots*, you idiot!) is laughable as it gets laughter at line 6. This *tsukkomi* line presents the correct name of the film, resolving the incongruity. Also putting down the *boke* player by saying 'you idiot' might bring out from the audience a sense of superiority over the *boke* player, inviting their laughter. This *tsukkomi* can be categorised as a correction type.

Conclusion

This paper has looked into the structure of *boke-tsukkomi* exchange and how it draws laughter. First of all, the *tsukkomi* role is found unique when comparing the structures of the *boke-tsukkomi* and the straight-funny exchanges. Further analyses of the *boke-tsukkomi* exchange confirm that the *boke* line makes jokes and the *tsukkomi* line makes a sharp response against the jokes. Secondly, this *tsukkomi* role could be dispensable in the *boke-tsukkomi* exchange to make the audience laugh but it seems to be necessary to keep the dyadic exchange moving on. Finally, although there is a language barrier, the *boke-tsukkomi* comedy can be translated into English and also invite laughter from an English speaking audience. In terms of the seven *tsukkomi* types, at least correction type is illustrated to be able to draw laughter in English (see Ex. 14). The other six types: negation, echo, silence, derivation, metaphor and negative reflection are yet to be examined in further research. It should be also interesting to take samples of the *tsukkomi* reactions to the *boke's* jokes across cultures and nations to find the similarities and differences. This is a fruitful topic for future research to discover cultural differences that appear in language-based humour.

Transcription symbols

LAUGH   capital letters indicate increased volume

(laugh)   the position of (laugh) is linked with the Romanised Japanese transcript within the same turn

[ ]   brackets indicate overlapping utterances

/ /   the utterance within the two slashes indicates uncertainty in hearing

( )   the round brackets contain actions

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Notes on Contributors

Rikki Campbell

Rikki Campbell holds a Master of Applied Japanese Linguistics from Monash University, Melbourne. Currently, she is a Doctoral candidate and is continuing to explore the relationship between study abroad and Japanese learners' social networks at Monash, where she also teaches part-time in the Japanese program.

Iori Hamada

Iori Hamada came to Australia in 2006 as a recipient of the 2006 Endeavour Japan Awards scholarship. She holds a Master of Communication at RMIT. She is currently completing her doctoral thesis on Japanese culinary products and practices in Australia from cross-cultural perspectives.

Machiko Ishikawa

Machiko Ishikawa is undertaking doctoral studies at the University of Tasmania supported by an Australian Postgraduate Award. A literary study major, Machiko is currently investigating the writing of Burakumin novelist, Nakagami Kenji, using a framework of post-colonial theory and subaltern studies. Machiko recently contributed a reflective essay (in print) to the journal, *Go-oh*, published by the Kumano University collective, a group of scholars committed to researching Nakagami's work. Machiko has worked as a research assistant in the UTAS School of Asian Languages and Studies.

Mats Karlsson

Mats Karlsson lectures in Japanese Studies at the University of Sydney. He researches and teaches on modern Japanese literature and cinema, as well as on social problems in contemporary Japan. He is currently working on a monograph manuscript dealing with material aspects and practical outcomes of the Proletarian cultural movement in Japan around 1930. Recent publications include "Kurahara Korehito's Road to Proletarian Realism", *Nichibunken Japan Review* 20 (2008) and "United Front from Below: The Proletarian Cultural Movement's Last Stand, 1931–34", *Journal of Japanese Studies* 37:1, Winter (2011).

April Sprague

April Sprague graduated Honours First Class in Japanese Studies from the University of Sydney in 2010 having completed a thesis on the topic of male sexuality and female power in Heian literature. She is currently employed by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Embassy of Japan in Canberra.

Hideo Tsutsumi

Hideo Tsutsumi holds a BA in English from Ibaraki Christian University. He was awarded an MA in Applied Linguistics from The University of New South Wales in 2010.

Emily Wakeling

Emily Wakeling recently completed a Master of Philosophy in Art History at the University of Queensland after earning her undergraduate degree, a Bachelor of Creative Industries, from Queensland University of Technology. Emily is continuing her research interest in contemporary Japanese art in Tokyo through the Monbukagakusho Research Scholarship. She regularly writes about exhibitions in Tokyo, focusing on photography, women artists, Asian art and new media.

Maki Yoshida

Maki Yoshida holds a Master of Applied Japanese Linguistics from Monash University. She has previously participated in the LOTE Teacher Assistant Program administrated by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Victoria and now teaches in the Japanese Program at Monash University.

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