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ABSTRACT

The form of Japanese children's personal narratives is distinctly different from that of English-speaking children. Despite follow-up questions that encouraged them to talk about one personal narrative at length, Japanese children spoke succinctly about collections of experiences rather than elaborating on any one experience. Conversations between mothers in the two cultures were examined in order to account for the way in which cultural narrative style is transmitted to children. Comparison of mothers yielded the following contrasts: (1) Japanese-speaking mothers requested less description from their children than English-speaking mothers; (2) Japanese mothers gave less evaluation and showed more attention than English-speaking mothers; (3) Japanese mothers paid attention more frequently to boys than girls; and (4) at 5 years of age, Japanese children produce 1.22 utterances per turn on average, while English-speaking children produce 2.0 utterances per turn. It is suggested that the production of short narratives in Japan is understood and valued differently from such production in North America. (Author/AB)

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Social Interaction and Discourse Style:

Culture-Specific Parental Styles of Interviewing and Children's Narrative Structure

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Running Head: SOCIAL INTERACTION AND DISCOURSE STYLE

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Abstract

The form of Japanese children's personal narratives is distinctly different from that of English-speaking children. Despite follow-up questions that encouraged them to talk about one personal narrative at length, Japanese children spoke succinctly about collections of experiences rather than elaborating on any one experience in particular (Minami & McCabe, 1991). Conversations between mothers and children in the two cultures were examined in order partly to account for the way in which cultural narrative style is transmitted to children. Comparison of mothers from the two cultures yielded the following salient contrasts: (1) In comparison to the English-speaking mothers, the Japanese mothers requested proportionately less description from their children. (2) Both in terms of frequency and proportion, the Japanese mothers gave less evaluation and showed more attention than English-speaking mothers. (3) Japanese mothers pay attention more frequently to boys than to girls. (4) At five years, Japanese children produce 1.22 utterances per turn on average, while English-speaking children produce 2.00 utterances per turn, a significant difference. Thus, by frequently showing verbal attention to their children's narrative contributions, Japanese mothers not only support their children's talk about the past but also make sure that it begins to take the shape of narration valued in their culture. The production of short narratives in Japan is understood and valued differently from such production in North America.

Social Interaction and Discourse Style:

Culture-specific Parental Styles of Interviewing and Children's Narrative Structure

Children from different cultures develop differently according to the models that the adults around them endorse. In divergent cultural settings, we can observe dissimilarities in parental expectations and their resultant differing communicative styles (e.g., Heath, 1983). For the purpose of conceptualizing such cross-cultural differences, parent-child interactions, especially their narrative discourse interactions, provide good examples.

To begin with, conversation between parents, particularly mothers, and their young children forms the context in which narrative discourse abilities emerge. Previous studies (e.g., Snow & Goldfield, 1981) present ways in which, through interactions with adults, young children learn what questions to ask and what responses to provide. Thus, language acquisition, particularly the foundation of communicative competence (Hymes, 1974), can be best explained with reference to mother-child interactions.

Furthermore, through conversational interactions, parents transmit culture-specific representational forms and rules, especially culturally nurtured canonical narrative discourse forms, to their young children. Following a social interactionist hypothesis (Bruner, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978), people, in interacting with each other, shape culturally canonical forms of narrative, narrative thinking, and interpretations. When the social interactionist paradigm is applied to the study of narrative, the caregiver, particularly the mother, is considered the primary agent who provides a framework for the child to learn a particular narrative discourse style.

Cross-cultural comparison of narrative productions has been addressed in previous studies. One example is from Michaels's (1981, 1991) observation of "sharing time" classes (an oral language activity in early elementary classrooms) in which she distinguishes the ways that African American and European American children describe

past events in their narratives. Further examining the same data as Michaels used, Gee (1985, 1986, 1989, 1991b) illustrates differences in narrative between an African American girl and a European American girl. Gee categorizes the former as an oral-strategy (or poetic) narrative and the latter as a literate-strategy (or prosaic) narrative. Thus, current research is moving in the direction of examining culture-specific narrative discourse productions.

Despite the big interest in emerging narrative competence, we lack much information on how culture-specific forms of narrative discourse are transmitted to young children. First of all, much cross-cultural research addresses cultural differences in the United States. Furthermore, data from languages other than English are very limited. We know next to nothing about how these different styles are acquired in other countries and other languages. Thus, past research on this topic has substantial shortcomings.

Purpose of the Present Study

The general purpose of the present study is to describe several aspects of narratives told by Japanese mothers and their young children. In this paper we explore briefly (1) how young Japanese children tell their stories and (2) how Japanese mothers guide their children in the acquisition of culture-specific styles of narrative discourse. Examining Japanese children's personal narratives in the context of mother-child interactions thus offers important insights into the cultural basis for language/discourse acquisition.

In light of this paradigm, furthermore, comparing Japanese mothers and English-speaking mothers is interesting in many respects. We do this by introducing <u>contrastive narrative discourse analysis</u>, which, we believe, clearly identifies discourse style differences between Japanese mother-child pairs and English-speaking mother-child pairs.

Age Considerations

For the purpose of this study, we selected young preschool children aged five. The reason that we focused on five-year-olds is due to age constraints that emerge from analysis of the development of children's narratives. Children begin to talk about the past at about 26 months (Sachs, 1979), but these early productions are quite short in any culture through the age of three and a half years (McCabe & Peterson, 1991). Three-year-olds' narratives are often simple two-event narratives, while four-year-olds' narratives are much more diverse and five-year-olds tell lengthy, well-sequenced stories that end a little prematurely at the climax (McCabe & Peterson, 1990; Peterson & McCabe, 1983). In other words, preschool is the period of extremely rapid development in the child's acquisition of narrative.

Methods

Subjects

Conversations between 8 five-year-old middle-class Japanese children (4 boys and 4 girls, M = 5;3 years) and 8 five-year-old English speaking, middle-class Canadian children (4 boys and 4 girls, M = 5;3 years) and their mothers were analyzed to study culturally preferred narrative discourse patterns. Mothers who participated in this project were supplied with tape recorders and blank cassette tapes and asked to elicit interesting past events and experiences from their children. That is, following the method McCabe and Peterson (1990) used in their studies, mothers were expected to ask their children to relate "stories about personal experiences that have happened in the past" (p. 5). While talk about past experiences was woven in with talk about the present and other non-narrative talk, we focused on talk about past experiences. Further, some mother-child pairs talked about more events than others. To establish a comparable data base, however, we decided to analyze only the initial three narrative productions by each mother-child pair.

Synthesis of two types of analyses

From diverse methods for analyzing narrative structure (see McCabe & Peterson, 1991, and Peterson & McCabe, 1983, for review), we synthesized two different types of analyses: One is verse analysis (Gee, 1985; Hymes, 1981), which has been applied successfully to narratives from various cultures, and the other is high point analysis based on the Labovian approach (Labov, 1972).

Verse analysis in Japanese

Verse analysis was developed by Hymes (1981, 1982, 1985, 1990) and extended by Gee (1985, 1986, 1989, 1991a, 1991b). Specifically, we define the most subordinate unit of the narrative as lines, which correspond to "idea units" defined by Chafe (1980). Lines are thematically grouped into verses, verses into stanzas, and stanzas into parts. When we apply verse analysis to a Japanese narrative, which was told by Kotaro (a boy aged 5;9), we obtained the following organization. Note that the numbers to the right refer to the order of lines (the minimum unit) produced.

Example 1: Kotaro and his mother's interaction

CHI:	ano **ne**	1
	bed mitai na yatu ni **ne**	2
	(MOT: **un**)	
CHI:	soko de **ne**	3
	nan ka hanas i tari s i te **ne**	4
	(MOT: **un**)	
CHI:	ason dari s u ru no.	5
MOT:	nani s i te asob u no?	
CHI:	ano **sa**	6
	card **ne**	7
	tranpu s i ta ri.	8
MOT:	huun.	

Translation:

CHI:	Um, you know,	1
	on something like a bed, you know,	2
	(MOT: uh huh)	
CHI:	there (on the bed), you know,	3
	(we) talked and, you know,	4
	(MOT: uh huh)	
CHI:	(we) play(ed).	5
MOT:	What do (you) play?	
CHI:	Um, you know	6
	cards, you know	7
	(I) play cards.	8
MOT:	Well.	

Final particles **ne/sa** (you know) and back-channel utterances **un** (uh huh)

The role of final particles

As can be seen above, the mother and the child are in the middle of discourse about what he did in kindergarten that day. Notice that spoken Japanese is produced in smaller units (lines 1-8) than traditional grammatical constructs, such as a sentence or a clause. Segmented by sentence- or clause-final particles as well as intrasentential ones (such as bed mitai na yatu ni **ne** (on something like a bed, you know) and soko de **ne** (there, you know)), these smaller parts serve as units in Japanese oral discourse. In other words, Japanese children constantly use ne or sa at the boundary of a discourse construct, such as a sentence or a phrase boundary.

The role of back-channel utterances

When we closely examine the social interaction between mothers and children, however, we realize that the use of final particles is only half of the story. In this

example, ne and sa in Japanese oral discourse serve as attention-getting devices similar to "you know" in English. By uttering ne or sa, the speaker often waits for the hearer's brief vocalization of acknowledgment like un ("uh huh"). As Example 1 illustrates, the mother uses back-channels to construct mutually shared frameworks. In other words, the hearer's back-channels effectively signal that she shares the ground on which the speaker--the child in this case--is standing (Maynard, 1989).

Overall, therefore, this example shows a narrator's uses of these Japanese attention-getting devices ne and sa ("you know") in conjunction with displays of attention from listeners, un ("uh huh"). In other words, this example illustrates how co-construction takes place; the Japanese mother in this example speaks few words and few utterances per turn and, instead, often simply shows attention, which, in fact, serves to divide her child's utterances into small units.

High point analysis in Japanese

Following the Labovian tradition (Labov, 1972; Labov, Cohen, Robins, & Lewis, 1968; Labov & Waletzky, 1967), we further scored the content of lines in verses. In this high point analysis (Peterson & McCabe, 1983) some clauses play the role of "orientation," which is considered to set the stage for the narrated events, whereas others are considered to perform the role of "evaluation" or "act." To analyze the present data we use another category, "outcome," which represents the result(s) of specific actions, whether evaluatively (e.g., "dakara kowa-ka-tta-n-da yo.": "That's why [I] was scared.") or in terms of physical consequences (e.g., "yok-u nar-ta n da yo.": "[I] got all right.") or both (e.g., "hone or-ta n da.": "[I] got a broken bone."). Note that about 20% of the verses in the Japanese children's narratives in our previous study (Minami & McCabe, 1991) consisted of an orientation, an action, and an outcome.

As a cautionary note, without any specific actions, by definition there could be no outcome; that is, while an act can stand by itself, an outcome cannot. The following example, which was told by Hiroshi (a boy aged 5;7), exemplifies the relationship

between an act and an outcome; that is, when he was playing on a slide, his pants were wearing thin, and finally he had a hole in them. In this example, in addition to lines that are indicated by the numbers to the right, small letters (a-c) in parentheses indicate the beginning of each verse.

Example 2: Hiroshi and his mother's interaction

CHI:	(a) **Orientation**	
	suberi dai s u ru to	1
	(b) **Act**	
	yoku petipetipeti to denki ga ippai kono heni k u ru kara **ne**.	2
	(MOT: **un**)	
CHI:	(c) **Outcome**	
	un to **ne**	3
	ko: yu: hu: ni ana ga ai ta no.	4
	s i tya tte **ne**	5
	konna ana ga.	6
MOT:	ah so: ka.	
	ura gaesi ni ki tok e ba yo k a tta **ne**	
	mae to usiro hantai ni.	

Translation:

CHI:	(a) **Orientation**	
	When (I) play on a slide	1
	(b) **Act**	
	there often comes a lot of electricity cracking cracking cracking, you know.	2
	(MOT: uh huh)	
CHI:	(c) **Outcome**	

	Um, you know	3
	like this (I) had a hole.	4
	(I) did, you know,	5
	(have) a hole like this.	6
MOT:	Uh, I see.	
	(You) should have put on (your) pants inside out, you know,	
	with the front side back.	

Verses (a-c) produced by the child conform to the pattern of an orientation followed by an act and then an outcome. As can be seen above, the mother uses a back-channel, responding to the child's use of the attention-getting device ne. At the end of the story, then, the mother evaluates what the child has narrated ("(You) should have put on (your) pants inside out, you know, with the front side back").

Two types of **huun**, topic-extension and topic-ending, then topic-switch

Extending a topic of conversation requires interest on the part of both partners. When a child talks about a particular incident, if the mother says, "Well, and then what did you do?" the mother's use of "well" indicates that she wants the child to extend the topic. If the mother says to the child, on the other hand, "Well (huun), what else did you do in kindergarten today?" the use of "well" more likely signals that the mother wants to switch topics. Recall that at the end of Example 1, the mother may still be interested in the topic of what the child did in kindergarten and go on to request more information about the same topic. At the same time, however, since huun ("well") indicates a speaker shift, she may try to terminate the current topic and introduce a new one.

In adult discourse, huun has been noted as serving a prefacing function (Maynard, 1989; Yamada, 1992), not a topic-switching one per se. As Example 3 below illustrates, however, our study shows the above-explained two opposing uses of huun ("well") as a

means of ending/switching or extending the conversation. That the same term is used in two opposing ways endows it with an ambiguity that softens its use as a way of essentially cutting off a child's conversation. This example is from Yumiko (a girl aged 5;6) and her mother. In this example, Yumiko talks about her experience when she and her father got a ride in a scary vehicle in an amusement park.

Example 3: Yumiko and her mother's interaction

CHI:	(a) **Act**	
	watasi ga **ne**	1
	papa wa **ne**	2
	"gya:!" tte i tte ta yo.	3
MOT:	do: site?	
CHI:	(b) **Evaluation**	
	kowa i kara.	4
MOT:	kowa i tte?	
	papa wa kowagar i na no?	
	huun. **[topic-extension]**	
	Yumiko wa heiki da tta?	
CHI:	omosiro i.	
MOT:	omosiro k a tta?	
CHI:	un.	
MOT:	**huun**. **[topic-ending and then topic-switch]**	
	zu: tto mae.	
	zu: tto mae zya na i wa.	
	ehtto itu da kke u:n.	
	hora zu:tto mae ni.	

Translation:

CHI:	(a) **Act**	
	I, you know,	1
	my dad was, you know,	2
	saying "Aaaaaaagh!"	3
MOT:	Why?	
CHI:	(b) **Evaluation**	
	Because (that was) scary.	4
MOT:	Scary?	
	Is your dad a wimp?	
	Well. [topic-extension]	
	Did you remain calm?	
CHI:	(That was) fun.	
MOT:	Was (that) fun?	
CHI:	Yeah.	
MOT:	**Well. [topic-ending and then topic-switch]**	
	A long time ago.	
	(It) is not a long time ago.	
	Um, (I) wonder when that was.	
	Yeah, a long time ago.	

Contrastive Narrative Discourse Analysis

The main focus of this study is on the emergence of a culture-specific narrative discourse style in Japanese children. To complement this work and support generalization about the culture-specific nature of both caregivers' practices and children's emerging narrative discourse structure, we now turn to the comparison of the results of a Japanese sample with the results of a similar study of North American parent-

child interactions (McCabe & Peterson, 1991; Peterson & McCabe, 1992). Consider, for example, the following dialogue between a Canadian girl, Leah (a girl aged 5;0), and her mother. Unlike the Japanese five-year-olds' narratives presented above, Leah expands upon a topic of conversation; she talks on and on and on. Moreover, unlike Yumiko's mother in Example 3, Leah's mother allows her to do so.

Example 4: Leah and her mother's interaction

CHI:	I knows a little girl,		
		(MOT:	yeah)
CHI:	and she was bad to her mother,		
		(MOT:	oh, yes)
CHI:	so one day she ran off to her friend's house,		
	when her mother told her not to,		
		(MOT:	yes)
CHI:	so her mother could not find her,		
	so she called the police,		
		(MOT:	yes)
CHI:	and the police went,		
	and tried to find the little girl,		
	so the police found her,		
	and put her in jail.		
	and the mother said don't do that.		
	so when (the girl) came back.		
	she went to jail,		
	and took the little girl away,		
	and she put her in her room,		
MOT:	Right.		

And then what happened?

CHI: She said to her mommy, "I don't like you anymore."

Coding

Audiotapes were transcribed verbatim for coding in the format required for analysis using the Child Language Data Exchange System (MacWhinney & Snow, 1985, 1990). Speech was broken into utterances, and transcripts of all parents' speech were scored according to Dickinson's (1991) system (Figure 1):

Insert Figure 1 about here.

Topic-Initiation (Switching)

1. Open-ended questions initiating new topics (e.g., "kyo: yo:tien de nani s i-ta no?": "What did (you) do in kindergarten today?").
2. Closed-ended questions initiating a new topic (e.g., "su:zi awase yar-ta?": "Did (you) play matching numbers?").
3. Statements initiating a topic (e.g., "kono mae Disneyland e i-tta de syo.": "The other day we went to Disneyland, right?").

Topic-Extension

4. Open-ended questions extending topics (e.g., "nani ga iti-ban suk-i da-tta?": "What did (you) like best?").
5. Closed-ended questions extending topics (e.g., "tanosi-k-a-tta?": "Did (you) enjoy (it)?").
6. Statements extending a topic (e.g., "nan ka i-tte-ta de syo.": "(You) were saying something, right?").
7. Clarifying questions (e.g., "nani?": "What?").

8. Clarifying questions that were partial echoes (e.g., "dare ga tyu: s-i-te kure-ta n?": "Who gave (you) smacks?" after the child said, "tyu: tyu: tyu tte yar-te.": "Smack smack smacked (me)").
9. Echoes (e.g., "tabe-ta no.": "(You) ate, didn't (you)" after the child had said, "tabe-ta.": "(I) ate").

Other Conversational Strategies

10. Statements showing attention (e.g., "un.": "Yeah.").

Topic extension was further categorized into:

A. Descriptive statements (e.g., "denki ga tui-te-ta ne.": "There was an electric light, you know.").
B. Statements about actions (e.g., "banana mo tabe-ta n.": "(You) also ate a banana, didn't (you)?").
C. Mother's evaluative comments (e.g., "Aki tyan tisa-k-a-tta mon ne.": "Because (you) were small, Aki, you know.")
D. Mother's request for child's evaluative comments (e.g., "u-tyan no doko ga kawai-i no?": "What (do you think) makes the bunny cute?")

Reliability

All transcripts were coded by an individual who is bilingual in Japanese and English. Two full transcripts of Japanese and two full transcripts of English were independently coded by individuals fluent in each of those languages respectively. Cohen's kappa for the first level (topic-initiation, topic-extension, and statements showing attention) of the Japanese coding was 0.98; Cohen's kappa for the second level (descriptive statements, statements about actions, mother's evaluative comments, and mother's request for child's evaluative comments) was 0.83. Likewise, Cohen's kappa for the first level of the English coding was 1.00; and Cohen's kappa for the second level was

0.90. Thus, all the reliabilities represent almost perfect agreement (Bakeman & Gottman, 1986).

Results

First, we analyzed frequencies, which represent the impact that greater talkativeness might have on children's narration (e.g., McCabe & Peterson 1991; Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1992). In addition, we used proportions because they correct for differences in length and allow us to see differing relative emphases on components of narration. To test for the effect of group and gender, multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were conducted for the major coding categories: maternal requests for descriptions, actions, and evaluations and maternal evaluations, statements showing attention, and initiation.

With regard to frequencies, there was a significant multivariate effect of group, Wilks' lambda = 0.10, approximate F (6, 7) = 10.03, $p < 0.01$. This effect was largely attributable to significant univariate effects on evaluations by mother herself and mother's statements showing attention.

In terms of proportions, there was a significant multivariate effect of group, Wilks' lambda = 0.10, approximate F (5, 8) = 14.24, $p < 0.001$, and a marginal interaction effect of group and gender, Wilks' lambda = 0.34, approximate F (5, 8) = 3.05, $p < 0.08$. The effect of group was largely attributable to significant univariate effects on maternal requests for descriptions, maternal evaluations, and statements showing attention. The interaction effect of group and gender was attributable to a significant univariate effect on maternal statements showing attention, F (1, 12) = 9.79, $p < 0.01$.

As can be seen in Table 1, in comparison to the English-speaking mothers, the Japanese mothers requested proportionately less description from their children. Furthermore, both in terms of frequency and proportion, the Japanese mothers gave less evaluation and showed more attention than did English-speaking mothers.

Insert Table 1 about here.

The Japanese mothers verbally acknowledged their children's talk more frequently than did the English-speaking mothers. Japanese and English-speaking mothers of boys (M = 21.96, SD = 16.38) verbally acknowledged their sons' talk more frequently than did mothers of daughters (M = 12.86, SD = 8.95). This interaction effect shows that the effect of "group" differs by "gender." As can be seen in Figure 2, the difference in the mean percentage between the Japanese mothers who have sons (M = 36.82, SD = 3.15) and the Japanese mothers who have daughters (M = 18.21, SD = 8.68) is very pronounced, compared to the difference between the English-speaking mothers of sons (M = 7.10, SD = 5.23) and the English-speaking mothers of daughters (M = 7.51, SD = 5.93). Therefore, while the Japanese mothers, in general, verbally acknowledged their children more than did the English-speaking mothers, Japanese mothers of sons made proportionately even more verbal acknowledgments than did Japanese mothers of daughters.

Insert Figure 2 about here.

Length of turns

In addition to the frequencies of the coded behaviors, "utterances over turns" (i.e., the number of utterances produced by a speaker per turn) was examined. In order to resolve issues of equivalence between the two languages, the propositional unit was used for this analysis. For example, arui te arui te ("(I) walked and walked") is simple repetition/emphasis of one particular action and thus one proposition, while te de torte ake ta ("(I) grabbed it by hand and opened it") consists of two separate actions and is thus

considered two propositions. By doing so, the same phenomena observed in two different speech communities were equated.

Japanese mothers kept their children from talking at length by means of showing attention so frequently. At 5 years, Japanese children are producing roughly 1.22 utterances on the average ($SD = 0.102$), while English-speaking children are producing 2.00 utterances per turn on the average ($SD = 0.85$), $F(1, 12) = 6.11$, $p < 0.05$ (Figure 3). Furthermore, while 44% of the Japanese children's multiple-utterance-turns exceed three utterances, 62% of the English-speaking children's utterances do.

Insert Figure 3 about here.

Discussion

Our study has demonstrated that narrative discourse style reflects culture-specific expectations about social interaction. That is, the Japanese narrative discourse is, through the attention-getting device and back-channeling, co-constructed by the child and the mother. From early childhood on, Japanese children learn these kinds of culturally valued narrative discourse skills through interactions with their mothers. We further assume that this mutual exchange contributes to the harmonious mutual relationship/understanding that is highly valued in Japanese society (Azuma, 1986; Clancy, 1986; Doi, 1971; Lebra, 1976; Shigaki, 1987). In other words, this co-construction of narrative discourse is shaped through the process of early empathy training (Clancy, 1986), which makes children sensitive to arousal in other people, facilitates the recognition of social cues, and motivates those children to understand cognitively the psychological condition of others. Thus, as primary agents of their culture, Japanese mothers induct their children into a culture-specific communicative style.

Naturally, diverse patterns emerged among the "typical" Japanese mothers; one mother tended to evaluate what the child narrated, and another tended to switch topics more frequently than other Japanese mothers. In spite of such differences, however, we have identified cultural similarities. For example, it has long been claimed that without listeners' proper back-channeling, the storyteller would not be able to tell folktales rhythmically (Uchida, 1986). Japanese mothers' interaction style supports this claim. Using frequent back-channels, Japanese mothers construct mutually shared frameworks of the narrative with their children. As we have previously stated, this mutual exchange is particularly important in Japanese society in which people tend to highly value rapport and empathy.

Interestingly, we have also found that Japanese mothers of sons tend to make more attentive responses than do Japanese mothers of daughters. In Japanese society, verbosity is viewed negatively, as exemplified by proverbs such as "The mouth is the source of misfortune." Moreover, as old sayings such as "Talkative males are embarrassing" go, this is particularly true for males. The results obtained in our study support this Japanese societal norm. That is, so far as the data we analyzed are concerned, Japanese boys' reticence seems to provoke their mothers to respond more, or mothers of sons are especially concerned that they not talk on and on in a culturally inappropriate way.

Finally, we have found that Japanese mothers occasionally try to prune further discussion of any one topic. Thus, Japanese children develop the capacity to talk at length about a topic at the same time that they develop the habit of not doing so on most occasions.

To conclude, English-speaking mothers allow their children to take long monologic turns, and even encourage this by asking their children many descriptive questions. In contrast, Japanese mothers simultaneously pay considerable attention to their children's narratives and contribute to a tendency to facilitate frequent turn

exchanges. The production of short narratives in Japan is understood and valued differently from such production in North America.

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Table 1. Mean frequencies and percentages (Standard Deviations) of mothers' prompts to children about past events

	Japanese Mothers M	(SD)	English-speaking Mothers M	(SD)	F[a] values for main effect of GROUP
Requests for descriptions					
Frequencies	19.88	(14.36)	33.38	(28.90)	1.28
Percentages	29.88%	(4.07)	37.27%	(8.23)	4.66*
Requests for actions					
Frequencies	15.13	(11.44)	20.00	(15.39)	0.48
Percentages	22.52%	(9.64)	23.09%	(11.00)	0.01
Requests for evaluations					
Frequencies	4.13	(4.55)	8.25	(9.29)	1.17
Percentages	7.64%	(9.99)	7.28%	(5.84)	0.01
Evaluations by mother herself					
Frequencies	4.75	(4.50)	19.63	(17.44)	5.29*
Percentages	7.08%	(4.71)	21.55%	(9.31)	14.40**
Statements showing attention					
Frequencies	16.75	(8.89)	6.63	(6.84)	5.81*
Percentages	27.51%	(11.64)	7.31%	(5.18)	44.18***
Initiation					
Frequencies	2.75	(0.71)	2.25	(1.04)	1.20
Percentages	5.38%	(2.21)	3.50%	(3.07)	1.86

*$p < 0.05$
**$p < 0.01$
***$p < 0.0001$

[a] Degrees of freedom = 1, 12

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Coding System.

ERIC

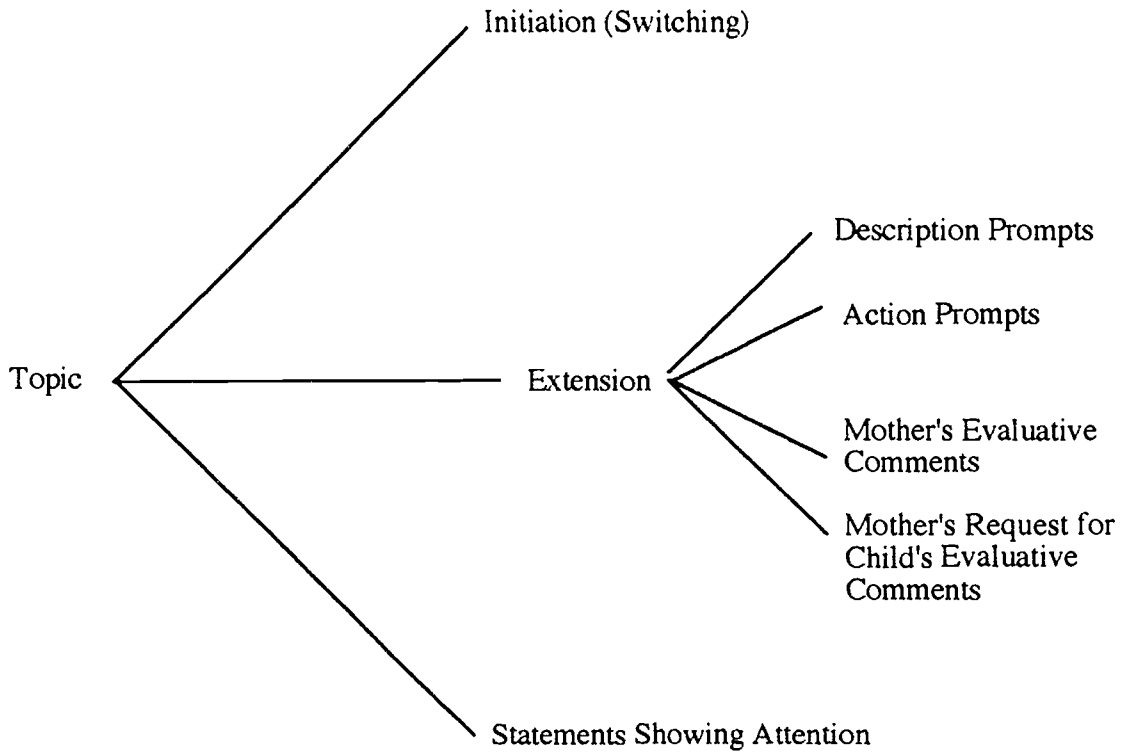

Initiation (Switching)
Topic
Extension
Description Prompts
Action Prompts
Mother's Evaluative Comments
Mother's Request for Child's Evaluative Comments
Statements Showing Attention

Figure 2. Maternal Statements Showing Attention by Group and Child's Gender (Percentage)

ERIC

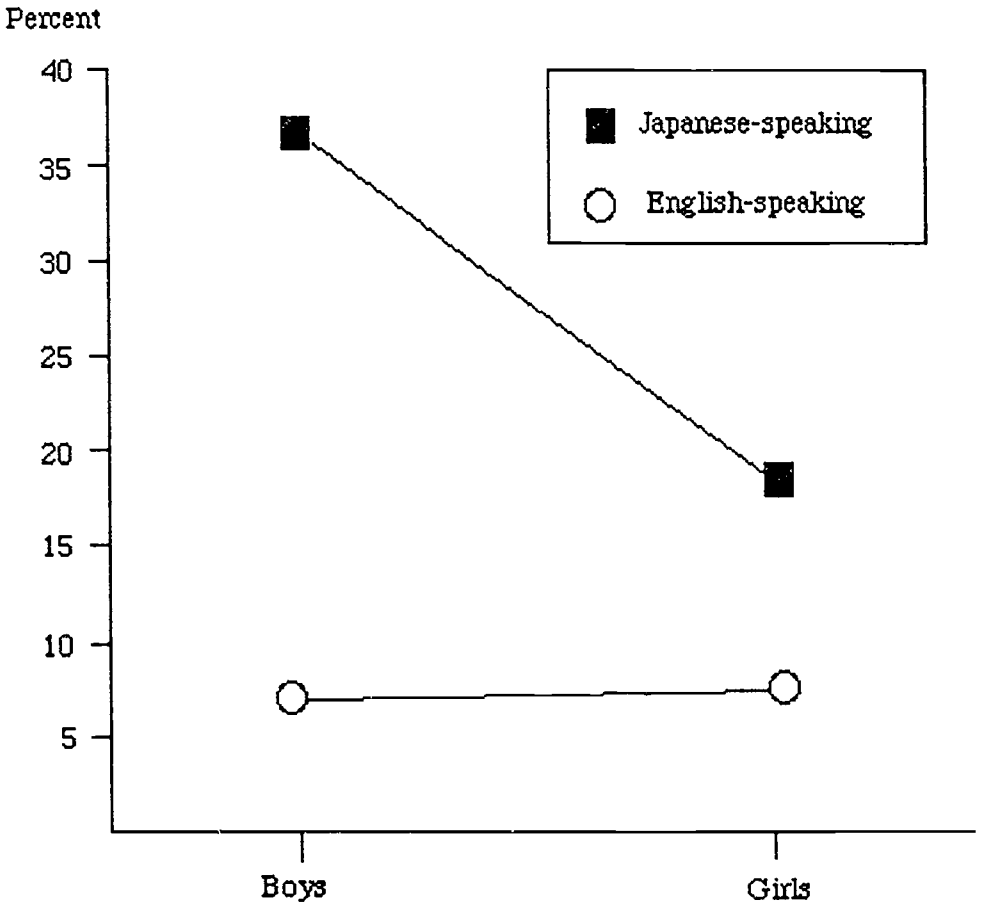
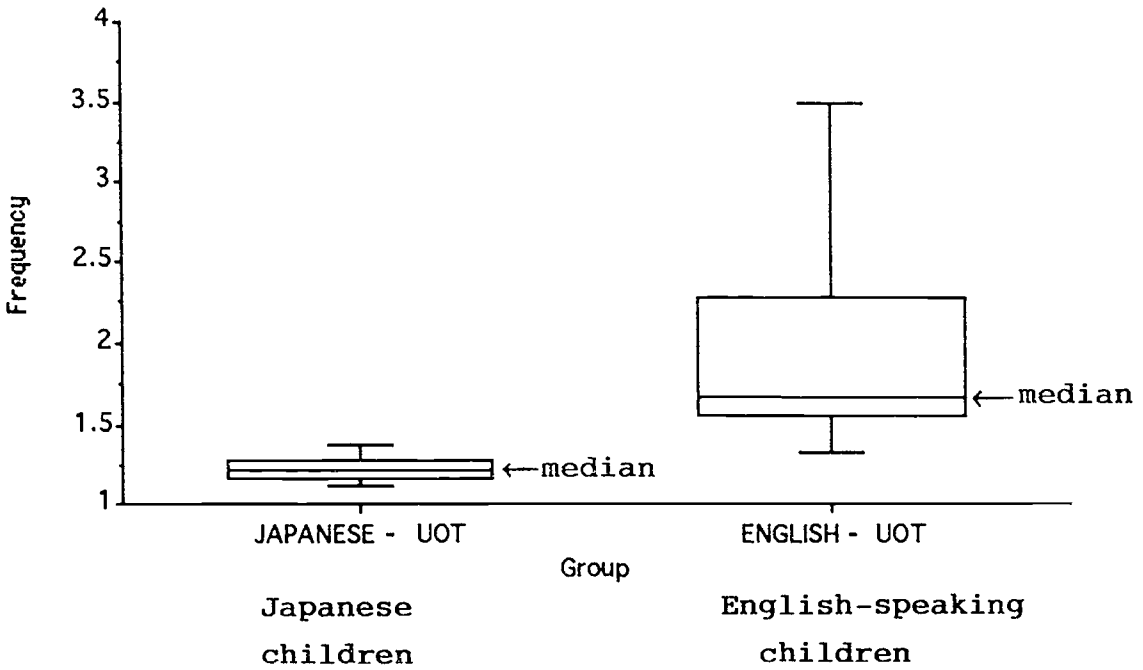

Percent
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
Japanese-speaking
English-speaking
Boys
Girls

Figure 3. Child's Ratio of Utterances over Turns

ERIC


4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
Frequency
median
median
JAPANESE - UOT
ENGLISH - UOT
Group
Japanese children
English-speaking children