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Language socialization in Japanese elementary schools: Attentive listening and reaction turns☆

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Abstract

As opposed to the Western ideal of the speaker's responsibility for clarity of speech, the Japanese concept of successful interaction mainly rests on the responsibility of the listener (Clancy, 1986). This implies that for Japanese, the skill of attentive listening is a significant part of communicative competence. This paper investigates how Japanese children acquire this skill in classroom interaction from the perspective of language socialization (e.g., Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986a, 1986b; Ochs, 1988), which assumes that children acquire language and culture through interactional routines. The data demonstrate that teacher–student interaction in Japanese classrooms differs significantly from that of the traditional American classrooms (e.g., Mehan, 1979) in terms of 'participant structure', the teacher's role, and the source of knowledge. The paper argues that because this Japanese specific classroom interactional pattern requires students to learn to a great degree from peer students and relate their opinions to their peers, it serves as a major socialization resource for Japanese children in acquiring the skill of attentive listening.

1. Introduction: Language socialization

Whether the locus of children's cognitive and social development is individual or societal has been the central theoretical issue in the studies of child development. On

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the one hand, the Piagetian research emphasizes the individual's cognitive development. The child develops egocentric speech first, and later speech appears on the social plane. In this view, the unit of research is the child (the individual), and little consideration is given to societal influence on the child. On the other hand, in more recent years, the paradigm has shifted to the 'sociohistorical' theory formulated by Russian psychologists such as Vygotsky, 1978 [1962]), Leont'ev (1981) and Luria (1976), and promoted by American scholars who take this theoretical perspective (e.g., Cole, 1985; Rogoff, 1990; Wertsch, 1985). The sociohistorical theory, which assigns importance to society in the child's development, views the child's cognitive and social development as an outcome of a joint social activity in which the child actively participates with the guidance of his/her caregiver(s). It further proposes that the child's cognitive development occurs first on the social plane (i.e. in joint social activities) and later will be internalized. Thus, in this theory, cultural values, which are created and manifested in social interactions, are acquired hand-in-hand with cognitive development. In other words, children's cognitive development is embedded in the acquisition of cultural values. In this connection, Rogoff states (1990: 12): "Societal practices that support children's development are tied to the values and skills considered important".

Closely related to this theoretical position is the language socialization research which has grown out of the tradition of the ethnography of communication (e.g., Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986a,b; Ochs 1984, 1988; Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1986a,b). Since language is a focal feature in most social interactions (Hymes, 1972), the role of language in a child's cognitive and social development is of great importance. Thus, the language socialization research proposes that children acquire sociocultural knowledge by participating in language-mediated daily activities and interactions. Since daily routines are the basic social interactions children engage in, they are considered the primary locus in which important sociocultural values are transmitted to children.

The transmission of sociocultural values to children occurs both explicitly and implicitly (Ochs, 1984, 1988; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986a). Explicit socialization takes place when caregivers clearly teach social norms shared by members of society. In Schieffelin and Ochs' terms, this is 'socialization *to* use language'. Implicit socialization is a process in which children learn to be competent members of society by taking part in daily routines. This is a case of socialization *through* the use of language. For example, by participating in a particular participation structure or by using a particular word or phrase in daily routines, children come to understand their own social role and the expected cultural norm associated with that role.

One of the important social contexts in which language socialization takes place is classroom interaction. The way in which language is used by the teacher and students in the classroom has a great impact on children's aquisition of the social and cognitive skills that are considered important in society (e.g., Mehan, 1979, 1985; Michaels, 1981; Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). The present paper examines the participation structure of Japanese elementary school classroom interaction. As far as I know, to date, except for Anderson's study (1995), there has been no previous research that investigates the participation structure in Japanese classroom interac-

tions from the language socialization perspective. Building upon Anderson's (1995) findings that in Japanese elementary school classrooms the normative participation structure is multiparty rather than dyadic, this paper proposes that such a participation structure helps socialize Japanese children to the culturally important skill of attentive listening, and it further suggests that this participation structure contributes to shaping children to be other-oriented, that is, to speak in relation to others.

Since explicit socialization always reflects important cultural values in society, this paper first looks at examples of this type of socialization in the Japanese home and school. These examples demonstrate that attentive listening is an important cultural value in Japanese society (i.e. explicit socialization). The paper then discusses the implicit socialization which occurs when children participate in classroom interactions (sections 3, 4 and 5).

The data for the present study come from fifteen hours of audio-taped classroom interactions of five classes in four schools in the Tokyo area, which are attended by children from middle-class families. Two of the classes are third grade classes and three are fourth. There are three male and two female teachers, whose ages range from the late twenties to approximately mid forties. All classes are coeducational and each of them consists of about 40 children (approximately 20 boys and 20 girls).

2. Explicit socialization to listen attentively

Values important to society are expressed in explicit socialization practice. As I demonstrate in this section, listening attentively is one of these values. At the macro-level, several aspects of Japanese verbal behavior suggest that listening is considered an important communicative competence in Japanese society. For example, there is a proverb, *Kenja wa kyuu kiite ichi shaberu*, 'a wise man listens nine and speaks one', which emphasizes the listening role. The importance of listening also manifests itself in the appearance of *Kikite*, the 'listener role' in many TV news and interview programs (Lebra, 1993). At the micro-level, recent comparative studies of social interactions between Americans and Japanese have found that while Americans are more speaking-oriented, Japanese are more listening-oriented (Clancy, 1986; Hayashi, 1988; Hirokawa, 1995; Maynard, 1989; White, 1989; Yamada, 1992).[1] Clancy (1986), for example, mentions that compared with American interactions, in which the speaker is responsible for the clarity of the message, in Japanese interactions the responsibility to figure out unclear points in the speaker's utterance tends to lie with the listener.

[1] The observations made in these studies are tendencies. The point is that in Japanese society listening is given more importance than it is in American society. I am by no means suggesting that in American society listening is not important. In any society, listening is an important part of communication. Cicourel (1974) claims that in human interaction, even when the hearer does not understand what the speaker is saying, the hearer tends to continue to listen hoping that something said later will clarify what was said earlier. Cicourel refers to this phenomenon as a 'retrospective-prospective sense of occurrence'.

How do Japanese children acquire the communicative competence of listening? Apparently, both at home and school, explicit language socialization takes place in which children learn to pay attention and respond appropriately.[2] Clancy (1986), who studied the interaction between mothers and three young children (ages ranged from 1;11 to 2;5), reports that Japanese mothers consistently make sure that young children listen and respond when they are addressed. She states:

"In my data as well, the three children would sometimes become engrossed in their own actions and either would fail to notice attempts to engage them in conversation or would choose not to reply. Their mothers did not allow this to continue; they consistently focused the unresponding child's attention upon the person who was trying to interact and repeated the utterance that had been addressed to the child ... Such repetitions were a frequent part of the mother-child interactions in my sample, occurring in every transcript of each child." (1986: 220)

Example (1) is one of the illustrations which Clancy (1986) provides to show the Japanese mother's persistent effort to make her child pay attention to the addressee. Here the researcher is asking the child (age 2;1) to show her his toy but the child does not respond. The mother urges the child to pay attention to the speaker and respond.

(1) [from Clancy, 1986: 221]

Adult:	[looking at a character in a storybook]: *Kore wa dare desu ka?* 'Who is this?'
Child:	[No response]
Mother:	*Nani! Dame ja nai, kotaenai de. Dare desu ka to yuu n deshoo. Doo yuu no? Hai to. Hisakochan to doobutsuen.* 'What! Isn't that bad, not answering. She says, "Who is it?" What do you say? Say, "Yes. It's Hisako and the zoo".'

Clancy further mentions that this behavior of Japanese mothers is contrasted with that of American mothers, who are reported to often allow young children to ignore the speech of others when children presumably have no difficulty understanding what is being said to them (Weststone and Foster, 1982; Dore, 1978, cited in Clancy 1986: 220).

Training to make children pay attention to the speech of others continues in the elementary school classroom. Anderson (1995), whose study is a long-term ethno-

[2] Both Japanese and American caregivers tell children to listen. Working class white American caregivers tell children to listen when they talk to them about discipline and safety, whereas middle class white American caregivers tend to focus on others' feelings (Karen Watson-Gegeo, personal communication). Clancy (1986) reports that Japanese mothers make sure the child listens by repeating the utterance when the child does not respond. Futhermore, Japanese mothers interpret the psychological state of a third party who is present in the speech context, which helps the child pay close attention to unspoken words. Since studies which compare how much listening is taught in both societies are scarce, we can only speculate about which society emphasizes listening to a greater extent. What Clancy reports suggests that listening is more important than speaking in Japanese society and that listening is more important in Japanese society than it is in working-class and middle-class white American society.

graphic work based on 65 hours of observations of a Japanese class from the first grade to the end of the second, indicates that elementary school teachers are similar to mothers in that they often remind students to pay attention to their peers' talk in class. He reports that the teacher in his study often asked students in class whether they had been listening to their peers' presentations and that students also called out *kikoemasen*, 'I can't hear you', to their peer's presentation. In example (2), he illustrates that the teacher, Ms. Natsuaki, is more concerned about whether her students have been listening than about asking Yonekawa-san to repeat her statement.

(2) [Anderson, 1995: 113 example 4.3][3]
Students are answering a question in the workbook: 'What kinds of people might come to the park shown in the picture?'

Yonekawa:	(stands) shakai de hataraku hitotachi desu.[4]
	[People who work in society do.]
Teacher:	hai, takeda-kun, yonekawa-san ga itta koto ieru ka na.
	[Okay, Takeda-kun, I wonder if you could repeat what Yonekawa-san said ...]
Takeda:	(no response)
Teacher:	ushida-kun, yonekawa-san no koto kiite imashita ka?
	[Ushida-kun, were you listening to what Yonekawa-san said?]
Ushida:	kitte imashita.
	[I was listening.]
Teacher:	ozawa-kun, kiite imasu ka?
	[Ozawa-kun, are you listening?]
Ozawa:	kiite imasu.
	[I am listening.]
Teacher:	(returns to Yonekawa) yonekawa-san, jaa, moo ichido onegai shimasu.
	[Yonekawa-san, uh, once more please.]
Yonekawa:	(stands) shakai de hataraku hitotachi desu.
	[People who work in society do.]

Anderson states (1995: 113): "clearly then, listening was an important expectation made of students in Natsuaki-sensei's class".[5]

Explicit language socialization that promoted listening was observed in the five classes I visited as well. The teachers of these classes made sure that all the students in attendance listened to their peers' talk. Example (3) illustrates the teacher's

[3] Both *san* and *kun* are suffixes attached to a family name, a given name or a sequence of both. *San* is a polite suffix, and outside of the classroom context, it may refer to a male or female, married or unmarried. *Kun*, on the other hand, is used only in reference to one's peers or subordinates, and usually it refers to males. In the classroom context, all the girls are called by the last name and *san*, and all the boys, by the last name and *kun*.

[4] Quoted examples do not follow the transcription convention used in this issue. They are copied exactly as they are written in the original text.

[5] The term *sensei* means 'teacher' and *Natsuaki-sensei* is equivalent to Ms. Natsuaki.

explicit concern that his students listen to the peers. Here a female student, Fukushima-san, is commenting on Takegami-kun's reading of a poem in the textbook. Like Ms. Natsuaki in Anderson's example given above, here the teacher, Mr. K, also asks individual students if they have heard Fukushima-san's talk before he requests her to repeat, which indicates the importance of listening as a normative behavior in class.

(3) [Mr. K is talking to his class.]

1	Fukushima:	((stands up)) *Tamura-kun to niteru n desu keredo, ano: chan to koe- koe ni natte hakkiri yonde imashita.* '(Mine) is similar to Tamura-kun's comment but, uh (Takegami-kun) was using his voice and was reading clearly' ((students talking and making noise. Mr. K addresses the entire class))
2	T:	*Hai, Fukushima-san no yutta koto kikoemashita ka?* 'Did (you) hear what Fukushima-san said?' ((Turns to Akabane-kun))
3		*Akabane-kun, kikoeta: ?* 'Did (you) hear it, Akabane-kun?'
4		*Kikoeta tte iu ka, kiiteta?* 'Rather than hearing it, did (you) listen to it?' ((Turns to Suzuki-kun))
5		*Suzuki-kun, daijoobu?* 'Are you OK, Suzuki-kun?'
6		((to Fukushima)) *Moo ikkai yutte, ushiro ni mukatte.* 'Say it once more facing the back (of the class).'
7	Fukushima:	*Tamura-kun ni niteru n* ((does not turn back)) '(It's) like Tamura-kun's.'
8	T:	*=Ushiro ni mukatte.=* 'Turn toward the back (of the classroom)'
9	Fukushima:	((turns to back)) *=Tamura-kun ni niteru n desu keredo, chan to koe ni natte hakkiri yonde iru.* '(Mine) is like Tamura-kun's, but (Takegami-kun) was using his voice and was reading clearly.'
10	T:	*Hai. Nanka ii koto arimasu ka?* 'OK. Is there anything good [about Takegami's presentation]? *Jaa moo hitori yonde moraoo ka na, moo hitori (0.3) moo hitori.* 'Well, I will have one more person read his/hers, one more (0.3) one more.'

In line 2 in (3), Mr. K asks the class as a whole if they have heard what was said by a girl student named Fukushima-san. Then in lines 3, 4 and 5, he turns to individual students who he thinks might have not paid attention and asks if they heard Fukushima-san. Then Mr. K requests that she say it once more facing the back of the

class so that all the students, in particular those in the back would hear her. She only partially complies to his request in line 7, so in line 8 he again requests that she face the back of the class.

The question posed by the teacher and his insistence to have Fukushima-san repeat her utterance facing the back of the classroom are his attempts to ensure that all the students in the class understand Fukushima-san's utterance. Note that the teacher does not summarize what Fukushima-san said and that he moves on to the next question in line 10. Since the teacher does not summarize the student's utterance, it is important for all the students to pay close attention to their peers' statements. It is essential that all the students understand a peer's comments before the class moves on to the further discussion of the topic.

A number of cultural anthropologists have argued that the group rather than the individual is the basic unit of Japanese society, and that cooperation among group members is an important and essential aspect in any endeavor (e.g., Doi, 1973; Lebra, 1976; Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Nakane, 1970). For example, Lebra states:

> "Collectivism thus involves cooperation and solidarity, and the sentimental desire for the warm feeling of *ittaikan* ('feeling of oneness') with fellow members of one's group is widely shared by Japanese ... Collective cooperation is taken so much for granted that a Japanese may not become aware of it until he is displaced from his group or is confronted with another culture." (1976: 25–26)

In this sense, the teacher's questions and request in (2) and (3) are motivated by the culturally important notion of cooperation among group members in Japanese society. Based on the observation of 15 nursery schools and 15 first grade classes in elementary schools in Japan, Lewis (1984, 1988) also reports that the teachers in these schools encourage students to cooperate to achieve shared goals. If so, the teacher's question as to whether the students have heard their peer can be seen as a way of facilitating cooperation among students rather than simply checking the audibility of the peer's talk.

In both my data and Anderson's (1995), students themselves often mention that they cannot hear a peer's utterance. Example (4) illustrates this observation. Here Nakamura-kun is commenting on Kobayashi-kun's statement, but he is incoherent in his speech. His utterance contains many instances of the filler *ano*, 'uh', and a false start (*omoshiroku-* 'interesti-'). It is not easy to make sense of Nakamura-kun's utterance. In line 2, one of the students in the class calls out, *kikoemasen*, 'I can't hear.' Then Nakamura-kun repeats his utterance in line 3.

(4) [Ms. A's fourth-grade class]

1 Nakamura: *Kono Kobayashi-kun no ano kansoo bun ni wa ano ano omoshiroku- ano minna o ano, minna wa ikanimo ano tsukuritai tte iu ano ki ga*
'This, in Kobayashi-kun's uh description, uh uh interesti- uh all of us uh, makes all of us want to make it'

2 S1: *Kikoemasen.*
'I can't hear.'

3 Nakamura: *anoo ikanimo minna ga tsukuritai tte iu, ano kimochi o tsutaeru yoo ni ...*
'Uh (Kobayashi-kun's description) expresses his feelings that all of us want to make it ...'

This type of calling out indicates that students understand that listening attentively to their peers' talk is an important and expected form of behavior.

In sum, we have seen that both at home and school, caregivers and teachers explicitly teach children to listen to others' talk. In elementary schools, students even tell their peers that they can not hear what he/she is saying. Given that words and phrases used in explicit socialization practice reflect important cultural values, it must be the case that attentively listening to others' talk is an important Japanese cultural value.

3. Participant structures: Dyadic vs. 'interactional umbrella'

Important cultural values taught explicitly to children are also taught implicitly through implicit socialization processes. Children are implicitly socialized to be good listeners by participating in daily activities. Although implicit language socialization is not as obvious as explicit, it is pervasive. It may also transmit more efficiently sociocultural information because children cannot readily go against the way in which language is used in society, while they can contradict an explicit mention of some social norms. In Ochs' words (1990: 291), "the greatest part of sociocultural information is keyed implicitly, through language use". The rest of this paper focuses on implicit language socialization in classroom interactions. I will demonstrate that children are socialized to be good listeners through participation in the Japanese-specific non-dyadic participant structure.

In traditional American classrooms the preferred participant structure of instruction is dyadic. Mehan (1979) as well as Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) identified a dyadic, canonical form for lesson structure in traditional American classrooms at the elementary level, a three-part sequence, Initiation-Reply-Evaluation (henceforth I–R–E) although variations on this form are not infrequent.[6] A typical example is given in (5), which comes from Mehan (1979: 92).

[6] Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) refer to this sequence as I–R–F (Initiation–Response–Feedback). In this paper, following Mehan, I use the term I–R–E. More recent research on American classroom interactions suggests that the cannonical I–R–E is a characteristic of what most educators call the 'traditional' classroom context (Drew and Heritage, 1992), and the proposal that the I-R-E pattern is the participation structure in the American classroom has been criticized (e.g., Wood, 1988). Multiparty participant structure is observed in some American classrooms. For example, Larson (1996) discusses the social construction of multiparty participant structure in an American kindergarten.

(5) *Initiation*	*Reply*	*Evaluation*
T: I call the tractor a 'mm ...'	R: Machine	T: Machine, Rafael good, I call it a machine.
T: See the ...	J: Street.	T: Street, good, 'see the street'.

The interaction in (5) is dyadic: each question involves the teacher and just one student at a time. Furthermore, each time a student responds, the teacher evaluates the response with the term, *good*, a marker of evaluation. Other such markers include *very good*, *all right* and *OK*. They index the teacher as someone who is an authority with respect to the content of the class instruction. In addition, as discussed by Duranti and Ochs (1986), the teacher's evaluation marker simultaneously indexes that the correct answer is a student's individual accomplishment. In uttering *good*, in Duranti and Ochs' words (1986: 229), "the adult does not take (or get) credit for her or his part in accomplishing a task; rather, the child is given full credit through unidirectional praising".

In the dyadic participant structure, the teacher is the source and authority of knowledge who passes judgment on children's responses. Thus, students are encouraged to (i) focus on the teacher's utterances; (ii) answer the teacher's question correctly so that they are praised for their accomplishment. In this participant structure, there is relatively little need or motivation to listen to their peers attentively.

In contrast, Anderson (1995), who studied a Japanese class from the first-grade to the second, observes that in Japanese classrooms the preferred participant structure is a multi-party interactional pattern, which he refers to as an 'interactional umbrella'. In the interactional umbrella, the teacher's role is not to hold one-on-one dialogues with a student but to structure interaction among students. In fact, the Japanese teachers and educators I interviewed repeatedly expressed the view that the teacher's role is to support (*shien*) class interactions but not to direct them. In all the five classes I observed, the teacher played the role of a supporter and utilized the interactional umbrella. According to Tooru Okuma, Professor of Education at the Tokyo Gakugei University, who regularly visits many elementary school classrooms to advise teachers on their class instruction, a teacher who evaluates students' opinions directly in one-on-one interaction is considered to be unsuccessful, for such a teacher does not foster students' spontaneity and forces his/her opinion on students (personal communication). Okuma's statement reflects the current trend in elementary school education in Japanese society.

The interactional umbrella consists of a four-part (rather than three-part) sequence of recitation, namely, Initiation–Presentation–Reaction–Evaluation (I–P–Rx–E) (Anderson, 1995). Anderson's findings are that in the I-P-Rx-E sequence the various parts are distributed to different speakers: the initiation (I) and evaluation (E) turns belong to the teacher; the presentation (P), to a primary student participant; and reaction turns (R), to secondary student participants.

Example (6), which comes from Anderson (1995: 231), illustrates the I–P–Rx–E sequence.

(6) [Natsuaki-sensei's social studies class]

Initiation	*Presentation*	*Reaction*	*Evaluation*
T: ne..dewa kore wa nan no tame ni reitooko ni ireru deshoo ka. [Okay? Now, why do you put (fish) in the freezer?]			
	Ss: (raising hands) hai! [Yes!]		
T: Yonekawa-san			
	Yonekawa (stands) kusaranai yoo ni suru tame desu. [It is so that it does not rot.]		
		S1: ii desu! [good!]	
		S2: onaji desu! [I have the same!]	
			Teacher: kusaranai yoo ni suru. [So that it doesn't rot.]

Examining the above example provided by Anderson (1995) as well as those in my own data, we observe the following: (i) it is the reaction (R) turns that make the participant structure non-dyadic; (ii) in reaction turns, peer students provide their additional comments on the primary participant's presentation; (iii) the additional comments in reaction turns can be another presentation, but often these comments take the form of peer evaluation or express how they are related to the prior utterances. Typically more than one student give reactions. (iv) The evaluation (E) turn in I–P–Rx–E also differs from that of I–R–E in that rarely the teacher uses markers of evaluation such as *good*, *very good*, and *all right*[7]; (v) The teacher, in the evaluation (E) turn, either signals that the class heard the students' utterances or gives a supportive comment.

[7] Apparently, Japanese teachers rarely provide an evaluative comment in the evaluation turn, which is allocated to the teacher. This being the case, the expression 'evaluation turn' may not be appropriate.

Example (7), which comes from my data, also illustrates the I–P–Rx–E sequence. Here the class read a poem on cargo trains and the teacher is asking questions about it.

(7) [Mr. K's Japanese language class, 3rd grade]

	Initiation	*Presentation*	*Reaction*	*Evaluation*
1	T: *Hai hoka ni.* 'Anything else?'			
		((Ss raise hands))		
2	T: *Tamura-kun.* 'Tamura-kun'			
3		Tam: *Gotto gatta gotto gatta gotto gatta tte yuu no wa 5 ren aru kara mannaka dakara Choodo ichiban supiido ga dete iru n da to omou.* 'Where the train says, 'gotto gatta gotto gatta gotto gatta' there are 5 stanzas, it's in the middle. So I think that that part is where the speed is the fastest.'		
4				T: *a* 'Uh huh'
5	T: *Hai hoka no hito doo deshoo ka.* 'OK, anyone else?'			
6		((Ss raise hands))		
7	T: *Inoue-kun.* 'Inoue-kun'			
8			In: *Tamura-kun no tsuketashi na n da kedoo ...* 'An addition to Tamura-kun ...'[8]	
9	T: *Hai ima no Inoue-kun itta no?* 'OK what Inoue-kun said now'			
10		S1: *Wakarima::su.* 'I understaand'		
11	T: *Yutta imi ga wakarimasu ka:.* 'Do you understand the meaning of it?'			
12	T: *Hoka no hito doo deshoo. Konoo kono shi yatte yoku*			

[8] Inoue-kun's comment, which follows, is very long and is not crucial to the present discussion, so it is omitted.

yonda tte yuu hito wa hoka ni iken nai no?
'What about other students? Those of you who read this poem well, don't you have any other opinions?'

13 ((Ss are talking))

14 T: *Sore igai ni ( )*
'Anything other than ( )'

15 ((Ss raise hands))

16 T: *Hai, Tsukamoto-kun.*
'OK, Tsukamoto-kun'

17 Tsu: *Boku wa Tamura-kun to chigatte ano gotto gatta gotto gatta wa ressha wa ima yurete iru tokoro da to omou.*
'My interpretation is different from Tamura-kun's, and I think where the train says, 'gotto gatta gotto gatta' is where it is shaking.'

18 T: *A supiido o dasu n ja nai n da koko wa. Supiido wa deteru no?*
'Oh, it is not where it starts to speed up. Is it already speeding?'

19 Tsu: *Supiido mo dete iru kedo, ressha wa yurete iru.*
'The train is speeding but it is shaking.'

20 T: *Ressha ga yurete iru.*
'The train is shaking.'
((writes Tsukamoto's opinion))
(5.0 sec.)
Kore mata betsu no kangae desu ne:. Hai, Soo Soo, ressha ga yurete iru n desu.
'This is another idea. Yes, right, the train is shaking.'

21 ((Ss raise hands))

22 T: *Abe-san.*
'Abe-san'

23 Abe: *Tsukamoto-kun to hotondo onnaji na n desu kedo* (3.0 sec.) *supiido o dashite iru kara, ressha ga yokee yurete iru.*
'My idea is almost the same as Tsukamoto-kun. (3.0) Since the train is speeding, it is shaking all the more.'

24 T: *Aa, naruhodo ne. supiido ga detete yurete iru wake.*
'Oh, really. It is the case that the train is shaking because of the speed.'

Example (7) illustrates how the peer students modify the primary student participant's presentation in their reaction turns and how the teacher uses non-evaluative comments in his evaluation turn. Tamura-kun, the primary student participant, expresses his comment on the poem in line 3. The teacher simply ratifies it by *aa* 'uh huh' in line 4 and immediately asks other students about their comments in line 5. Inoue-kun then states in line 8 that his opinion is an addition to Tamura-kun's. In line 17 Tsukamoto-kun mentions that his comment is different from that of Tamura-kun. Finally in line 23 Abe-san mentions that she agrees with Tsukamoto-kun. It is the multiple reaction turns in which the peer students express their comments on the primary participant's presentation. By so doing, the students jointly construct in class a possible range of interpretations of the poem. In this process, the teacher does not critically evaluate students' presentations and reactions in the evaluation turn with evaluative remarks such as *ii desu*, 'That's good', and *chigaimasu*, 'That's wrong', but he supports them by using back-channel cues (*aa* 'uh huh'), repetitions (*ressha ga yurete iru*, 'The train is shaking'), and clarification questions (*Supiido wa deteru no?* 'Is it already speeding?') among others.

The I–P–Rx–E participation structure is not limited to classes or activities where students' opinions and interpretations are of importance such as in social studies classes or poem reading exercises. It is also observed in math classes where generally more objective facts are valued than interpreting poems. Example (8) illustrates how the teacher elicits reaction turns by not explicitly evaluating the correct answer given by a student.

(8) [Mr. K's math class, 3rd grade]

	Initiation	*Presentation*	*Reaction*	*Evaluation*
1	T: *Sanjuu ni na no?* *Kore sanjuuni. Naze?* 'Is it thirty-two? This, thirty-two. Why?'			
2		Ss: ((raise hand)) (10 sec.)		
3	T: *Oota-san*			
4		Oo: *Hai.* ((stands up)) *Etto, keisan no toki ni, kakezan no hoo ga issho ni aru toki ni, tashizan to kakezan no=* 'Yes' ((stand up)) 'Uh, when one calculates, if there is multiplication, addition and subtraction'		
5	T: *=Motto (minna ni kikoeru yooni).* '(Speak in such a way that others will hear you) better'			
6		Oo: ((turns to the rest of the class)) *Tashizan to kakezan no keisan ga atte, kakezan no hoo wa, ushiro ni aru toki demo-, kakezan no hoo o- saki ni yaru.* 'When there are both addition and multiplication, even if the multiplication follows (the addition), one does the multiplication first.'		
7		Og: ((raises his hand))		
8	T: *Mada nanka te ga agatteru.* *Ogawa-kun.* 'A hand is still up. Ogawa-kun'			
9		Og: *Hai,* ((stands up)) [*ano, kakezan mo* 'Yes' ((stand up)) 'uh it's true with multiplication'		
10	T:			[*Un,* 'Uh-huh'
11		Og: *Soo na n da kedo, warizan mo, tashizan ya hikizan yori mo saki ni yaru. =*		

'but one does division
before addition and
subtraction.'

12 T: *=Hoo.*
'Oh'

13 T: *Takegami-kun.*

14 Tak: *Kakezan toka*
warizan wa, tashizan toka
hikizan yori, tsuyoi.
'Multiplication and
division are stronger
than addition and
subtraction.'

15 T: *Tsuyoi.*
'stronger'

16 T: [*Betsuni kenka shiteru wake ja,*
'They are not exactly
fighting.

17 Tak: [*Saki ni yaru.*
'One does them first.'

18 T: *Saki ni yaru.*
'One does them first.'

19 T: *A, soo iu yakusoku*
atta kke?
'Was there such a rule?'

20 S1: *Atta. Mae ni mo yatta=*
'There was.
We did that before.'

21 T: *=Soo desu ne.*
Soo datta ne.
'That's right.
That's right.'

Just prior to where (8) starts, Mr. K has asked students what is the answer to the expression written on the board. One student, Tsukamoto-kun answers 'thirty-two'. However, Mr. K does not ratify his answer by an evaluative expression such as 'right'. Instead, in line 1 he starts to ask the class if Tsukamoto-kun's answer, 'thirty-two', is all right. Then he asks why the answer is 'thirty-two'. In line 4 Oota-san presents her opinion in response to Mr. K's question. Mr. K does not evaluate Oota-san's presentation, but instead he elicits reactions. Two students, Ogawa-kun (lines 9 and 11) and Takegami-kun (lines 14 and 17) build on Oota-san's presentation. In response to these two students' reactions, Mr. K does not use truly evaluative expressions. He only utters *hoo* 'Oh' in line 12, an expression that indicates what the speaker has heard is new information, and in lines 15 and 18, he uses a partial repetition of Takegami-kun's utterances. In line 19, he continues to ask the class about the validity of the content of Takegami-kun's reaction. Once one student in line 20 gives positive response to it, Mr. K finally evaluates it with the expressions, *soo desu ne* and *soo datta ne* 'that is right' 'That is [lit. 'was'] right'.

These characteristics associated with reaction and evaluation turns create a context in which (i) true evaluation often comes from the peer students but not from the teacher; (ii) as a result, the source and authority of knowledge concerning the content of the class rests mainly with the peer students; (iii) the role of the teacher is that of a facilitator/supporter who mostly helps smooth interaction among students and affectively backs them up. I will elaborate on these points below.

4. Roles of the peer students and the teacher

The identities of the students as evaluators and of the teacher as supporter are created during the interaction which consists of students' comments on the presentation and of the teacher's affective stance toward the students. As mentioned above, it is in the reaction (R) turn that students often serve as evaluators of the presenter. Lewis (1988) also mentions that in the elementary school classes she observed in Tokyo, students were involved in peer evaluation. According to Anderson (1995), the meaning of reaction is to acknowledge the peer's presentation and add to it. My proposal (that the reaction turn functions as an evaluation) does not run counter to Andersons' claim since 'evaluation' does not necessarily mean a negative one.

In example (6) above, which is from Anderson's data, students 1 and 2 offer their reactions to Yonekawa-san's presentation. More specifically, student 1 positively evaluates Yonekawa-san's response by saying *ii desu*, 'it is good', and student 2 states his opinion in relation to Yonekawa-san's. The reaction, *ii desu*, 'it is good', is an evaluative remark, the type that is typically made by the teacher in American classrooms. The utterances by students 1 and 2 both underscore the correctness of Yonekawa-san's answer. In contrast to the peers' evaluation, the teacher's stance is more affective than evaluative. In the last line in (6), she repeats Yonekawa-san's utterance. Repetition is a marker of joint production and indexes the speaker's endorsement of another's utterance (Stubbs, 1983). In sum, while the peers provide evaluations, the teacher's utterance tends to lack evaluative words such as *good* and, instead, indexes affective stance. Thus the teacher creates her own image as an affective supporter of his/her students.

More examples of peer evaluation and the teacher's supportive role are seen in (9), portions of which have been presented above. Mr. K, like the teacher in example (6), does not use markers of evaluation such as *good*.

(9) [Mr. K's class, third grade]

1	T:	*Doo deshoo, Takegami-kun (ikimashoo) hai.* 'How about, Takegami-kun, (Let's go) yes.'
2	Takegami:	((stands up)) *Kamotsuressha. Gachan gachan gachan gachan gachan gacha gacha:n gachan gatan goton gatan goton gatan goton goto gata goto gata goto gata gota gata gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gotogata kotokoto kotokata kotokata kotokata kotokata kotokoto.* 'Cargo train [reads aloud the sounds of a train]'

3		((Ss laugh))
4		((Ss raise hands and are talking))
5	T:	*Doo yuu toko umakatta, ima no? Takegami-kun.* 'What was good, this one, Takegami-kun'(s)?'
6		((Ss raise hands))
7	T:	*Higuchi-san.*
8	Higuchi:	((stands up)) *Saigo no kotokata tte yuu tokoro no oto ga chan to hayakatta.* 'The last sound, kotokata was (said) properly fast.'
9	T:	*Ha::i.* 'O:K' *Hoka ni.* 'Anything else?'
10		((Ss raise hands))
11	T:	*Tamura-kun.*
12	Tamura:	((stands up)) *Ugoite (ru toka ni)* 'Movi (ng like)'
13	T:	*Ookii koe de.* 'In a loud voice.'
14.	Tamura:	((keeps standing up)) *Ugoiteru toka (wakaru yoo ni)* 'so that we'd know it's moving'
15	T:	*Yutte ita. Un.* '(he) was saying. Uh-huh.' *Fukushima-san.*
16	Fukushima:	((stands up)) *Tamura-kun to niteru n desu keredo, ano: chan to koe- koe ni natte hakkiri yonde imashita.* (Mine) is similar to Tamura-kun's but, uh (Takegami-kun) was using his voice and was reading clearly'
17		((students talking and making noise))
18	T:	*Hai. Fukushima-san no yutta koto kikoemashita kaa. Akabane-kun kikoeta:? Kikoeta tte yuu ka, kiite ita? Suzuki-kun daijoobu?* 'OK. Did you hear what Fukushima-san said? Did you hear it, Akabane-kun? Rather than hearing it, did (you) listen to it? Are you OK, Suzuki-kun?' ((to Fukushima)) *Moo ikkai yutte, ushiro ni mukatte.* 'Say it once more facing the back (of the class).'

Mr. K does not evaluate Takegami-kun's reading of the poem. Rather he gives opportunities to the peer students to evaluate it. In line 5 Mr. K asks the class what points are good about Takegami-kun's reading of the poem. Three students, Higuchi-san, Tamura-kun, and Fukushima-san respond to Mr. K's request and give their evaluations in lines 8, 12, 14 and 16. Mr. K's role here is more supportive than evaluative. In line 15, Mr. K co-constructs a turn with Tamura-kun, whose turn was incomplete. Then he says *un* 'uh- huh' with a falling intonation, which acknowl-

edges rather than evaluates Tamura-kun's answer. This *un* gives credit to Tamura-kun even though his answer was incomplete.

Furthermore, instances of *hai* 'OK' occurring in this example do not indicate Mr. K's evaluation. Although the word *hai* is often translated into English as *yes*, it is not in essence a marker of agreement to the content of the prior talk, but rather a marker of response to the expectation of the addressee(s). Generalizing the various pragmatic functions of the word *hai*, Kitagawa (1980) defines its core meaning as "a polite signal to the addressee to indicate that the speaker has heard (and understood) what the addressee said to him" (1980: 110). Furthermore, the teacher's *hai*'s in (9) occur at (speech) activity boundaries. Although Kitagawa does not mention it, it makes sense that *hai*, as a marker of response to the addressee's expectation, would occur at a boundary of a (speech) act. In line 9 he says *ha:i* 'O:K' after Higuchi-san's reaction. He says it with a prolonged [a] and a singsong intonation. Then he asks students if there are any other reactions. In line 18, he uses *hai* to preface his concern as to whether the students have heard Fukushima-san's reaction. The function of *hai* in Japanese (and *OK* in English) in this position is what Goffman (1981) calls 'bracketing'. It occurs at the beginning or end of an activity or act and indexes that an activity or act is about to take place or has finished.

Students provide their reaction to the presenter. All three reactions in (9) are evaluations of Takegami-kun's recitation. Higuchi-san critically but positively evaluates the presenter's recitation by saying *chanto hayakatta*, '(It was) appropriately fast'. Tamura-kun's comment describes the clear manner in which the recitation was presented. These comments can be made only if they listened to the presentation well. Moreover, in lines 16 and 19, Fukushima-san expresses how her evaluation is related to Tamura-kun's reaction, which requires careful comparison of her own and others' reactions. This, of course, can be done only by listening attentively to the prior utterances. Takegami-kun, the presenter, also needs to listen to the reactions of the peers in order to find out how his presentation went. Virtual lack of the teacher's evaluation markers gives students' reactions more importance in that they are the source of knowledge with respect to the content of a lesson. In this way, the reactions promote attentive listening to the peer students' utterances.

The teacher not only serves as a supporter but also as a facilitator for listening. He or she controls the structure of peer interaction in a way that creates more opportunities for students to listen carefully to their peers. Instead of evaluating students' presentations him/herself, s/he solicits students' comments on the presenter's performance, which creates multiple reaction (R) turns. In (9), for example, after Takegami-kun presents his recitation, in line 5 Mr. K solicits three reactions from the students. In response to his solicitation, many students raise their hand, which indicates that many listened to the presentation attentively enough to give comments on it.

When the teacher's expectation that students should listen attentively is not met, s/he tries to make sure that they listen. As we have seen earlier, s/he explicitly asks students if they were listening or s/he uses a more subtle strategy of dropping a hint that his/her expectation has not been met.

In example (10), which comes from another school, the teacher, Ms. R, implies that her expectation has not been met. Here, Takahashi-san has just presented her

view on country and city life. After her presentation, Ms. R solicits students' comments. She provides a model comment by mimicking an animated student's voice, *!Koko joozu ni kaketeru na:!* '!This part is well written!'. Only two students raise their hand. In line 4, Ms. R's utterance, 'I wonder if no one but Katoo-kun and Moro-kun can find them' reflects her expectation that more students should have listened to the presentation well and should have asked for a chance to react to the peer's speech. In line 6, Ms. R requests more detail from Katoo-kun, which again reflects her expectation of careful attention to the peer presentation.

(10) [Ms. R' class, fourth grade]
[Takahashi-san has just finished reading her short written essay to the class.]

1	Ss:	((applaud))
2	T:	*Hai doo deshoo, ii tokoro. !Koko joozu ni kaketeru na:!* 'Well, what were the good points? !This part is well written!'
3		((Katoo-kun and Moro-kun raise their hands))
4	T:	*Katoo-kun to Moro-kun shika mitsukerarenai no kana:.* 'I wonder if no one but Katoo-kun and Moro-kun can find them.' *Hai, Katoo-kun.* 'OK, Katoo-kun.'
5	Katoo:	*Muzukashii kotoba ga tsukatte aru.* 'A difficult word was used.'
6	T:	*Muzukashii kotoba ga tsukatte aru. Nan deshoo.* 'A difficult word was used. What is it?'
7	Katoo:	*Koogai.* 'Pollution.'
8	T:	*Koogai? Koogai.* 'Pollution? Pollution.'

In this way, the teacher as facilitator provides students with more opportunities to listen to their peers by creating reaction turns and asserting the importance of attentive listening, both explicitly and implicitly.

In addition to creating more opportunities, the teacher often facilitates students' listening and contributing in reaction turns by writing on the blackboard important points of students' presentations and reactions and the names of the students who made the points. These short notes assist students in remembering the content of the utterances and/or the names of the students who made them.

As we have discussed so far, Japanese classroom interaction is characterized by peer evaluation in multi-reaction turns within the sequence of I–P–Rx–E and by the teacher's role as supporter and facilitator. These characteristics create a locus of knowledge among the peer students, and thus authority for assessing does not solely reside in the teacher but it is distributed among the students as well.

This interactional pattern of elementary school classrooms is part of an overall pattern of activities in Japanese nursery and elementary schools. Ethnographic studies of Japanese nursery schools by Lewis (1984), Tobin et al. (1989), and Peak (1991) as well as of elementary schools by Lewis (1988) and Anderson (1995), all

of which observe daily routines of school life, report self-management of activities by children and minimized authority on the part of the teacher. For example, observing nursery schools, Lewis (1984: 83) states, "Peers, not teachers, may have authority to manage aspects of classroom life ranging from participation in class events and finishing one's lunch to fights with other children". Tobin et al. (1989) report that upon viewing the video of an American preschool, Japanese teachers and parents commented that in an American preschool there is too little opportunity for children to engage in spontaneous, unsupervised interaction. Their comment reflects the expectation of Japanese teachers and parents that children should have a relatively large degree of self-autonomy in the classroom. The notion of minimized teacher authority has an important cultural consequence. It promotes the children's self-management and their attentive listening to their peers. Peer evaluations in reaction turns, then, is seen as one of the manifestations of the overall pattern of the daily routine at school.

5. Effects of attentive listening

Cognitive development is embedded in sociocultural contexts; the cognitive skills children acquire in their early age are essential in social organizations and institutions in a given society (Rogoff, 1990). The present study suggests that listening skills developed by taking part in multi-party participant structure in Japanese elementary school help develop the cognitive skill of discriminating similarities and differences between the opinions of self and others with respect to the content of talk.

Consider again example (7), given above. In the multiple reaction turns, students make explicit meta-comments on the relation between their opinion and that of the primary student participant. In line 8, Inoue-kun states that his opinion is an addition to Tamura-kun's (*Tamura-kun no tsuketashi na n da kedoo*). In line 17, Tsukamoto-kun remarks that his opinion differs from Tamura-kun's (*Boku wa Tamura-kun to chigatte*). In line 23, Abe-san comments that her opinion does not differ much from that of Tsukamoto-kun (*Tsukamoto-kun to hotondo onnaji na n desu kedo*). This practice is prevalent in all the classes I observed. Anderson (1995) also reports that students in their reaction turns make such meta-comments. The students' meta-comments, which can be made only by careful comparisons of their own opinion and that of others, are evidence that students listen to others attentively. These meta-comments of the students also indicate that attentive listening socializes them to consider their own position in relation to others.

It is the multiple reaction turns that make it possible and even inevitable to compare one's opinion with those of the peer students. In contrast, in the dyadic interaction, a student is expected to respond only to the teacher's questions. Therefore, he or she is not given an opportunity to specifically speak in relation to other student's comments. For this reason, in comparison with the dyadic interactional pattern, which is often seen in schools in the United States, multi-reaction turns in multiparty interactional patterns largely adopted in Japanese schools are more likely to social-

ize children into speaking in relation to others in the group. As pointed out by some scholars (e.g., Yamada, 1992; Hirokawa, 1995), compared with American conversation, Japanese conversation exhibits other-orientation. Speaking in relation to others is certainly a type of display of other-orientation. Thus, attentive listening to their peers' speech in the classroom also helps children to acquire not only cognitive skills of differentiating one's position from that of others, but also the culturally valued skill of speaking in relation to others, which simultaneously qualifies them as good group members.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that in Japanese elementary school classroom interactions, students are both explicitly and implicitly taught to listen carefully. In particular, I have described the way in which children are implicitly socialized to become competent listeners by participating in Japanese classroom interactions. Peer evaluations and minimized teacher's authority within the frame of the non-dyadic I-P-Rx–E sequence encourage students to listen attentively to their peers.

This study also suggests that school children develop cognitive and social skills by taking part in this participant structure. Listening attentively, children learn to differentiate their own opinion from those of others with respect to content. One manifestation of this skill is to express one's opinion in relation to those of others in the group. Thus attentive listening to their peers' speech in the classroom also helps children to acquire the culturally valued skill of speaking as a member of a group.

Appendix: Transcription conventions

[	overlap
?	rising intonation
.	falling intonation
:	elongated syllable
(1.2)	length of significant pause in seconds
((text))	information for which a symbol is not available
(text)	information for which a symbol is not available (in Anderson's data)
=	turn latching
!	animated pronunciation
-	false start
( )	incoherent string
(word)	conjectured string
S1, S2	unidentified student
Ss	unidentified students

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