

Referring as a collaborative process in native and nonnative spoken discourse

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986:1), "Conversation is the fundamental site of language use." It is here that speakers and hearers work together to establish mutual references in order to communicate successfully. In "Referring as a collaborative process," Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986) investigated how English Native Speaking (ENS) subjects collaborated in getting their messages across in their co-construction of first language (L1) interactional conversational exchanges through the information-gap-ping type of Tangram matching task, but their study focused on native language speakers with no direct account for additional factors involved in nonnative verbal exchanges. As Crystal (1991) stated, as cited by Carrier (1995:37), "it is particularly important to consider what occurs when nonnative speakers communicate." In referential communication tasks, learners are obliged to refer to concepts for which they lack the necessary second language (L2) words. Consequently, this study examined the question of whether, in establishing definite reference, nonnative speakers of a language employ conversational strategies more similar to those in their native language or to those used by native speakers of the language they are speaking.

According to Crystal (1985:240), "Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effect the(ir) use of language has on other participants in the act of communication." Carrier (1995), interested in contrastive pragmatics, studied how nonnative speakers of English would employ their referring strategies in the same task, using Tamil and Japanese native speakers. She found that they used different strategies from those used by native speakers of English in the Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs' study (1986), and that, as time went on, they began to accommodate to each other's modes of reference. In contrast, this study dealt with how the Japanese native speaker subjects would refer to whatever they would have to in their L1 (Japanese) and L2 (English) interactional negotiation processes of achieving the mutual goals of the Tangram matching tasks, adopting the same experimental design utilized by Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986).

2. STUDY

The purpose of this study was to find similarities and/or differences in the referring processes of native and nonnative speakers by comparing the referring strategies of the two pairs of native Japanese speakers in their L1 Japanese (JNS) and L2 English (NNS), i.e., one pair performed the task in Japanese (JNS) and the other in English (NNS). The

pairs were to put identical sets of abstract figures in the same order, while separated by an opaque barrier. Six trials for each pair of subjects' spoken interaction were tape-recorded, transcribed, analyzed, and compared with those from Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs, focusing on their referring expressions to look for similarities and/or differences between their L1 and L2 referring strategies.

[Experimental Design]

Two Japanese native speaker (JNS) pairs (one as a NS speaking Japanese and the other as a NNS speaking English) were assigned to be directors and matchers and were asked to start the Tangram matching task without seeing each other for six times. In front of each subject were 12 Tangram cards representing strange figures. For the director the cards were already arranged in a target sequence of two rows of six, and for the matcher the same figures were also laid out in two rows but in a random sequence. The director's job was to get the matcher quickly to rearrange the figures to match the target ordering. They could talk back and forth as much as they needed, but the director was to go through the positions in the array sequentially. After they had matched their arrangements and the director's and matcher's figures were placed in two new random orders, the director's new sequence became the new target and the procedure was repeated.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The six trials for the JNS subjects took about 25 minutes, exactly the same as it took for the Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs' ENS subjects (English Native Speakers subjects using English), while the six trials for the NNS subjects took about 46 minutes, which indicated the nonnative difficulty in achieving mutual acceptance on the figures. The fact that the NNS transcript contained 1838 words and the JNS one contained 1274 words also showed the nonnative difficulty in achieving successful communication via the referring task of unfamiliar Tangram figures.

As for the general patterns of initial references by the JNS director, no significant decrease was found in the number of words and structural complexity as the trials proceeded, as shown below.

[JNS director's initial references for Figure (I) in each trial]

Tr-1: *hora/kore-wa? ... tatoeba.. anoh...*

'Look!/This is' 'for example' 'well'

Look!/This is, for example, well/let's see something like a

Japanese

'gloss'

translation

*..nanka..bareriina..ka..hakuchou?-ga... [kataashi- ageteru-
'something like ballerina or swan?' 'one leg' 'is raising'
ballerina or a swan is (doing ...)? It looks like it's raising*

youna- kanji-nanda- kedo... ...]

'like' 'looks like/seems' 'but']

one of the/its legs. (indefinite sentence-unit reference)

Tr-2: *de- tsugi- ga... .uuun... .kore-wa..desu-nee...*
 'and' 'the next (one) is' 'umm' 'this is'
 and the next one is, umm, this is ...

M: *heikindai- de.. baransu-wo..totteiru-ka.. YMCA-*
 'balance beam' 'on' 'balancing' 'is' 'or' 'YMCA'
 Which one is balancing on a balance beam or YMCA?

ka..docchi-ka...
 'which one'

D: *sousousou eee... ..heikindai nohou..*
 'yes, yes, yes' 'yes/that's right.' 'balance beam' 'the one'..
 Yes, yes, yes. Yes./That's right. Yes, (it's/that's) a **balance**

Hai

'yes'

beam one.

(indefinite NP)

Tr-3: *de... yonbanme-ga... .uunto... kore-wa...(desune)...*
 'and' 'the 4th (one) is' 'umm' 'this is'
 and the 4th one is, umm, this is the one (which looks) **like a**

bareriina-mitaina-yatsu-de... ..eh... katahou...no...ashi-wo..
 'ballerina-like-(the) one' 'eh' 'one side' 'of' '(the/her)
 ballerina. Eh is raising one of her legs

..ageteru... ..ageterutte—iu-ka?

legs' 'is raising' 'is raising' 'shall we say/should I say'
 is raising one of her legs is raising, should I say?

Tr-4: *eetto...sanbanme-ga uun-kataashi-wo bareriina-ga...*
 'well' 'the third (one) is' 'umm' 'one leg' 'ballerina'
 Well, the third one is, umm, one of her legs, ... it's the one

koshi-wo...ageteru—yatsu—de... .. Eeto... ..hidarik-
 'waist' 'is raising' 'the one' 'is'... 'well' 'left
with a/the ballerina is raising her waist up. Well, **with** two

kawa-ni... .. sankakkei-ga... futatsu... ..
 side' 'on' 'a triangle' 'is' 'two'

triangles on the left side. (adjectival predicates)

Tr-5: *tsugi-ga... bareriina- de... ashi-wo... migi...*
 'the next (one) is' 'ballerina' 'and' '(the) leg' 'right'
 The next one is **the ballerina**, and she is raising her leg to

migi- gawa——ni... ageteru... Hidarikkawa-
 '(the) right side' 'to' 'is raising' 'left side'
 right, to the right side. The(Its) left side is standing

ga... sankaku-ni... tatteru...
 'is' 'triangularly' 'is standing' (compact definite NP Reference)
 triangularly.

Tr-6: *tsugi-ga... Bareriina- ga... kataashi...*
 'the next (one)' 'is' 'ballerina' 'is' 'one leg'
 The next one is the one **which looks/is like** a/the

.ageru—youna-yatsu
 'is raising' 'like' 'the one'
 ballerina is raising one of her legs. (relative clause)

However, comparing the JNS data shown above with the ENS data shown below more carefully can provide us (with) an intriguing phenomenon.

[ENS director's initial references for Figure (I) in each trial]

Tr-1: All right, the next one looks like a person who's ice skating,
 except they're sticking two arms out in front.
 (relative clausal complement)

Tr-2: Um, the next one's the person ice skating that has two arms?
 (relative clausal complement)

Tr-3: The fourth one is the person ice skating, with two arms.
 (adjectival predicates)

Tr-4: The next one's the ice skater.

Tr-5: The fourth one's the ice skater.

Tr-6: The ice skater. (compact definite NP reference)

As shown above, although there seemed to be a more significant decrease in the number of words and structural complexity in the ENS data, the fact that the JNS data still revealed the indefinite relative clausal component in the final trial even after she used the compact definite NP reference in the previous trial might reflect the inevitably implicit nature of the Japanese language. While the ENS data exhibits a faster and more systematically natural or gradual decrease in the number of words and structural com-

plexity, the JNS showed a more fluctuating phenomenon, which might also reflect the learners' psychological uncertainty or unfamiliarity with the figure even in their native language. As seen above in the simple series of ENS initial references for Figure (I), the initial use of relative clausal complements to describe the figure in the first two trials and the middle use of the adjectival predicates starting with "with" are finally described by the compact definite NP reference as "the ice skater," which demonstrated a very systematic decrease.

On the other hand, on each trial, though not consistently, the JNS director described the figure, generally with such indefinite references as "*nanka*(=something like)" and "*mitaina-yatsu*(=the one like .../the one that looks like ...)" in Japanese to reveal her uncertainty without knowing what words she could use to describe the figure most effectively so that the matcher could get it right. Due to her uncertainty, she could not help using a lot of Japanese indefinite references as well as hedges in earlier trials, i.e., the earlier the trial was, the more words she needed. In fact, the number of words used in Trial 1 (578) was much more than in Trial 6 (100). In addition, she took 351 more words (approximately 150 % more words) to secure acceptance of her presentation on Trial 1 than on Trial 2 (578-227=351), and 73 more words (approximately 50 % more words) on Trial 2 than on Trial 3 (227-154=73). As indicated by the ENS data in Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs' study, the ENS showed a similar but much weaker tendency to refer to the figure with a definite description on Trials 2-6 in my JNS data. Thus, it was not necessarily the case that the JNS director tended to use nonstandard NPs in the early trials and standard NPs later. However, in general the JNS director kept similar attitudes toward depicting the figure by leaving such indefinite morphemes as *nanka* and *mitaina* out of the context and changing the entire references (utterances) into definite ones, eliminating the elements which entail "something like" or "that looks like" in Japanese as she proceeded on the trials, as seen in most of the examples of initial NPs to refer to each figure in the JNS 6th trial shown below.

[Examples of initial NPs to refer to each figure in the 6th trial]

Fig. (C) *ano YMCA-no...*

'that' 'YMCA's (one)'
(it's) that YMCA one.

Fig. (D) *potto-wo-motteru-yatsu?*

'the pot' 'is carrying' 'the one'
(it's) the one carrying the pot

Fig. (G) *ano..shikakkei-ga...sukueaa-ga-aruhou?... .*

'that' 'square' 'is' 'square' 'is' 'there is' 'the one which has'
(is it) the/that one that has the/that square?

Fig. (I) *.bareriina-ga...kataashi...ageteru—youna-yatsu*

'ballerina' 'is' 'one leg' 'is raising' 'like' 'the one'

(it's) the one which looks/is like a/the ballerina is raising one of her legs.

Fig. (J) *ano... hidari... doutai-ga... hidari-ga... chouchoukei- no sutoreeto-de ..*
 'that' 'left' 'the body' 'is' 'left' 'is' 'rectangular' 'straight' 'is'
 that/that one/the one, left, the left side of the body is rectangular and straight

Director: *kubonderu-yatsu?*
 'bent/curved' 'the one'
 the bent/curved one?/the one which is bent/curved?

Fig. (L) *unto... ashi-wo... kusshin-shiteru ... youna-yatsu-de... .*
 'well' 'leg' 'is bending' 'like' 'the one' 'is'
 well, the one which looks like bending the leg

migikkawa-ni ... ano... sankakkei-ga... tsukideteru?
 'right side' 'to' 'that' 'triangle' 'is' 'pushing out'
 that one which has the triangle pushing out to the right side?

Only initial NPs were considered for analysis, following Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs. As seen in the examples above, only Figures (I) and (L) have kept "*youna-yatsu* (the one like, something like)" in their referential expressions. Four instances of "*ano*(=that/that one)" in the JNS 6th trial (as in examples (C), (G), (L) and (J) above) mark the referential expressions, which supports that such demonstrative pronouns as "*ano*(=that)" can function as a useful substitute for the English definite article "the" to compensate for the lack of definite article(s) in Japanese.

As for the types of NPs and other phrases advocated by Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986), not all of them were found in my data, which may posit some problem in classifying according to their taxonomy. As in (1) and in (2), many of the referring expressions were not actually noun phrases, but were noun clauses or sentential units as well as participles and adjectival predicates.

(1)D: It's **like .. are you familiar with ballet?**

(2)D: Ah, sixth one is like ah, **sitting on the ground.**

According to Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs, in initiating a reference, if the director pauses long enough, and if the matcher has some confidence she knows what the director is about to say, she can present all or the final part of a noun phrase by proxy. I considered the proxy NP when the matcher actively solicits proxy NPs, recognizing that the director would not be able to continue or complete the utterance. So, in the Japanese example (3) below, the director could not finish her sentence, as seen in "*migikkata-ni ... nanka ono...*," which is an incomplete sentence unit and does not have any verbs, when the matcher tried to offer alternatives to describe the figure, as in "*aah ... nanka-sa ... ano-tonakai-mitai-ja-nai? - ue-ni ue-ni tsuno-ga atte chigau?*"

(3) D: *un... migikkata-ni nanka ono*
 'yes' 'right side' 'on' 'something-like' 'ax'

yes, on the right side something like an ax (is)

M: *aah..nanka-sa... . ano—tonakai-mitai-ja-nai?*

'aaa' 'well' 'something-like' 'that' 'reindeer-like' 'isn't it?'

Ah, well, ...it's (something) like, that reindeer-like, isn't it?

... ue-ni ue-ni tsuno-ga.. atte chigau?

'on' 'on the' 'antlers' 'there are' 'aren't

There're antlers on it, aren't there? / Isn't that so?

Thus, the matcher offered help to the director in figuring out the figures by proposing some alternatives, which exactly embodied "referring as a collaborative process."

It was also interesting to note that at times the role of the director was shifted to the matcher and vice versa, namely, they conversed as if they had switched their roles unconsciously or naturally in their collaborative process of trying to attain mutual agreement on the right figure at each interactional phase as shown in (4) below.

(4) (Turn 1)

D: *de—tsugi-ga... Uun... kore-wa-desu-ne... atama-wa.. hishigata-de nanka.*

'and' 'the next one is' 'umm' 'this is' 'head' 'is' 'diamond' 'and' 'like'

and the next one is, umm, this is, the/its head is diamond and (something) like that?

anoo ah shiroi-ten-ga... dotto-ga... . haittete... .

'that?' 'ah' 'white-dot-is' 'dot(s) are' 'included'

Ah, white dot is ... dot(s) are included (in the figure)

M: *hai*

'yes'

Yes. / That's right.

(Turn 2)

D: *de—tsugi-ga... . Uuun ... kore-wa... .desu-nee...*

'and' 'the next (one) is' 'umm' 'this (is)' I-s'(emphatic)

and the next one is, umm, this is

M: *heikindai-de baransu-wo... .totteiru-ka... .YMCA-ka.. docchi-ka... .*

'balance beam' 'on' 'balance' 'is-ing' 'or' 'YMCA' 'which (one)/whether or not'

whether it is balancing on the balance-beam or YMCA (taking D's role)

(Turn 3)

D: [*sousousou eee ... heikindaino. .hou. hai*]

'yes, yes, yes' 'eee' 'balance-beam' 'one' 'yes'

yes, yes, yes, yes, the one with the balance

beam, yes. (it's a/the balance beam one, yes.)

(with back-channel,
taking M's role)

(interruption/overlap)

M: *saigo-ga...*

(taking D's role/)

'the last (one) is'

the last one is

(Turn 4)

D: *tonakai-no*

'reindeer's (one)'

the reindeer's (one) / the reindeer one / the one with the reindeer

D: *de-tsugi-ga.. ano... hidari.. doutai-ga.. hidari-ga..*

'and' 'the next one is' 'that' 'left' 'body' 'is' 'left' 'is'

and the next one is that...the body on the left side is, the/its left

chouhoukei-no... sutoreeto-de.. migi-ga...

'rectangular' 'straight' 'is/and' 'right is'

side is..rectangular (one) and straight, and the/its right side is ..

M: *gutto.. magatte.. chotto.. sutoreeto-de..*

'sharply' 'curved/bent' 'a little' 'straight' 'is/and'

and it is sharply curved/bent and a little (bit) straight and

(taking D's role/floor, interrupting D's utterance)

(Turn 5)

D: *mata ... migikkawa-ni ... hidarikkawa-ni ...*

'again' '(the) right side' 'to' '(the) left side' 'to'

again (it's curved/bent) to the right side and to the left side

M: *kubonde*

(taking D's role/floor, interrupting D's utterance)

'(is) curved'

it's curved

(Turn 6)

D: *kubonderu-yatsu?*

(taking M's role/floor, interrupting M's utterance)

'is curved' 'the one'

a curved one? / the one which is curved?

Here, the director's structurally incomplete second turn, which consisted of such typical topic-marking structural formulaic expressions in Japanese as "*kore-wa ... desu-nee* (=this is/what this is is)" was smoothly and cooperatively completed by such matcher's

immediately following utterances as “*heikindai-de ... baransu-wo ... totteiru-ka ... YMCA-ka ... docchi-ka* (=whether it is balancing on the balance-beam or YMCA),” which beautifully revealed that both the director’s and matcher’s utterances are in sync for the common goal of matching the figure. Then, the director responded in a positive and emphatic way using the repetition of “*sou*” and “*hai*” (i.e., *sousousou eee... heikindaino hou ... hai*=yes, yes, yes, yes, the one with/on the balance-beam? ... yes./it’s the balance beam one, yes.) to show agreement on the figure in question in her third turn as if she were the matcher by back-channeling as well as confirming and showing consent by uttering “yes” at the end of their final stage of completing their co-construction of discourse, which was uttered in response to such matcher’s previous utterances of request for confirmation as “*heikindai-de ... baransu-wo ... totteiru-ka ... YMCA-ka ... docchi-ka...*” Here, the co-construction of collaborative discursual properties (matcher’s Turn 2 and director’s Turn 3) were successively continued onto the following chains of turns between the identical pair of matcher (as a director) and director (as a matcher) as illustrated in Turns 3-4, 4, 5, and 5-6. In fact, such conversational participants’ incomplete topic-marking utterances as matcher’s “*saigo-ga* (=the last one is) (Turn 3)” and director’s “*de-tsugi-ga ... ano ... hidari ... doutai-ga ... hidari-ga ... chouchoukei-no ... sutoreeto-de ... migi-ga* (=and the next one is that...the body on the left side is, the/its left side is ... rectangular (one) and straight, and the/its right side is) (Turn 4)” are filled by the interlocutors’ (partners’/co-constructionists’) immediately following completing utterances as director’s “*tonakai-no* (=the reindeer’s (one) / the reindeer one / the one with the reindeer) (Turn 4)” and matcher’s “*gutto ... magatte ... chotto ... sutoreeto-de..*(and it is sharply curved/bent and a little (bit) straight) (Turn 4).” In addition, those incomplete phrasal adjuncts (modifiers) (e.g., adverbial, prepositional, adjectival phrasal units) as director’s “*mata ... migikkawa-ni ... hidarikkawa-ni ...* (again (it’s curved/bent) to the right side and to the left side) (Turn 5)” and matcher’s “*kubonde* ((it’s) curved/bent) (Turn 5)” were continued and confirmed by each interlocutor’s successive utterances as matcher’s “*kubonde* ((it’s) curved/bent) (Turn 5)” and director’s “*kubonderu-yatsu?* (a curved one? / the one which is curved?) (Turn 6).”

Thus, by overlapping, interrupting, taking turns and gaining the floor, the two interlocutors assist each other’s comprehension, supply feedback on each other’s imprecision, and guide each other toward greater accuracy and agreement. The fact that the similar patterns of co-construction of collaborative discursual properties continue to be successfully and successively demonstrated by the identical pair of the subjects clearly indicates the collaborative nature of interactional process in the discursual properties for reciprocal negotiation in the difficult and cognitively-demanding communication task.

Intriguingly enough, in the NNS data, the matcher took over in a number of places, in one of three ways - as a normal (solicited) proxy, as suggestion when reference is not working, or as an immediate guess without evidence of what the director will say, as in (5).

(5) D: And tenth one is.. hmm

M: Okay, he- does he or does she have two leg? Can we see two

D: Yeah.

M: Legs?

D: Two legs.

M: And he's like a .. monster which has a long hea- long nose.

(taking D's role)

D: (laugh) monster? Yeah. Yeah, [yeah, yeah.]

M: Okay. Okay. So **this is the one.**

In this example, the matcher failed to figure out the right figure. Within the limited scope of this study, this might imply a possible effect of the matcher's identity as a Japanese male on his conduct of initiating the turn relationship with the Japanese female director, positively taking the floor from her in guessing what the target figure was like. That is, there might be a possible cultural expectation for him to "take care of her," which might have made him act like this, with conscientious and commonsense leadership as a Japanese male potentially permeating his linguistic behavior. He helped her overcome the difficulty in describing the figures in the collaborative task as if he felt he were responsible for initiating the interaction with the Japanese female based on the implicit/embedded cultural assumption. This speculation on the inclination of one Japanese male behavior might be a further topic of exploration in the relevant interdisciplinary field of cross-cultural pragmatics and second language acquisition in terms of its involvement with gender difference issues from socio-cultural and anthropological ethnography of communication perspectives.

Moreover, it seems that the general overall tendency of the subjects' perspectives during the experiment were holistic and analogical in both languages. The English speakers (NNS) did not use literal expressions such as "black shape" were found, but there sometimes was found the use of segmental perspectives such as "with their arms open" whenever they wanted to distinguish between the two similar figures. Similarly, in the Japanese data, there were no literal expressions and most of the expressions were based on holistic and analogical perspectives, being occasionally segmental whenever they found it difficult to distinguish two similar figures. As seen in the two examples of "tonakai(reindeer)," (i.e., one with the triangular antlers and the other with the square head), the JNS subjects could not help taking segmental perspectives in order to agree on the right figure.

The Japanese speakers used adjectival predicates and particles much more frequently than predicate nominals, as in (6).

(6) D: And sixth one is **having hat**.

(6') D: Ah, sixth one is *like* ah, (a person) **sitting on the ground**.

(predicate without nominatives)

This is related to the following phenomenon. In examples (7), (7'), (8) and (8'), the translation into English masked a consistency in Japanese that showed up in the gloss and in the English speech of JNSs.

- (7) *potto-wo...motteru- yatsu?* (8) *ano YMCA-no....*
 'the pot' 'is carrying' 'the one' 'that' 'YMCA's (one)'
 (it's) the one carrying the pot (it's) that YMCA one.

- (7') carrying pot one (8') YMCA one
 one who is carrying a pot

Thus, the NNSs made the same distinction but in a different way: they tried to use adjectival predicates and participles to refer to the animate subjects, as seen in "white spot (one)" and "having hat." The "(next one is, um,) from his behind one" and "white spot one (the one with white spot)" could be considered as literal translation, one of the typical L2 learners' communication strategies proposed by Tarone (1977), which could also be considered as what Andersen (1990) called "relexification" (Ellis, 1994:381). Here, the L2 learners tried to take words of the L2 (e.g., "white spot" "(the) one") and imposed them on L1 syntax, which represented the learner's interlanguage developmental process of applying/adopting the word-order rule to/for the L2 lexicon, which must have caused the literal translation. This supported Kasper's (1997) claim that L2 recipients often tend towards literal interpretation, taking utterances at face-value rather than inferring what is meant from what is said, and underusing context information.

The fact that they did not produce such an ungrammatical morpho-syntactic error as *"having (a) hat one / (a) having hat one" but that they did produce *"from his behind one" in the other trial might support the idea that the Japanese subjects tended to employ the reference "one" with the inanimate subjects (e.g., "arabesque one," "iron one," and "ballet (one)") in their L1 and that they used adjectival predicates and participles to refer to the animate subjects.

The animacy of the referents might have made the Japanese NNS subjects choose the verbal predicates mainly consisting of present participles to represent the present progressive tense as if the figures in question were non-static living entities or agents to be described. Some examples of their trying to identify the figures with the animate (living things) were their uses of "mother," "middle-aged woman," "reindeer," as well as "*Sunafukin*," the personified proper noun for a cartoon character, and personified "YMCA," which was further related to the referential "naming" strategy proposed by Carrier (1995).

In using definite NPs, the NNS did not always articulate definiteness in their reference in Japanese. This did not necessarily mean that there was no definiteness in their cognitive system or interlanguage developmental system, but it did indicate their typical omission of the articles (a/an/the) in their English production. It meant that there were almost no articles in their spoken discourse, except for a very few obligatory instances as in (10) and (11). Instead, the participants used phrases like "...is no arms, no legs one," and also "... is no arms, no legs," which seemed to mean "armless one," "legless one," i.e., attributive rather than a name. In Japanese they would use adjectival predicates and participles such as "... is having (a) hat," etc. This was also related to the phenomenon of predicates that did not contain nominatives, as in (6') mentioned above.

Unlike Carrier's findings, the English data contained fewer literal references than analogical ones, as was in the Japanese sample. This was further connected to the fact that the NNS pair in fact seemed to have decided without discussion to personify the figures, as observed in (6) "sixth one is ... sitting on the ground," rather than "sixth one is a person sitting on the ground."

As for the obligatory cases, definite reference appeared in the initial NP of the second figure in Trial 1 as in (10), because the speakers had tacitly agreed on a common perspective of figures as living entities after only a single figure in (9). This was also related to the phenomenon of predicates that did not contain nominatives, as in (6').

- (9) D: **First one is like, uh, man, is, with his one leg up, and both hands, like, like, doing ghost?**
- (10) D: **Okay, next one is .. like .. um, the head position is straight,**
 M: straight
 D: and, uh, **the hand is .. out .. pointing toward .. ah .. right.**
 M: right
 D: right [side]
- (11) D: And ten- ah, eleventh one is .. **the one is who is trying to fly.**

As in (11), there was another definite reference in the first trial, which was licensed because it was brought up earlier in the trial by the matcher, where the director could assume mutual knowledge of that figure on the part of the matcher.

4. CONCLUSION

To sum up, on the later trials (e.g., Trial 5 & 6), I found the largest number of "canonical" representations of the acceptance process in what Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs called the "basic exchange," in which the director presents an NP and the matcher presupposes the director's acceptance. In fact, here most of their turns could be regarded as the basic exchange, which should only be possible when the matcher could accept the director's initial presentation without refashioning it. As Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1986:17) noted, "basic exchanges should have occurred seldom on early trials, but often on later trials, where they [director and matcher] could be based on prior mutually accepted descriptions."

Without all the NPs being actual noun phrases, the NPs used here in the final stage could be regarded as what Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs call "elementary NPs." Thus, these elementary NPs found in the NNS data as "the first one is two triangles/two triangle ears," "third one is .. from (his) behind (one)," "fourth one is having hat," "fifth one is flying," "sixth one is white spot (one)," "seventh (one) is .. (the) ghost," "eighth one is iron," "next is sitting (on the) ground," "tenth one is ballet one," and "last one is nothing (one)" occurred in the basic exchanges without the matcher's responses. In addition, those elementary NPs found in the JNS data as "*ano(that) YMCA-no* (YMCA's (one)), "*potto-wo-motteru-yatsu?* (the one carrying the pot), "*saigo-ga sankakkei-ga futatsu?* (the last one is two triangles?), "*tsugi-ga.. bareriina-de..* (the next one is ballerina)," "*tsugi-ga..*

tonakai-no.. (the next one is reindeer's (one)), " *taiku-zuwari-wo shiteru ... Sunafukin?* (the Sunafukin which/who is sitting on the ground with the arms around the knees?)," and " *okaasan-ga... kusshin-shiteru, hiza-wo... kusshin-shiteru- yatsu-de* (the one with the mother bending, her knees, bending her knees" also occurred in the basic exchanges without the matcher's responses. This clearly indicated that these basic exchanges consisted of the elementary NPs established on the basis of their prior mutually accepted descriptions.

Interestingly enough, the English version displayed more shorter elementary NPs than the Japanese version did, which might also be closely related to the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural differences in how Japanese people would perceive the two languages and from what kind of perspective(s) they would manipulate them. Moreover, the fact that the JNS director did not necessarily decrease the number of her words in the elementary NPs toward the final stages of the trials (5 & 6) by compressing her directive expressions might exemplify some cross-cultural differences deeply hidden in or penetrating their L1 Japanese use, which did not always appreciate succinctness. Since Japanese people hate to end their utterances with finality in their native Japanese, even their directive expressions could be made indirect and rather meandering. This might imply an intriguing question for the future concerning how people's cognitive processes influence their language use.

Since this study was a small-scale case study, there was obviously a need for a larger sample in order to draw any plausible conclusions. Whatever was claimed to be a cross-cultural difference might only be due to so much individual difference among the subjects. From the cognitive perception perspective, the director and the matcher in this study seemed to have a lot of trouble, not linguistically, but because of their failure to agree on perspective and their failure to realize that they didn't agree.

Through the collaborative process of referring to the figures, the directors and the matchers were gradually able to minimize their own ways of referring to the figures so that they could understand each other efficiently even without back-channels toward the final stages of their trials, as shown in their elementary NPs of basic exchanges, which supported the theory of minimizing collaborative effort proposed by Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs. As they suggested that collaboration might take one form for word denotation and another for demonstrative reference, the JNS director used the Japanese equivalents of the English definite reference "the," such as "that" "(the) one .. with-adjectivals." In the course of the exchanges in repeated references with hedges and pause-fillers (um, well, let's see, you know, I mean, etc.), which could be viewed partly as an outgrowth of the collaborative process, the director and the matcher tried to minimize collaborative effort, probably tending to "opt for holistic over segmental perspectives, for permanent over temporary features, and for unitary over multinary categories" (Clark & Wilkes-Gibbs, 1986:33).

Furthermore, it might be suggested that there was a difference between the perspectives taken by the Japanese subjects from those taken by the English native speakers, i.e., the Japanese being holistic as opposed to the English being analytical in their referring processes. As stated by Levinson (1983:43), "...taking features that are

directly and simply encoded in one language, one may well be able to find the same features encoded in more subtle and less visible ways in either the structure or the use of other languages" in analyzing the transcript from the Japanese data, which might be closely related to the holistic nature of their cognitive-pragmatic perspective revealed in their referring strategies. According to Verschueren (1987), as cited by Carrier (1995:38), "the pragmatic perspective centers around the adaptability of language, involving the constant making of choices at every level of linguistic structure." This gave me some insights into the relevant areas of cognitive and developmental psychological aspects of language use, i.e., whether their referring strategies and language use might be influenced by their cross-linguistic and cross-cultural factors in relation to the modes of thinking, analytic-segmental vs. holistic-integrative. This might further shed some light on the nature of interlanguage processes of second language learners, especially in terms of cognitive aspects of language production and cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics.

Notes

*This is a revised version of the paper presented at the JACET Convention at Waseda University on September 5, 1997. The expanded version of this paper was presented later at the 12th Annual International Conference on Pragmatics and Language Learning on February 28, 1998, at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

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