

International Workshop on Linguistics of *Ba*  
Waseda University  
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16:40-17:20

# ***Ba* Oriented Perspective and language practice**

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# Why '*ba*' oriented perspective?

(1) How can we make sense of the practice of Japanese honorifics?

The shift of use/non use of honorifics within the same sociolinguistic setting.

(2) How can we explain the emergence of new ideas between conversationalists?

# What is *ba*? (1)

***Ba* (lit. field) is a semantic space.**

The basis of thinking that **integrates cognition** (mind) and **perception** (body).

A frame of thinking that **complements scientific reductionism** thinking.

## What is *ba*? (2)

Discovered and developed by a biophysicist, Dr. Hiroshi Shimizu (Shimizu 1978).

***Ba*** was discovered in the relational study of biological **self-organization**.

**Self organization** was discovered in the automatic movement of the molecular level of protein taken from muscle. This self organization is made in a semantic space named *ba*.

# The logic of *ba*

**The logic of *ba*:** non-linear,  
non reductionist,  
non cause-effect, and  
non dichotomous.

# The theory of *ba* and quantum field physics

Quantum field physics: A central tenet is that matter can be both wave and particle.

The theory of *ba*: Similarly, the individual and its context exist in our consciousness simultaneously. This dual nature of consciousness is the basis of thinking.

# Four assumptions of *ba* theory Shimizu (2004a, 2004b)

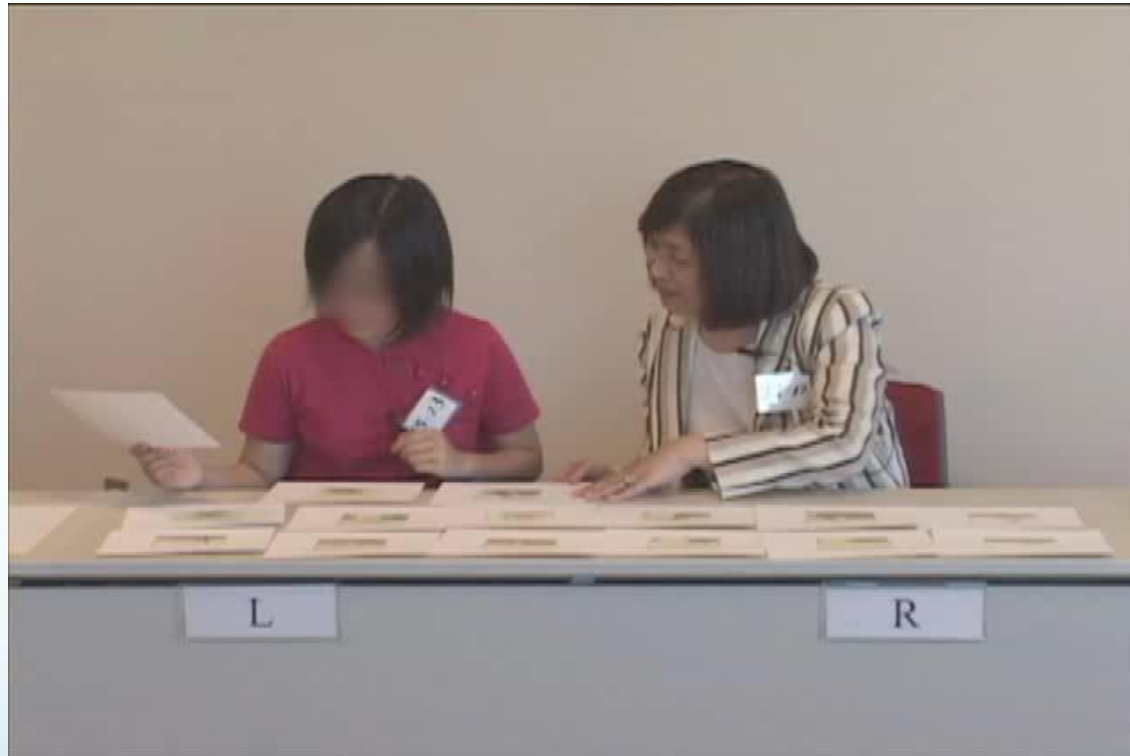
Assumption **1**: Taking the **inside** view

Assumption **2**: Model of **two domains of self**

Assumption **3**: **Dynamic** model  
of the improvised drama

Assumption **4**: Two levels of communication:  
overt vs. **covert** communication

# Task Discourse





# Research questions (1)

*How can we explain the shift of use of honorifics within the same stretch of discourse?*

# The data

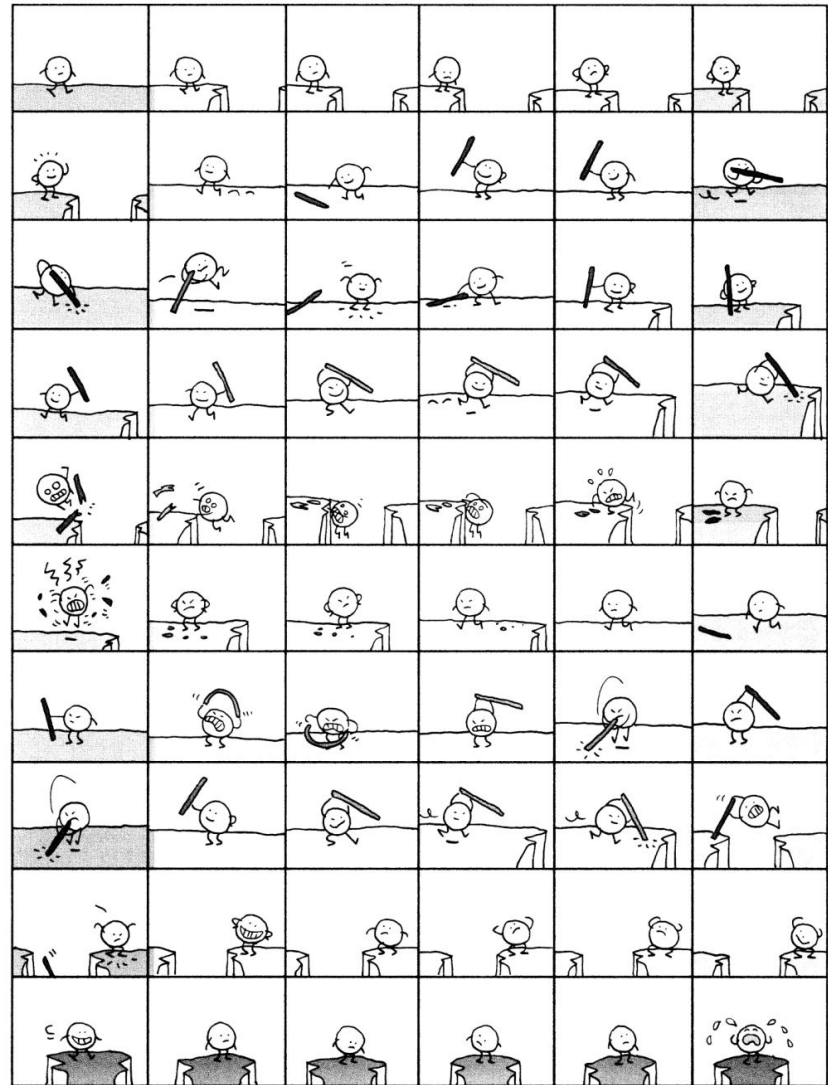
Mister O Corpus: Cross-culturally comparable discourse data

The subjects: Teachers and students

The discourse: Conversation in executing the task of co-creating a story from picture cards

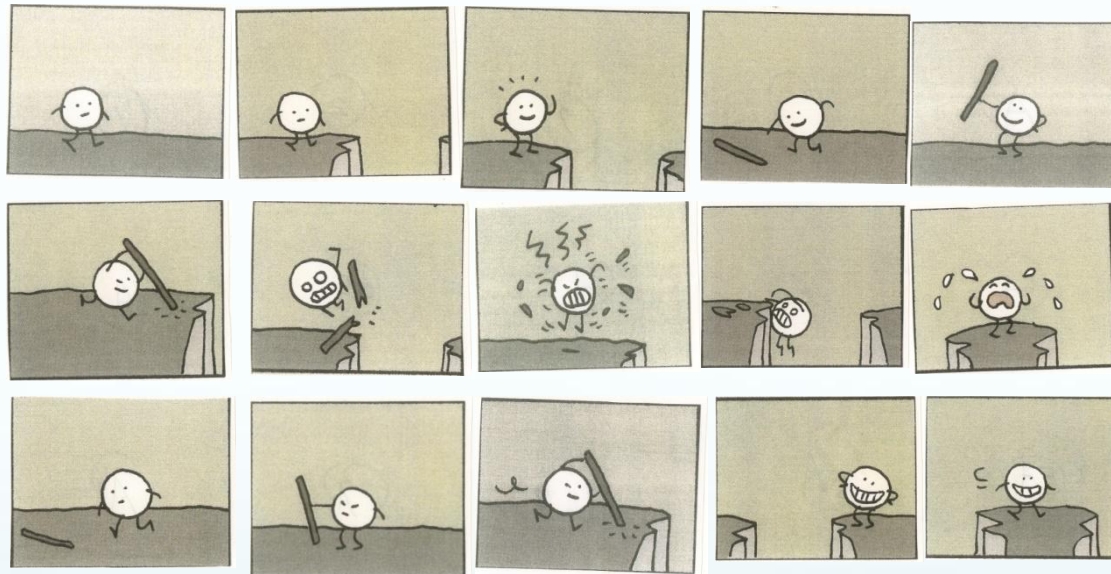
# Original Story

*Mister O* by Lewis Trondheim  
(Kodansha 2003)

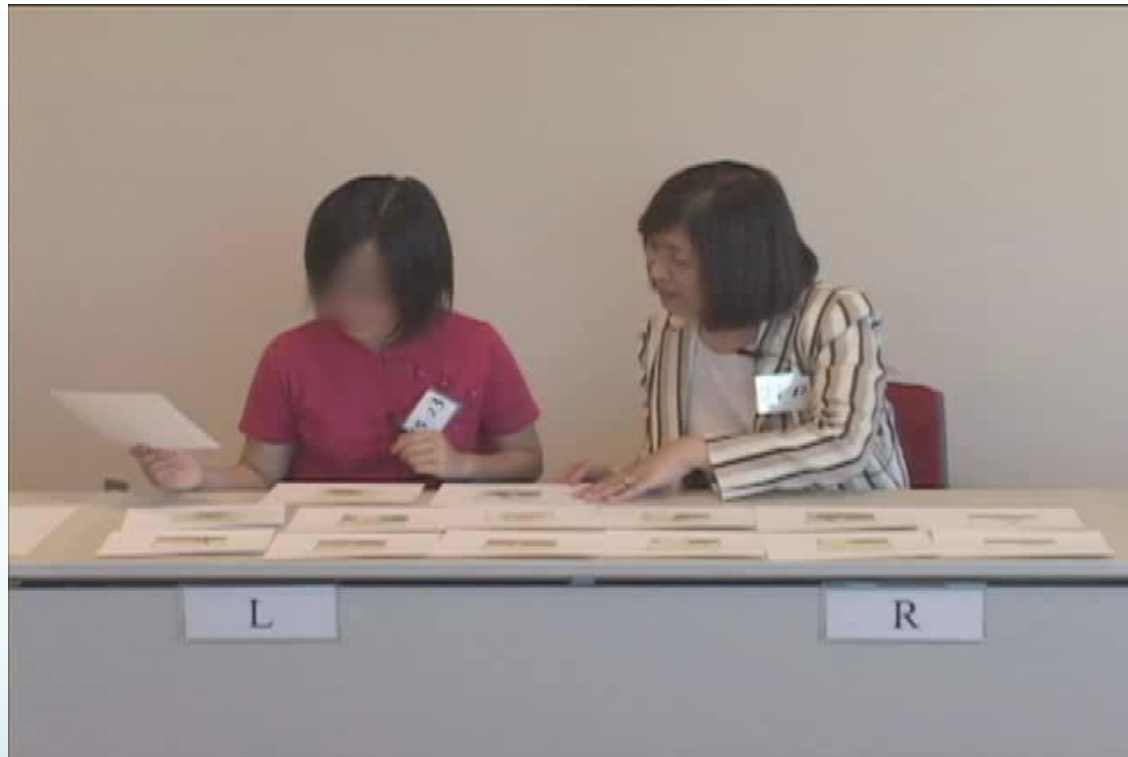


Lewis Trondheim

# Selected 15 pictures



# Teacher vs. Student



# Text

01T: (He) picks up (the stick), this way, here,  
and turns around, **right?** (HON+FP)

02 S: **Yes**, that's right. (HON+FP)

03 T: This... well...why don't we put it here?  
(HON) =

04 S: = **Yes**, that 's right. (HON+FP)

05 T: Then (the stick) gets broken, and  
(he) nearly falls down.

06 S: (He) [nearly falls down.

07 T: [nearly (falls down).

08 S: (He) gets angry, falls down...

09 T: {laugh} Where is this [crying?

10 S: [crying, suddenly,  
but, (he) could jump over to this side.

-----skip-----

19 T: This looks strange, **right?** (HON+FP)

20 S: **Yes**, it does, this shape. (HON+FP)

# What is happening in 05-10

It is obligatory to use honorifics between strangers and/or interactants with a status difference. This is the Japanese linguistic politeness called *wakimae*.

Non use of honorifics between the teacher and the student → Deviation from the rule of politeness

How can we explain this deviation from the rule of linguistic politeness?

Silverstein (1976)

## Classification of index types

**Presupposing Use:** *wakimae* use  
obligatory use of honorifics

**Creative Use:** **deviant** use  
free from *wakimae*  
non use of honorifics

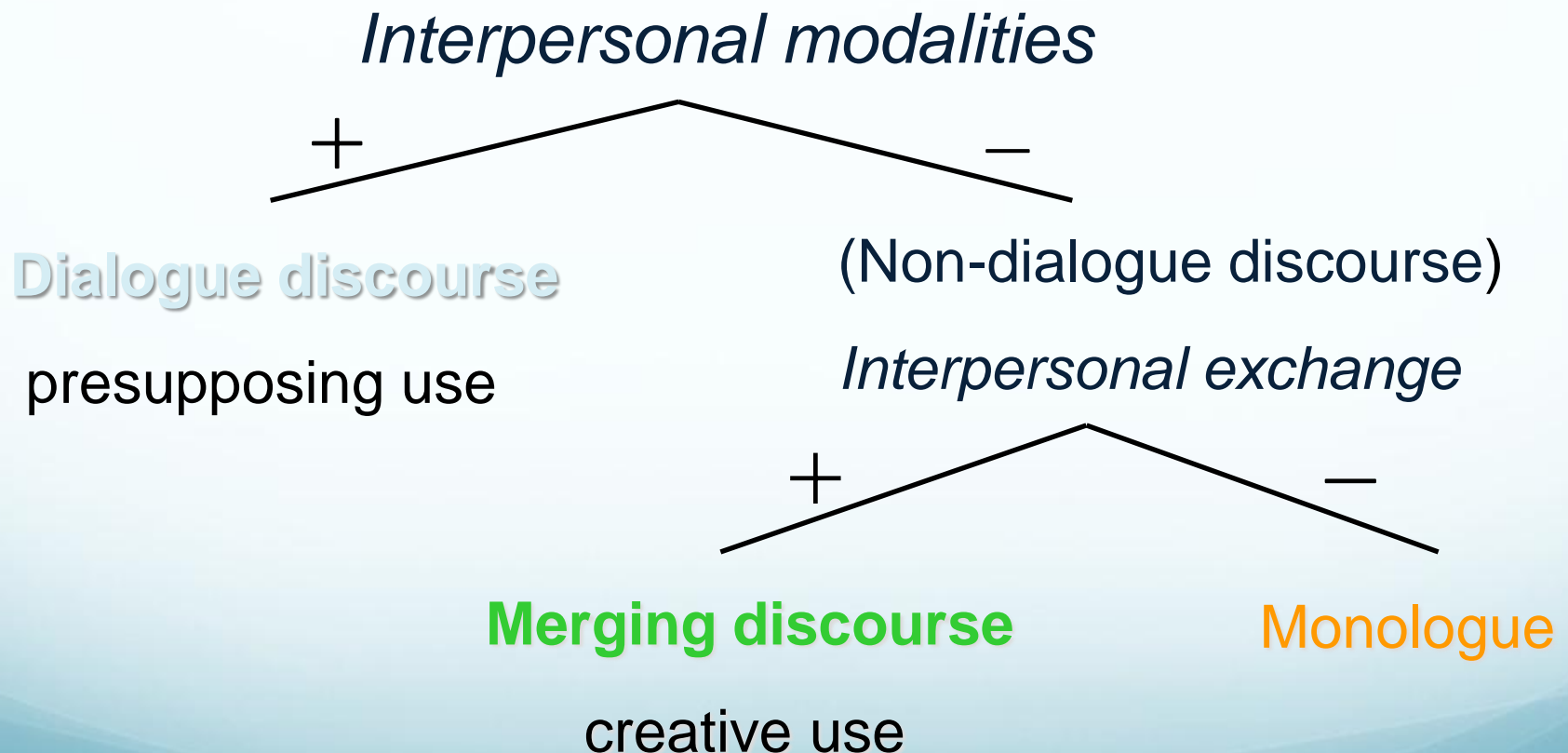


# Two types of discourse

Utterances **with** interpersonal modalities  
→ **Dialogue** discourse

Utterances **without** interpersonal modalities  
→ **Merging** discourse

# Structure of discourse types



# Dialogue vs. Merging



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Dialogue Discourse

Merging Discourse

Dialogue Discourse

# Why does the shift happen?

The shift between polite style and non-polite style (line 04 to line 05) is automatic, not readily subject to conscious recall. It is spontaneous and emergent (Gumperz 1982: 61).

Is it **the style shift** (Cook 2008, Ikuta 2008) ?

Is it **the frame shift** (Park & Takanashi 2011) ?

Not enough to explain **why** the shift happens automatically.

# The theory of *ba* useful for explaining the automatic shift.

(1) Inside view of a speech event  
(Assumption 1)

What is inside view?

(2) Dynamic model of a improvised drama  
(Assumption 3)

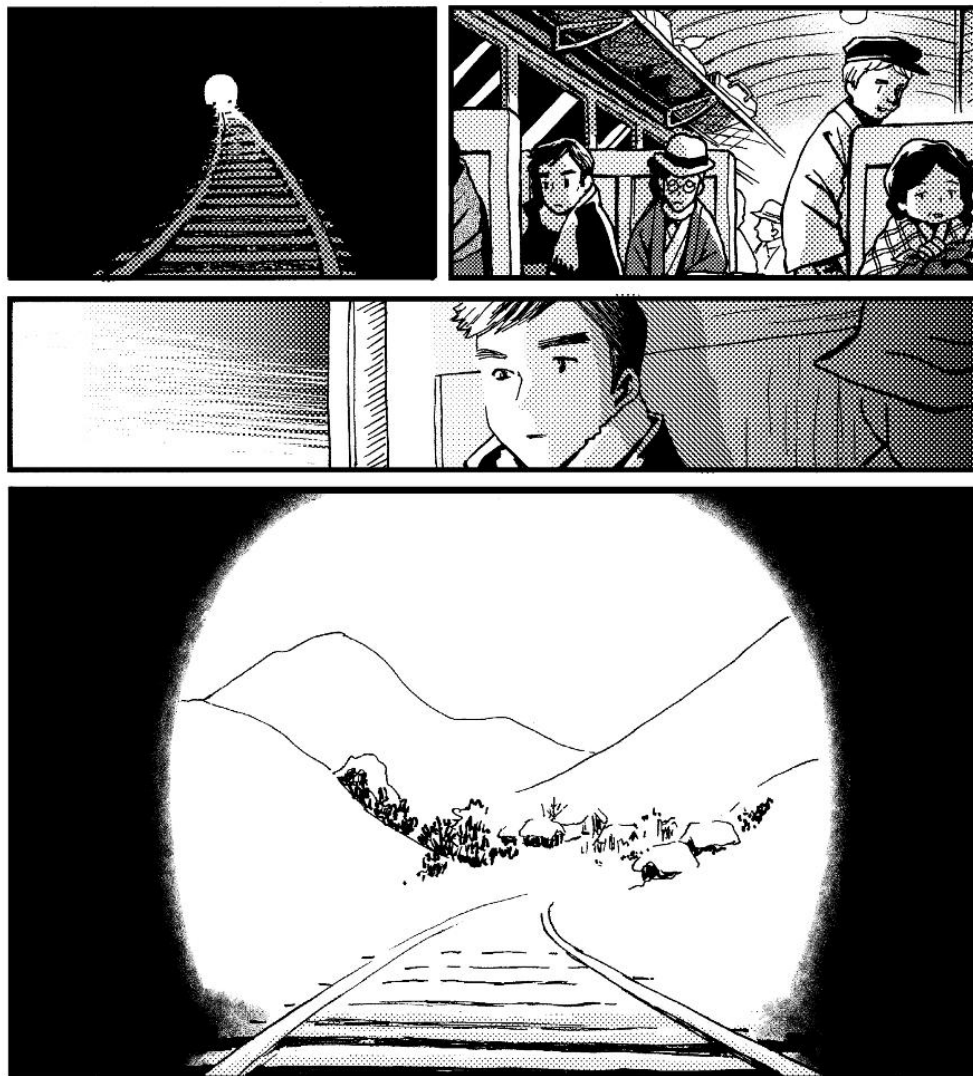
What is dynamic model?

# *Snow country by Kawabata*

国境                      の      長い   トンネル   を   抜ける   と  
kokkyou                  no      nagai tonneru   wo   nukeru   to  
Country boundary   GEN   long   tunnel   OBJ   run through   then

雪国                      で   あった。  
yukiguni                  de   at-ta.  
snow country   PRED-PAST

“The train came out of the long tunnel into the snow country.”



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国境                      の    長い   トンネル を   抜ける   と  
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“The train came out of the long tunnel into the snow country.”

# What does this *manga* tell us about this sentence?

国境の長いトンネルを抜けると雪国であった。

The immersion of  
the protagonist's view,  
the author's view, and  
the audience's view

*Ba* oriented perspective: non objective,  
non static, and non descriptive

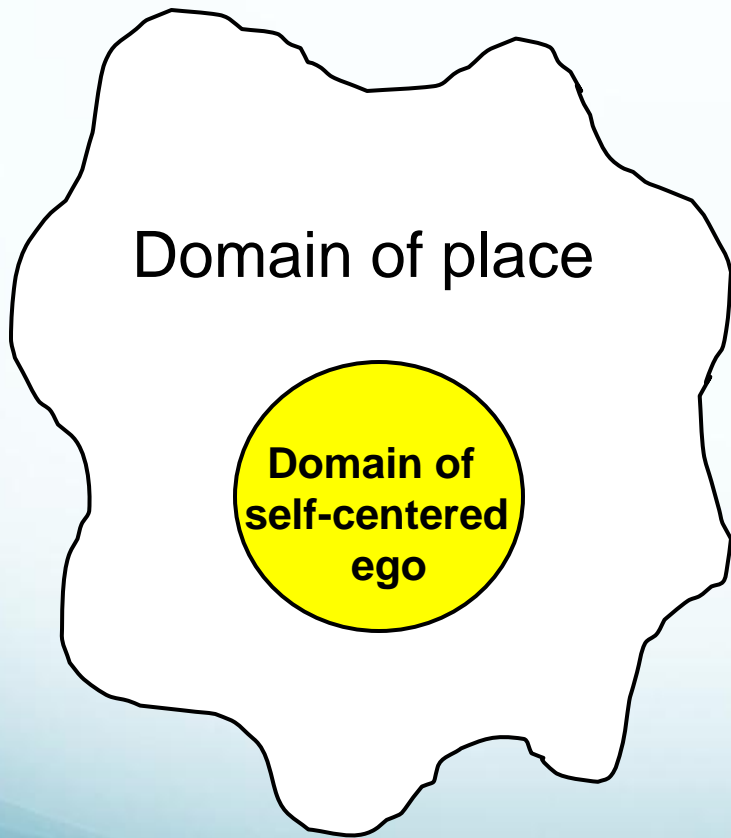
# **Model of two domains of self (Assumption 2)**

Is the self solid and separated from the other?

What constitutes the self?

# Assumption 2:

## Egg model of two domains of self



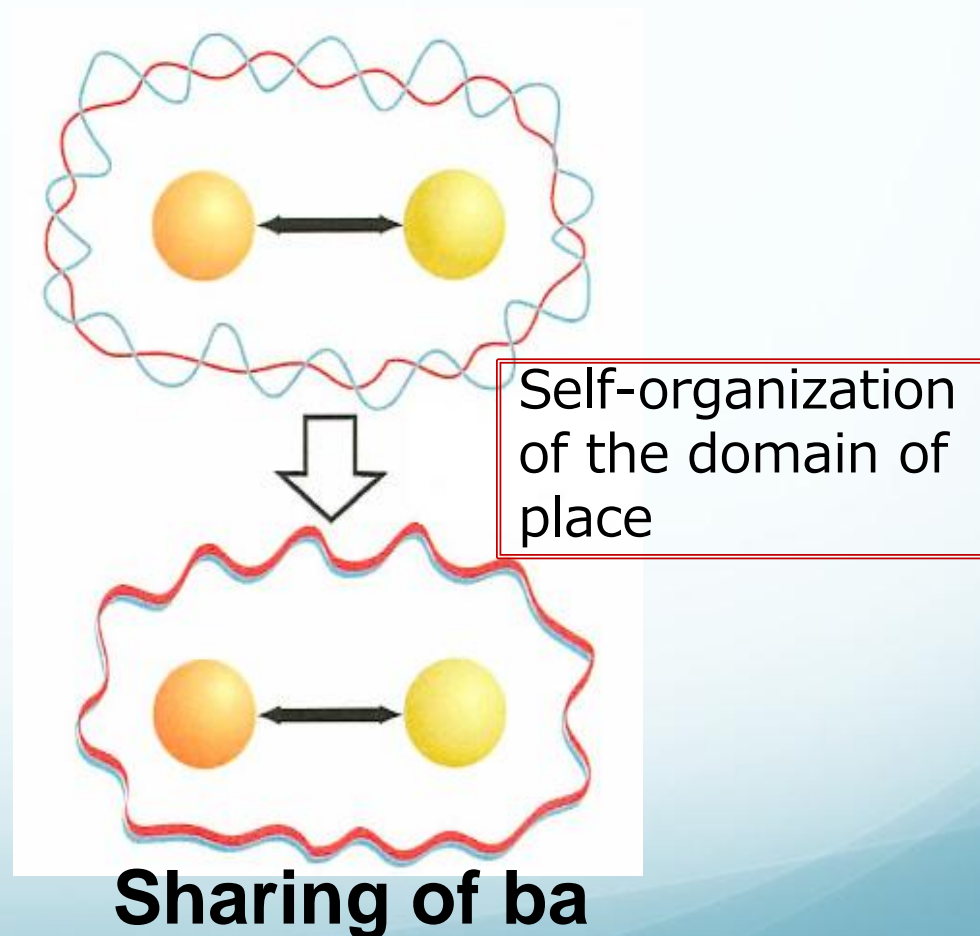
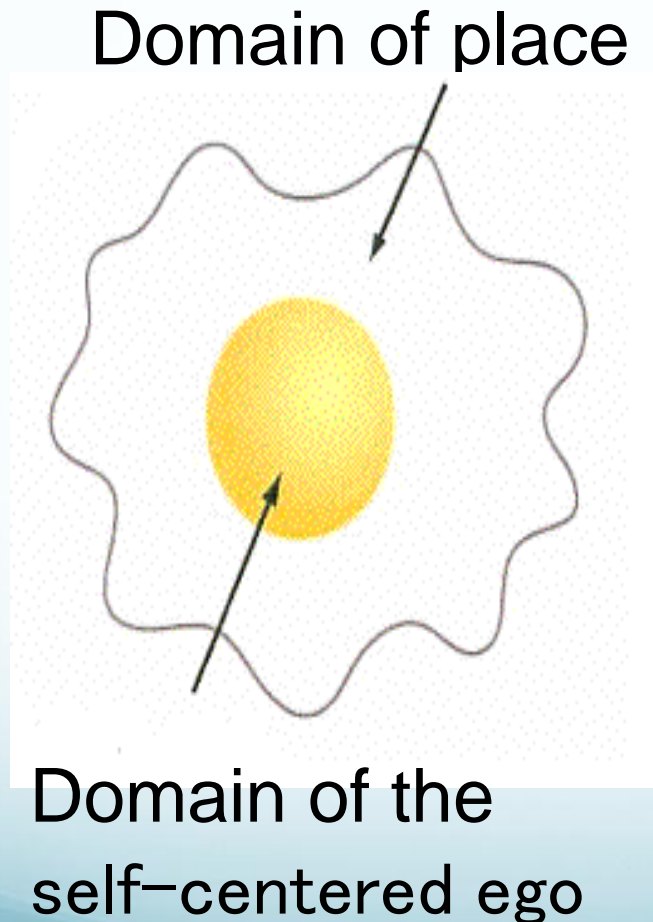
### Dual-Mode Thinking

**A: Domain of self-centered ego recognized by brain**

**B: Domain of place perceived by body**

**A and B are working simultaneously**

# How the *ba* is shared by two selves



# Assumption 3: the dynamic model of improvised drama

## The shift from **self-centered ego** prominent to **place** prominent

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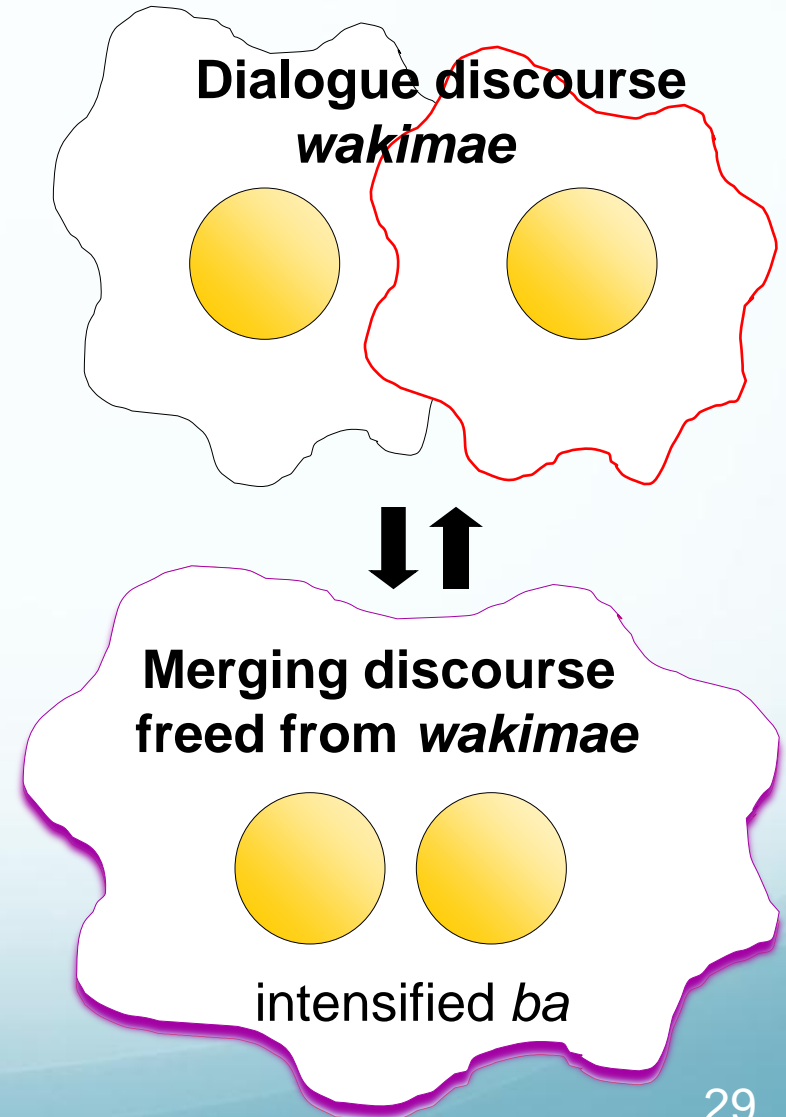
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# The two stages of discourse (1)

## Dialogue discourse ( 01-04,19-20 )

Interactants in the domain of self-centered ego exchange information accompanied by interpersonal modalities.

This is performed in self-centered ego prominent selves.

# The two stages of discourse (2)

## Merging discourse (05-10)

Conversationalists simultaneously shift from self-centered ego prominent phase to the place prominent phase.

In the place prominent area conversationalists share the feeling of co-existence, i.e., the sharing of the intensified *ba*.



## Research question (2)

*How and why  
can two strangers co-create  
a story in a short time?*

# Assumption 3: the **dynamic model** of improvised drama

The shift from **self-centered ego** prominent to **place** prominent

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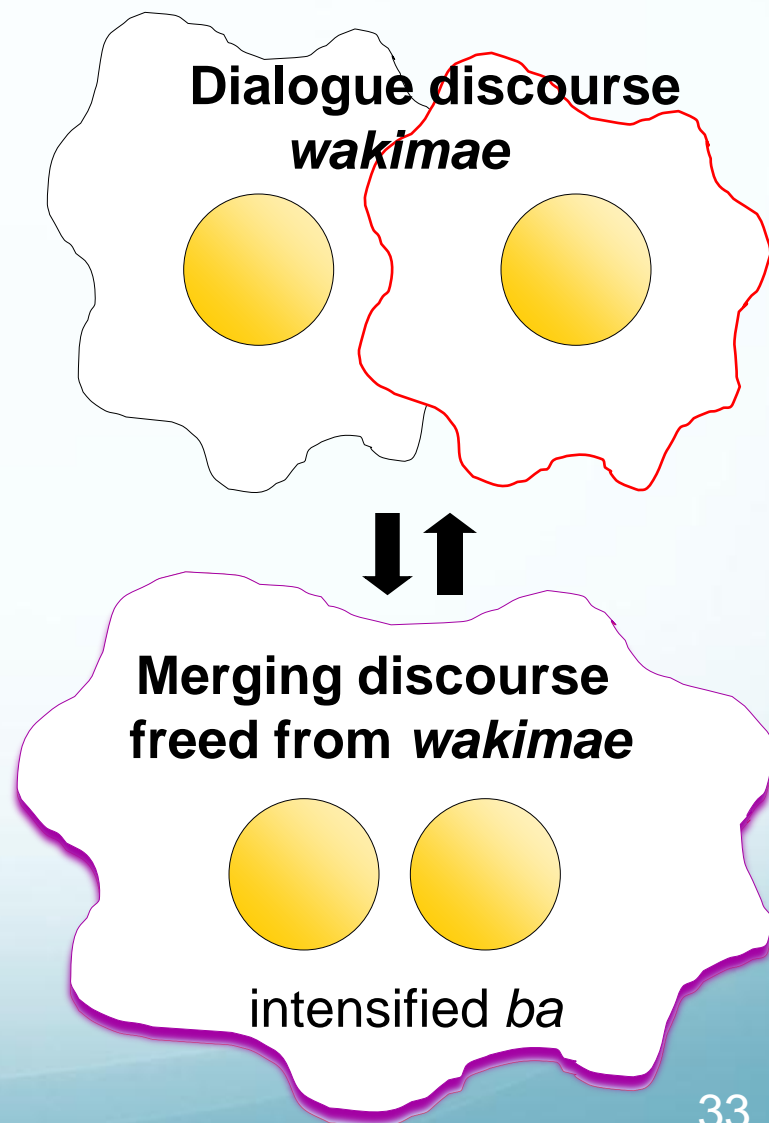
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# What is happening in merging discourse ?

## 1. Repetition

There is no new information.

Why do they repeat?

## 2. Simultaneous utterances

Why can they say the same thing simultaneously?

# The effect of merging discourse

What are they doing by repetition and simultaneous utterances?

-Exchanging/confirming information?

-Playing with words?

No, but **entrainment** is caused between conversationalists in the intensified *ba*.

# What is entrainment?

## Entrainment

*Biology* of a rhythm or something which varies rhythmically causes another gradually **to synchronize with it.**

The effect of entrainment

→ conversationalists merge and share the ***ba***

Why does entrainment occur?

# Entrainment and Mirror neurons

A mirror neuron is a neuron which fires both when an animal performs an action and when the animal observes the same action performed by another animal.

Mirror neurons in the brains of conversationalists might be a source of repetition and simultaneous utterances.

Mirror neuron is a possible explanation for **covert communication** (Assumption 4)

# How entrainment is emerged

05 T: soshitara ore te shima *tte ochi soo ni-nat ta*

06 S: *ochi s[oo ni-nat ta*

repetition

07 T: [oo ni-nat ta

simultaneous  
utterance

08 S: okot te ochi te

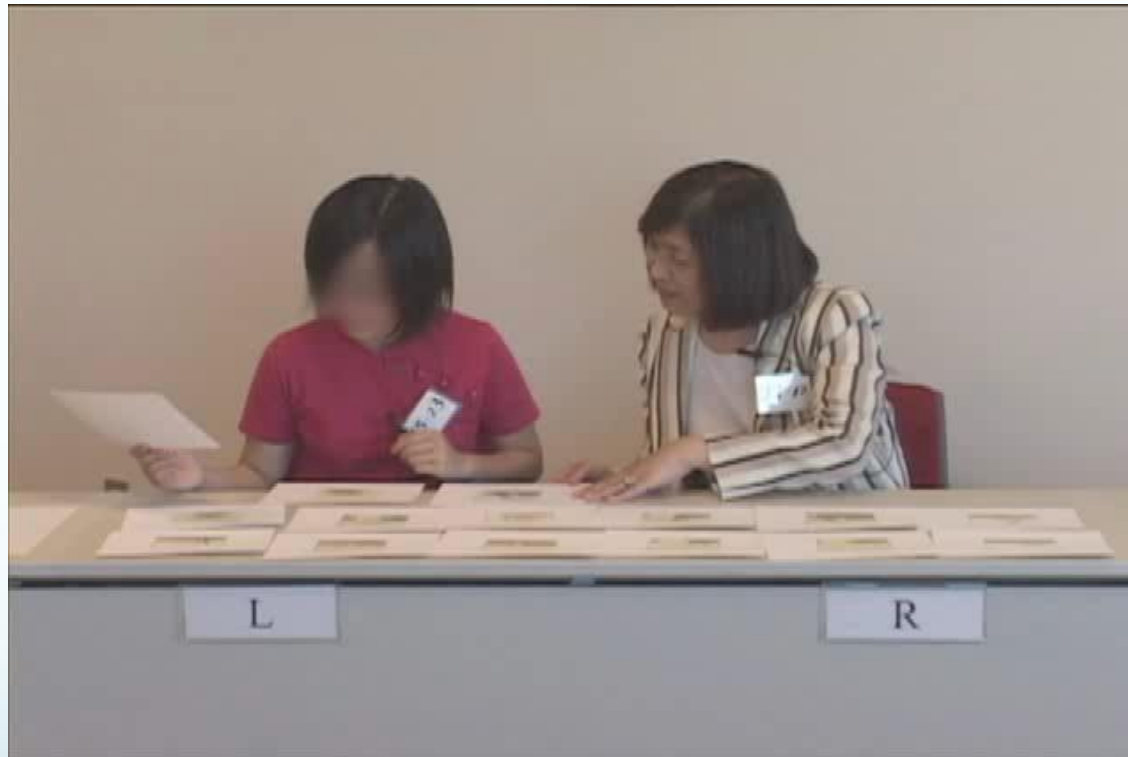
09 T: kore ga doko de [naiteiru

10 S: [naite ikinari demo kocchi ni  
watare ta

simultaneous  
utterance



# Repetition & simultaneous utterances



# Mechanism of co-creation of a story (1)

**THE FIRST STAGE:** The shift of discourse types

## Dialogue discourse

The dialogue discourse with interpersonal modalities  
Discourse in the self-centered ego (egg yolk domains)



## Merging discourse

The speakers suddenly drop interpersonal modalities.  
They are freed from *wakimae*, interpersonal concern.  
The story telling phase of conversation accelerates in  
the intensified *ba* of the place dominant phase (egg  
white domain).

# Mechanism of co-creation of a story (2)

**THE SECOND STAGE:** The function of **Merging discourse**

Merging discourse without interpersonal modalities



Develop self-organization of egg white domain that creates intensified **ba**.



Repetitions and simultaneous utterances serve to resonate, synchronize, and enhance **entrainment** of the interactants.



Foster the **covert communication** (Assumption 4) by mirror neurons  
Stabilization of **ba** as the basis of co-creating a story



Set up **ba** for **emergence** of new ideas and co-creation of a story.

# Concluding remarks (1)

Virtues of introducing *ba theory*

## 1. The inside view

The researcher could take the speaker's view embedded in the *ba*, and therefore observe what is happening in the discourse.

## 2. Two domains of self

enables us to understand how and why the shifts occur automatically within the same sociolinguistic setting.

# Concluding remarks (2)

3. **The dynamic model of improvised drama** explains the instantaneous shift of the dialogue discourse to the merging discourse.
4. **The covert communication** is enhanced by repetitions and simultaneous utterances that entrain conversationalists. It is caused by the function of mirror neurons in the brains of conversationalists. This sets up *ba* where new ideas are co-created.

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***Thank you  
for your attention***

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