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# Differences of Situating Self in the Field/*Ba* of Interaction between the Japanese and American English Speakers

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## < Outline >

- This study presents differences of cultural practices of Japanese and American English interactions in which mutual consent is established.
- The differences between Japanese and American interactions can be explicated by a frame of thinking of ‘*ba*’; that is, the way of situating and relating oneself with the other in the field/*ba* of interaction is different.
- Referential shifting from the first person pronoun to the second person pronoun in Japanese is presented as another pragmatic and interactional phenomenon that can be explicated by the theory of *ba*.

## < Data >

- Data: The task of Mister O Corpus (Collected under a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Japanese Academy for the Promotion of Science, JWU, 2004)
- Subjects
  - 12 student-student Japanese pairs
  - 11 student-student American pairs
- to make a coherent story with 15 picture cards

Fig. 1. Mister O Corpus picture cards



# General characteristics

Table 1: General Characteristics of the Data

	Americans	Japanese
No. of Pairs	11	12
Average Time (min.)	7:29 (max. 14:28, min. 3:51)	7:03 (max. 11:34, min. 4:35)
Average No. of Turns	73	90
Turn Duration (sec.)	6.3	4.9

# Linguistic devices to make a story

## 1. Proposing ideas and opinions

- 1) Declarative statements
- 2) Declarative statements with mitigating expressions
- 3) Declarative questions
- 4) Question forms

## 2. Co-constructing their story

- 1) Mono-clausal co-construction
- 2) Multi-clausal co-construction
- 3) Repetition
- 4) Overlapping repetition

# Proposing ideas and opinions

## 1. Declarative statements

(1) [E18: 37]

R: See, but they do the same thing, he goes on his head.

(2) [J16: 50]

R: *a, jaa, kore, kore-ga sagashite-ta-N-da*

“a, then, this, this was looking for it.”

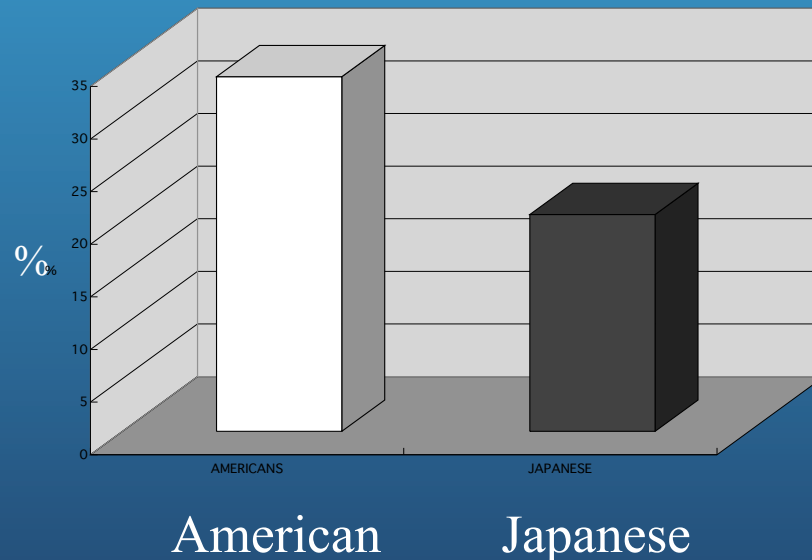


Fig. 2. Average and t-statistics of Declarative statements

	t-statistic
JP vs. AME	0.001

## Proposing ideas and opinions

### 2. Declarative statements with mitigating expressions

(3) [E18: 35-37]

L: @@@ Wait, **I think** uh... oh yeah, this one's before this one then.

R: No, **I think** it's after it! Because look, they're still on this side here.

(4) [J16: 5]

R: *tobe-ta mitai* “**it seems** that he could jump over (the cliff).”

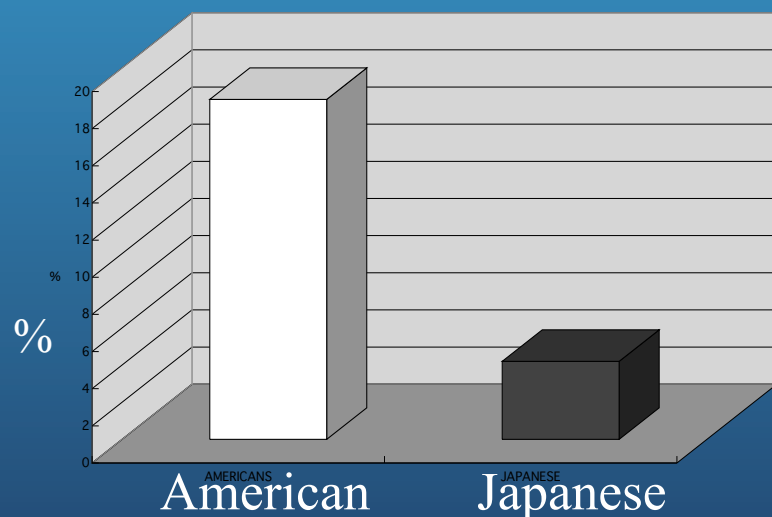


Fig. 3. Average and t-statistics of Declarative statements with mitigating expressions

	t-statistics
JP vs. AME	0.000

# Proposing ideas and opinions

## 3. Declarative questions

(5) [E06: 20]

R: And which one of these had a little ... this one? ... **he falls and it killed him?**

(6) [J16: 21]

L: *de* -, ***sasou?*** “then, (he) invites (him)?”

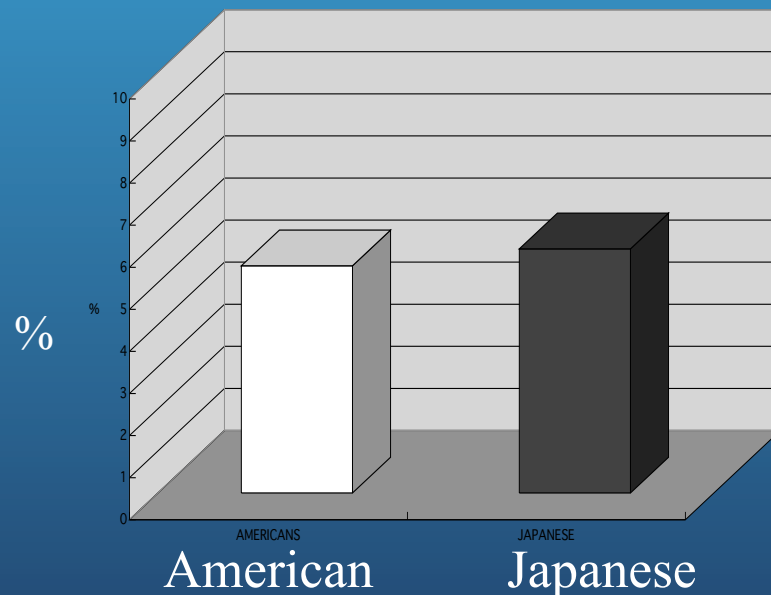


Fig. 4. Average and t-statistics of Declarative questions

	t-statistics
JP vs. AME	0.857



# Proposing ideas and opinions

## 4. Question forms

(7) [E06: 202]

R: oh, **how about if we take this one out?** ...cuz here he squishes that one, but this time he was the guy on the bottom, so this time...

(8) [J16: 77]

L: *damedat-ta-kara, kore, a, modot-te deau-N-desu-ka?*

“it was not successful so, ah, this went back and met (him)?”

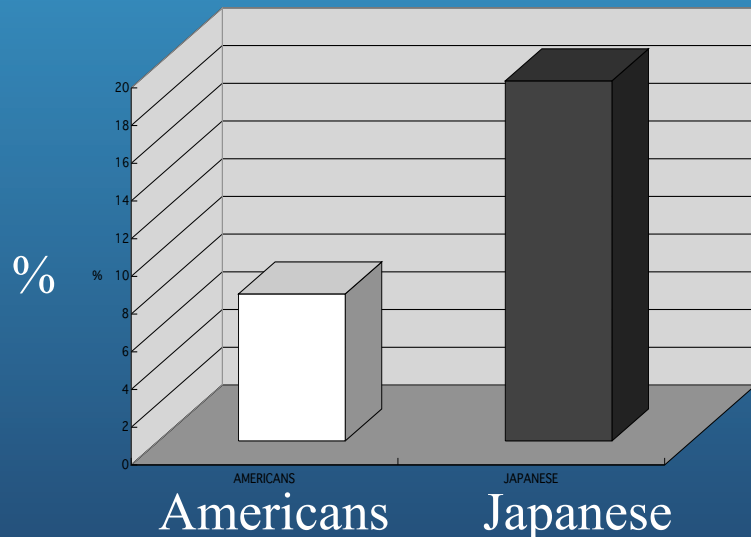


Fig. 6 Average and t-statistics of Question forms

	t-statistics
JP vs. AME	0.0003

# Proposing ideas and opinions

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## – Summary –

- Japanese speakers tend to utilize mainly questions forms, which are aimed at inducing a response such as agreement/disagreement, or acknowledgement from the partner.
- American speakers tend to use declarative statements with or without mitigating expressions, which are aimed at proffering the speaker's ideas and opinions without any intention of inducing the partner's response.



- These results indicate that the way the American pairs propose ideas and opinions is straightforward and speaker-oriented, whereas that of the Japanese pairs is more indirect and hearer-oriented.

## Co-constructing a story

- 1) Mono-clausal co-construction
- 2) Multi-clausal co-construction
- 3) Repetition
- 4) Overlapping repetition

## Co-constructing a story

### 1. Mono-clausal co-construction

(9) [E20: 065-066]

R: Um... where does -- okay, where does this -- oh, okay, the little guy goes, so **he goes back to get ...**

L: **Big guy.**

(10) [J16 03-05]

L: *ookii-no-de yat-tara jibun-ga*

“(he) tried with a big one and he ...”

R: *tobe-ta, mitaina, e*

“could jump”

# Co-constructing a story

## 1. Mono-clausal co-construction

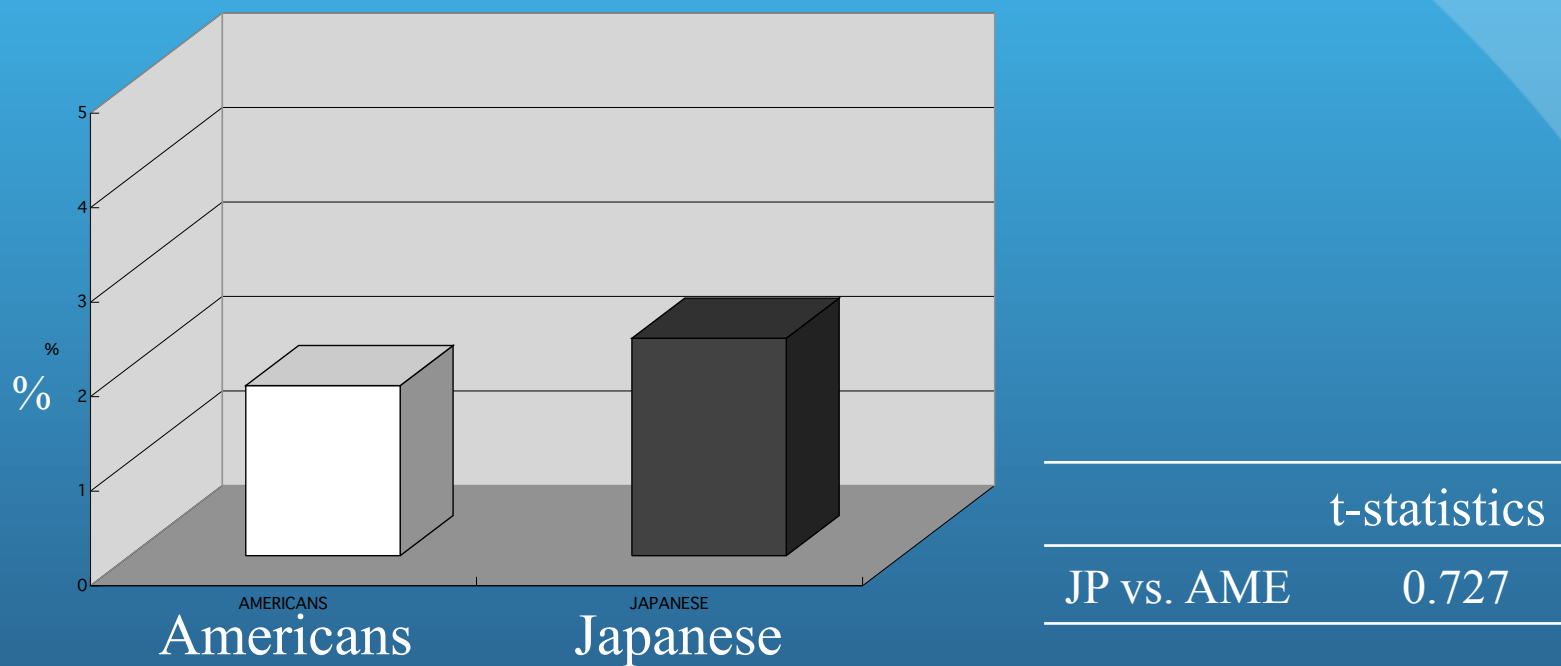


Fig. 7. Average and t-statistics of Mono-clausal co-construction

# Co-constructing a story

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## 2. Multi-clausal co-construction

(11) [J16: 67-71]

1 L: *arui-[te-ta*

‘(it) was walking’

2 R: [*te-tara, watare -nai, [modot-te, mitsukeru*

‘was (walk)ing, can’t go across, returns, finds’

3 L: [*modot-te, mitsuke-te, sasot-[te*

‘returns, finds, invites and’

4 R: [*un,*

*nok-[ke-tara*

‘yeah, put him/her on, then...’

5 L: [*nok-ke-te, tsubureru*

‘put him/her on, is smashed’

## Co-constructing a story

### 2. Multi-clausal co-construction

(12) [E22 ll. 44-52]

1 L: Oh, and then he accidenta[lly goes –oh, and then he jumps, and then [he's ...

2 R: [ly  
[he squishes the little white [guy.

3 L: [Guy, and then he goes  
overboard...

4 L: [And he's ...

5 R: [He .. her .. he bounces, [cuz look, doesn't it look like he's  
bouncing over?=  
=

6 L: [yeah  
=(o)ver him.

7 L: And then he's the only one that's able to go=  
=

8 R: =And he still  
can't get over

## 2. Multi-clausal co-construction

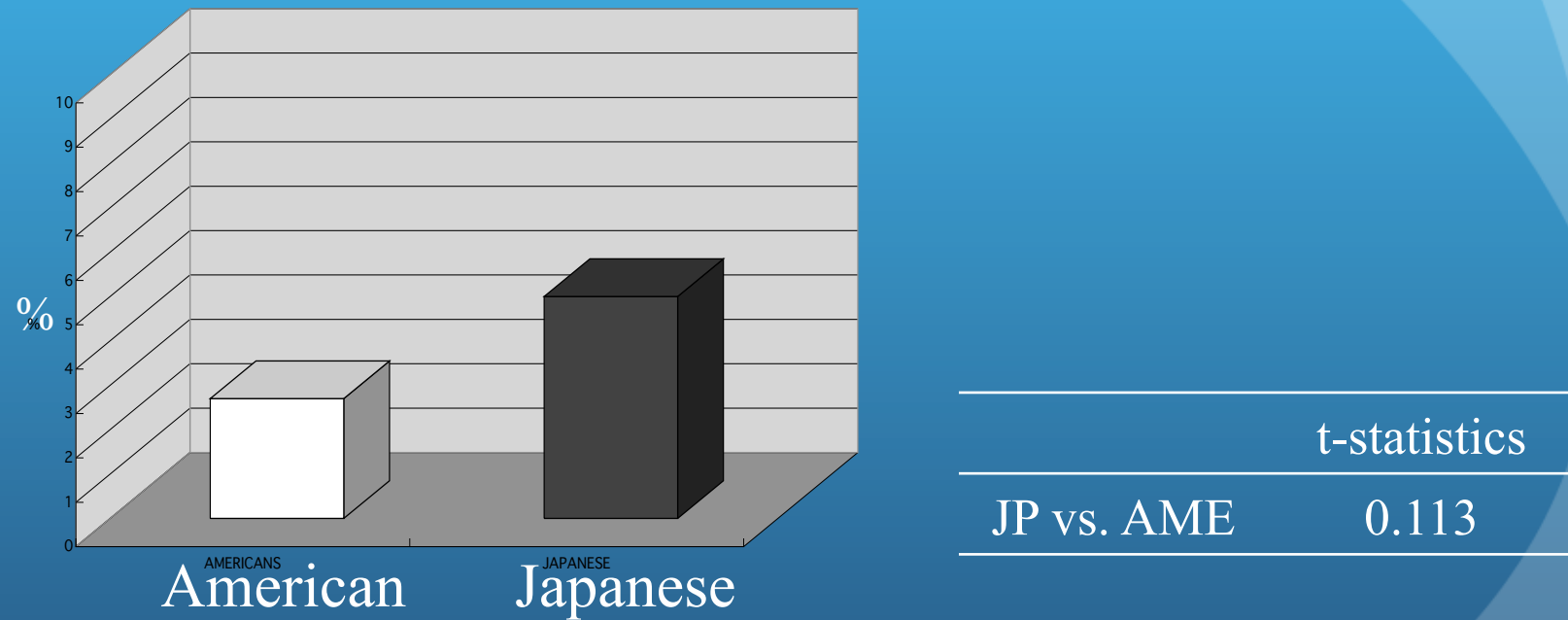


Fig. 8. Average and t-statistics of Multi-clausal co-construction



## Co-constructing a story

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### 3. Repetition

(13) [J16: 61-64]

L: *at-te*...

“(he) met (him)...”

R: (0.2) *atto, kore at-te* ...

“a, this met (him)...”

L: *de, sasou?*

“then, (he) asks (him to jump)?”

R: *sasot-te*...

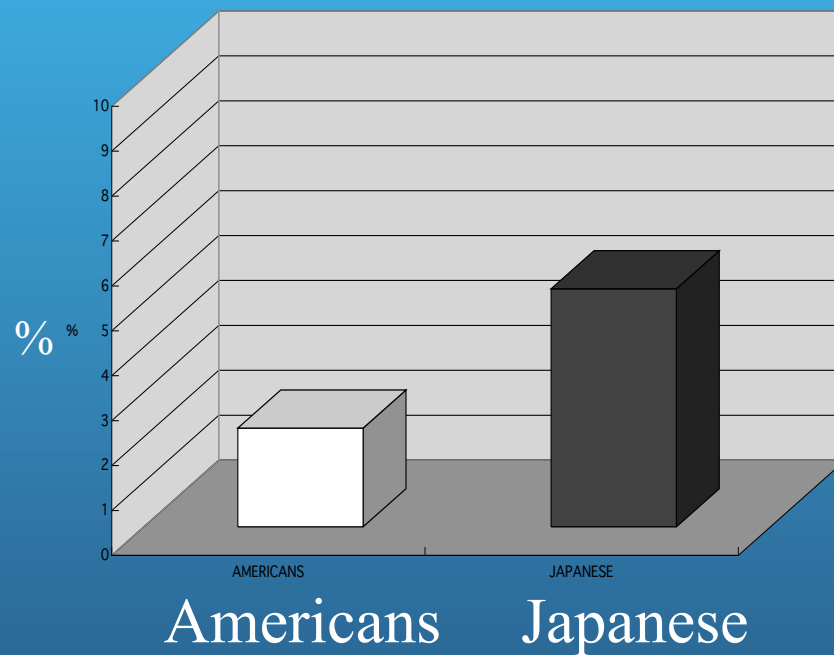
“(he) asks (him to jump)...”

(14) [E16: 60-61]

R: **Brings him over** [here?

L: [Year, **brings him over** ... and then ...

### 3. Repetition



	t-statistics
JP vs. AME	0.025

Fig. 9. Average and t-statistics of Repetition

# Co-constructing a story

## 4. Overlapping repetition

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(11) [J16: 67-71]

L: *arui-* [*te-ta*  
'(it) was walking']

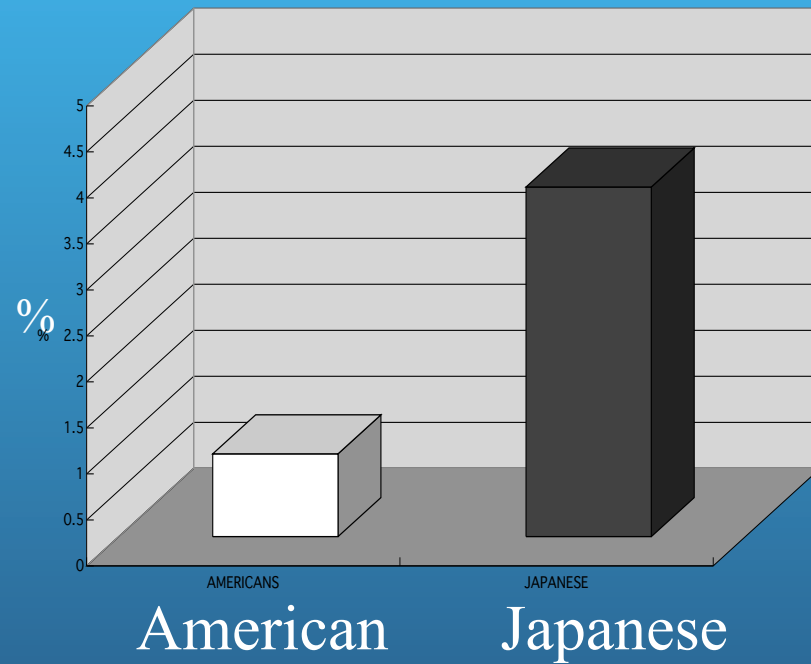
R: [*te-tara*, *watare -nai*, [*modot-te*, *mitsukeru*  
'was (walk)ing, can't go across, returns, finds']

L: [*modot-te*, *mitsuke-te*, *sasot-*[*te*  
'returns, finds, asks and']

R: [*un*,  
*nok-[ke-tara*  
'yeah, put him/her on, then...']

L: [*nok-ke-te*, *tsubureru*  
'put him/her on, is smashed']

## 4. Overlapping repetition



	t-statistics
JP vs. AME	0.004

Fig. 10. Average and t-statistics of Overlapping repetition

## Co-constructing a story

### – Summary –

- The Japanese speakers used all the four linguistic devices much more frequently than the American speakers.



- The interaction of the Japanese speakers is more interdependent and mind-sharing.

## Preferred linguistic devices for mutual consent

### 1. Proposing ideas and opinions

A 1) Declarative statements

A 2) Declarative statements with mitigating expressions

3) Declarative questions

J 4) Question forms

### 2. Co-constructing the story

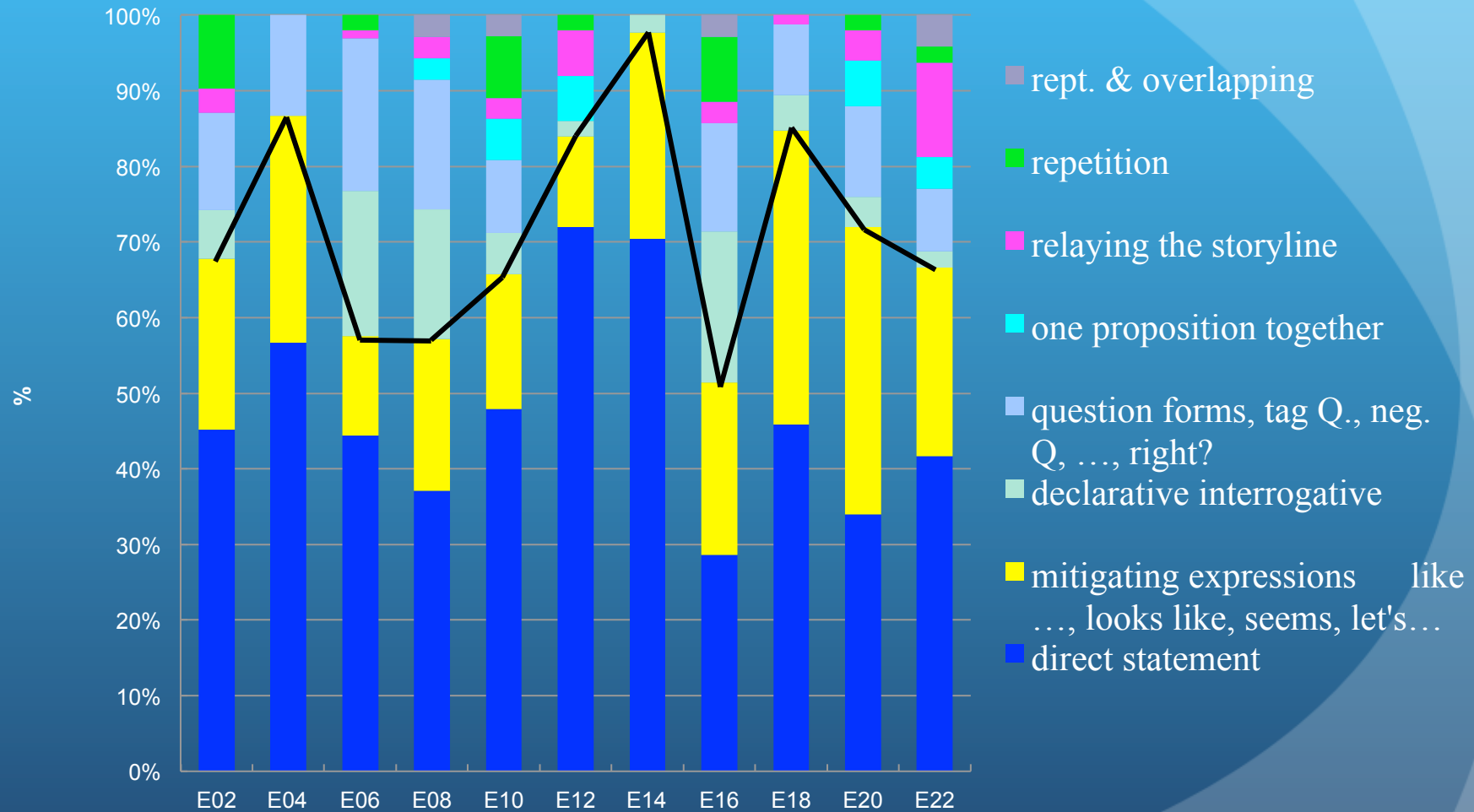
1) Mono-clausal co-construction

J 2) Multi-clausal co-construction

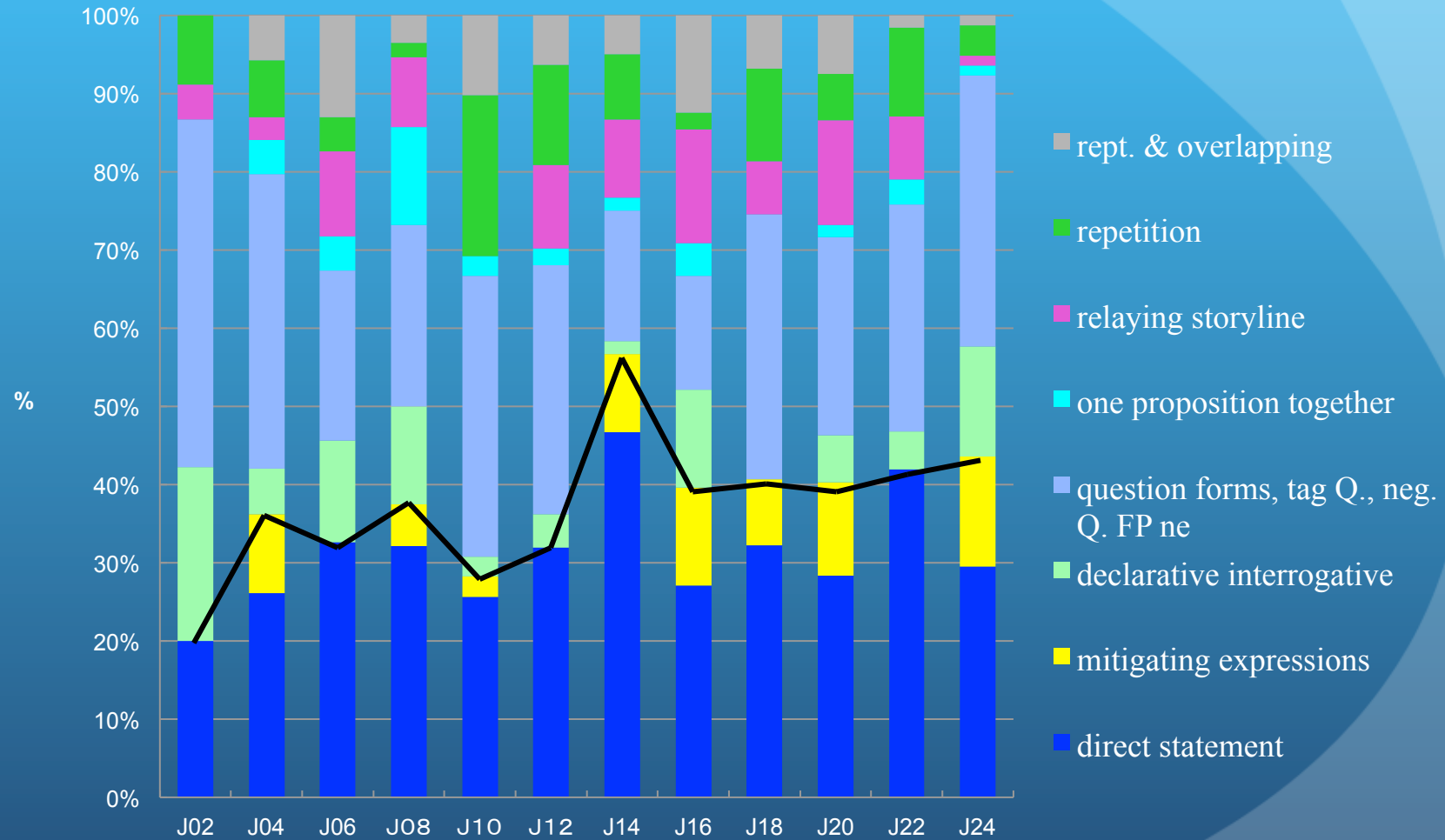
J 3) Repetition

J 4) Overlapping repetition

# Fig. 11. Linguistic devices by American pairs



# Fig. 12. Linguistic devices by Japanese pairs





## Preferred styles of interaction

### Americans

- propose ideas in a more direct manner.
- if the partner has a different idea, it would be expressed in a direct manner.
- do not seek the partner's agreement at each step.



Longer turns and less frequent turn-exchange

### Japanese

- seek understanding and agreement at every moment.
- need congruity at every step.



Shorter turns and frequent turn-exchange

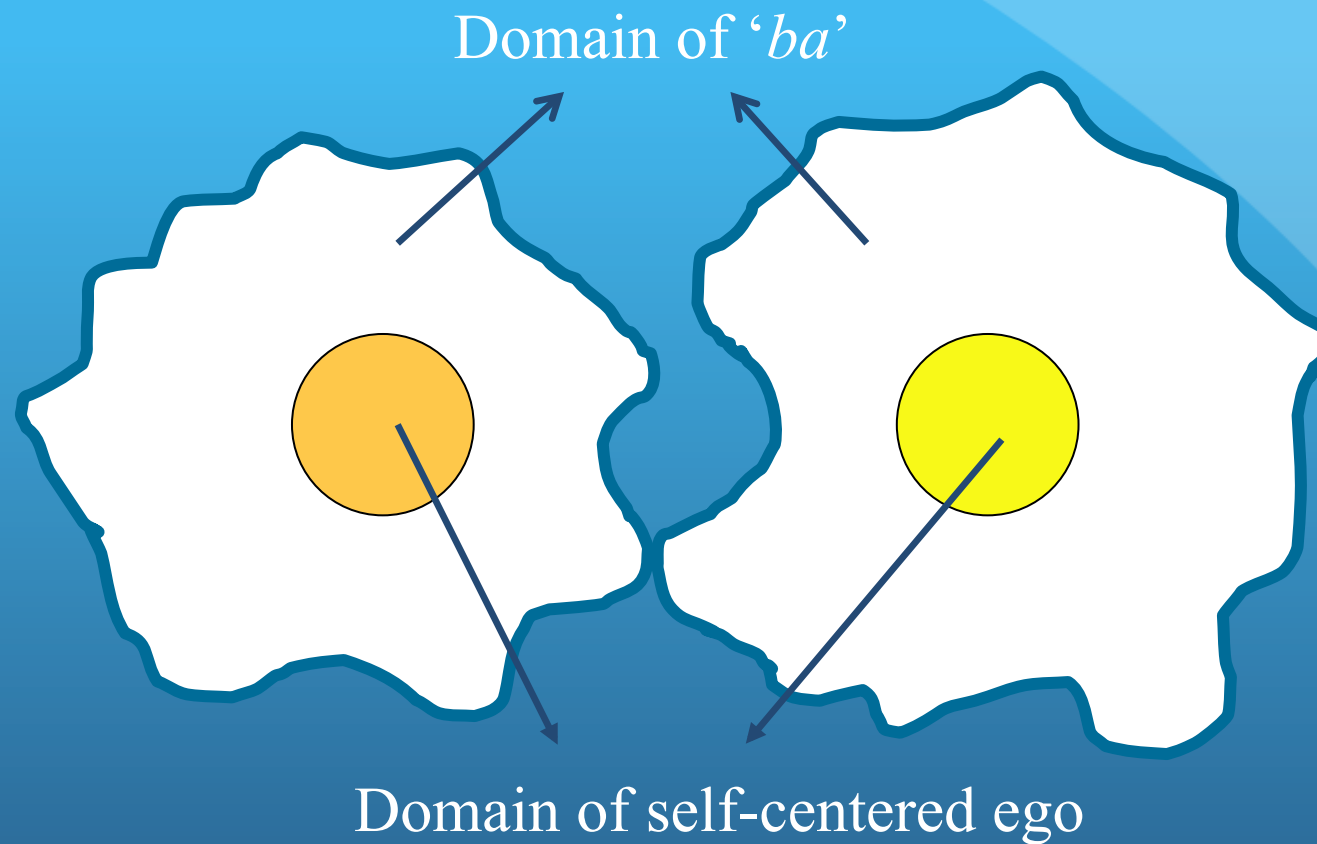
**Situating the self and the other  
in the field/*ba* of interaction**

## American interaction

- the participants keep their independent selves in separate fields.
- their selves are independent, self-contained and autonomous entities.
- their interaction consists of the exchange and negotiation of ideas, thoughts, and opinions.



a one-to-one, independent-minded interaction



(Arranged by the author based on Shimizu (2000))

Fig.13 Situating the self and the other in an interaction  
– American speakers –

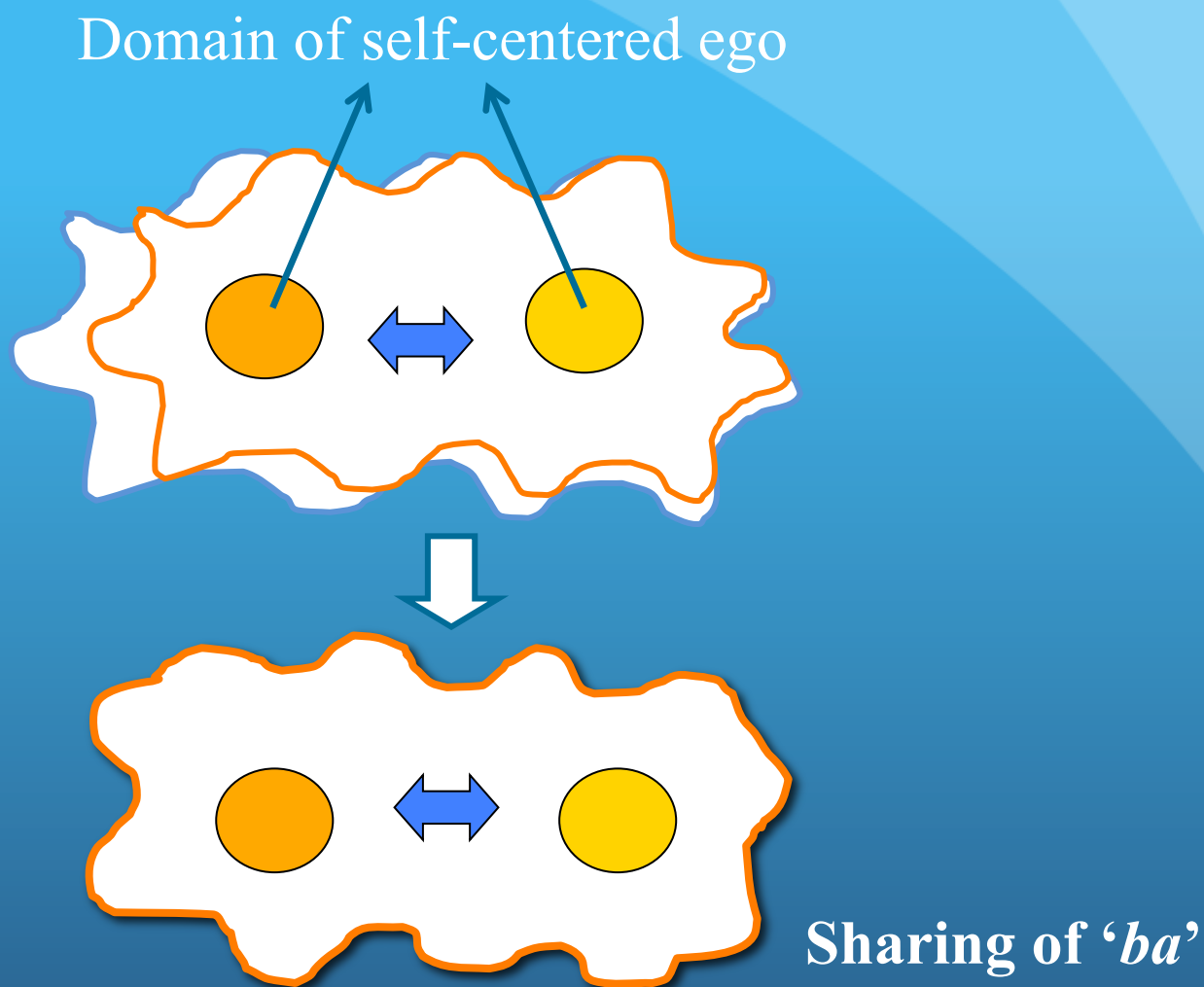
## Japanese interaction and the theory of '*ba*'

- They reorient themselves at every moment by seeking the partner's response.
- They resonate each other by entraining themselves
- the domain of '*ba*' merges into one and creates a stage on which each self interacts.



show the importance of '*ba*'-dependency

→ a '*ba*'-sharing/merging interaction



(Arranged by the author based on Shimizu (2000).)

Fig. 14. Situating the self and the other in an interaction  
– Japanese speakers –

Another pragmatic and interactional  
phenomenon which can be explicated  
By '*ba*'-theory

< *konata* ‘I’ >

(15) a. *sonata wa omoi yora -zu tomo,*  
 you.*sonata* TOP think.of -NEG if.not,

*konata* *wa omoi yori te sooroo*  
 I.*konata* TOP think.of GER be.HMBL

(*Otogizooshi, Benkei Monogatari* (14c – 16c))

‘If you do not think of (it), I (i.e. *konata*) think of it.’



< *konata* ‘you’ >

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(15) b. *konata* -no (*kataru*) *Heike* -wa  
you.*konata*-GEN (tell) *Heike* (name) –TOP

*hito* -ga *homema-ra-suru* *hodoni*,  
person-NOM praise-AUX-POL more,

*watashi-mo* *ureshiu* *gozaru*.  
I -too pleased HMBL

(*Kyoogen* (*Muromachi Period* 14C – 16C))

‘The more people praise *Heike Story* you (i.e. *konata*)  
tell, I am pleased as well.’

< *temae* >

(16) 1st person - in a humble use

*Temae*-ni kane-ga nai-hodoni kase-rarei

‘Since *temae*, (‘I’) don’t have any money,  
lend me some.’ (Nippo Dictionary 1603-04)

(17) 2nd person - in a contemptuous use

*Temee*-ni iware-taku-nee

‘I do not want to be blamed like that by *temae*  
(‘you’).’

(18) *Isobo-ga iu -ni -wa “Ware -wa ningen -de -gozaru”*  
name NOM say-to-TOP I.ware -TOP human-COP-POL

*Shanto ayasiu iwa-ruru -wa*  
name suspiciously say-HON.NML-TOP

*“Ware -ni sore-wo -ba towa-nu...”*  
you.ware-to that-ACC-PT ask -NEG

(*Amakusa Isopo* (16C [c. 1593]) (Shibasaki 2005: 172))

‘*Isopo* (i.e. Aesop) said, “I (i.e. *ware*) am mankind.”  
*Shanto* (i.e. Xanto) suspiciously said, “(I) don’t ask  
you (i.e. *ware*) such an (obvious) thing.’ ”

## Modern Japanese

(19) a. Ware -wa umi -no -ko

ware (‘I’) -TOP ocean-GEN-child

‘I (‘*ware*’) am an ocean child.’ (part of a phrase of a song)

b. Waree nani shitoru-N -ja

ware (‘you’) what do -NM-QU.

‘What are you (‘*ware*’) doing?’

(20) a. *boku-wa gakusei-da.*

I.*boku*-TOP student-COP

‘I (i.e. ‘*boku*’) am a student.’

b. *boku doko -ni suN-de iru -no?*

you.*boku* where-LOC live -GRD EXT-NM

‘Where do you (i.e. ‘*boku*’) live?’

First and second person pronouns  
in Indo-European languages

(21) *Comme j'ai de beaux yeux, moi!*

‘What beautiful eyes you (i.e. *je/moi* ‘I’) have!’

Inclusive ‘we’

# Referential shifting in Japanese

## - Summary -

- Referential shifting from the first person to second person pronouns in Japanese represents the nature of non-separation of oneself and the other self in the shared domain of *ba*, where ‘you and I’ can be easily merged into one.
- *Isshin doutai* “一心同体”



## Conclusion

- 1) In order to accomplish a cooperative task, the Japanese interact each other by resonating, synchronizing and entraining themselves.
- 2) Referential shifting between the first person and the second person pronouns can be another illustration of the Japanese characteristic of situating the self and the other in the place of interaction.



The concept of non-separation of the self and the other of *Ba* theory can explicate these culturally rooted ways of situating and relating oneself with the other in the place of interaction.

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Thank you !