THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A LOCAL LANGUAGE RESOURCE FOR IDENTITY

CONSTRUCTION IN JAPANESE TELEVISION VARIETY SHOWS

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By

Gavin Ken Furukawa

Committee:

Christina Higgins, Chairperson
Haruko Cook
Graham Crookes
Gabriele Kasper
Patricia Steinhoff

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the context of Japanese variety shows to analyze the ways that English is used for identity construction and how this relates to the idea of English as a local resource but still connected to the wider world. It also analyzes the ways that English is used as an entertainment resource for both variety programs and for the people who appear on these shows. Japanese variety shows are a site where *tarento*, entertainers that are marketed through their personality without belonging to single categories such as singer, actor, or dancer, are often ridiculed and humiliated for the purposes of entertainment. During this process, the *tarento* will often construct themselves and others through tactics of intersubjectivity that isolate individuals from the larger group using different dimensions of relation. This dissertation takes a Sociocultural Linguistics approach to the data allowing for the combination of multiple methods and traditions to gain a more holistic understanding of the connections between the English Language, Japanese media culture, and society. Drawing upon Bakhtin's (1981) chronotopes, and Bateson's (1972) notion of interpretive frames, I analyze the discourse of Japanese variety shows as a series of embedded frames of different places in space and time that are constructed through indirect indexical reference working together to create a single text. Utilizing data from focus groups and interviews as well as broadcast data this dissertation investigates the content of the text, audience reception and production aspects of Japanese television. I analyze the uses of English to construct images of intelligence and social cool as well as stupidity and unstylishness through indexical fields. The analysis reveals how socially positive and negative images are used as marketable resources and how intermediary level discourse in the form of screen text or telop can

present itself as having institutional authority through use of typography. My findings

reveal that English is used in a continuing cycle connecting the indexical fields of English

to the program and the viewership. The findings also show that the educational context of

learning English is never totally separated from its use in this medium.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

My dissertation examines how images of English and English related ideologies cross dimensions from entertainment to education. The focus of my analysis is on how English is used in one particular aspect of the *mediascape*, Japanese variety shows. As part of the mediascape, these shows need to be analyzed as both media and as mode (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001, pp. 79-81) which matches the dual aspects of the electronic capability of producing and spreading information as well as the collection of images created by these media described by Appadurai (1990, pp. 298-299). English in Japanese variety shows is an ideal situation to see how new signs and meanings are constructed and used. They also relate to border crossings among the scapes as well. English use on Japanese variety shows does not stay within the mediascape and in addition it draws upon images and aspects of the other scapes in the course of its production. The key scape that the use of English in Japanese media intersects with is that of education, which is situated in the *ideoscape* since ideologies of what English and Japanese look and sound like are taught to students through numerous drills and tests in most Japanese secondary education contexts. In exploring the meanings produced in these scape crossings, it is apparent that ideologies of English stemming from the realm of education are re-entextualized in the media, often for entertainment purposes, but also in ways showing that Japanese entertainers sometimes use English as a resource to resist the hegemony of the language. Despite this, conventional ideologies about English education are more frequently reproduced in the media. In particular for most middle and high schools in Japan, the notion that memorizing verb tenses or being able to translate

single vocabulary items out of context shows English ability whereas novel and creative uses of English do not.

My dissertation also contributes to the sociolinguistics of English as a global language by examining how English is used in the environment of Japan. These variety shows are made for consumption by an audience still described as "predominantly monolingual" (Hiramoto, 2012, p. 228). Despite this label, the audience has a variety of resources related to English such as widely shared experiences of studying English in the Japanese education system and knowledge of their first language to use in constructing various identities through English. It also means that the uses of English here are highly localized (Higgins, 2009) while at the same time drawing on globalized images as well. My dissertation also contributes to the understanding of English as a global language by showing how English is embedded into the Japanese language, culture, and society.

My research questions in examining this context are:

1. How is English used to construct identity on Japanese variety shows?

2. How does the use of English in media shed light on the role of English as a global and/or local language in Japan?

3. How is English framed as a resource for entertainment in these programs?

To answer the first question I will use embedded frames (Gordon, 2009, pp. 115-156) and indirect indexes (Silverstein, 1976) to explain how participants in Japanese variety shows can construct identities for themselves and others through use of the *tactics of intersubjectivity* (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). I will also explain how these embedded frames are used by visually unseen participants through intralingual screen text and sound

effects to utilize institutional authority for the purposes of creating identities for the embedded participants and the home viewing audience.

To answer the second question regarding the role of English as a global and local language in Japan I will use data that connects English to elements of social cool and social un-cool (unfashionable uses of English). Through my analysis I will explain how English is representative of the global in terms of image while having local uses that are different from that found in monolingual English countries or in typical English as a lingua franca contexts particularly through the use of code ambiguation.

In my analyses I will also reveal how English is a resource for entertainment that often utilizes performative frames to display ability and lack of ability. Both ability and lack of ability here are resources that work together with the Japanese entertainment system to move between texts connecting the mediascape with what Appadurai (1990) termed the *ethnoscape*, the landscape of human beings which can serve to carry and transmit resources across borders.

In this next section, I situate my research on these questions within the contexts of discourse analysis and media research.

1.2 Situating My Research

In this section, I first describe the conceptual and analytical framework that has shaped my research. I then turn to a discussion of research on language and media, and I pay particular attention to research in Asian contexts as a way to explain how the present study expands this field. Finally, I give a preview of my dissertation and explain its overall structure.

1.2.1 A contribution to Sociocultural Linguistics.

My dissertation adds to the growing collection of research on Sociocultural

Linguistics, which also aids in the understanding of media related research in general as

well as specifically increasing the body of research that examines the use of English in

Japanese popular culture. Sociocultural Linguistics (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) is based on 5

distinct principles: *emergence*, *positionality*, *indexicality*, *relationality*, and *partialness*.

The principle of *emergence*, based on the work of Hymes (1975) and Bauman and Briggs

(1990), states that identity emerges through interaction rather than being some

predetermined element, because of this identity is understood in Sociocultural Linguistics

as a social and cultural phenomenon. The principle of *positionality* was developed from

the understanding that larger macro-level categories determined by the researcher are

often less relevant than local categories or those categories that emerge through

interaction. It states that "identities encompass (a) macro-level demographic categories;

(b) local, ethnographically specific cultural positions; and (c) temporary and

interactionally specific stances and participant roles" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 592).

The third principle, *indexicality*, concerns the way in which identities are constructed.

According to this principle, identities emerge through indexical work which includes

stating the categories outright, implications and presuppositions about the self and others,

displaying evaluations and epistemic orientations, and the use of structures and linguistic

systems that are ideologically connected to specific groups or people (p. 594). The idea of

relationality is that identities do not exist independent of others; rather they exist in

relationship to others. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) include in these relations the notions of

sameness/difference and authority/delegitimacy (p. 598). The final principle, the principle

of *partialness*, deals with the fact that as researchers and analysts we can never get a truly complete picture of identity since we must base it on what we can perceive and what we understand of the context. It states:

> Any given construction of identity may be in part deliberate and intentional, in part habitual and hence often less than fully conscious, in part an outcome of interactional negotiation and contestation, in part an outcome of others' perceptions and representations, and in part an effect of larger ideological processes and material structures that may become relevant to interaction. It is therefore constantly shifting both as interaction unfolds and across discourse contexts. (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 606)

My dissertation fits in particularly well with these 5 principles in that the social constructionist approach to identity that I take is of necessity in line with emergence. My examination of both interaction and ideological discourse also works well with positionality and indexicality as well given that I use the context to inform my analysis. Relationality also works in my analysis since it relies heavily on the dimensions of the *tactics of intersubjectivity* which are themselves outgrowths of this principle. Finally, partialness is essential to my dissertation as well given that I am not a member of the target audience for the shows I examine, being neither a native Japanese speaker, nor raised in Japan as a Japanese citizen.

As an arguably new research tradition[1], Bucholtz and Hall's (2004) Sociocultural Linguistics has already embraced a variety of methods in its attempts to study the sociocultural connections to language use; however, different methods of analysis that have not been yet applied to this subject are particularly important to the goals of exploring areas of common ground between different traditions and methods that are often left unseen when researchers are too focused within single traditions or methods. This combination of approaches has led to the understanding of what Bucholtz & Hall (2005) term *tactics of intersubjectivity*, a way of understanding identity construction in terms of relationships rather than categories.

Sociocultural linguists such as Eckert (2008), Nilep (2006), and Jones (2011; 2012) have not yet explored how identity is constructed across different chronotopes or examined the common ground that can be found with the study of typography that I have utilized in this dissertation. Research on discourse in mass media has often focused on exploring the pragmatic uses of language as situated within the EM/CA tradition (Eglin & Hester, 1999; Hutchby, 2005; Gotsbachner, 2009), the language of power and discrimination from a CDA perspective (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 2009, pp. 156-186), or from a media studies perspective which analyzes both the text of the broadcast and its context including production and audience reception (Zillman & Weaver, 1999; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan, 2002). Overlapped with this third category,

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[1] The use of the term is itself new but Sociocultural Linguistics comes from several older traditions such as Linguistic Anthropology, Conversation Analysis and Interactional Sociolinguistics. Part of the Sociocultural Linguistics program is to find common ground between different disciplines and traditions which is different from those of the other traditions from which it came (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008, pp. 401-403).

research on multilingualism is a small but growing collection of work done by scholars who have particular interest in the use of English in mass mediated forms of popular culture found in countries where English is not the dominant language variety (Higgins, 2009; Pennycook, 2007) and especially in Asia (Pennycook, 2003; Park, 2009; 2010; Hiramoto, 2010; Moody, 2010) which is where my research is situated.

Among recent traditions doing research on identity and language, Sociocultural Linguistics has been particularly prolific. Typically working within a social constructionist paradigm (e.g., Bucholtz & Hall, 2008; Jones, 2011, p. 721), researchers whose work can be described as Sociocultural Linguistics examine the connections between culture, society and language (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008, p. 404). The most common focus within this tradition has so far been the analysis of indirect indexes (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Higgins, 2007; Kiesling, 2004; Nilep, 2006, p. 8, Eckert, 2008, p. 454; Jones, 2012, p. 44) and ethnography (Faudree, 2009, p. 154; Jones, 2012, pp. 50-58). For example, Jones (2012) explains how in a U.K. lesbian hiking group, drinking a beer can be seen as being particularly "dykey" (pp. 68-69). On one particular outing the hiking group stopped at a pub to get drinks. When one of the new members got herself a full pint of beer to drink, it was commented that she was the "dykiest of them all" (p. 68). Because of her ethnographic work, Jones understood that most of the hikers usually either drink something non-alcoholic or if they do drink beer it's usually a half-pint. Jones combines this knowledge with the knowledge of beer as having an unfeminine image to explain how this single act got the new member the description of being *dykiest*. Higgins (2007) also combines ethnographic work and interviews with her analysis of indexicals in her work on workplace humor in Tanzania. She explains how the use of the seemingly

English phrase *maintain figure* in a mostly Swahili exchange creates multiple overlapping indexical orders for different participants. Some see the phrase in the context of the whole comment which was understood as relating to history, political/social change and gender, while others understood it as a reference to modern Tanzania (p. 16).

The highly interdisciplinary approach of Sociocultural Linguistics leads to the understanding of common ground (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008, p. 405) across methods and traditions. One such example of this is how Eckert (2008) combines knowledge of phonological variation with the linguistic anthropological understanding of indexicality to shed light on how enregisterment and iconization occurs through the collection of indexicals that she calls indexical fields (pp. 465-466). This common ground is an additional goal of the Sociocultural Linguistics program. The discovery of common ground in research allows for the comparison of findings and gives a much clearer picture as to what has and has not been discovered about what role language plays in society and culture. By drawing on analysis of my multimodal data in terms of content, context, sequence, and typography my dissertation helps to extend this research program into both a new mode and a new medium (Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 142).

1.2.2 A contribution to research on multilingualism in the media.

Separate from Sociocultural Linguistics is another collection of research related to my dissertation, that which combines media studies and multilingualism. By choosing to research English as a global language and drawing upon Japanese variety shows as a major data source this work joins with the research of others that analyzes how English is used in popular culture from countries where English is not the dominant language.

Scholars within this tradition examine these uses of English in terms of being localized (Higgins, 2009) or as part of translingual practices (Pennycook, 2007; 2008) where speakers take ownership of English but in ways dramatically different from monolingual English speakers in inner circle countries (Kachru, 1994).

In research on Asian media and English three particular collections of research are highly relevant to my own work: the work currently being done on South Korean media uses and depictions of English, general research on the uses of English within Japan as both a global and local language, and specific research focused on pop culture English. Within the research on South Korean media and English Lo and Kim (2011; 2012) and Park (2004; 2009b, pp. 133-167) are most prolific. All three researchers share interests in both language used in interaction and language ideology. This body of research usually focuses on South Korean media representations of English and English speakers. Lo & Kim (2011) explain how registers of Korean and English used in dramas by different actors connect to different chronotopes and backgrounds resulting in situations where some celebrities are framed in the media discourse as being elite and modern while others are seen as vulgar. Lo & Kim (2012) also examine how comedy shows can construct Korean American characters as socially *lame* when learning Korean while multilingual South Koreans maintain a chic image in other types of programs. Such research has shown how uses of English can vary from constructing cool identities to sources of humor or derision. In addition to his work on the use of English in South Korea, Park's work on Korean variety show formats, particularly his analysis of captioning practices, has added greatly to the understanding of these practices which are so common in both South Korea and Japan. By analyzing how language is used in this particular medium,

Park (2009a; 2010) has shown how intralingual captions, similar to those used in

Japanese television, regiment language use by telling the viewer which uses are to be

seen as important or not. His research also shows how translation subtitles tell viewers

which uses of English should be seen as widely understood or not. Park states that further

examination of captioning and subtitling practices could lead to a greater understanding

of the under researched link between media texts, production practices, and consumption.

My dissertation adds to this by examining these links in greater detail.

1.2.3 English as a local and global language.

My research contributes to scholarship on the global spread of English by

examining how English can be both a global and a local language in the same

environment and by exploring the ways that English has become embedded in the

Japanese language. Current scholarship in Japanese contexts has explored the different

educational contexts of English (Honna, 1995; Gottlieb, 2001; McVeigh, 2004; Hiramoto,

2012) showing in particular the differences between what is taught in compulsory

education contexts versus private language schools (Lummis, 1976; Hiramoto, 2012) and

analyzing the types of texts being used (Hino, 1988; Koike & Tanaka, 1995), while

others have debated the idea of using World Englishes versus EIL for teacher training

(Matsuda, 2003; Hino, 2009).

In researching the general use of English in Japan the work by Philip Seargeant

stands out as particularly important. Seargeant's research on this topic has ranged from

generalized examinations of English use in Japanese society (Seargeant, 2005a) to more

detailed analyses of specific schools and sites for learning English (Seargeant, 2005b).

His work is extremely helpful for me in situating my research because of his attention to English as an idea as much as a language, for example the way that English is used ornamentally to give a cosmopolitan image (Seargeant, 2010, pp. 77-78). This approach allows for an analysis of English use in Japanese society that is somewhat broader than descriptive approaches that focus on word etymology and structure (Stanlaw, 2004) or the typography of individual lexical items (Honna, 1995; Taguchi, 2006; Inagawa, 2007). Similar to some of Haarman's (1989) work where he analyzes general attitudes towards English through survey work as well as seeing what English accomplishes semiotically when used in commercials, Seargeant (2009, p. 154) tries to see English as a concept and an interactional resource at the same time. My research also takes this approach in that for Japan, English is both an ideological construct and a resource that can be used in interaction.

1.2.4 Japanese, English and the media.

My interest in aspects of the mediascape (Appadurai, 1990) is both personal and academic. Personally, I have spent much of my life consciously learning sentence patterns and vocabulary in both my L1 and L2 through initial exposure from television. Academically, I believe the mediascape to be a powerful force that allows for connections that transcend time and space by sending images of events to be seen all over the world and at all different times regardless of when those images were recorded. This interest has led me to situate my work among those who specifically work in analyzing how English is used in Japan's popular culture. Pennycook's (2003) early work on the music of Rip Slyme, a band that interweaves English with Japanese in their lyrics,

showed how English is utilized as a resource along with Japanese to the extent that lines

of distinction between the two languages are blurred through hybrid language practices.

The complexities of English and Japanese translingual practices in music were then

analyzed further in Moody and Matsumoto (2003) and in Moody (2006). Through

analyzing creative uses of code ambiguation in JPop songs, Moody and Matsumoto

(2003) argued that the lyrics assume a widespread ability to understand English, albeit

mixed with Japanese. They also demonstrated how the genre of JPop music has a long

standing connection to the English language allowing code-ambiguation to situate the

song within the genre and convey a sense of being modern. Moody (2006) went on to

analyze the market value of English within popular songs and how this use questions

ideologies of difference between Japanese and English. Similarly, my research into

Japanese variety shows and their use of English seeks to interpret the value of language

use within the environment in which it is produced, and with attention to its marketability.

1.3 Preview of the Dissertation

In Chapter 2, I will describe the methodology I used, including my data collection

methods and my analytical framework. Due to the relatively complex nature of Japanese

television, I also provide a brief discussion of television discourse in order to familiarize

the reader with the scope of the data I use as well as to discuss methodological issues

related to this form of data. I then explain the collection processes I used and the data sets

I created. After this I will go into detail regarding the methods of analysis starting with

those commonly used in Sociocultural Linguistics, paying particular attention to frames,

typographic analysis and chronotopes. Using a simple image of data drawn from a US

television drama, I will show how each form of analysis can be approached individually and then I will demonstrate how they can be combined for a greater understanding of the text within its TV context.

Next I have included two background chapters to help in understanding the highly contextualized nature of my data. The contexts involved in researching English in such a specific and under-researched situation as Japanese variety shows requires an understanding of two diverse topics which is why I have included the information on them in seperate chapters. It is absolutely important to understand the context of Japanese television and where variety shows fit within the media but also it is important to first understand the linguistic environment of Japan itself.

In chapter 3 I will explain the context of English in Japan, starting with its history. Beginning with the period of isolation known as *sakoku*, I review the initial contact situation between the Japanese language and English and explain how early educational approaches and attitudes to teaching English have had a particularly long term impact on the way Japanese is taught even to the present day. This is important to my dissertation because the educational system is frequently indexed when English is used and this use of English must be understood as historically situated. I then explain the post-World War II education system and Japan's current situation with English in relation to the use of standardized testing. After this I give a brief explanation of the linguistic environment of Japan in terms of the basic phonology of Japanese and the orthographic systems used in Japan in order to familiarize the reader with the resources utilized in code ambiguation which occurs between Japanese and English.

Chapter 4, the second background chapter, gives an explanation of Japanese variety shows. I first answer the difficult question of *what is a Japanese variety show*? by doing a typological analysis based on multiple sources which is followed by a detailed description of this genre. I then follow that with a description of several subgenres and the use of *corners* (コーナー) that can cross different television genres and subgenres. After that, I also explain two specific subgenres which are extremely common: the comedy ensemble and idol variety formats. In doing so, I also explain the *tarento* system of Japan and explain the categories of Japanese comedians and idols.

Chapter 5 begins my detailed analysis of Japanese variety shows by examining the connections between English and intelligence through performances from one particularly long running program, *Mechamecha Iketeru*. I use both embedded frame analysis and typographic analysis here. I then show how the educational context is utilized to construct identities along the dimensions of Bucholtz and Hall's (2004) *tactics of intersubjectivity*. In particular I will explain how *adequation* and *distinction* are used with multiple embedded frames to ridicule and mock. I will also describe how these shows utilize institutional authority and shared educational experiences to accomplish linguistic ridicule.

In Chapter 6, I build on the links between English and intelligence to examine how this can then connect to personal attributes of sophistication and coolness. In particular, I show how frames are used to construct spaces for the display of what I term *English cool*, but often with reference to Japan's English education system at the secondary level. I then demonstrate how English cool becomes foundational to other notions such as *sugosa* ('to be amazing'), Hollywood, and the category of *sutaa* (similar

to the English word 'star' but with different implications). Because the participants are all entertainers the image of Hollywood and *sutaa* relate to achieving success in their current line work as well as having the image of wealth and glamour. I also illustrate how the relationship between English and cool can be manipulated so that in addition to English signifying cool, cool can signify English.

The next chapter then takes this idea of English cool and provides examples of how *un-cool English*, or English use that is seen as unfashionable, can be utilized as a resource on television shows as well as in other related forms of media. I will explain how a particular type of comedian becomes connected with the idea of English with several examples as to how English can be a comedic resource and relate to negative and un-cool qualities in Japanese society. This idea of un-cool English as a resource runs counter to many discourses about the importance of English that are commonly heard in research on English in Japanese education.

Finally, I will give brief discussion of the dissertation and my conclusions in chapter 8. This will be followed by a brief summary of the whole dissertation. After that I discuss the limitations of my research and possible directions for future research on the topics I have addressed.

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explain the methodology I use to analyze my research questions. First I will discuss my reasons for choosing television data as the focus of my dissertation in terms of its power and influence especially in Japan. Then I will explain how my data were collected and describe some of the participants. In my data analysis section I explain the choice of Sociocultural Linguistics as the main framework for my analysis. In this section I will explain three of the main analytical devices from Sociocultural Linguistics that I use throughout the dissertation: tactics of intersubjectivity, framing, and indexicality. Then I will go on to discuss the use of semiotics of typography as developed by van Leeuwen (2006) in my analyses. In this section I will explain how distinctive feature analysis (p. 147) within this line of research is grounded in Systemic Functional Linguistics and give examples of how this analysis is accomplished. I will then discuss the use of Bakhtin's (1981) chronotopes towards television data and how this concept can be combined with Sociocultural Linguistics and the semiotics of typography.

2.2 Television Discourse

In Japan, television is an industry generating over 65 billion yen in advertising sales alone. Because of the *tarento* system currently in place in Japan which will be explained further in Chapter 4, there is an enormous amount of cross promotion, leading to even greater amounts of money. Television in Japan is connected to a multitude of industries this way. Popular TV shows often feature guests promoting movies, concerts,

stage shows, clothing lines, restaurants, books and magazines. The shows will also

promote themselves, these guests and the consumables they promote on their websites

and specialized sites available through cell phone services or through digital broadcast

channels. This process of cross promotion is similar to the *commodification of the*

celebrity (Rojek, 2001) but differs in that the celebrity culture utilizes abstract desire

(p.187) whereas for the Japanese media industry the *tarento* system encourages a highly

personal relationship between the consumer and the *tarento* which is strengthened

through the marketing process (Lukacs, 2010; Karlin, 2012; Marx, 2012).

In addition to being a powerful financial power in Japan, television is also key site

of discursive practices that engages over 100,000,000 people on a regular basis (Chun,

2007, p. 3). In addition to consuming the media by watching it, people talk about it, plan

their schedules by it (Silverstone, 2007, p. 18), and also blog about it. If they watch a

show and then buy a product, they are embedded in the discursive, but also in the

material practices that it is meant to encourage. On occasion, they take part in the

creation of these programs as well by joining in activities planned by the various

programs, writing or calling them, and commenting on the shows' websites. Part of the

postmodern experience in Japan is the development of relationships with many of the

people who appear on television making it a more personal experience. Lukacs (2010)

explains this by connecting the breakdown of signification as seen through the rise of

appearance and form in Japanese television *trendy dramas* over content with the main

feature of trendy dramas being *tarento* rather than actors (p. 41). The *tarento* then

become a draw that overrules substance and meaning in shows through form creating the

empty signifier which many see as a hallmark of postmodernity (Chandler, 2005, p. 78).

In addition, television is a part of the average Japanese citizen's everyday life, as it is in many parts of the world. As such, it is even more important to be examined in that the subtle everyday things are often the ones that have great impact with very little attention (Silverstone, 2007, p. 17). This aspect of the *mediascape* (Appadurai, 1990) is a very important point of connection between individuals and society, and it is something which can give insight to both social scientists and critical theorists alike.

2.3 Data Collection

I collected data from two main sources: television programs and focus groups conducted in Japan. The television data comes from a collection of over 100 hours of Japanese variety shows recorded by friends and video streaming sites. From this collection, I looked for data that showed or referred to English language use. The focus group data was collected to help understand the audience reception. As a non-native speaker of Japanese and more importantly a native speaker of the language being researched, I decided to employ a research assistant to prevent any potential discomfort at having strangers talk in front of me or to me about my own language.

I employed a research assistant who is a Japanese native speaker to find participants from among his friends and acquaintances at a university in Japan to take part in four focus groups. Each group consisted of 3 college students who knew each other and the assistant personally beforehand. Gender was distributed evenly among the groups with one group of 3 males, one group of 3 females, one group with 2 males and 1 female, and one group with 1 male and 2 females. My research assistant was given four different video clips each under 10 minutes and played two videos for each group. After

watching each video, he asked the participants questions about the use of English in order to start the discussion. He was also instructed to allow the participants to change topics at will to try and maintain a level of informality (Puchta & Potter, 2004, p. 25) if possible. Each participant received 2500 yen in compensation for around 1 hour of their time, and all gave oral consent after reading a handout about the research project written in Japanese. The four hours of focus group data were also drawn upon in my analysis of the TV data as well, inspiring new directions for my analysis.

In addition to these two data sources, I also conducted interviews with friends who work for different Japanese television programs both here in Hawaiʻi and in Japan and I drew on my experiences taking part in the taping of several Japanese TV programs both in front of and behind the camera before starting my degree. I also explained my research to these sources as well to get their feedback on my general analysis. This was very helpful in understanding the general context of what is filmed as opposed to what is seen on television.

2.4 Data Analysis

2.4.1 Sociocultural Linguistics.

I situate my research within Sociocultural Linguistics, a broad interdisciplinary approach to language that examines the interactions between culture, society and language (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 568). A Sociocultural Linguistics approach embraces sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, and several forms of discourse analysis to examine the interaction between these three aspects of human existence. It also allows me to look at language use on multiple levels ranging from the detailed

examination of human speech and interaction to the use of texts produced for the on-screen telop, and finally to larger ideological discourses that exist in society.

Sociocultural Linguistics-based research often includes analytical techniques from several widely different approaches to the study of language. Some like Eckert (2008) take a variationist approach while others use techniques drawn from Conversation Analysis (Sidnell, 2008) or from postmodern theory (Jones, 2012). While there are definitely aspects of these various approaches that are in direct conflict with each other, something that Sociocultural linguists do not deny or forget, the goal of Sociocultural Linguistics is to "call attention to common ground that is sometimes overlooked in highly focused discipline-specific work as well as in the heat of academic debate" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008, p. 405). Some examples of this common ground between disciplines may include the concepts of emergence or indexicality as discussed earlier in Chapter 1. The benefits of such an approach have led to great insights as well as a more holistic understanding of how language is used (Eckert, 2008; Sidnell, 2008). In the next section, I highlight the key aspects of Sociocultural Linguistics that I make use of to analyze Japanese media.

2.4.1.1 Intersubjectivity.

Much of the work in Sociocultural Linguistics to date has been on the construction of identity, utilizing the *tactics of intersubjectivity* created by Bucholtz and Hall (2004, pp. 493-494) which analyzes the construction of identity along several dimensions such as *adequation/distinction*, *authentication/denaturalization*, or *authorization/illegitimation*. Examples of this include Higgins's (2007) analysis of how understanding is accomplished during verbal play in a Tanzanian office or Fitt's (2006)

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examination of how bilingual children use their languages to ally or distance themselves from others.

These tactics of intersubjectivity are particularly important to my research because of how English is used on Japanese television to construct various identities and relationships. This is particularly used in cases of *ijime* ('harassment') in my data where a large group will ridicule a single individual creating movement of a single individual in the direction of *distinction* while moving the rest of the group into *adequation* through contrast. At other times this may be enhanced by also constructing the identity of the ridiculed individual through *illegitimation*. These tactics will be particularly utilized in Chapter 5 where the focus is on English and its relation to intelligence.

2.4.1.2 Frames.

In addition to the tactics of intersubjectivity, Sociocultural Linguistics also often utilizes *framing* (Bateson, 1972). Framing involves the use of frames of interpretation which allow interactants to contextualize each other's actions to achieve intersubjectivity. Particularly important for my analysis is the idea of *embedded frames*. Goffman (1986) describes the idea of embedded frames first as *lamination* (p. 82), by which he means that activities may have multiple layers. One example he gives of this Droste-like effect is a play that has a rehearsal as part of its script. It is a play occurring within a play. Gordon (2008) examines this idea in greater detail as she shows how frames can be embedded and *overlapped* (pp. 115-116). She gives an excellent example of embedded frames by examining a child role-playing with her parents (pp. 145-153). By pretending to be one parent then the other while acting out a scene from her bath time earlier that night, the child is able to construct a frame whose metamessage is completely contained within

another thus constructing an embedded frame. In the play frame she acts out a *mommy and daddy are giving Natalie a bath* reenactment that hearkens back to an earlier time period. That earlier time period is completely encapsulated in the play of the present. In contrast, when parents tease each other by referring to earlier comments where one is a complaint about childcare and the other is a critique of the complaint (pp. 116-121) the frames are overlapped but not embedded. A particular utterance becomes the point of overlap between the two frames.

The concept of embedded frames is essential for analyzing televised discourse in Japan because there are multiple layers of embedded frames in existence in most Japanese television programs. These embedded frames, also used to a lesser extent in most TV broadcasts, are meant to be clearly understood by viewers. For example in the photos below, Figure 2.1 was taken from the US television show *Supernatural*[2] (Kripke, 2005-2014) about two brothers who hunt and kill monsters. It is part of the opening credits of the show.

Figure 2.1 *Supernatural* credits   Figure 2.2 Credits frame diagram

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[2] To avoid infinging on copyright, the figures in my dissertation representing televised data are drawings made to represent the original data.

It is understood by viewers that the words were placed onto the image after the scene was filmed. What we have is a simple case of embedded frames as seen in Figure 2.2. Viewers understand that the credits are added after the filming of the scene was done and that the actor cannot see these words. However, if we look at the next image, we can see more screen text but from a different frame.
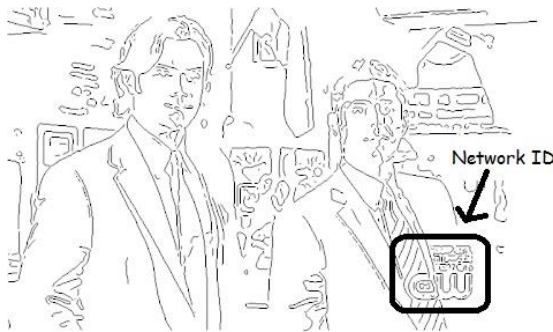
Figure 2.3 Actors in *Supernatural*
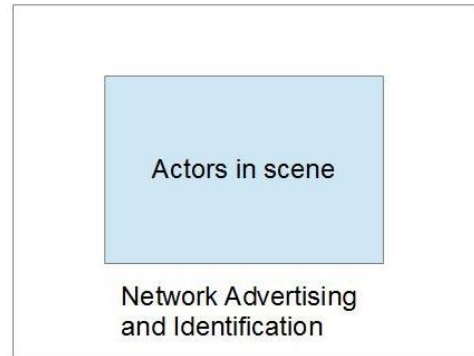
Figure 2.4 Actors in *Supernatural* frame

The words in this image in the lower right corner are slightly transparent and the words read "Gossip Girl New Episode Monday 8/7c The CW." It is both an advertisement and network identification. It advertises a new episode of another show airing on the same network and then names the network with the stylized "The CW," or the name of the network, at the end. This creates an embedded frame like in Figure 2.4. Viewers understand that this not a part of the show itself unlike the outermost opening credits frame in Figure 2.2. It is understood that the advertising and network identification text was added later in the journey of the TV show as it moves from production to consumption. Japanese TV has considerably more frequent use of screen text and many more embedded frames than this example from US TV, making an analysis of the frames essential to understanding the context of language use. The example below shows some of this complexity.

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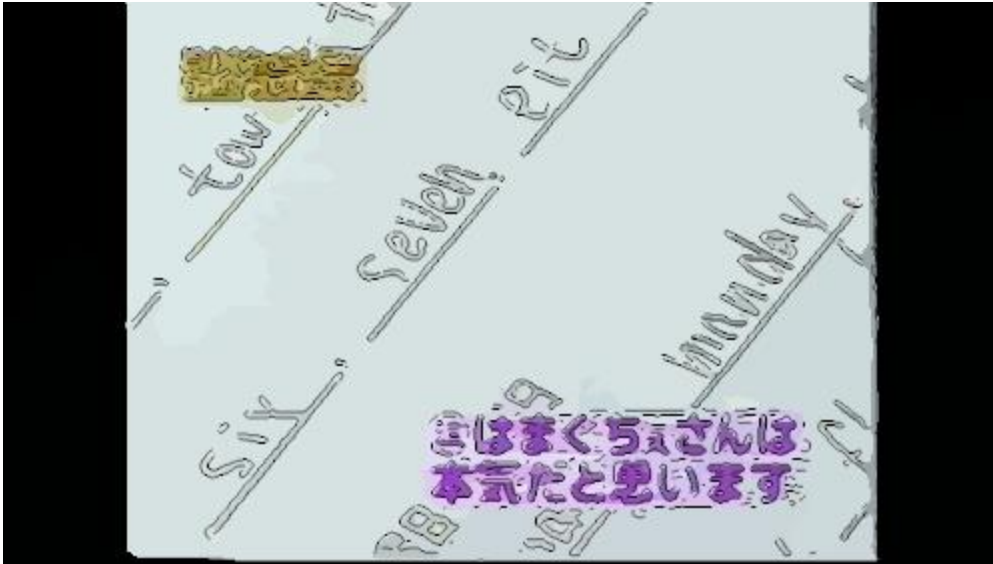
Figure 2.5 Hamaguchi's numbers

This example is taken from a point towards the end of an episode of a popular TV show in Japan called *Mechaike* (Nakajima, 2000-2012). The show itself has a specific segment or *koonaa* ('corner') embedded in it called the *nukiuchi tesuto*. This is written in the yellow text in the upper left corner. *Nukiuchi tesuto* ('surprise test') is embedded within Mechaike as a program. Within that *koonaa* is a specific point where the person with the lowest score on the test has his or her wrong answers ridiculed. This can be seen by the image of the test form with answers filling the screen and from the point in the show where it is taken from, namely after the lowest scoring person has been announced. This act of ridiculing answers is a specific action that has a set order of events and a particular metamessage which occurs within the nukiuchi tesuto segment. This act of ridicule constitutes another interpretive frame. The person who is being ridiculed has his name purposefully misspelled in both the upper and lower text which is both then overlapped with an earlier incident in the show where this was also teased. In addition purple text at the bottom tells the viewer how to interpret the responses of Hamaguchi

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which are to follow. There are at least 5 possible embedded and overlapped frames in this image with the possibility of more depending on how the image is contextualized.

Many of the frames in Japanese television such as the frame with the spelling error in the earlier example are difficult to perceive without understanding how frames are constructed. Interpretive frames like these are created through the complex use of *indexicality*, a major principle within Sociocultural Linguistics.

2.4.1.3 Indexicality.

In addition to frames, I draw heavily on *indexicality* (Silverstein, 1976) to analyze both the language and visual aspects of the data. Indexes are a type of sign where the signifier implies or suggests the signified. The most common example of this is smoke indexing fire. Smoke does not resemble fire in the way that icons typically resemble the signified nor is the relationship arbitrary and created by humans in the way that symbols work (Peirce, 1994, pp. 243-253). Indexes work closely together with frames to create signs that people can interpret. Japanese television is highly intertextual and symbolic, requiring an understanding of how indexes are used to achieve understanding and that indexes are frequently the main way that identities are constructed (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, p. 594). Indexicals commonly seen in television data can range from simple sound effects such as chimes, bells, or buzzers to the use of different linguistic registers. Often in television quiz shows chimes and buzzers are used to qualify answers as correct or incorrect. In standard quizzes if a contestant answers there is often a chime sound which tells them that the answer was correct and a loud buzzer if the answer is judged as incorrect. Such sound effects are clearly indexical since the sound does not specifically mean correct or incorrect. Indeed, if a chime sounds when people are not watching

television people may think that someone is at the door or that they have received an email or message on the computer. Likewise a buzzer can mean the end of a half of a basketball game. The indexicals work with specific interpretive frames to create signs which are understood by participants.

While Sociocultural Linguistics provides me with the tools needed to make sense of the interactional aspects of the data, embedded within frames, I also rely on other tools from semiotics for the text analysis of my data. While Van Leeuwen's work is definitely compatible with Sociocultural Linguistics I have listed him separately here since his work seems to be more related to the specifics of Critical Discourse Analysis and general semiotics with a focus on media and multimodality.

2.4.2 Semiotics of Typography.

The semiotics of typography (Van Leeuwen, 2006) is very useful to my analysis of Japanese television due to the heavy use of telop, a type of intralingual caption which I discuss further in Chapter 4. These captions serve multiple purposes in Japanese television including clarification, impact (Park, 2009a), contextualizing, commenting, and evaluating. Because of the importance of these captions to the data, a means of interpreting text at a fine level of detail is required for a thorough understanding. In breaking down fonts used in advertisements to their constituent parts, Van Leeuwen's (2006, p.142) approach to typography as a semiotic mode gives me a way to do this.

The semiotics of typography is situated within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday, 1978). One of the essential aspects of SFL is the study of texts in terms of what they do. For researchers in SFL, text is taken to mean any situation where

language is being used (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2000, p.3). As such written

texts may serve functions at three different levels simultaneously. They first serve a

textual function where the written text gives a coherent message. In addition they serve

an interpersonal function by enacting social functions, and an ideational function by

representing "the world around and inside us" (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 15).

Van Leeuwen (2006) suggests a list of several features which can be used in

doing a distinctive feature analysis of typography to examine the signs created by various

font styles. These features are: weight, expansion, slope, curvature, connectivity,

orientation, and regularity. Such an analysis of written text can be applied to an image

like the advertisement/network identification in Figure 2.3 shown earlier (see Figure 2.6

below).

There are two texts appearing simultaneously in this image. The first text is the

image of the two actors and the second is the written words in the lower right hand corner.

These are in two completely different modes. The written text here is severely

backgrounded by several features. It is first clear that the words are transparent. This

difference in weight backgrounds the written words, leaving the image of the program

(the two actors acting the scene) in the

Figure 2.6

foreground. The placement of the written text being far from the center also adds to the backgrounding making this the less important of the two texts.

In the written text we can see that it is made from two constituent parts: an advertisement for the show *Gossip Girl* and the network identification. This constituent division is aided by the extreme weight difference here. The network identification uses much thicker letters than the rest of the transparent text. They are also completely different in terms of expansion, where the letters of the first constituent are much more closely positioned and smaller in size than the second constituent. There is almost no slope to either constituent showing that the whole of the written text here is impersonal as seen when contrasted with human handwriting which is often greater in slope. The curvature of the letters can be seen to soften the impersonal tone caused by the earlier lack of slope through "experiential and cultural associations" (Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 149) making it factual information but also personable rather than cold or overly cerebral. This is important in terms of both field and tenor. With the goal of giving information to viewers, the field requires a factual quality but in terms of tenor with both the show being advertised as a teen drama focusing on the relationships of wealthy young adults and to

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the network which aims at drawing young women in the 18-34 year old range (Gough & Hibberd, 2008).

The advertisement for this show is made of three constituent parts: the title of the show, a description of an upcoming episode, and a time. The time constituent can relate to both the title by giving the regular timeslot for the show and the time when the specific new episode can be seen. The vertical orientation of the letters in the advertisement also helps to keep the information from seeming too serious or emotionally heavy. The network identification constituent has two potential fields in that it may also work together with the advertising constituent to possibly form a fourth constituent of the advertisement by telling viewers where the show and episode can be seen making this a textual double voicing (Bakhtin, 1981).

The network identification here has a strong horizontal orientation and high connectivity which makes the individual letters C and W into more of a logo. The placement of the definite article within the bowl of the C further increases the connectivity of the constituent. The horizontal orientation of this constituent foregrounds the network identification over the advertisement constituent making it more important than the advertisement while still less important than the image text.

As this analysis shows, there can be a large amount of meaning contained even within small amounts of screen text. Moreover, these meanings can then be applied to further analysis by examining how the constituents work with the interpersonal and ideational metafunctions. In terms of how advertising is accomplished through screen text we can see that the tenor of both the show being advertised and the network work at the interpersonal level by conveying a feeling and attitude towards the show and network

geared towards being personal rather than cerebral. In terms of the ideational function

(Halliday, 1985) the discussion of a not yet occurred event may also be seen as a

chronotope (Bakhtin, 1981) intruding upon another leading to greater understanding of

the discursive construction and socio-cultural uses of time-space. The new episode of

Gossip Girl is at a future point in time and the location is given by the network ID. *Next*

Monday on the CW network at 8pm EST/7pm CST as a chronotope intrudes upon the

Thursday on the CW network 9pm EST/8pm CST chronotope that Supernatural is airing in.

This notion of chronotopes is the next part of my methodology in analyzing Japanese

television-related data.

2.4.3 Chronotopes.

Bakhtin (1981) developed the term *chronotope* to describe the "intrinsic

connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships" (p. 84) that is often found in

literature, such as in the literary genre of the *Greek tragedy* where a specific era of time

and a specific country is understood as the setting of the story. This idea was then

expanded to include a less literary and more general idea of semiotically constructed

space-time by Agha (2007) through the analysis of cultural chronotopes that are able to

connect different times and places through cultural practices. For example, Agha (2007)

examined mass mediated chronotopes where the frames of large numbers of people are

unified although separated in varying amounts based on factors such as being physically

together or not. This ability to connect different times and places is particularly relevant

for mass-mediated discourse.

If we examine something on television like a football game we can see several chronotopes in use. The game itself occurs in a specific chronotope which is different from the chronotope of anyone who is watching it on television. In the first place they are not in the same space as the event. The game is occurring at some venue that is different from that of home audience members. It also is at a different time with a wide range of possibilities for this dimension. In some cases the game may be a recording of something that happened recently or a long time ago. Even if the game is currently going on at the same time it is being viewed there are delays that can occur with broadcast images such as satellite or internet latency. Commentators construct chronotopes constantly as they discuss plays that occurred in the recent past and instant replays accomplish this as well. Similar constructions of chronotopes occur in historical dramas or movies where the time and space is indirectly indexed through props and sets such as the use of a Ford Edsel to construct the late 1950s in the US.

Mass-mediated discourse is often seen as problematic without the use of chronotopes in analysis. The majority of data on television, even live broadcasts, have some edited aspects. The production crew and director have the ability to choose which cameras to show on air even during live broadcasts. They can also choose what gets seen with the camera and what doesn't. Similarly, they have the ability to turn on or turn off microphones and there are often network censors who have the ability to remove sound or video after it has occurred but before it is transmitted from the studio. When something like an interview is not aired live, even more editing possibilities come into play as the production staff and director may look for specific sound bites (Hallin, 1992) to show home viewers. This editing phenomenon can cause problems for the analysis of televised

data as interaction because the original conversation is then unseen in the final product. This kind of edited, mass-mediated data has also been referred to as being "double-articulated" (Lorenzo-Dus, 2009, pp. 5-6). Similar to this, such edited discourse may have several features in common with reported speech (Coulmas, 1986).

Using chronotopes to analyze and understand television data helps to remove some of the confusion as to the nature of the data and also leads to the understanding that the data are a form of high performance (Coupland, 2007, pp. 146-148). That which appears on the screen is a mode and medium (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2010, pp. 21-22) of communication at the same time. Just as audio data with no video can leave out whole realms of communication such as gaze and gesture (Goodwin, 2000), analyzing television data as anything other than a multimodal discursively constructed chronotope also leaves out whole realms of communication such as typography and *mise-en-scene* and is therefore essential to analyzing this kind of data.

2.4.4 Combined analysis.

The image from the show *Supernatural* connects several different chronotopes together. The first chronotope is that of the home viewer watching this episode. It exists as an interpretive frame with the understanding that what is being viewed is a television show, with the expectation that the viewer might be enticed to watch another television show, *Gossip Girl*. This frame has four embedded frames inside of it. The first of these which is perhaps easiest to see is the frame of the two actors acting out a scene which the home viewer is watching. It is a completely different frame from the home viewer frame in that the home viewer understands this as entertainment to be consumed and the actors

understand it as work that leads to entertainment for the consumer. This chronotope that the actors inhabit is in a different time, before the episode is released, and a different space, a studio lot. The actors are constructing another embedded frame by pretending to be characters visiting a bar in Pennsylvania (see Figure 2.7).
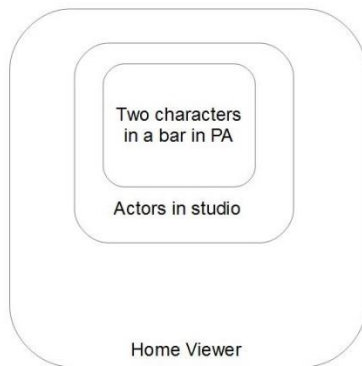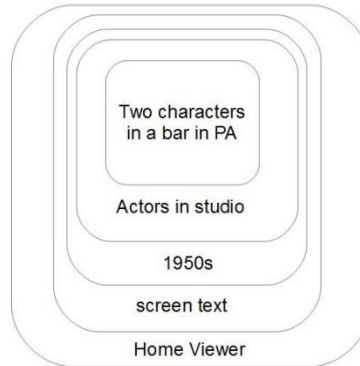
Figure 2.7   Figure 2.8

Between the frame of the home viewer and the actors in the studio are two more frames that are also chronotopes. The image in Figure 2.3 is black and white; a purposeful choice. The title of this episode is "Monster Movie" and is an homage to horror movies filmed in the 1950s. The black and white color indexes both the genre and the era. Then, between the frame of the 1950s and the frame labeled *home viewer*, is the frame of the transparent text in the lower right corner that I analyzed earlier in section 2.4 (see Figures 2.6 and 2.8). We know that this advertisement indexes the future day and time of next Monday at 8pm EST/7pm CST. From the earlier analysis, we also know that this frame utilizes a textual mode to express the chronotope for the purposes to communicating information at both the ideational level (about what will happen) and at the interpersonal level to convey more complex messages regarding the message itself, the network, and the show that it is advertising.

Taking this kind of analysis and applying it to the uses of English in Japanese will allow me to show to the interactions within a multilingual, multilayered and multimodal form of discourse which millions of people take part in everyday. It will allow me to show how language, society and culture interconnect in an everyday use of language that is powerful in that it is so common and yet usually goes unnoticed. Chronotopes are especially relevant for Japanese television in that the *tarento* that appear on these shows often do much cross-promotion so that the appearance of an actress on a talk show might be connected to her appearance in a new movie being released in the near future and as such be connected to her appearance on several other TV shows for the same purpose.

Chapter 3: The Context of English in Japan

3.1 Introduction

Before I can begin to talk about how English is used in Japanese variety shows, it is important to understand a certain amount about the history and contemporary role of English in Japan itself. In order to understand the complex beliefs and attitudes towards English held and displayed by many Japanese people on television, we need to know how the language was and is introduced. How was English introduced to the country as a whole? How do most Japanese people get introduced to English? And what language systems and knowledges do they have in place when they are introduced to English?

To answer these questions I will begin this chapter with a brief discussion of the history of Japan as it relates to English and English language education. This discussion will not delve deeply into historical explanations, but will provide a framework for understanding the general context of English in Japan. This will be followed by a linguistic description of Japanese as the language that English is taught through and must co-exist with. An understanding of what Japanese sounds like and how it is written is essential for being able to see how code ambiguation in some of my data occurs. I will end with some discussion of the various typologies of English use established by earlier research in this area in terms of the linguistic form and the educational environment/techniques used in teaching it.

3.2 Japanese History and the English Language

The Japanese attitude towards *kokusaika*, often translated as internationalization, is a major ideology invoked in government discourse about the teaching of English from

the late 20th century to the current time. It is important to understand *kokusaika* as a concept and not just a single word definition to know what it means to Japanese citizens and politicians to be able to appreciate the issues being discussed. The historical context of Japan's exposure to English and its international relations will help with this.

The attitude towards *kokusaika* in Japan is often thought to have some of its roots in both the geographically isolated nature of the island country and in the policy of seclusion called *sakoku* that existed officially from 1639 to 1868 (Itoh, 1996, p. 235), in response to a rebellion involving many converted Christians trying to achieve religious freedom in 1637. Some years before the policy of *sakoku* was enacted, Japan was exposed to the English language because of a shipwrecked English sailor named William Adams, who met with the *shogun* ('warlord' and the effective leader of the government at the time), Tokugawa Ieyasu. The Tokugawa *bakufu* ('shogun led government' or 'shogunate') encouraged by this positive meeting made Adams their official English translator when England established a commercial enterprise in Nagasaki in 1613 (Ike, 1995, p. 3). Although the business office there closed 10 years later since the Dutch had by that point won the competition for Japanese trade with the western world, there was already some exposure to and knowledge of the English language.

During the period of *sakoku*, the government only allowed small trade with the Chinese and the Dutch, and this policy continued for over 200 years. Despite that policy there were occasional incidents with ships from other foreign countries that led the shogunate to realize that English translators were necessary, so they asked several L1 Japanese Dutch interpreters at the time to learn English as well. These first English translators in 1809 were not permitted to learn how to read the language for fear that they

would be contaminated by foreign ideas and religion (Ike, 1995, p. 3) possibly out of fear that this could lead to another rebellion. This continued and the only other contact between Japan and the west was through occasional shipwrecked sailors such as Ronald MacDonald who came to live in Japan, and Nakahama Manjiro who travelled to the United States.

Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived in Japan aboard his gun loaded *kurobune* ('black ships') in 1853 with threats of violence if he were not allowed to present his letter from then U.S. President Fillmore. This forceful encounter effectively began to erode the power of the shogunate as it was forced to capitulate to a more powerful outside force. Consequently, Nagasaki became a free port in 1859 (Spackman, 2004, p. 209), the same year that Nakahama Manjiro wrote a commercial textbook on learning English by using Chinese classics and Japanese *kana*, the mora writing system for Japanese (Ike, 1995, p. 4). This textbook, titled *Eibei Taiwa Shokei* ('Shortcut to Anglo-American Conversation') completely affected the course of Japanese language education thereafter since many modern English textbooks in Japan still use the same techniques that Manjiro used over 150 years ago. The power of English began to grow during this time. Fukuzawa Yukichi, the most famous Japanese scholar of that era, began to teach English and more English speakers were arriving in for trade and in order to spread the Christian religion. The first English language school, the Yokohama Academy, opened its doors in 1865, created by the weakening shogunate. The period of *sakoku* officially ended in 1868 once the Meiji Emperor regained power and Japanese citizens were allowed to leave the country and visit other lands.

Compulsory English has its roots in the education reforms of the Meiji era. During the Meiji Restoration there was considerable tension around the topic of the English language. Japan was beginning to westernize at a very fast pace. This was viewed as necessary to prevent Japan from being taken over by the United States. English classes were added to the middle school curriculum in 1881 by the Ministry of Education. Mori Arinori, a scholar who later became Japan's first Minister of Education, was a strong proponent of English even to the point of suggesting that it become the national language of Japan (Heinrich, 2012, pp. 21-28).

At the same time, many works were being published that cried out against the west and the dangers of being colonized (Ike, 1995, p. 5). This tension for and against the west and English can be seen in Mori's eventual assassination by a man who claimed to be a Japanese patriot defending the honor of the emperor (Swale, 2000, p. 2).

Arguments about the need and effectiveness of English language education in Japan abounded in the early 1900s (Ike, 1995, pp. 5-6) within the opposing contexts of westernization and nationalism. The breakdown of the Gentlemen's Agreement[3] between the United States and Japan only fueled the tensions. The Ministry of Education then published its *Kokutai no Hongi* in 1937 which essentially backed the nationalists and helped to codify many of the concepts now a part of *nihonjinron*, the collection of beliefs about the uniqueness of Japan and the Japanese (Miller, 1982, pp. 92-93). *Nihonjinron* often constructs Japan as linguistically homogenous (Liddicoat, 2007, p. 34) and English

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[3] The Gentlemen's Agreement between the US and Japan was an informal arrangement where Japan would prevent further emigration to the US and in return the US would not pass any laws restricting immigration. The breakdown of this agreement resulted in the Immigration act of 1924 also referred to as the Asian Exclusion Act which then severely limited immigration from Asia to the US (Cullinane, 2014).

as the opposite of the Japanese language making the situation difficult for EFL education

(Seargeant, 2010, p. 55). During World War II, English continued to be taught in Japan

but only through textbooks approved by the government (p. 6) showing that even though

the country was at war with the English speaking countries it still felt that learning

English was a necessary part of compulsory education. When the war ended in 1945, the

education system was completely restructured by General Douglas MacArthur to the

current system of 6 years in elementary school, and 3 each for middle and high schools

(Iino, 2002, pp. 83-84) mirroring the US education system. Despite the renewed

popularity of compulsory English education after the war, many people were still

skeptical about its effectiveness. In fact, a well-known written debate between politician

Hiraizumi Wataru and scholar Watanabe Shoichi called *Eigo Dai Ronso* ('Great English

Debate') took place about English education in the pages of the conservative monthly

magazine *Bungei Shunju* published in 1975.

3.3 English Education in the Present

The current state of English education in Japan is that it is the main language

taught as the compulsory foreign language course for middle and high school and is also

being introduced at the elementary school level through language activities (Hiramoto,

2012, pp. 229-233). The Ministry of Education continually urges students to learn

English as part of its emphasis on *kokusaika* (Kubota, 2002, p. 16). Nevertheless, many

Japanese learners and teachers of English are conflicted in terms of teaching techniques

and the opportunities to use English, as it is often used only in the classroom and in

college entrance exams (Honna & Takeshita, 2002). Japan continues to score in the

lowest rankings for English ability as determined by tests like TOEFL, which results in a type of English complex that many Japanese people have where they feel shame and embarrassment about their English ability and at the same time feel a strong belief that English is equivalent to "the west" and to the US (Hino, 2009, pp. 104-107; Hiramoto, 2012, 237-240).

This history leads directly to the use of English that this dissertation focuses on. Japan is a society where 'the west,' as symbolized by English (and the U.S.), is loved by many Japanese citizens. At the same time many of these same people feel separated from English or feel that it is not a part of their identity. As in many other EFL settings, this separation exists despite several years of English language education and may find expression in completely different ways from L1 English speaking environments. Examples of this are situations such as in hip hop lyrics where the separation between English and Japanese is blurred (Pennycook, 2003) or mondegreens where English lyrics are misheard as funny Japanese phrases to make jokes with (Moody, 2009).

3.4 The Influence of Japanese on English: A Brief Overview of Japanese Structure

Of course English in Japan must be understood by understanding certain details about the Japanese language. Japanese is a mora timed language with five basic vowel sounds: a, i, ɯ (similar to /u/), e, and o. It also has twenty three consonants as seen below. The alveolar stops and fricatives do not occur with /i/ and the alveolar stops also do not occur with /ɯ/. In other words there are no /ti/, /tɯ/, /di/, /dɯ/, /si/, or /zi/ moras in traditional Japanese.

Table 3.1 Consonant Chart

	bilabial	alveolar	alveo-palatal	palatal	velar	uvular	glottal
stops	p b	t d			k g		
fricatives	ɸ	s z	ɕ	ç			h
affricates		ts dz	tɕ dʑ				
liquids		ɾ					
glides				y	w		
nasals	m	n			ŋ	N	

The moras usually occur in V or CV patterns and the /N/ as well as germinate consonants can take the same length of time as a V or CV.

Four different orthographic systems are used in Japan. In my data, all four orthographies are sometimes used in telop, the intralingual captions used frequently in Japanese variety shows. These orthographies are *hiragana*, *katakana*, *kanji*, and *roomaji* also spelled *romaji* or sometimes *rōmaji*. *Kanji* come from China and have two basic readings, an *onyomi* which is based on Chinese pronunciation, and a *kunyomi* which is the Japanese-based reading of the character. Each *kanji* has a specific meaning but both *hiragana* and *katakana*, which are based off of *kanji*, are symbol systems based on sound with no overt meaning. *Hiragana* are typically used for writing Japanese words sometimes in conjunction with *kanji*. For example the word *chuuko* meaning *used* is written with two *kanji* (see Figure 3.1). The first one means *middle* and the second one means *old*. Both characters together use the *onyomi* but each also has a *kunyomi*. If I

wanted to write the adjective *old* in Japanese I would use the second character whose *kunyomi* is *furu* and add the *hiragana i* to it making the adjective *furui* ('old').

$$中古 = chuuko = \text{used}$$

$$古 = ko \ (onyomi) \text{ and } furu \ (kunyomi)$$

$$古 + い = 古い = furui = \text{old}$$

Figure 3.1 *Onyomi* and *kunyomi*

      Much data in this dissertation involves the use of *roomaji* ('meaning Roman letters') which are utilized in various situations in Japan. The use of the term itself in Japanese can also be quite confusing. In addition to being a collection of letters, *roomaji* can also refer to spelling systems for Japanese words. The two most commonly used are the Hepburn style ('*hebonshiki*') and the *kunrei* style ('*kunreishiki*'). Throughout most transcripts in this dissertation I will use the *hebonshiki*[4] primarily because *kunreishiki* is ill suited to the romanized spellings of certain words which are common in modern Japanese. *Roomaji* (spelled with a double o this way to be consistent with its

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[4] Although the articles は and を will be written as *wa* and *o* respectively when in spoken data in my dissertation, when they appear in written data I will write them as *ha* and *wo* since they are different characters from the わ and お which are also sometimes represented by the same romanization in other texts. Also in the case of proper names such as 叶 ('Kanou') I will follow the typical pattern for romanizing names that leaves out the vowel length when discussing the person but will include the vowel length in the transcription. So 叶 will be romanized as *Kano* when discussing the person but in transcription the utterance will show up as *kanou*.

romanization from the Japanese) used with English loan words can make the description

somewhat confusing especially when the *roomaji* spelling looks identical to the English

one. As an example, the word *no* as a response to a question would be written the same in

both *roomaji* versions of Japanese and in English although the opposite word *yes*

(possibly '*iesu*' or '*yesu*' in *roomaji*) would look quite different. This is of course an

external classification of the letters which can be quite different from real life. Across the

variety shows I analyze, the word *roomaji* usually refers to spelling a Japanese word with

roman letters and the word *arufabetto* ('alphabet') is usually used when requesting the

writing of an English word.

3.5 Describing English in Japan

In analyzing the English in variety shows, I turn to scholarship that has

categorized the uses of English in Japan. One set of systems focuses primarily on

categorizing individual words or spellings of words and the other set has been about

trying to see the situations that English is used in. I will attempt to explain these systems

briefly here to contextualize my later analysis of different types of English and how they

are used on Japanese variety shows.

Nobuyuki Honna (1995) did an excellent job of categorizing individual word

items. In his examination of English loan words in Japanese he discovered 8 different

patterns of loan words. The first pattern that he describes only briefly concerns words that

are borrowed maintaining their "original form" although written in Japanese orthography

(pp. 46-47). He then went to explain the other seven categories where there are semantic

and structural changes: semantic narrowing and shift, Japanese phrasings of English, tail

abbreviations, acronyms, abbreviations of compounds, Japanese words combined with English loans, and word play.

The first category is made up of the names of specific items or phrases and expressions that have extremely clear meaning. Examples of this might be things such as 'apple' or 'salt' and are what Inagawa (2007) refers to as straight forward borrowing and what Taguchi (2006) refers to as sound change loanwords. I consider these to be primarily straight forward borrowings with reservations. In the first place, changing the orthography is drastic since in the case of going from English to Japanese it means taking an 18 vowel system and making it fit into a five vowel system instead. While there have been many additions to the katakana system over the years, it has mostly been in terms of C and CV combination changes. No new vowels have been added. Additionally the whole semantic field does not get imported into the language with the meaning even though the base meaning is the same. In other words the range of connections that exist between a word don't just transfer in but new connections may be made or existing connections with the Japanese word bearing the same basic meaning may transfer to the loanword and the semantic or phonological qualities could narrow or widen in different ways over time as well.

The second category Honna (1995) describes involves semantic narrowing and shift after being borrowed. For example the word revenge in Japanese ('*ribenji*') has the typical meaning of getting a second chance to achieve some kind of goal that was not achieved the first time. Inagawa (2007) refers to this type as a semantic modification while Taguchi (2006) calls it a sound and semantic change.

The third category of loan word is Japanese phrasings of English, sometimes referred to as *wasei-eigo* (Inagawa, 2007; Taguchi, 2006) is particularly relevant to my data. These words have been coined in Japan and while they can appear similar to English words are often not understood by native speakers. Words such as *skinship* ('physical contact for purposes of increasing general friendliness') are typical of this as well as advertising phrases seen at the end of Japanese commercials like Drive Your Dreams for Toyota commercials.

The fourth and fifth, tail abbreviations and acronyms respectively, refer to shortenings of words. A tail abbreviation might be something like using the word *biru* to mean building or *risutora* for restructuring. Acronym examples include words like OL ('office lady') or 1LDK ('1 bedroom, living room, dining room, and kitchen') as used when describing apartments.

The sixth type, abbreviation of compounds and the seventh, Japanese words combined with English loans, often look very similar. An abbreviation of compound might be something like *famiresu* (short for 'family restaurant') or *sumaho* (short for 'smart phone'). The Japanese-English combinations are things like *rendora* which is short for *renzoku dorama* ('continuing drama') or *owarai buumu* ('comedian boom') referring to the rise in popularity of comedians in the Heisei era.

The eighth type, word play, is in some ways very easy to understand. One example of this is in the NHK variety program *Eigo de Shaberanaito*. The title in Japanese means 'if you don't speak English. . .' but the *don't* part of 'don't speak' ('*nai*') combined with the conditional *to* makes a pun with the English word night ('*naito*') making the title also have the meaning 'The night we speak in English'.

While this system for categorizing loan word types is not perfect, it gives a good place to start with analyzing some of the different forms that English can take in Japan. I will use the terms in my analysis as they become relevant.

In the case of situations, Honna (1995, pp. 52-54) gives three where English words are used in Japan that apply quite well to my data. The first type is that of technical terms, the second neologisms, and the third is as euphemisms. All three situations are often shown in Japanese variety shows. The use of technical terms, and by extension the use of English words to sound technical, is fairly common. Such uses are always seen in health related or electronics related conversations. Neologisms come very much into play as comedy groups and different segments in variety shows are named using this basic idea. These naming practices will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Finally, the idea of euphemisms is central to the use of English for establishing social cool. Many Japanese words, particularly *jukugo* (Sino-Japanese words consisting of multiple *kanji*), have either strict or unpleasant connotations. Because of this, English words are often used instead of Sino-Japanese words (Honna, 1995, p. 53).

The information in this chapter will hopefully give additional insight into the context of my data and analysis for those who are unfamiliar with Japanese and the use of English in Japan. By keeping in mind the history of Japan and it's relationships with the west, the US and English along with knowing the sounds and orthographies available, the use of English in Japanese TV becomes the biproduct of an environment filled with struggle and tension. Similarly, understanding some of the uses of English words that have been previously examined will help in understanding what these entertainers are using them for.

Chapter 4

A Sociolinguistic Introduction to Japanese Television

4.1 Introduction

When describing Japanese variety shows a recent article from the Huffington Post stated that "the world of Japanese game shows is best known as a technicolored whirlwind of half-naked bodies, sadomasochistic physical challenges, and the occasional whimsical bunny rabbit head" (Scherker, 2014). This description was to try and explain the complex nature of these programs which become wildly popular as internet videos because they are so different from those shows which are commonly seen in other countries. While there are a large number of people who watch them on a regular basis, countless others have never seen them. Critics in Japan have sometimes described this audience as "a hundred million idiots" (Oya, 1957 as cited in Chun, 2007), referring to the type of programming shown on variety shows as appealing to the lowest common denominator. Although I have already explained the historical, educational and linguistic context of English use in Japan, this knowledge alone does not allow us to fully understand how English is used within my data. A fuller appreciation of how English is used and seen in the media can be achieved by understanding what a Japanese variety show is, and how it relates to the broader industry of Japanese entertainment.

In this chapter I will explain what a Japanese variety show is for the benefit of those who have never seen one. In the process of doing so, I will give a detailed description of the landscape of Japanese television with an attempt at describing the shows, the networks that produce them, the entertainers that appear on them, and the talent agencies that manage these entertainers. I will then explain in more specific detail

the Japanese variety show format and its features. I will then go into an explanation of Japanese humor and comedians, followed by Japanese idols since they feature so prominently in the variety shows that I will analyze. All of this is needed for an understanding of the context of Japanese variety show data.

TV programs in general are a highly under-valued and under-researched form of entertainment. In particular the variety shows of Japan are treated by many Japanese academics I have spoken with as embarrassing to discuss. My interviewees who work in the television field also find this research topic amazing since they cannot imagine the topic as one appropriate to academic research, an experience similar to those of other researchers on this topic (Lukacs, 2010, p. 19). As one fellow sociolinguist remarked to me at a conference when I explained the kind of shows I research "*Ah, kitanai bangumi desu ne!*" ('Oh, you mean dirty shows right!'). This made me even more curious to research this media format which would be so easily labeled *kitanai* by another researcher. I begin unpacking the context of these dirty shows by first explaining what the television situation in Japan is like.

4.2 A Typology of Japanese TV

Japanese television programs are often quite difficult to categorize with many shows being hybrid combinations of various formats (Galbraith & Karlin, 2013, p. 6; Lukács, 2010, p. 2). To that effect I have attempted to formulate a typology of Japanese television from looking at several sources as data. A typology of these programs is necessary to understand where my variety show data is situated within the wider range of

television programs and it helps me to define the term *Japanese variety show* which is an essential part of my research questions.

There are many sources for information on Japanese television and the way they categorize TV programs ranges widely. Certain resources will divide Japanese TV shows into two varieties, dramas and everything else. The website d-addicts.com has only a J-drama and J-TV search option, but this is not surprising given the fact that the origin of the website is to provide people access to dramas first. Similarly the Japanese video stores in Hawaiʻi do only slightly better by dividing TV programs into six different genre: *dorama* ('drama'), *baraeti* ('variety'), *jidaigeki* ('historical dramas'), *supesharu* ('specials'), *supootsu* ('sports'), and *ongaku* ('music'). This division creates problems of its own as well. The category *jidaigeki* ('historical drama') also includes the yearly NHK (the Japanese public broadcasting network) and *Taiga Dorama* (literally 'saga drama') meaning that it can often be seen as a subcategory of drama. Also, the specials category often consists of extra-long episodes of various shows in the variety and music category as well but certainly not all variety show episodes are specials so the special category must actually be several subcategories combined together into one.

After consulting three online TV schedules for Japan, Yahoo Japan, Goo TV Gaido, and Intaanetto TV Gaido, I developed the following table to demonstrate the genres that are available.

Table 4.1 TV Program Schedule Genres

Intaanetto TV Gaido	*Goo TV Gaido*	*Yahoo Japan*
dorama ('drama')	*dorama* ('drama')	*dorama* ('drama')
supootsu ('sports')	*supootsu* ('sports')	*supootsu* ('sports')
ongaku ('music')	*ongaku* ('music')	*ongaku* ('music')
baraeti ('variety')	*baraeti* ('variety')	*baraeti* ('variety')
anime ('animation')	*anime* ('animation')	*anime/tokusatsu* ('animation/hero')
nyuusu ('news')	*nyuusu* ('news')	*nyuusu* ('news')
tooku ('talk')	*tooku* ('talk')	*shuumi/kyouiku* ('hobbies/education')
waidoshoo ('wide show')	*waidoshoo* ('wide show')	*joohoo/waido* ('information/wide')
kuizu ('quiz')	*kuizu* ('quiz')	X
ryouri ('cooking')	*ryouri* ('cooking')	X
ryoukou ('travel')	X	X
X	*eiga* ('movie')	*eiga* ('movie')
dokyumentari ('documentary')	X	*dokyumentari* ('documentary')
kotengeinou ('classic entertainment')	X	*gekijou/kouen* ('play/performance')
X	X	*fukushi* ('public welfare')
X	X	*sono hoka* ('other')
youji ('infants')		
shuumi ('hobbies')		
fasshon ('fashion')		
kagaku ('science')		
koushitsu ('Imperial family')		
seijikeizai ('politics/economics')		
shoppingu ('shopping')		
orinpikku ('Olympics')		

In addition to the fact that there are large differences in the number of categories for each guide, some guides like Yahoo Japan give multiple categories to the same show whereas others like Intaanetto TV Gaido do not. In addition sometimes there are subcategories which further confuse the issue. For example, the show *Pekepon* which airs on Friday nights on the FujiTV network is classified as a variety show on Intaanetto TV Gaido but

on the Yahoo Japan site it is classified as a *baraeti* then sub categorized into *tooku*

baraeti ('talk variety'), *kuizu baraeti* ('quiz variety') and *geemu baraeti* ('game variety')

groups; this becomes problematic because for Intaanetto TV Gaido, *tooku* and *kuizu* are

completely separate categories from *baraeti* while obviously for Yahoo Japan they are

not.

      I then took a similar look at the four largest commercial networks and tried to see

how they divide up their TV shows. The result was the chart as seen below. Looking at

how the networks classify the shows there are some definite patterns that start to appear.

Table 4.2 Commercial Network TV Program Genres

Fuji TV	TV Asashi	TBS	Nippon TV
dorama ('drama')	*dorama*/*eiga* ('drama/ movie')	*dorama*/*eiga* ('drama/ movie')	*dorama* ('drama')
eiga ('movie')	X	X	X
baraeti/*ongaku* ('variety/music')	*baraeti* ('variety')	*baraeti*/*ongaku* ('variety/music')	*baraeti*/*ongaku* ('variety/music')
X	*ongaku* ('music')	X	X
houdou/*jouhou* ('news/information')	*houdou*/*jouhou*/ *dokumentarii* ('news/information/ documentary')	*seikatsu*/*jouhou* ('lifestyle/ information')	*nyuusu*/*jouhou* ('news/ information')
X	X	*houdou*/ *dokyumentarii* ('news/ documentary')	X
supootsu ('sports')	*supootsu* ('sports')	*supootsu* ('sports')	*supootsu* ('sports')
anime/*kizzu* ('animation/kids)	*anime*/*hiiroo* ('animation/ hero')	*anime* ('animation')	*eiga*/*anime* ('movie/ animation')
minibangumi ('mini show')	X	*minibangumi* ('mini show')	*minibangumi* ('mini show')
X	*ryouri*/*tabi*/*kurashi* ('cooking/travel/ lifestyle')	X	X

In most systems (download site, video store, TV schedules, and half of the networks) the category of *dorama* stands apart with the two exceptions of the TBS network and TV Asahi that lump it together with the *eiga* ('movie') category. The *supootsu* section existed by itself in 8 out of the 9 data sets. This tells us that both *dorama* and *supootsu* are fairly major well-defined categories. Also showing up 8 out of 9 times was *ongaku* however in two of the networks the category of *ongaku* was combined with *baraeti*. We can infer from this that while there is definitely a difference between *ongaku* and *baraeti,* for two of the networks there is enough similarity to group them together. *Baraeiti* appeared 7 times as did anime, although 2 of the *bareiti* were linked with *ongaku* as mentioned earlier and 5 of the anime listings had other categories listed together with them as well. All the other categories appeared 5 times or less. If we take this as a possible starting point to understand the world of Japanese television there are 5 basic categories that we see below with the category of music having a possible link to the category of variety show.
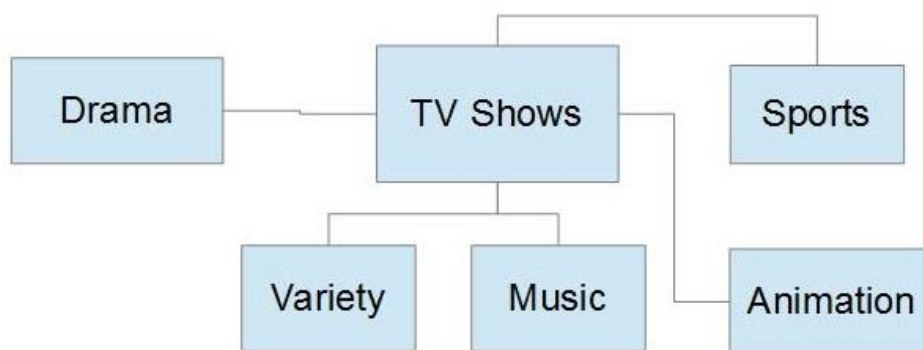
Figure 4.1 Mapping TV Genre

This allows us to get an idea of the context of Japanese television programs in terms of the types of shows that are out there. Needless to say, each category includes numerous subcategories and shows within each category may have elements that belong to other categories as well. For example, it is possible to have a drama based on sports where the main character is an athlete such as in the 2004 drama *Pride* featuring a romance between an ice hockey player and an office lady. Similarly, a variety show could have a segment in it that uses animation such as the recent new corner on FujiTV's *Mechaike* called *Mecha Yuru Anime* ('Totally Slack Animation' see Figure 4.2). This kind of borrowing across genre and subgenre, considered standard in Japanese television, is what makes these shows so difficult to classify and describe. This phenomenon is viewed by some as being a result of the horizontal integration of Japanese television in the 1980s (Lukács, 2010, pp. 9-15). No matter what the cause, we must still realize that such a typology is a general guideline at best, created to help contextualize the data in my study, not as a tool for assigning *a priori* categories to these texts.

Figure 4.2 Mecha Yuru Anime (Nakajima, 2000-2012)

4.3 Variety Shows

I will now turn the discussion towards the specific genre of variety shows. In particular I will examine some of the types of variety shows that exist in terms of the shows' content and overall structure. These types include, but are not limited to: ensemble comedy variety, game or quiz variety, talk variety, and idol variety. As with the larger categories there is a tremendous amount of borrowing between these types as well but this kind of list helps to get a general idea of the types of variety shows that can exist in Japan.

The ensemble comedy variety show in Japan is not a new genre. One classic example of this was the 1970s smash hit *Hachiji da yo! Zenin Shuugou!* ('It's 8 'o clock! Let's all get together!') featuring the musical band/*owarai* ('comedy') group *za dorifutaazu* ('The Drifters'), which at the time had five members that would come on the show and play comedic songs and perform in various skits with other famous celebrities. It was purposefully focused on the entire show being funny and was set in front of a live audience to try appeal to as many viewers as possible (Chun, 2007, p. 198). This general format continues to this day with shows like *Mechamecha Iketeru! What a cool we are!* (usually shortened to *Mechamecha Iketeru* or *Mechaike*) which includes in its cast six comedy duos along with actors and other performers. Another example of this genre was the comedy show *Haneru no Tobira: You Knock on a Jumping Door* (often shortened to *Haneru no Tobira* or *Hanetobi*) which aired from 2001 through 2012. *Haneru no Tobira* (Miyazaki, 2001-2012) featured eleven comedians all performing together weekly. In recent versions of this genre a standard episode might consist of a combination of skits, comedic performances, or physical and mental games where losers must endure some

kind of *batsu geemu* ('punishment game'). Such *batsu geemu* are standard in this genre in recent times. Examples of *batsu geemu* can include things like being submerged in scalding hot water, drinking an extremely bitter drink, or getting an electric shock.

Japanese game or quiz varieties are often focused more on the idea of competition rather than on winning prizes. This format takes the idea of the physical or mental games as described in the ensemble comedy genre above and makes that the main part of the whole show. Although such variety shows resemble quiz shows of the American variety on the surface, they are quite different primarily because many of them do not offer cash prizes. For many quiz and game variety shows winning a prize, if there is one at all, is often secondary to providing entertainment for the viewers. When cash prizes are offered on such shows, they are usually quite small in comparison to US game shows. A typical show that offers a cash prize is *Nep League,* which offers 1 million yen (around $10,000 US) as a grand prize. This prize must then be broken up among the five team members letting each person walk away with approximately $2,000. This may partly be due to certain legal restrictions about cash prizes relating to the lottery system and other forms of legal gambling in Japan, but the small size of these awards makes for a slightly different motivation in the show.

Another key characteristic of Japanese variety shows is the fact that they frequently feature only media celebrities. Japanese quiz and game varieties are often about average people watching famous people trying to win money and prizes. Although there are programs such as the NHK *Kuizu 100nin Riki* ('The hundred people power quiz') which have non-entertainers playing, such versions are in the minority. Popular shows like FujiTV's *Nep League* or TV Asahi's *Cream Quiz Miracle 9* only feature

celebrities playing. Lukacs (2010, pp. 19-20) explains in her anthropological research on dramas that Japanese entertainers were the main focus for viewers and that informants often ended up talking more about the individual *tarento* than the dramas. This focus on *tarento* over the program is definitely the case for variety shows in this quiz and game sub-genre.

The talk variety genre as seen currently on Japanese TV is often hosted by comedians. Examples of these would include TV Asahi's *Ametooku* and FujiTV's *DownTown DX*. *Ametooku* gets its name from combining the name of the hosts of the show, *owarai* duo Ameagarikesshitai ('after the heavy rain suicide squad') and the word *tooku* ('talk'). Several celebrity guests, usually comedians, come on and explain what they all have in common (referred to as *kukuri* in the show). Past *kukuri* include comedians who like electronic devices, fat comedians, or brown-nosing comedians. The guests then spend the next hour talking about their common theme. In *DownTown DX* ('*dauntaun derakkusu'*) guests spend most of their time talking about funny drinking stories or amusing tales about what they do during their everyday lives.

The final variant in this group is the idol variety shows. These are usually referred to as a *kanmuri bangumi* (literally 'crown show') and refer to television programs that are based around a particular entertainer and usually have their name incorporated somehow into the title. This is a marker of high status for the entertainer because it is usually a sign that the entertainer has the ability to draw viewers through the power of their name. Idols are particularly representative of the *tarento* category in that they sing, dance, act, and do comedy, without really being singers, dancers, actors, or comedians (Aoyagi, 2005, p. 3). Examples of idol variety shows might include *Nogizaka tte doko* featuring the idol group

Nogizaka 46 on the TV Tokyo network or the long running SMAP X SMAP on FujiTV

featuring the five member idol group SMAP. A typical idol bangumi includes music

since most idols release songs, but they may also include games and skits as well, always

featuring the idols that the show is named after in the case of *kanmuri bangumi*.

Again, certain aspects of these genres do often mix together. However, this listing

is to give a basic idea of the general landscape of what kinds of variety shows exist in

Japanese TV which is different from what is seen in other media formats and in other

places. This dissertation contains data from several shows that all fit into one or more of

these general categories. I will now turn my attention to describing some of the general

features of these shows with specific examples so that some of the small details in my

data and analysis can be clearly understood.

4.5 Variety Show Subgenres and Corners

One of the most important features to think about when examining an

environment like this is the type of events that can occur within these shows. Typical

events include: *conto* ('comedic skits'), *tooku* ('talk'), *geemu* ('games'), and *uta* ('song').

Note that these events parallel the subgenre of variety shows with the exception of the *uta*

event being matching up with the idol variety type of show in terms of what happens

during the event and the sub-genre (see Table 4.3.1 below).

Table 4.3 Variety Show Sub-genres

Variety Show Sub-genres	Common Events in the Show	Features
Ensemble Comedy	*Conto* ('skits')	Comedy routines
Game/Quiz	Game	Competing in games
Talk	Talk	Interviews, telling stories
Idol	Song	Singing, dancing, comedy

Each show belongs to a subgenre which relates to its overall attributes but within each program there can be several segments which can be labeled with one or more of these event types as well. Some examples of this complex structure can be seen in variety shows from each of the subgenres from the previous section.

As an example of ensemble comedy *baraeti,* let us take a look at the show *Haneru no Tobira* which ended its run in 2012. As I mentioned earlier, *Haneru no Tobira* had 11 comedians as its regular cast members. A typical episode might be like the one from November 17, 2010 which I use here as an example. This episode started off with a physical game segment, which are often referred to as *koonaa* ('corners'). This physical game corner was called "Tokyo Boys Collection," a parody of a very famous fashion show called the Tokyo Girls Collection that happens every year. In this segment, hosted by one of the male regular cast members, several male comedians who are guests of the show, plus one male cast member walk out onto a catwalk with spinning turntables moving in clockwise and counterclockwise directions at varying speeds. They must then navigate this moving catwalk in the manner of a male model while wearing the most fashionable clothes they own. Falling off this catwalk means landing in a large muddy area. This attempt to traverse the catwalk is critiqued by several female models who have all appeared in the Tokyo Girls Collection fashion show, upon which the game is based.

This is clearly a *geemu koonaa* on this variety show. The comedian must play the game because it's his job to do so; he gets paid to do this. For him, leaving or not playing is not an option.

The next segment on the show was a combination of a game and a talk section called *episoodo wan guran purii* ('Episode-1 Grand Prix') in which four comedians, all famous for their witty speaking skills (3 guests plus 1 regular cast member), come on the show expecting to tell their funniest stories. This segment combines game elements and talk elements together since the comedians are in competition to see who can train someone to tell the better story. Both competition and talk are central in this segment. After appearing on the stage, however, they are told that they are there for a completely different reason. This kind of surprise or practical joke is usually called a *dokkiri* and can be found in many variety shows. They are then told that other people will be telling their funniest stories for them and then they introduce the real storytellers. The actual storytellers are all comedians belonging to the *suberigeinin* ('slip-up comedian') category meaning that they are famous for not being able to tell stories well (also 3 guests plus 1 cast member). The skilled speaking comedians then take the non skilled ones and teach them their funny stories after which the unskilled comedians perform in front of the audience . The storytellers are then ranked with the implication that the skilled storyteller whose student scored the lowest either must not be very good or their funny story must not have been particularly interesting.

At the end of the show three of the cast members told the other regulars that they have formed a new group based on their status as being unfunny comedians. They then performed a dance with the song that they have made playing in the background. This

segment is a type of *uta* ('song') corner and is followed by a notice from the show that viewers can download the song for use as a ringtone from the show's website. In this episode of a comedy ensemble variety show we have a game corner, a talk/game corner and an song corner. In other episodes there are short skits as well many other games and other occasional songs.

Similarly, the incredibly long running[5] daily talk variety show *Waratte ii tomo!* ('It's okay to laugh!') plays many games with the regular members both before and after the interview segment. While this is usually classified as a talk variety show, more than fifty percent of the time on air is focused on playing various physical and quiz type games. It also always starts off with the host coming out and singing the theme song of the show, which is a type of *uta* corner. In this case we have a talk variety with *uta* corners, talk corners, and game corners all combined into one.

The highly popular Quiz Hexagon II (running from 2005-2011 on FujiTV) also showed this interesting blend of corners. While primarily a quiz show focusing on celebrities that are marketed with the image of being low in intelligence, the show also produced several popular songs and singing groups even earning the show's regular cast members a spot on the annual NHK singing contest Kouhaku Utagassen in 2008. While performing on the rival network they got an amazing 47.8% viewership rating (JapanToday, 2009).

Finally, the idol variety show SMAP X SMAP (Haruna, 1996-2014) has done a number of games and skits over the years as well as many musical performances. This *kanmuri bangumi* has aired regularly on Monday nights since 1996. One skit that I

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[5] This show will end its 31 year run this spring.

analyze in Chapter 7 featured group member Inagaki Goro as a suave mysterious

character who is supposed to save a damsel in distress but instead leaves after asking

meaningless questions. Another regular skit called "Grassies" involved three group

members pretending to be grass on someone's lawn having a conversation. Another

corner on the show called Actors' Colliseum involved the members competing to see

who could memorize lines from a play or TV show accurately and quickly. Recently on

the January 14, 2014 episode, the SMAP members and 5 guest actresses had a talk

segment about ideal relationships called *Joyuu & SMAP ga kettei konna renai yuruseru?*

Yurusenai? 2014 ('Actresses and SMAP vote Is this kind of love forgivable?

Unforgivable? 2014'). They have also performed their own songs as well as done

performances with guest musicians ranging from traditional enka singers like Kitajima

Saburo to modern pop singers from the US like Lady Gaga.

Although different programs can be based off a single subgenre to start with,

having multiple corners allows them the freedom to bring a little bit of every kind of

variety into their programs if the producers want to do so. Talk shows can have song and

game corners and idol shows can have comedy skits. These structural features are often

borrowed back and forth across subgenres and sometimes genres as well.

4.5 Visual and Sound Effects

Other features that are commonly seen within the variety show genre are in the

form of various visual and sound effects that often have regular but unstated rules of

usage. These effects are often described as strange or irritating by many non-Japanese

however they are often essential parts of the show (Gordenker, 2011). Two of the main

visual effects are *waipu* ('wipe') and *teroppu* ('telop').

Waipu is usually a small picture in picture effect that is meant to heighten the

viewing experience in Japanese television and tells the audience how to interpret what is

being said and heard (Ho, 2013, p,12; Galbraith & Karlin, 2012, pp. 16-17). The word

originally referred to the effect of transitioning from one image to another in a sweeping

horizontal movement ('wipe') but has come to refer to the picture in picture effect which

is standard on so many Japanese variety shows (Gordenker, 2011).
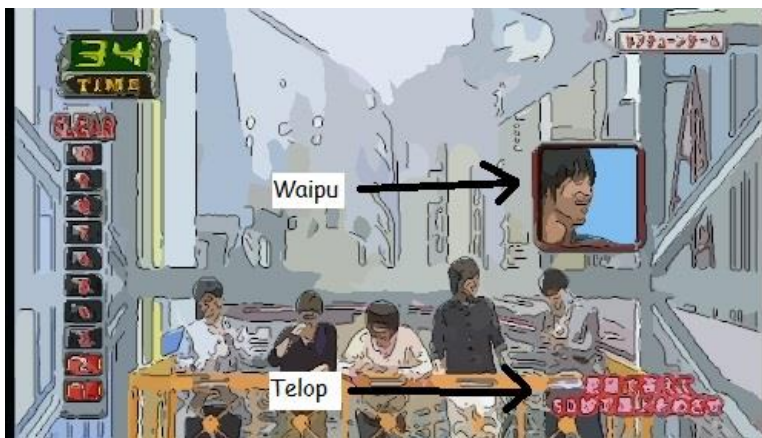
Figure 4.3 waipu and telop (original image from Nagao, 2012)

Telop, short for television opaque projector, is used to describe the text that

usually appears on screen during Japanese variety programming. Telop is often used to

give context to the scene being shown, as well as to intensify the feelings associated with

the events and dialog currently being seen and heard. It is also referred to as impact

captioning and can be found in a number of countries throughout East Asia including

South Korea (Park, 2009a). This text is added in the editing room and is done in a wide

variety of colors and fonts which will be seen in Chapters 5-7.

In order for the visual media to have impact on the audience there must be *congruency* between what is seen and what is heard; this congruency can be of both formal and semantic varieties (Kim & Iwamiya, 2008, p. 430). Formal congruency, which is not usually an issue in Japanese variety shows, concerns the audio and video track being in sync with each other. On the other hand, semantic congruency relates very clearly to the sound effects that are used. This concerns the relationship between the meanings of what is seen and heard. For example, loud buzzer sounds are often used in many quiz variety shows to indicate a wrong answer along with a large red X mark. The buzzer sound is semantically congruent with a red X mark. This mark would seem strange to many viewers of Japanese variety shows if the sound effect that emerged with it were to be a pleasant sounding chime because this would be semantically incongruent while still being *formally* congruent since the sound effect was in overlap with the appearance of the X mark.

4.6 The People Involved

Finally the last key feature in variety shows concerns the people involved both in front of the camera and behind the camera, as is the case in any media production. Behind the camera is a whole collection of different groups of people. In one sense, the home viewers are a part of this group in that the camera is capturing the image from the same visual perspective that the home audience has. In addition to the home audience, some programs have a live studio audience as well. This was the case with *Waratte ii tomo* when I sat in the studio audience for this show in 2002. For *Waratte ii tomo*, over a hundred audience members sit on some bleacher-like seats squeezed very close together

from over an hour before the program starts until over an hour after the official program ends, since the talk between the celebrities continues even after the live broadcast is over. We were given cues beforehand on how to react in different situations by someone and had several run throughs before the live show started.

In addition, other variety shows that do not have in studio audiences still have the production crew, all of whom sometimes serve as both audience members and performers. Contrary to American and British settings, many Japanese TV shows regularly show footage of cameramen and sound specialists doing their work as the show is filmed. The laughter of the staff is often heard on camera in most of these programs (Lukacs, 2010, pp. 2-3) reacting as a studio audience might if one were there.

The people in front of the camera in Japanese variety shows often belong to the category of *tarento* ('talents'). *Tarento* is a category of entertainer starting from the 1960s that are often described as people who become familiar to TV viewers by virtue of constant exposure (Chun, 2007, p. 101). The tarento systems is one of the most important aspects to all Japanese television. After a brief time of struggle with the Japanese motion picture industry in the 1950s and early 60s, television began a steady rise to power while working in conjunction with the studios that had at first viewed this upcoming industry as rivals (Lukacs, 2010, pp. 31-34). During this time, the idea of *tarento* started with commentators who began to garner their own popularity through being seen repeatedly on television. This trend continued, becoming what many believe is the main reason for media consumption in Japan. Lukacs (2010) explains that the rise of neoliberalism along with shifting demographics led to the current situation where people often watch dramas not for the story, but for the *tarento* that appear in the drama and their perceived

similarity to the characters they are portraying. I would argue that this watching of television for the sake of intimacy with the *tarento* is the exactly the same with variety shows, if not more so, since the tarento are not playing characters in a fictional story but instead playing themselves.

Almost all *tarento* work for talent management agencies and are considered as employees of these companies. These variety show *tarento* usually belong to one of two types: *geinin* ('comedians') or *aidoru* ('idols').

4.6.1 Owarai geinin.

The term *owarai geinin* (literally 'laughter art people') is often shortened to simply *geinin* in contrast to the larger field of all entertainers termed *geinoujin*. Most modern comedy performed by *geinin* has its origins in the *manzai* tradition. By some accounts the art of *manzai* comes from around the end of the 8th century. During this era at New Year's it was traditional for pairs of entertainers to do rituals that blended actions for good fortune and silliness (Stocker, 2006, p. 52). This later become codified into two specific characters: a serious one and a stupid or foolish one. This combination is now termed *tsukkomi* ('straight man') and *boke* ('fool') and is the backbone of modern Japanese humor (Katayama, 2009).

Most Japanese comedians work in pairs regardless of whether or not they perform actual *manzai* style humor and in fact modern *manzai* is a variant which originated in 1933 called *shabekuri manzai* (Stocker, 2006, p. 59). In most *manzai* or *owarai* pairs, or *konbi* ('combo') as they are called, there is a designated *boke* and designated *tsukkomi*. There are occasional groupings of three people or more which are usually called *yunitto* ('unit') or *torio* ('trio') in the case of three members. On occasion these roles can switch

and some *owarai konbi* find greater success after switching these roles. The group always

has a name and that name may or may not have anything to do with they type of comedy

that they do. An interesting thing to note is that most groups currently use English

borrowings and neologisms in part or in whole for their names. For example in the earlier

mentioned example of *Haneru no Tobira* there were 5 groups of comedians making up

the show's regular cast, 4 *konbi* and 1 *torio*. The names of these groups are: King Kong,

Robert, Drunk Dragon, Impulse and Hokuyou. Only the last *konbi* does not use an

English borrowing for their name. Why this is done is not usually explicitly stated but

there is a cool factor to English language use which will be explained in Chapter 6 that

may factor heavily into this.

Figure 4.4 Beat Takeshi's *komanechi* (Biito Takeshi Komanechi, 2011)

There are many types of routines or *neta* performed by *geinin* on variety shows.

Konto from the French *conte* meaning a short skit is fairly common as is the art of

monomane ('impersonations'). *Geinin* will often do anything to prevent *suberi* ('slip'),

the act of a joke or conversation falling flat. In addition to these two kinds of *neta* there is

a third called *ippatsu gyaggu* ('one-shot gag') similar to a sight gag in vaudeville that is

often some gesture, sound, or combination of both that has no specific meaning other

than to look funny. An example that some Americans might be familiar with is the muppet Fozzie Bear who says "Wocka wocka wocka!"; the phrase has no explicit meaning but is meant to be funny. A Japanese example is the *neta* of famous comedian and film director Beat Takeshi who does his "*komanechi*" action, a reference to the leotards of gymnast Nadia Comaneci, gold medalist and the first gymnast to score a perfect 10 in the 1976 Olympics (see Figure 4.4 above). In context, the gesture usually has no explicit meaning but may serve as a tension breaker or mood changer by virtue of being a type of comedy performance.

The largest talent management company for comedians is Yoshimoto Kougyou, based in Osaka. While other such companies exist, certainly Yoshimoto is the largest and most famous or infamous. With a reputation for being a powerful company with many successful comedians that have their own *kanmuri bangumi* and for paying very little to its comedians until they have been with the company for a long length of time, Yoshimoto is both an honored company to be affiliated with and one that is often complained about.

4.6.2. Aidoru.

The term *aidoru* ('idol') as defined by Galbraith and Karlin (2012, p. 2) refers to "highly produced and promoted singers, models, and media personalities." Most although not all idols are young and usually appear in just about any kind of media genre you can think of. They are often thought of as being sexy, romantic, or cool and can belong to either gender. They usually maintain the image of being currently unattached and therefore sexually "safe" (Nagaike, 2012, p. 116). The term *aidoru* is different from the

larger category of *tarento* which can include people such as unattractive married comedians who while heavily promoted may not have the same degree of marketing as a sexy and single *aidoru*.

These *aidoru* are so popular that in 2010 the top selling singles for the year were all from *aidoru* groups with 4 singles by the female *aidoru* group AKB48 and 6 singles by the male *aidoru* group Arashi (TokyoHive, 2010). Idols may be solo acts but are most often seen in groups (Nagaike, 2012, p. 101). In variety television it is not uncommon for idols to have *kanmuri bangumi* as I explained earlier in my discussion of idol variety shows. At one point the group Arashi had three *kanmuri bangumi*, one on each of three major networks: *Himitsu no Arashichan* on TBS, *VS Arashi* on FujiTV and *Arashi ni Shiyagare* on Nippon TV.

Idols are known for their looks, acting, singing, athletics, dancing, and occasionally for comedy. Out of all the companies that manage idols the most famous is perhaps Johnny's Jimusho which specializes in young male idols. Johnny's is the company that manages the idol groups SMAP, Tokio, V6, Kinki Kids, and Arashi, all of whom currently have *kanmuri bangumi*, as well as a host of other idols and idol groups. Large companies like Johnny's wield enormous power in the entertainment industry and are considereed one of the most distinctive features of Japanese business (Marx, 2012, p. 38).

4.7 Understanding 'Dirty' Shows

The goal of this chapter was to give readers with little to no knowledge of Japanese variety shows the means to understand their context as it pertains to my data.

These *dirty shows*, as named by the one sociolinguist mentioned earlier in this chapter, represent a significant portion of Japanese television. While to many, such shows give Japanese citizens the lowest common denomenator (Chun, 2007, p. 53) in terms of entertainment, they also provide a significant means by which viewers can feel a sense of intimacy with *tarento*. This intimacy is an important feature of what is seen by some as postmodern neoliberal media (Lukacs, 2010, pp. 8-9) through its promotion of the individual by cultivating and optimizing individuality through the *tarento* (Lemke, 2001, p. 200). Now that I have explained the context of my data I will begin by analyzing these shows and how they connect the idea of English with intelligence.

Chapter 5:

English and Stupidity in Variety Shows

5.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 3, a large part of the Japanese context for English is education. Because of this, there is a powerful association between the idea of English and intelligence. The term *intelligence* is frequently used when referring to *academic intelligence*, a trait often correlated with success in school (Lighbown & Spada, 2006, p. 57). Particularly within the discourse of non-academics, academic ability in the form of good grades is connected to the idea of intelligence based on how intelligence is operationalized (Sternberg, 1999, p. 296), which is a blend of the *stable-trait* fallacy and the *general-ability* fallacy of intelligence (Sternberg, 2003, p. 46). In other words there is a commonly held, although mistaken, belief that intelligence levels do not change and that ability in one area translates to ability in several areas, ergo skill in English as a subject in school as seen through grades shows an *intelligence* in the vernacular sense and that is conflated with the general scholastic ability that academic intelligence is typically associated with.

For many Japanese, not only is the basic statement that if you are good at English, you must be smart true, the converse, inverse, and contrapositive are then often seen as true as well. In other words many also believe in certain situations that: if someone is intelligent then that person is also good at English; if that person is not good at English then they are not intelligent; and if they are not intelligent then they are not good at English. In this chapter, I will analyze several examples to show how these indirect

indexical beliefs about English language and intelligence are produced within Japanese variety shows.

Many Japanese variety shows and their associated corners or segments are based on the idea of connecting English and intelligence. One of the shows in which this relationship is particularly highlighted is the popular variety show *Mecha Mecha Iketeru!* (translated in the show's logo as 'what a cool we are'.). I will first explain the design of this program and its history, and then I will explain in detail the major segment of the show that I examine which focuses on connecting English with intelligence. My analysis focuses on how one's lack of intelligence -or stupidity- is socially constructed in connection to English ability.

My analysis will also explain how frame shifts and frame embedding are used to ridicule people's English in this particular program. Embedded frames (Gordon, 2008, pp. 115-116) are used by participants to increase the othering and ridiculing of others by use of *erasure* (Irvine & Gal, 2000). In addition, sudden frame shifts marked by cues such as changes in volume intensify the ridiculing process by utilizing contrast.

5.2 Mechaike

The full name of the show to be analyzed in this chapter is *Mecha Mecha Iketeru! What a cool we are!* (Nakajima, 2000-2012). As can be seen from the logo (see Figure 5.1) the second half of the show's name is in English and is a translation of the phrase *mecha mecha iketeru* where the presumed pronoun is dropped. This part of the name is never actually used when naming the show verbally and also rarely appears when people write about it. The phrase itself comes from a youth variety of language that was popular

when the show premiered in 1996. It might be seen as similar to American youth

language attributed to a valley girl or surfer saying that something is 'totally totally cool'.

It is very interesting that the claim to 'cool' in this program's title is done in English, but

the relationship between social cool and English will be explicated in Chapter 6. *Mecha*

Mecha Iketeru! is often referred to by the shortened form of its name *Mechaike*.

Figure 5.1 *Mechaike* logo

When *Mechaike* first premiered in 1996, the regulars consisted of four comedy

duos (3 male duos and 1 female duo), an male actor, a female model, and a female

tarento (see Chapter 4 for definition and explanation). While these last three individuals

do appear in various corners of the show, much of the program revolves around the

comedians, especially the comedy duo *Naintinain* (Ninety-nine) comprised of Okamura

Takeshi as the *boke* ('fool' but often used as 'stupid') and Yabe Hiroyuki as the *tsukkomi*

('straight man'). Although Yabe is often referred to as the leader of *Mechaike*'s cast, it is

usually Okamura whose presence is found in nearly every corner of the show. After a

scandal in 2006, one of the other male comedians left the show. Then Okamura fell ill in

the summer of 2010 and took a four month leave of absence from the show, which

brought the number of regulars down to 9 people. At this time the show held open

auditions where anyone, entertainer or not could try to become a new cast member. In the

end, two younger comedy duos (one male duo and one female duo) a male model, a

female *tarento* and one *ippanjin* ('average person' meaning someone who is not a professional entertainer) were added to the cast, after which Okamura returned, making the current official cast of 17 members. Specific demographic information about the show's audience was not available but as is shown in many segments involving on location shoots, Mechaike has a wide ranging audience from young children to adults in their 50s and 60s. At its highest viewership, Mechaike achieved a 33.2% rating during the popular *nukiuchi tesuto* special of 2004.

The show usually consists of various cast members taking part in corners that mimic or spoof different everyday situations, or memes[6] from news and popular culture. *Mechaike* is typical of Japanese television in that it is a blend of different formats combined together, including aspects of skit comedy, documentaries, interviews, and infomercials combined into one program. These corners often start off as a type of skit that spoofs a specific event or type of event.

To demonstrate the blended nature of the show, I will give an explanation of one common corner on the show. In the *Shinkuronaized Teesutingu* ('Synchronized Tasting') corner, Yabe is usually seated with an announcer and a celebrity guest in a viewing box to the side of a large platform with a trap door in the bottom which is over a large pool filled with ice and water. The pool and the viewing box are surrounded by a studio audience of viewers. This corner is a spoof of synchronized swimming competitions. The segment begins with a female voice over a loudspeaker announcing the start of the competition in English, followed by the male announcer sitting in the viewing box

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[6] An amusing image, video, or text that is passed around over the internet.

announcing in Japanese, very much like the Japanese telecast of an actual synchronized swimming event.

A celebrity guest is introduced, followed by small talk about their current projects. Then the celebrity promotes their latest project, often a movie or upcoming TV drama with scenes shown in a *waipu* ('picture in picture') thereby indexing a typical talk show but also an infomercial due to the promoting of the movie or drama. This promotion of the celebrity's new projects is called *bansen*. After that, a mixed group of usually male cast members and guest comedians come on the platform dressed in drag as female synchronized swimmers. They march on to the platform and false names are given for them which combine their real Japanese names with morphemes that sound like they belong to foreigners from a specific country. For example, if the group is pretending to be a synchronized swimming team from Russia and one member's Japanese name is Kato, his name in the telop box might read Katovsky. The group members then stand on the platform in the middle of the large trap door and close their eyes. A specific dish such as curry or sushi is placed in their mouths by attendants and the team needs to guess what kind of food it is. If all the team's answers do not match they are then dropped into the icy water bath below and need to make it out to the other side of the pool where a large tub of warm water waits for them to warm themselves back up. The talk ranges from discussions somewhat in character as female synchronized swimmers to discussions out of character either as the comedians tell jokes or as they try to guess what kind of food they are eating. Once they fall into the icy water, any pretense of being female synchronized swimmers is usually dropped as they talk about their usually mistaken answers or about the coldness of the water and the difficulty in getting out of the pool.

The examination of the participants' reactions as they endure the cold water and the idea of a type of game or challenge are similar to many reality shows such as Survivor or Big Brother and the description of the water and difficulty in getting out of the pool has some aspects of the documentary in it as well. While this might seem strange and excessive, it is a rather typical variety show segment in Japan.

Many of the corners on *Mechaike* are similar in that there is a set that spoofs a well-known context or understood event such as synchronized swimming. The regulars and guests are also dressed in costumes that further add to the representation of these settings. Speech acts and events are often arranged in ways that mirror or parody the original event. Talk continually shifts in and out of character with occasional references to the performers' personal lives and careers outside the show. This constant moving in and out of character is typical of Japanese varieties since the form of the *tarento* in terms of their personal lives often has greater audience appeal than the corner taking place. Again this value of form over content reflects the empty signifier that Lukacs (2010, p. 41) sees as common in postmodern Japanese television. Now that the overall tone of *Mechaike* is understood, I will move to an examination of a popular corner that has been airing for 14 years on this show, the *nukiuchi tesuto*.

5.3 The *Nukiuchi Tesuto*

One particular corner on the show that uses a lot of English is the *nukiuchi tesuto* ('surprise test'). The *nukiuchi tesuto* has been performed 14 times since its inception in 2000. The *nukiuchi tesuto* is a test usually taken by a mixture of regular cast members and celebrity guests with the intent of ranking the participants who take the test based on

academic skill, as measured by a five part exam based on Japanese middle school and high school curricula. This segment is particularly important to examine because it takes English in the classroom and brings it to television through indexical parody in terms of set, costuming and its use of standardized tests, to determine intelligence and the lack of intelligence. In particular, an English test based on middle school and high school exams is utilized to accomplish this as one subject out of five being tested. This segment is quite infamous for surprising *tarento* with the test without giving them formal notice as the details are usually worked out in secret between the show's production staff and the management agencies of the *tarento*. It usually airs as extended length specials with sometimes several weeks of *mikoukai eizo* ('unseen footage') being shown afterwards.

This corner usually starts out with narration by the off camera announcer, Kimura Kyouya. A scene from somewhere in Tokyo is usually shown with a focus on the building that is being used to hold the test. Next, viewers see the inside of the building which is made to look like some type of shop or business place, and then the song "Westminster Chimes" is played. This song is the exact same sound used in Japanese middle schools and high schools to indicate the beginning of class.

Viewers then see a close up of Okamura's feet in slippers and socks, like those worn by some male teachers in Japan and a close shot of a roll book being placed on a desk. A sliding classroom door, also like many public middle school and high school classrooms, slides open and the first test taker is revealed behind it. The first test taker is usually a regular cast member of the show and always reacts with surprise when the door opens. Okamura, dressed in a neutral toned sweater vest, slacks and glasses does a parody of male Japanese teachers. One of my informants, Naomi, found his costume to be

"*paafekuto*" ('perfect') in constructing an older, stereotypical male teacher even down to the type of slippers he wears. Then Okamura usually yells at the person entering for being late and tells them to hurry inside such as in this example from the first test which was in episode #149 from July 15, 2000.

Extract 5.3.1

Okamura: Ohayoo. Osoi omae wa! Osoi! Chikoku!
Mitsuura: Okashii to omotta.
Okamura: Okashii to omotta ja nee. Hayaku hairee yo baka!

Okamura: Morning. You're late! Late! Tardy!
Mitsuura: I thought something was strange.
Okamura: Who cares if you thought something was strange. Hurry up and
            get your butt in here idiot!

The use of *chikoku* here to mean tardy along with the set and Okamura's use of the deictic *omae*, a pronoun commonly used by teachers towards students helps to construct his identity as teacher and Mitsuura as a student. Based on comments from interviewees the use of *baka* ('idiot') here serves to construct him as a specific kind of teacher, one that is strict and hints at violence. Okamura then directs the test participants to their assigned seats at one of the desks in the middle of the classroom set. If the participant has already taken part in the test before, they often just laugh and take their seats or make comments such as *uwa mata da* ('Oh jeez, again?'), *uwaa, ohisashiburi desu* ('Oh jeez, it's been a while since we did this!'), or *mata yareru* ('Are we doing it again?').

The fact that the test takers were not coming to be filmed adds another layer of meaning to the name *nukiuchi tesuto* ('surprise test'). According to the narration and video footage I have collected, the introduction of the test to the test takers is a type of *dokkiri* ('practical joke'). The first two tests in 2000 and 2002 took place at FujiTV

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studios in rehearsal rooms where the other cast members were expecting to have an off camera meeting and skit rehearsal. In these early tests, Okamura is in on the *dokkiri* from the beginning and acts as an emcee while waiting for the guests to arrive in the classroom set. The test takers all come in wearing their street clothes and one of the women seems particularly upset in the 2002 test because she is not wearing any make-up and is being filmed. The fourth test was at Haneda Airport and the test takers, all women, were all told that they would be filming an airline commercial with Bae Yong-Joon, a very famous Korean actor. The ninth test in 2008 was held in a building made to look like a Lamborghini showroom and each of the test takers, all male this time, were told that they were chosen to be Lamborghini's image characters for Japan. Each time, the test takers realize that they were deceived only when the door opens, leading to an extra meaning of 'surprise test'.

Okamura then usually introduces himself as their main teacher, writes his name on the chalkboard, and then introduces the announcer Sano Mizuki as the assistant teacher. He then explains that they will be taking either a final test or a midterm test depending on the time of year that the segment is being filmed. In the past when the 'class' was completely comprised of young female idols, the fictional school was called *Shiritsu Okamura Joshi Koutou Gakkou* ('Okamura Private Girl's High School') or *Okajo* for short, mirroring the standard nicknaming practices for all-girl schools by using the *onyomi* for the character *onna* ('woman') as the suffix *jo*. On another occasion when the class was all-female and ranging in career type and age, it was called *Kokuritsu Mechanomizu Daigaku Fuzokukoukougakkou* ('National Mechanomizu University Affiliate High School') a spoof of an actual prestigious all girl's high school in Tokyo

called *Ochanomizu Daigaku Fuzokukoukougakkou* ('Ochanomizu University Senior High

School'). When the test takers were all men who were considered to be handsome, the

fictional school name was *Shiritsu Mecha Mecha Ikemen Paradaisu Gakuen* ('Private

Totally Totally Hot Guys Paradise Academy'), a name based on a popular manga and TV

drama about a private school filled with handsome men. Finally, when the test takers

were all men that had a reputation for being tough the fictional school was called

Mechabappu Hai Sukuuru ('Mecha-Bop High School') as a spoof of Kiuchi Kazuhiro's

1983 manga series *Be-Bop High School* featuring a rough group of high school boys. The

use of these names as parodies serve as a type of overlapping frame, connecting the

chronotope of the set with the chronotope of the school or type of school being parodied.

After the skit background has been established, Okamura then gives an

explanation for the purpose behind the test. The test as he usually explains is to see who

among the test takers is a *baka* ('idiot'). The following example from the fourth test,

which aired on 12/27/2003 as Episode #271 displays Okamura explaining the kind of

baka they will be searching for with the test.

Extract 5.3.2

```
01   Okamura:     Nenmatsu to iu koto de, konkai wa,
02                nenmatsu, JANBO BAKA wo kimemasu.
03   test takers: ((laughter))
04   telop box:   kakunin: daremo ga katsute kurushinda ano kimatsu tesuto de
05                gouka kikaku rashiku nenmatsu janbo baka wo kettei!!
06   Okamura:     baka. supesharu baka to kimashita. konkai wa
07                nenmatsu (.) JANBO BAKA. zengoshou arawasete,
08                zengoshou awasete. san okuen >no baka desu.<
09   telop box:   3 okuen no baka desu.
```


```
01   Okamura:     since it's the end of the year, this time,
02                we'll choose the year end JUMBO IDIOT.
03   test takers: ((laughter))
```

04	telop box:	note: someone will suffer immediately because with that final test
05		we'll decide the Year End Jumbo Idiot through our fantastic plan!!
06	Okamura:	We've had the Idiot and the Special Idiot. This time it's
07		the <u>Year</u> <u>End</u> (.) JUMBO IDIOT. The total prize is,
08		the total prize is being <u>a three hundred million yen</u> > idiot.<
09	telop box:	300 million yen idiot.

At the time of episode #271, one of the most popular topics in various news and variety programs was the large end-of-the-year lottery called the *nenmatsu janbo takarakuji*. Clearly the title of the idiot on this third test reflects the popularity of the topic while serving to elevate the intensity of the title of *baka* ('idiot'). A new *baka* title is used for each test, and the losing contestant also receives that title as a result of having the lowest score. The loser of the first test, cast member and comedian Hamaguchi Masaru, was simply referred to as *Baka*. The second test on 10/12/2002 resulted in the same cast member being titled *Supesharu Baka* ('Special *Baka*') in honor of the extended length special that it aired in. The third test, which had all female test takers, resulted in idol singer Tsuji Nozomi being titled *Bakajo* ('Stupid Woman'). Other titles have included *Mitsuboshi Baka* ('Three Star Idiot'), *Warudo Baka Kurashikku* ('World Idiot Classic'), and *Rechourui Saikyou Baka* ('the Stupidest of all Primates'). The use of these extreme titles serves to increase the importance of scoring high on the test as well as enhancing the risk involved in scoring poorly.

The clothing the test takers wear also sometimes matches the fictional school setting of the test. The typical costume for test takers is a sailor dress uniform for women and the typical boy's school outfit used in Japan called a *gakuran* for the men. Those women attending the fictional *Mechanomizu* High School are given skirts and shirts with pink blazers. After changing into school uniforms, the test takers are given one hour to

study before taking the test using textbooks used in middle and high schools in Japan. Standard textbooks used in schools are placed inside their desks beforehand for this purpose.

During this study time, the announcer then quickly goes over each of the test takers, explaining who they are and describing their attitudes toward the test that they have displayed thus far in the program. While he explains this, video footage of each test taker is shown of them studying along with information regarding their careers, home prefectures, educational background, favorite school subjects and weakest school subjects as *seito kobetsu* DATA ('student individual DATA'). In this particular example taken from the 3/31/2012 test former boxing champion Naito Daisuke is featured. His name in large blue text is given heavy *weight* (in other words *bolded*) making his name more salient than the simple black lower weight text just above that gives his status as a former champion or from the information to the right. The use of the small photograph next to his name indexes a type of official file format similar to what could be in a student or employee file. Similarly the text at the top also weighted and using *uruko* ('Japanese serifs') along with the content saying *mechabappu haiskuuru seito kobetsu* DATA ('Mechabop High School Student Individual DATA') gives an institutional quality to this information making it appear impartial even though by choosing what data to show and how to arrange it, certain ideologies can be seen such as the relevance of his home prefecture and *tarento* management company. It then explains that he is from Hokkaido and what talent management agency he is affiliated with. It then gives his last school attended and his favorite and worst school subjects which are math and English respectively.

Figure 5.2 Naito's Data

In every version of the test, Okamura then passes out the tests with an admonition
not to turn them over until the chime sounds. The test then comes in 5 sections; each
lasting exactly 50 minutes giving the test takers a 10 minute break between the different
parts. The first section is *kokugo* ('Japanese language and literature') followed by
suugaku ('math'), *shakai* ('social studies'), *rika* ('science'), and finally ending with the
often dreaded *eigo* ('English'). In versions of the test since 2008, there is usually an
explanation by the narrator during scenes of the English segment of the test about the
importance of English to scoring well on the test as a whole. These statements are echoed
through the telop (see Figure 5.3 below).

Figure 5.3 English Warning

The yellow text at the top of the screen gives us the basic context of the situation.

Extract 5.3.3

Mechamecha ike para gakuen	Mechaike Paradise Academy
Nukiuchi kimatsu tesuto	Surprise end of term test

The text box in the lower right of the screen however gives a warning about those who do poorly in English.

Extract 5.3.4

shikenjou no chuui jikou	Important points about the test
4 eigo teitokuten ha kiken.	#4 Low English scores are dangerous.

After this the off camera narrator, Kimura Kyouya, adds:

Extract 5.3.5

narrator: eigo wa dekinai seito ga maikai kai ranku sareru koto wa keihou ga.

narrator: Students bad at English should be warned that they always get ranked lowly.

Both the narrator and the text box shown in telop place the role of English quite high in determining the rank of the test takers. None of the other subjects are given this particular importance. After the tests are scored, Okamura returns to the classroom set with Sano and proceeds to tell the test takers who scored the highest in each subject and make fun of many of the mistaken answers that were given. Before he mocks those who gave particularly interesting answers that were marked as errors he explains to them what he's about to do. Here is an example of this from the first test in 2000.

Extract 5.3.6

```
01   Okamura:       II DESU KA?
                    good CP Q
```

```
02              JUN   I O HAPPYOU SHITE IKU MAE,
                order rank O reveal  do  go before
                'Okay, LISTEN. BEFORE I TELL YOU HOW
                YOU DID,'

03  Yabe:       oo.

04  Hamaguchi:  mae   ni.
                before at
                'Before that.'

05  Okamura:    sensei saiten shitete,
                teacher score doing

06              dou ni mo  kou  ni mo,
                how at also this at also

07                rikai    dekinaI,
                comprehend able:NEG
                'While Mr. Okamura was grading
                there were certain answers I just,'

08  Yabe:       ((laughs))

09  Yamamoto:   ((laughs))

10  Okamura:    kaitou ga
                answer SB
                'could not'

11  Suzuki:     ((laughs))

12  Okamura:    ikutsu   ↑KA, dete kimashita.
                how.many Q   exit  come:PST
                'comprehend on your tests.'

13  Hamaguchi:  eh? sou na no?
                    true N  N
                'Huh? Seriously?'

14  Yabe:       maa maa. ikinari yatta kara ne?
                well well suddenly do  from  IP
                'Now now, we had to do it all of a sudden right?'

15  Okamura:    sore o, sensei ima kara,
                that O  teacher now from

16              dondon, iJITte ikimasu. ((smiling))
                ON      tease   go
                'I will repeatedly tease them starting now.'

17  background:  ((laughter))


18  Kato        aa. [maji de   yatta   bun
                    true with do:PST  part
```

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```
19                ijiraren no iya da na.]
                  tease:N  N  bad CP IP
                  'Aa. No one wants to get teased about the
                  part you were trying hard at right.'

20   LM telop:    [maji de yatta   bun
                  true with do:PST part

21                ijiraren no iya  da na.]
                  tease:N  N  bad  CP IP
                  'No one wants to get teased about the
                  part you were trying hard at right.'

22   Hamaguchi:   oo.
```

Okamura constructs an additional activity and frame first by putting emphasis on the word *mae* ('before') in line 2 which Hamaguchi rephrases as a postpositional phrase in line 4. He then begins by giving the focus for this activity and frame by describing certain answers on the test, increasing the distinction between these answers and other by use of the phrase *dou ni mo kou ni mo rikai dekinai kaitou* ('certain answers I just could not comprehend') from line 7-10. Then in lines 15-16, Okamura explains what the action towards the focus will be. Kato's comments in 18-19 are mirrored by the text in 20-21. These comments themselves serve as a means of expressing attitude towards this new frame at the interpersonal level. The same phrase overlapped in telop increases the salience of this comment for the home viewer leading to the embedding of a new corner where the goal is to tease answers and answer givers whose responses were judged as being incomprehensible.

Okamura with Kato and Hamaguchi creates this embedded frame within the *nukiuchi tesuto* corner that we now understand as having a clearly stated purpose, similar to the metamessages in Gordon's (2009, pp. 141-142) embedded frames from family

interaction. This segment is in every single test and often takes the majority of time in these episodes.

Nukiuchi Tesuto
Corner

Tease test takers
about strange
answers.
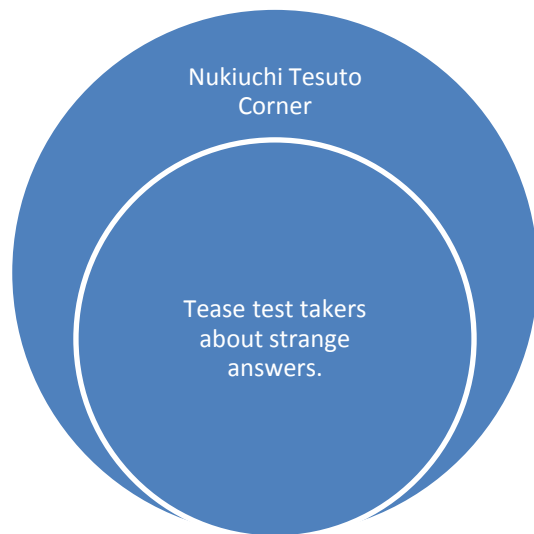
Figure 5.4 Embedded teasing segments

After this, Okamura ranks the test takers based on total scores. He begins with the top ranking test taker and ends with the lowest ranked who is also named the *baka* of that particular test. Each announcement of rank is usually preceded by several long pauses, close up shots of the yet unranked students and Okamura and sound effects. After the *baka* is announced, a handout is given to each test taker featuring several mistaken answers given by the *baka* of that test. Okamura proceeds to make fun of the *baka* and their answers for several minutes and the show usually ends with the *baka* wearing some kind of embarrassing headpiece to 'celebrate' their title. This last part is often received by the 'losers' in a mixed way with varying combinations of laughter, expressions of shame, and tears.

5.4 English and Stupidity

On *Mechaike*, English is used far more often to show stupidity than intelligence. Most of the laughter that occurs on the *Nukiuchi tesuto* corner is during the time when people's answers, particularly their English test answers, are marked as incorrect and then made fun of by Okamura. The English portion of the test is usually divided into five sections which often include such themes as: *kisou tango* ('basic vocabulary'), *eibunsaku* ('English composition'), *eibunwayaku* ('English-Japanese translation'), and *doushi henka* ('verb conjugation'). Okamura severely ridicules the mistakes made by the test takers in any of these areas as he goes over some of the questions and the correct answers, an act known as *ijime* ('bullying' or 'hazing'). Parts of this do in fact mirror actual experiences from school for many Japanese people. Although teachers would not name specific students in this way, it's not unheard of for teachers to go over test questions and comment on answers they find strange. One informant told me that she thought this was common before the 1990s but that it probably didn't happen anymore.

The *ijime* that occurs within this data is quite troubling to many who do not watch these programs regularly. At the same time, it is important to note that it was not remarked upon by any of the focus groups as being particularly cruel or unusual. This may be due to the fact that such *ijime* is quite common within the genre, the context of the variety show as a workplace, and within the educational context being indexed. For many such environments the practice of ridicule or other forms of *ijime* may be quite normal or accepted.

While there have been numerous studies attempting to make a connection between media violence and actual violent practices (Kodaira, 1998) many researchers

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are still cautious about making any claims of causality. In addition, the theories that connect media violence to violent practices are frequently changing. Older theories that claim the media as a powerful suggestive force have long since been disproven and much of the more recent research still leads to mixed results (Kunczik & Zipfel, 2008). While some studies have shown a correlation between media examples of *ijime* and *ijime* practices (Sasaki & Muto, 1987), causality is still unproven.

The tendency of bullying to occur as a group tormenting a single individual is often the norm for most *ijime* situations (Akiba, 2004). Mirroring the set of the *nukiuchi tesuto*, much *ijime* occurs in classroom environments and it is not unheard of for teachers to engage in activities that single students out for ridicule (Ebimura & Watanabe as cited in Yoneyama, 1999, p. 3). *Ijime* is also known to happen in the workplace, particularly since the 1990s, after the economic bubble (Meek, 2004, p. 322) and for the *tarento*, *Mechaike* is a workplace where this happens.

By analyzing the discourse from these situations I will show how mistakes in English are connected to stupidity. First I will identify the types of answers that are viewed as mistakes on this show. After that I will examine the reactions of Okamura in his role as the instructor and emcee for this segment. By doing so, I will explore how his actions and other resources of the program guide the rest of the class into ridiculing or mocking test takers while guiding viewers to interpretations of these situations as humorous. After that I will analyze the reactions of the test takers as they are mocked for their English showing how they sometimes make attempts to reduce or divert the mocking and ridicule. Finally I will connect these data to the larger context of Japanese society and its education system.

5.4.1 English Errors.

The types of English errors that are teased on *Mechaike* come in three categories: spelling errors, sentence translation errors, and code ambiguations. The errors shown in my data are certainly common types of errors though taken to a further extreme than what would normally be found on an English test. In the focus groups I conducted, many of the participants felt that the answers were too weird to be real, showing such a severe lack of test-taking skill that the answers had to be faked, meaning the test taker was trying to be funny. Others were not so sure, giving stories and accounts of the errors they and their classmates had made that were particularly funny in similar ways. Two informants working in the television industry, Ikue and Kenta, told me that they often look for *tennen* ('naturally ditzy') characters like this for use in their shows. Ikue in particular was actually looking for L2 Japanese speakers like that from my university to appear in a program they were working on where a *tarento* would be teaching Japanese and funny responses or uses of Japanese given by the 'students' would be teased and laughed at. The types of errors shown here and the ridicule they receive can be seen as reflective of bullying practices in schools where even teachers are known to harass and shame students in class (Yoneyama, 1999, p. 166-169).

5.4.1.1 Spelling mistakes.

One type of error that is commonly ridiculed on the show is spelling errors. These are usually found in vocabulary sections of the test when someone is asked to translate words from Japanese into English, but they can also occur in other parts as well. This example from the first *nukiuchi tesuto* in 2000 shows how one test taker was threatened with a zero score because of not spelling his name properly on the test.

Figure 5.5 The Misspelt Name

The spelling is clearly marked as an error here in the close up of the elmo[7] screen with the red check mark that is commonly used to mark errors in Japanese schools. We can also see that this is the top of the test where the subject, *eigo* ('English') is clearly written on the page in *kanji*. A large red zero is double underscored at the top, reinforcing the possibility of a zero score due to not writing your name on each test made verbally by Okamura earlier as the teacher in this corner. The spelling errors are also commonly pointed out further by additional comments made through the telop (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 Hamaguchė

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[7] Elmo refers to a brand of camera/projection systems used similar to overhead projectors where documents can be seen on a screen or monitor. The term elmo has come to be used to represent such devices regardless of manufacturer.

We can see in Figure 5.6 that the camera gives us a close up of comedian Masaru Hamaguchi, the person who made the spelling error. The telop box below his face provides the context for this image as *eigo 0 ten no hito no namae* ('the name of the person who got 0 points on English'), a label which makes him a candidate for the *baka* 'stupidest' contestant. To draw even more attention to Masaru's deficient English skills, we see that he spelled his name incorrectly in English, as indicated by the *bouten*, or the small dot over the final letter (ė). The black text has less weight than the red which in addition has the color red and the use of the *bouten* to make it extremely salient here. This dot is often used to signify incorrect language on variety show programs although not in schools. The rounded shape of the red text and lack of flicks or *uroko* ('scales') gives his name a soft feel in comparison to the visible *uroko* on the back text. This creates a semiotic soft/gentle versus harsh/official contrast in the written text.

These spelling errors are particularly interesting in the case of Japanese people using English in that unlike English, Japanese *kana* are usually called by their pronunciation. In other words the character い is romanized with the letter *i* and pronounced /i/; the character う is romanized with the letter *u* and pronounced /u/. English of course has many possible pronunciations for the same letter depending on the multiple factors including the phonological environment the letter is in, the geographical environment, and what social situation it is being used in, just to name a few. Because English spelling is so non-phonemic, the letter *e* can be pronounced as /ɛ/ as in *bet*, /i/ as in *be*, /eɪ/ as in *café* or /ə/ as in *camera*. Hence, it is not particularly surprising that Hamaguchi (/hamaguʧi/) would spell the last vowel sound in his name with the letter *e*

since the very pronunciation of the letter matches the vowel sound in the final mora of his name.

It is also important to realize that Okamura can use any other pronunciation of the letter *e* in Hamaguche including /i/ but instead he uses the /e/, matching the standard romanized form. Doing so constructs a greater difference between Hamaguchi and everyone else in that the mora /ʧe/ does not exist in standard Japanese and singles Hamaguchi out further while at the same time reproducing the ideologies of standardization at the expense of the individual. This latter action serves to move Hamaguchi along the axis of authorization and illegitimation toward illegitimation where he is denied the choice of how to spell his name.

Other similar spelling errors are quite common on the show due to *katakana* based spelling and pronunciation of certain words. Examples of these types of errors are often shown on questions that ask the students write the days of the week or list the numbers 1 through 10 in English.
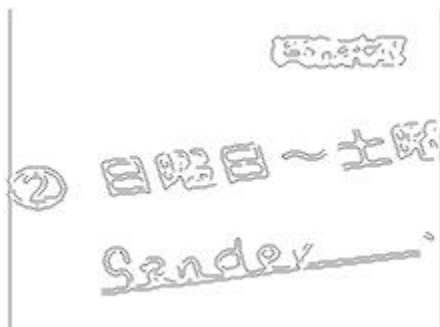
Figure 5.7 Tsuji's spelling   Figure 5.8 Hamaguchi's numbers
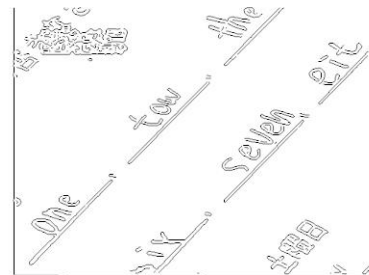
In the Figure 5.7 from the third test in 2003, we can see that *nichiyoubi* ('Sunday') has been spelled S-a-n-d-e-r. The romanization of the English Japanese word is *Sandee* (サンデー). In this situation the general spelling rules in *katakana* affect her romanization of the word. For English Japanese, the words ending with a postvocalic r are often converted

to an extended vowel, specifically the /a/ sound. So computer becomes *kompyuutaa* (コン

ピューター). For this word Tsuji has reversed the process and converted the extended

vowel from *dee* (デー) into -der making the spelling into Sander. Similarly, Hamaguchi in

the second picture has written the word 'nine' as *nain* matching the katakana spelling of

the word romanized (ナイン → *nain*). Despite the possibility of these words being

pronounced closer to the English /sʌndeɪ/ and /naɪn/, Okamura instead chooses to

pronounce them as /sandaː/ and /nein/. Once again this is done to move people along the

two axes towards distinction and illegitimation (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). By reading

aloud from sheets that were explained as containing Hamaguchi and Tsuji's answers he

effectively shifts the position of what Goffman (1981, pp. 144-145) termed animator

from the two test takers to himself while leaving the role of author the same. Speaking as

Tsuji and Hamaguchi he then purposefully uses pronunciations that are distinct from the

institutional standard. This pronunciation as the two test takers moves them towards

distinction. At the same time the use of institutional authority here to make their

utterances unintelligible moves the two test takers to illegitimation while Okamura as the

teacher retains his placement in the opposite direction of authorization.

5.4.1.2 Sentence translations.

Another kind of situation that is often the target of teasing is sentence translation

exercises which result in humorously incongruent answers. These answers are also

mocked and used to construct negative identities through distinction and illegitimation

but because the test items are longer with a greater sense of context to them the ridicule is

increased. Answers are no longer just incorrect, they become construed as nonsensical by

Okamura through the ideoscape. Drawing upon the ideology of the inverse and

contrapositive of the general-ability fallacy in conjunction with their English test

performance, he discursively constructs a reality where if you are not good at English you

are not smart and if you are not smart you are not good at English.

One such example comes from the second *nukiuchi tesuto* from 2002 (see Figure

5.9). The question asked test takers to translate the sentence "Once upon a time there was

a big tree here" into Japanese. Hamaguchi's answer at the time was "*Mou ichido itte*

kudasai. Ano dekai ki de iin desu ka?" ('Please say it again. Is that big tree okay?'). What

gets teased with this answer is the conversational structure and tone of Hamaguchi's

answer and that a situation where it could be used would be highly unlikely.
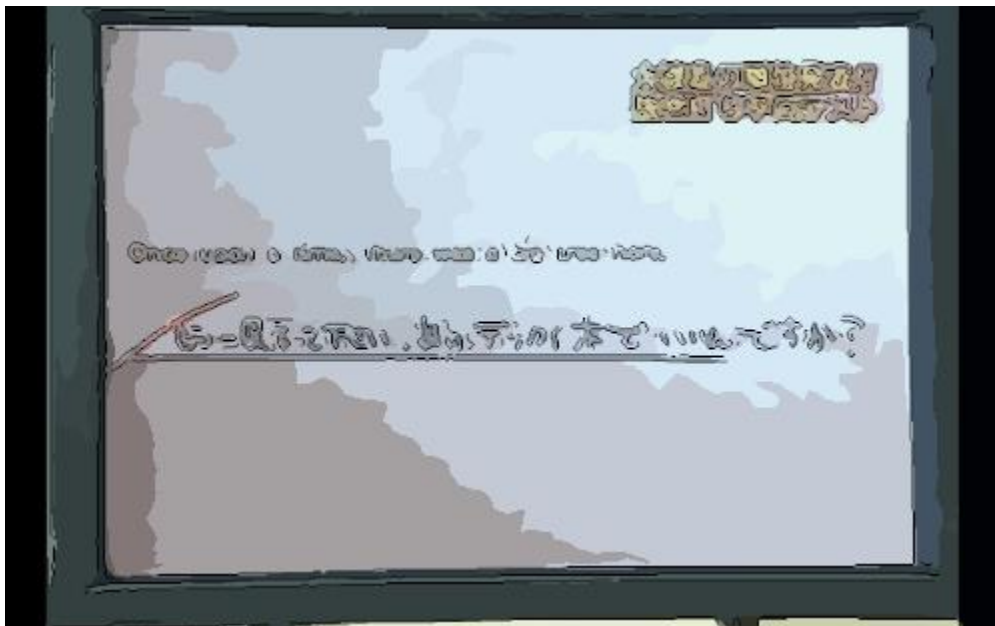
Figure 5.9 "Is that big tree okay?"

This situation was mocked by both Okamura and the editing staff who added a

picture to show the unusualness of the context that Hamaguchi had created. In their

illustration, a blond person holds one hand to his ear as if unable to understand the person

he is speaking to and then points to a large tree nearby. This answer is seen as lacking a

type of test-taking ability where answers that might be viewed as unlikely to institutional authorities such as teachers would be ruled out. It becomes part of constructing Hamaguchi as other while at the same time feeding into the larger discourses about intelligence and test performance discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

Another example where the translation error is seen as a general lack of intelligence can be seen in this test question from the twelfth test in 2012. Test takers were asked to translate "Claudia likes the man who likes fishing." The note in the frame, added after filming for additional effect, states that Claudia is the name of the beloved wife of one of the test takers, Umemiya Tatsuo, who is quite famous for enjoying fishing. One of the other test takers, Daigo, is then constructed as giving a rude answer to this test question.

His response as shown on the elmo screen is "*kuraudia ha otoko suki de dareka wo tsuru no ga suki desu.*" ('Claudia likes men and she likes it when she catches someone.') This answer is teased because of the pragmatics, as it refers to a fellow test taker's wife and because it is an odd subject for a test. As a mistake it is highly syntactic in nature where the dependent clause is understood as a coordinating clause and the relative pronoun is mistaken for an indefinite pronoun. However, it is still the pragmatics that makes this error something to be ridiculed in this part of the test. The display of these translation errors serves primarily the purpose of distinction although some illegitimation may occur as well since such translation problems often contain multiple mistakes with grammar as well as spelling and reading. More importantly, displaying and mocking these errors reinforces the ideologies that equate school and test performance as indicative of intelligence. At the same time negative performance through overall score

or having your answers mocked is seen as the opposite. The various errors are analyzed

and made fun of by Okamura, the telop, and the other test takers so that the way of

thinking behind the error is viewed as strange or abnormal in terms of general logic and

by extension weak in analytical intelligence (Sternberg, 1999).

The next type of error commonly seen is from questions on the test where when

asked to translate a Japanese sentence to English, the test taker uses telegraphic language

to make up for lack of vocabulary or grammatical knowledge. This example comes from

the fourth test in 2003. When asked to write the sentence "You sing a song" in future

tense, Yamamoto, a former regular member of the cast, wrote "You sing a song Go Go."

In this example, Yamamoto uses the word go twice to refer to the future. Another

example from the eighth test in 2006 illustrates a similar answer by fashion model Rinka

who translated the question *anata ha dochira no juusu wo kaimasu ka* ('Which juice will

you buy?'), as "Do you jūsu or jūsu?" Although both of these sentences are pragmatically

understandable in actual situations, they are severely teased here as Okamura and the

other test takers mock them by repeating their words over and over. Rather than

contesting this teasing, the test takers usually just sit through it as Yamamoto and Rinka

did.

5.4.1.3 Code ambiguations.

The final type of error that is most commonly made fun of in this corner are

situations where Japanese is somehow made equivalent to English or English is made

equivalent to Japanese. These errors are what Moody and Matsumoto (2003; 2011, p.

182) term *code ambiguations* which, while common in other domains such as Japanese

pop music, are treated with shock in the context of the *nukiuchi tesuto*. Such

ambiguations often lead to louder volume or increased magnitude of reactions by the other test takers. These errors are in situations where when asked to translate an English word into Japanese, the test taker reads an English word as something similar to Japanese based on the sound. Reactions to this kind of English from the other test takers often include loud gasps and cries of *uso* ('you must be kidding') or *kangaekata wa sugoi* ('it's amazing how they think').
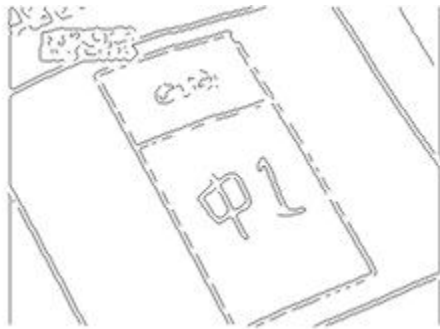
Figure 5.10

This picture (Figure 5.10) is an example from the tenth test in 2011. Shigemori, who was chosen as the *baka* of that test, gave this translation of the word *church* into Japanese. The correct answer as described in the narration is *kyoukai* ('church') but what Shigemori writes here is *chuuichi* ('seventh grade' or 'first year middle school'). After everyone loudly expresses their shock at this answer she explains her reading of the English word church (/tʃɛrtʃ/) as /tʃuːritʃi/. The audible reactions from the other test takers are highly emphatic when there is a code-ambiguation error. This may indicate the existence of some scale for understandable errors versus shocking errors in English for this program.

Similarly, former boxer Naito received much ridicule during the 12[th] test when he translated the words *kinou* ('yesterday'), *kyou* ('today'), and *mirai* ('future') into English. The answers he gave, which were met with a great amount of laughter were *yestade, tode,*

and *mirakuru*. While the first two responses are quite similar to the earlier answers also categorized as misspellings, the last word was interpreted as particularly incorrect and subjected to much critique since it blurs the line between what is English and what is Japanese through Japanese orthography. The word *mirai* ('future') in kanji as written on the test is comprised of two characters, the first one 未 ('*mi*') meaning 'not yet' and the second one 来 ('*rai*') meaning 'come'. Both characters also have other pronunciations (*kunyomi*) and the second character can be used to make the word 来る (*kuru* or 'come') in Japanese. Combining the *mi* from the first character and the *ra* from the second character then adding the alternative reading for the second character Naito has come up with the word *mirakuru* which is a English Japanese pronunciation of miracle from English written in *roomaji*. Both Naito and Shigemori's utterances required a great deal of linguistic knowledge and ingenuity. Despite this, both of these extremely unusual translations are viewed as particularly worthy of teasing rather than being seen as indicative of the skills required to come up with these answers.

These four types of errors are often examined, sometimes in cases where several types are combined, in great detail on the show. These are often popular devices for ridiculing people's English to the point where people are occasionally moved to tears as the other test takers laugh and mock them. I will now examine the form that this ridicule and mocking can take on the show.

5.4.2 Ridiculing English.

In this extract taken from the first *nukiuchi tesuto* in 2000, Okamura begins to ridicule one of the test taker's English by building up the gravity of the mistake. His

ridicule is assisted by the editing process and the other test takers. This is accomplished by moving the test takers along the axis of adequation and distinction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; 2005) and by use of linguistic resources that create a contrast between most of the test takers and one specific individual.

Extract 5.4.2.1

```
01   Okamura:    sa. eigo     wa minasan (.)
                 IP  English  TP everyone

02               kekkou dekite orimashita.
                 lots   able   exist:PST
                 'So. Everyone did rather well in English.'

03   Yabe:       muzukashii na:::
                 difficult   IP
                 'It was tough wasn't it.'

04   Suzuki:     na:::
                 IP
                 'Wasn't it though?'

05   text box:   [hobo zennin yuushuu.
                 about everyone excellent
                 'Most everyone did excellent.'

06   sound:      [((high pitched vibrating sound))

07   Okamura:    TADA, koko de, (2.0) sensei.
                 but   here at         teacher

08               kanashii oshirase ga arimasu.
                 sad      message   SB exist
                 'BUT, Mr. Okamura has some
                 unfortunate news.'

09   Yabe:       dou shimashita.
                 how  do:PST
                 'What happened?'

10               (.)

11   Kato:       °nani?°
                 'What?'

12               (1.0)

13   Okamura:    REI  TEN   GA IMASU!
                 zero point SB exist
                 'Someone got a zero!'

14   ?:          ee?
```

```
                        'Huh?'

15    Mitsuura:    EE?=
                   'Huh?'

16    Suzuki:        =ee:?
                   'Huuh?'

17    Yabe:        rei  ten?
                   zero point
                   'A zero?'

18    Hamaguchi:   uso ya. maji de?
                   lie CP  true CP
                   'You're kidding. Seriously?'

19    sound:       [((metal percussive sound))]

20    text box:    [0 ten?]
                        point
                   'A zero?'

21    Okamura:     Sano san happyou shite kudasai!
                        AT reveal   do   please
                   'Sano, please show us who it is!'

22                 ((cut to commercial))
```

Right away from line 1, Okamura starts the discussion of the new test area by using the discourse marker *sa* and naming the subject. He then immediately moves the test takers in the direction of adequation by using the adverb *kekkou* ('lots') to describe their accomplishment on the English test. This move is furthered by the text box in line 5 which while not seen by Okamura and the test takers is clearly seen by the home viewers. The resulting effect is that the move to adequation is highlighted for the home audience. This highlighting effect is increased by the sound effect in line 6, which due to the overlap with the telop box appearance, draws attention to the written words.

1. As seen on a TV watching the program as it airs
2. Information added in editing process (lines 5 & 6)
3. What happened when it was filmed
4. Nukiuchi tesuto
5. Make fun of mistakes in the test
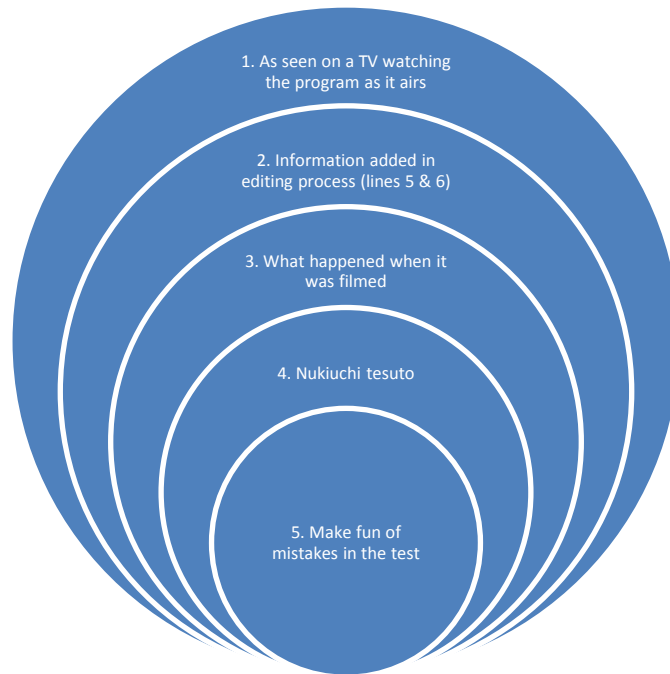
Figure 5.11

To carry out his act of distinction, Okamura creates a contrast between most of the test takers and someone who got a zero score. He does this by first raising his voice and making an exception to his earlier statement with the word *tada* and using the phrase *kanashii oshirase*. *Kanashii oshirase* is of course at odds with the earlier formulations of the English scores as *kekkou dekita* from line 2 and *yuushuu* in line 5. Okamura uses the pauses in 7, 10, and 12 to increase the gravity of the upcoming announcement, which in turn increases the contrast between these two pieces of information. At this point we have one positive piece of information which is given right away that puts most of the test takers on the adequation side of this particular tactical axis and a second piece of information that would seem to be invoking some part of the opposing polarity of distinction in some way. The likelihood of a close to neutral position on the side of distinction decreases with the intensity of the contrast being built here. By using these contrasting terms and dramatic pauses, Okamura projects his next statement with

gradually increasing detail. Okamura then allows this contrast to increase sharply with

the statement that someone has scored zero points on the English test in line 13. Of

course the score of zero presents an extreme situation in that this is the lowest score that

can conceivably be received. The contrast is underscored further in lines 14-18 when the

other test takers react to the idea of someone scoring a zero. All of these activities result

in the construction of Frame 5 in the diagram above (see Figure 5.11), a framing that

creates the context for singling out a test taker who has the lowest score. This reaction by

the other test-takers is interesting as a type of high performance which Coupland (2007)

explains as temporally and spatially bounded. In other words, a type of chronotope where

reactions are performed using increased intensity (p. 147). In this sense, any reaction such

as what occurs between lines 14-18 must be understood as the attempt to convey extremis

with the intensity expected of performances on television. It is in certain ways both

ideational and interpersonal (Butt, et al., 2000, p. 46) in that an attitude is expressed

within a specifically constructed chronotope.

The extreme nature of receiving a zero score is further increased by the telop box

in line 19 and the overlapped sound effect in 20. Again, the overlapping sound effect

further highlights the details given in the text box and the text itself highlights the

reactions in lines 14-18 effectively aiding in achieving intersubjectivity for the viewers.

The text box creates an overlapped frame with the comments that were just made to

foreground the zero score. The text boxes and sound effects are discursive resources used

at the intermediary level of television discourse. Such intermediary level television

discourse includes what Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001, pp. 7-8) refer to as the

production and *distribution strata* of multimodal discourse. The *distribution stratum*

refs to the parts of media involving the technical work that goes into recording, editing

and in the case of television programs, transmitting finished show whereas *production*

refers to the organization of the expression. Originally, Kress and Van Leeuwen saw

these as separate from each other and from the actual sense of performing but with text

like this that serves a performative purpose but is added in during distribution

purposefully by those who do design work, the differences between these strata become

unclear. It is still quite different from the other parts of the performance that occurred

when the corner was taped. Because of that, in this case the text occurs at the Frame 2

level as seen in Figure 5.11. While work in this stratum is usually seen as a type of

reproduction of discourse rather than a straightforward production, Kress and Van

Leeuwen do clearly state that increased levels of technology and mass media can lead to

the combination of the production and distribution strata. In this particular situation the

intermediary level of television production discourse (in the form of telop) works

together with the micro level of television performance discourse in the form of Okamura

and the other test takers who are clearly fulfilling their roles and creating this increased

contrast and tension. Because their roles are inscribed into a plot that all participants

share knowledge of, their actions are in service of these roles.

 The next two lines show this tandem work most clearly as Okamura leads to the

climax of this exposition. By ending his sentence in line 21 with emphasis and requesting

the *happyou* from Sano, Okamura is finally about to name the person with the lowest

score. As he does so, the show breaks for commercial in a classic cliffhanger move. The

cliffhanger ending before commercial is a standard practice that serves to draw people

back to watching the show from whatever they are doing during the commercial break

(Thompson, 2003, pp. 42). By doing this, the mezzo level discourse matches Okamura's

discourse and accentuates its importance. The level of importance given to who scored

the zero on the test, which Okamura has been scaling up the whole time, is further

enhanced with a suspenseful commercial break.

Upon return from commercial break, there is a slight replay of what occurred just

before the commercial break from what was effectively line 13, now also line 24 in this

next extract.

Extract 5.4.2.2

```
23                 ((return from commercial))

24   Okamura:      REI TEN   GA IMASU!
                   zero point SB  exist
                   'Someone got a zero!'

25   ?            ee?
                   'Huh?'

26   Mitsuura:     EE?=
                   'Huh?'

27   Suzuki:         =ee:?
                   'Huh?'

28   Yabe:         rei  ten?
                   zero point
                   'A zero?'

29   Hamaguchi:    uso ya. maji de?
                   lie CP  true CP
                   'You're kidding. Seriously?'

30   sound:        [((metal percussive sound))]

31   text box:     [0 ten?]
                      point
                   'A zero?'

32   Okamura:      Sano san happyou shite kudasai!
                       AT reveal   do    please
                   'Sano, please show us who it is!'

33   Okamura:      Sono hito   no na   wa,
                   that person N  name TP

34                 (.) KOCHIRA!
```

```
                           here
                   'And that person is, HERE!'

35    sound:        ((symphonic note))

36    TV screen:    eigo 0 ((double underline on zero))
                    English

37                  masaru hamaguche ((red check next to last letter))
                    'English: 0   Masaru Hamaguche ✓'

38    Sano:         Masaru. Ha↑maguche.
                    'Masaru Hamaguche.'

39    background:   ((laughter))

40    Kato:         ((laughter))

41    Hamaguchi:    ((puts head down laughing))

42    Yabe:         ((laughter))

43    sound:        [((single bell))]

44    text box:     [eigo  0 ten   no hito   no namae
                    English  point N   person N   name

45                  Hamaguchė san] ((san in hiragana))
                    'The person with a zero in English:
                    Hamaguchė.'
```

Okamura continues the climax of his exposition a bit further in lines 32-34. He says the word *kochira* loudly as a cue to Sano, who is manning the elmo connected to a TV screen in the set. This screen is one of the main ways used to mock people's answers in the *nukiuchi tesuto* corner. The use of the elmo serves a function similar to the mezzo level TV discourse but between one group who know the results of the test (Okamura and Sano), and the test takers who do not know the identity of the person that got the zero score. Similar to the text boxes inserted like in line 31, it tells the test takers what to focus their attention on. Watching the picture from the elmo as a TV viewer is then like looking at a picture of a picture of a picture, a type of Droste effect created by this visual image. Embedded frame analysis is absolutely essential for being able to see how these work in

that the frame of each screen, both in the program and in the home of the viewing audience, serves as a chronotope embedded within another.

After Okamura's cue and the symphonic note in the mezzo TV discourse cueing home viewers to pay attention to the picture from the elmo, we can see the score from an English test marked with a zero and the name of the test taker filled out in what appears to be their own handwriting in English as Masaru Hamaguche. I refer to this name writing as English, and not simply as romanization, based on the name order in which the family name is placed last. This is not something that typically happens in Japanese but is a marker of English. Another formulation of this writing as English will come later as well.

The pitch raise inserted by Sano in line 38 into the name Hamaguche serves a similar function to the sound effects for the TV viewing audience but this one is of course heard by both home viewers and test takers alike. The *che* cluster shown at the end of the name is understood as a misspelling, similar to the earlier examples, in this case of the chi in Hamaguchi. While several others there are laughing, Hamaguchi puts his head down on his desk. This is a common reaction to the ridicule in this corner.

The telop box that follows marks this as an error with the use of the *bouten*, the dot that exists over the *e* at the end (as discussed above in Section 5.3.1.1). *Bouten*, while sometimes used for drawing attention to specific letters or characters in Japanese writing is often used to point out mistakes through TV *jimaku*. The single note which overlaps with the textbox draws the viewers' attention to the telop. In this case however, it is also a more complex indexical. The single bell tone in Japanese variety shows is often representative of poor performance, as in this case by Hamaguchi. The most common

reference for this index is the NHK singing program *Nodo Jiman,* where people from different parts of Japan come on TV to compete in an amateur singing contest. The best singers on this show are given a series of running chimes on a tubular bell set. Average singers are given three notes on the bells and the worst singers are given a single chime. This show, which originated as a radio program in 1946 is very likely the origin of this sign but it is now used by several shows for similar purposes. By giving this particular sound effect, not only is attention given to the telop but a negative evaluation is also attached echoing the *boten* use and the laughter of the other test takers.

In this next extract we can see that this is clearly a type of *ijime* or ridicule that is started by Okamura but is continued by several of the other test takers as well.

Extract 5.4.2.3

```
46   Okamura:      IMASU KA?
                   exist Q
                   'Do we have someone like that here?'

47   Yabe:         omae kakkou tsukete eigo   de=
                   you  style  attache English with
                   'You tried to look cool by doing it in English'

48   Yamamoto:                             =Hamaguche?

49   Kato:         nori [nori?]
                   ride  ride
                   'Was he getting carried away?'

50   Okamura:         [masaru] ha ma gu che tte imasu ka?
                                              QT  exist  Q

51                  SENSEI SHIRANAI NA:.
                    teacher know:NEG IP
                    'Do we have a Masaru Ha-ma-gu-che?
                    Mr. Okamura's never heard of him.'

52   Arino:        imasen.
                   exist:NEG
                   'We don't.'

53   Yamamoto:      inai    desu ne.
                   exist:NEG CP   IP
                   'We don't do we?'
```

```
54   Okamura:      HAMAGU::CHE MITAI NA HITO IMASU KA?
                              like  N  person exist Q

55                 hamaguche san? HAMAGUCHE SAN?
                   'Is there anyone here that looks like
                   a Hamaguche? Mr. Hamaguche? Mr. Hamaguche?'

56   Arino:        imasen.
                   exist:NEG
                   'We don't.'

57   background:   ((laughter))

58   Arino:        maji desu ka?
                   true CP   Q
                   'Are you serious?'

59   Yabe:         kore wa:.
                   this TP
                   'This is'

60   Mitsuura:     Hamaguche.

61   Suzuki:       Hamaguche?

62   Okamura:      ittara    te  o age, HAMAGUCHE SAN!
                   exist:COND hand O raise          AT
                   'If you're here raise your hand Hamaguche!'

63   Sano:         HAMAGUCHE SAN!

64   Okamura:      ((pointing at paper)) JIBUN NO
                                            self N
65                 NAMAE O KAKENAI       KARA. omae
                   name  O write:POT:NEG from you
66                 nande hamaguche? tte.
                   why              QT
                   'Since you couldn't write your own name.
                   why did you write Hamaguche?'
```

Okamura starts off this extract by asking the question *imasu ka* with extremely high volume in line 46. We see then that the misspelling of Hamaguchi's name is being changed within the *ijime* ('bully' or 'harass') frame that is constructed here as belonging to a different person. In order to understand what is occurring here it helps to understand what is being seen by the audience and how this televised discourse was produced.

For the television audience, this *ijime* frame where Okamura and the others pretend to not understand Hamaguche as a misspelling of Hamaguchi is the innermost embedded frame (Gordon, 2002; 2009 pp. 141-142) of this segment. Okamura and the others construct it in the general part of the *nukiuchi tesuto* in frame 5 as a new frame, frame 6. They construct frame 6 embedded in several other layers of frames as seen below (see Figure 5.12). It is a newly created innermost embedded frame as seen by the home viewers shown below as frame 6. Okamura, Sano and many of the test takers move between Frame 6 and Frame 5 constantly in this extract, and the result is increased ridicule and humor. I will now explain in detail how this movement between frames occurs.
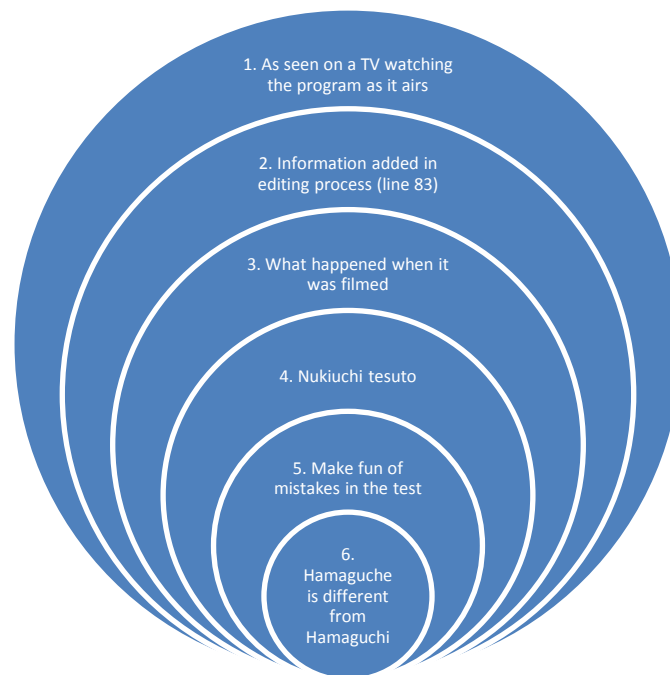
Figure 5.12

Okamura creates Frame 6 in line 46 by pretending not to know who Hamaguche is. The formulation of the writing of Hamaguchi's name in English as being something to seem cool or fashionable by Yabe in line 47 occurs outside this in Frame 4 and Frame 5.

As a critical statement to the detriment of Hamaguchi, it is both in the frame of the general discussion of the test (Frame 4) and ridiculing the mistakes of Frame 5. Yamamoto is also in these two frames with his questioning tone as well as Kato with his formulation of the act as being *nori nori* ('get carried away'). Okamura persists in the assertion of Frame 6 in lines 51 and 52 and he does so aggressively by raising his voice. As a result of this forceful ridicule, others begin to join him in Frame 6. Arino and Yamamoto also pretend not to know who Hamaguche is, moving themselves to Frame 6. Arino, who has been silent until this point puts himself directly into Frame 6 while Yamamoto, whose earlier actions were in Frames 4 and 5 but not in 6 has now moved completely into Frame 6. It is also important to understand that Arino's actions serve more than one set of obligations by doing this. Arino is Hamaguchi's comedic partner and often serves in the *tsukkomi* role which means it is often his job when Hamaguchi does some kind of *boke* action, which could be any variety of things formulated as nonsensical, to directly point out the nonsensical nature of those actions. In other words it is often Arino's job as a comedic partner to Hamaguchi to formulate his utterances and actions as stupid in some way. Arino then shifts out of Frame 6 into Frame 4 and 5 by asking if the answer was serious in line 58. Mitsuura and Suzuki join Yabe in Frames 4 and 5 while Okamura continues to reinforce Frame 6 until joined in Frame 6 by Sano in line 63. Frame 6 is abandoned by Okamura at that point as he yells at Hamaguchi in lines 64 – 65. Although Frame 6 is not constructed again in the program, the spelling of Hamaguchi's name becomes a running joke used to make fun of him repeatedly in the remaining 15 minutes of the show as Okamura, Sano and the telop boxes continually refer to him as Hamaguche.

Similar ridiculing occurs with reading problems as well. In this next extract, a well-respected veteran actor is ridiculed about how he read the word 'college' on the test as something approximating corn flakes, due to the influence of the cereal brand Kelloggs. We can see that there are still these same frame movements occurring in Frames 4 through 6. The next Figure is presented as a reference for lines 1-7 to help with understanding the visual description.

Figure 5.13 College

Extract 5.4.2.4

```
01   large frame:  reichourui saikyou baka kettei!!
                   primates   top    idiot decision

02                 mechabappu haisukuuru   kimatsu    tesuto
                              high.school end.of.term test

03                 (eigo)    1 tsugi no    eitango
                   English     next  N English.vocabulary

04                 wo nihongo ni shinasai.
                    O Japanese to do:IMP

05                 college (daigaku)
                           college

06                 NOTE sankousougou  daigaku ha
                        combined      college TP

07                 university
                   'To find the stupidest of all primates!! The
                   Mechabop High School Final Exam English
                   1 give the next English word in Japanese.
                   college (college)
                   NOTE a collection of colleges is a
                   university'
```

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```
08   Okamura:     don   don   ikimasu yo!
                  going going  go    IP

09                tsugi no tango    nihongo ni kakinasai!
                  next N  vocabulary Japanese to write:IMP
                  'We're just gonna keep on going! Write the
                  next term in Japanese!'

10   Yuuji:       ee::?
                  'hu::h?'

11   Okamura:     ichiban!  karejji. kore daigaku desu!
                  number.one college  this college  CP

12                Iwaki san!
                        AT
                  'Number one! College. This is college! Iwaki!'

13   sound:       ((beep))

14   large frame: ●saikyou wo kimeru ringu ni
                   top     O decide  ring  at

15                haiyuu, Iwaki Kouichi ga toujou
                  actor                 SB enter
                  'now entering the ring for the top spot,
                  actor, Iwaki Kouichi'

16                ((close up of Iwaki))

17   Okamura:     Iwaki san daigaku nante   kaitan
                        AT college what:QT write:PST:N

18                deshou ka. KOCHIRA!
                  CP:VOL Q   this
                  'What did Iwaki write for college I wonder.
                  Here it is!'

19   screen:      ((full screen shot of TV screen))

20   telop:       kenka no tsuyoi danshi kou
                  fight N  strong boy   high

21                nukiuchi kimatsu tesuto
                  surprise term.end test
                  'The tough all boys high school
                  surprise final exam'

22   TV screen:   ((logo with fist))

23                mechabappu kimatsu tesuto
                             term.end test
                  'Mechabop Final Exam'

24   sound:       [((symphonic note))]
```

```
25   TV screen:     [((shot of paper)) college

26                  ((handwritten katakana)) koon fureiku
                                            corn flake

27                  ((red check))]
                    'college    cornflake  ✓'


28   Sano:          koon fureiku.
                    'cornflake.'

29   screen:        ((laughter))

30   screen:        ((people laughing))

31   Kato:          keroggu da.
                    Kellogg CP
                    'It's Kellogg's.'

32   Okamura:       kore wa nazo deshita!
                    this TP puzzle CP:PST
                    'This was a mystery.'

33   Ayabe:         keroggu!
                    'Kellogg's!'

34   Lee:           keroggu! aa keroggu!
                    'Kellogg's! Aa Kelloggs!'

35   sound:         ((chime))

36   text box:      shiken ni deru baka DATA
                    test   in exit idiot

37                  bunseki 2 karejji → keroggu → koon fureiku
                    analysis  college   Kellogg's  corn flake
                    'Data from the idiots in the test
                    Analysis 2 college →Kellogg's → cornflakes

38   Okamura:       aa keroggu ka!
                       Kellogg's Q
                    'Oh Kellogg's!'

39   Kato:          keroggu!
                    'Kellogg's!'

40   background:    ((laughter))

41   Bobby:         ((laughing))

42   Kato:          keroggu   da na! ((laughing))
                    Kellogg's CP IP
                    'It's from Kellogg's isn't it!'

43   Okamura:       keroggu   de    machigaetan   desu ka?
                    Kellogg's with mistake:PST:N CP   Q
```

'*You got it confused with Kellogg's?*'

44 Iwaki: mou daisuki na n desu.
                 INT love   CP N CP
                 '*I really love it.*'

45 background: ((laughing))

46 Ayabe: ((clapping hands while laughing))

47 background: ((hitting desk))

48 Umemiya: ((nodding))

49 Kato: keroggu!
                 '*Kelloggs!*'

50 Okamura: keroggu!
                 '*Kelloggs!*'

51 Kato: oishii desu mon ne?
                 tasty CP thing IP
                 '*It's delicious isn't it?*'

52 Okamura: oishii desu mon ne!
                 tasty CP thing IP
                 '*It's delicious isn't it!*'

53 Ayabe: ichiban oishii desu yo.
                 best   tasty CP IP
                 '*It's the most delicious you know.*'

54 Okamura: keroggu oishii [desu.]
                 Kellogg's tasty CP
                 '*Kellogg's is delicious.*'

55 Iwaki: [iya asa]   wa yappa   keroggu da
                                  no morning TP of.course Kellogg's CP
                 '*Well, every morning it's gotta be Kellogg's for me.*'

56 background: ((laughter))

57 Yabe: asa   wa keroggu [da.
                 morning TP Kellogg's CP
                 '*It's Kellogg's every morning.*'

58 Okamura: [asa wa ne
                                      morning TP IP

59   gyuunyuu fa:: tte kaketa   ne. ((circle pouring
                 motion))
                 milk   ON   QT pour:PST IP
                 '*Every morning right? Just pour the milk
                 all over it right.*'

60 Iwaki: sou sou sou. CHOtto satou mo   irete.
                 true true true small sugar also insert

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```
61   Okamura:       >naruhodo BATSU DESU!< ((looking at papers))
                    of.course   X    CP
                    'of course. WRONG ANSWER!'
```

Okamura starts this new section of ridiculing by saying that they are moving on and describing the test question in lines 8-9 and 11. Line 8 is more of a move to manage the flow of the program and so can be seen as situated in Frame 4. Since the main aspect of this part of the program is making fun of people's answers on the test that are categorized as incorrect, it is clear that line 9 is a move into Frame 5, the ridiculing of another person's answers. Unless there is a connection between answers such as two different peoples answers to the same question or two categorically incorrect answers by the same individual there is often a brief move back to Frame 4 between these ridicule sequences. After this, Okamura names the test taker who is about to be ridiculed in line 12 as Iwaki. At this point they are thoroughly in Frame 5 where the answers are ridiculed just as in the earlier example with Hamaguchi. Okamura requests for the lines to be revealed in 17 and 18 by asking it as a question and then raising the volume in his voice which acts as a cue. In fact, we see the same word *kochira* ('here') used with high volume followed by a visual on the TV screen on the set connected to the elmo with an overlap of the symphonic note as in extract 5.4.2.2 with Hamaguchi. Once the visual of the test sheet is shown in 25-27 we see Sano reading the answer out loud, just as he read Hamaguchi's misspelled name out loud in extract 5.4.2.2. Again just as in the earlier example, much laughter follows although in this case, Iwaki is not shown to be laughing or putting his head down. Also similar to earlier, we see that another test taker is analyzing the answer. In 5.4.2.3 Yabe describes Hamaguchi's attempt to write his name

in English as trying to be stylish. In this case it is Kato in line 31 who formulates the answer as resulting from reading the word college as the brand name Kellogg. This analysis is taken up and repeated by Ayabe and Lee. This analysis is then presented by the text box in lines 36-37 as being a type of data regarding the stupidity shown in the test. After the others continue to laugh about this analysis, Okamura and several others make comments about the deliciousness of the breakfast cereal as a softening to the ridicule. This softening is situated in a Frame 6 similar to the embedded frame used in ridiculing Hamaguchi's spelling in 5.4.2.2 and 5.4.2.3. In this particular situation the Frame 6 is focused around discussion of Kellog's Corn Flakes.

Both frame 6s serve as small skits where the answers from the test are treated as having greater value than the final evaluation of incorrect would give. These skits help to increase humor and ridicule. For Hamaguchi, it was a digression into a play frame in which people were pretending to not know whose name was written on the test. They pretended that it was a correct spelling for someone and not a wrong answer. For Iwaki it is a discussion about breakfast cereal and how he likes to eat it as a relevant topic rather than a response totally unrelated to what Okamura constructs as the right answer. Okamura brings the discussion back to the conclusion of this section by doing a quick change in topic and volume simultaneously in line 61. This quick topic change and volume change serves as the punchline or *ochi* to the comedy routine while at the same time serving to strengthen Okamura's *tsukkomi* ('jab' or 'abuse') a comedic act commonly referred to as *nori tsukkomi* ('to play along before giving abuse'). Doing this *tsukkomi* also constructs the other party, in this case Iwaki, as the *boke*, which is itself another word for idiot or *baka*.

5.4.3 Frame shifts and ridicule in Japanese variety shows.

The pattern for this ridicule is that some contrast is constructed within Frame 4 that produces an inner frame where ridiculing an individual's answers is the main practice. Statements from either Frames 4 or 5 are commonplace where they can be either relating to the test in general (Frame 4) or as a way of formulating distinction in Frame 5 (see Figure 5.14 below). Then another frame usually gets embedded (Frame 6). In this frame, Okamura and the others will mock the individual through erasure (Irvine & Gal, 2000). In the case of Hamaguchi, this was accomplished through erasing the understanding of his name being misspelled in a pretend frame. In the case of Iwaki, erasure took place when Okamura and the others treated the topic of cornflakes as relevant; the irrelevance is erased in frame 6. This innermost frame serves to locate the specific ridiculed individual as being distinct from the others, usually in terms of intelligence, and serves to strengthen the return to frame 5 in contrast. For Hamaguchi's example, Okamura's tone suddenly shifts from loud and yelling to a normal tone in line 65 and for Iwaki the volume goes from soft to loud in line 61.
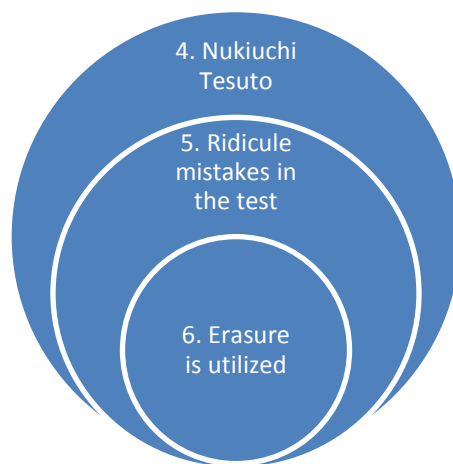
Figure 5.14   Embedded erasure

An innermost frame such as the earlier Frame 6 examples can also happen during the test. During the third test when a group of female idols were on the show, one of the answers was given by Tsuji, the girl ultimately chosen as *bakajo* ('stupid woman'). Her misspelled answer was used to change a song title for one of her own songs, "Love revolution 21," in order to ridicule her. The word *one* was misspelled as "on" which Okamura then read as /on/, and the word *two* was misspelled as "tur," which Okamura then pronounced as /turu/. In this short extract from April 5, 2003, we can see that Okamura creates another pretend Frame 6 just as in the previous data.

Extract 5.4.3.1

```
01  Okamura:    ne. renai reboryuushon touentiwan.
                IP  love  revolution   21
                'Right? Love revolution twenty one.'

02  text box:   renai reboryuushon 21
                love  revolution
                'Love Revolution 21'

03  sound:      ((beep))

04  Okamura:    kashi kawatte kimasu ne.
                lyric change  come   IP

05              sono atte iwareru to.
                that match say:POT QT
                'It would change the lyrics right.
                if we made it like that.'

06  text box:   renai reboryuushon
                'Love Revolution'

07  Okamura:    rabu reboryuushon [turu ten on.]
                'Love Revolution turu ten on.'

08  text box:   renai reboryuushon [tru.ten.on]
                'Love Revolution turu ten on.'

09  Tsuji:      ((laughing))

10  Okamura:    imi      wakaranai.
                meaning understand:NEG
                'I don't understand it.'
```

By using the conjunction *to* along with the description of changed lyrics in lines 4 and 5,

Okamura creates a very brief innermost pretend frame and restates the lyrics in line 7.

This framing is backed up by the Frame 2 intermediary level overlap through use of the

telop text box in line 8 which mirrors Okamura's pronunciation of the numbers. It should

be noted that what the telop box gives in line 8 for *two* is *tru* but this is different from

Tsuji's answer earlier, which was tur. The difference serves no actual purpose in that

either spelling is presented as incorrect by the staff in the editing room and matches

Okamura's earlier pronunciation of Tsuji's answer. Either spelling in this case would

then be usable for reinforcing the innermost frame and using it as a way to ridicule.

These examples have shown that the movement between frames and the

construction of new embedded frames is a common device for ridiculing English here.

The existence of frames like Frame 5 is of basic importance. Once it is understood that

the point of this frame is to ridicule and tease, Okamura as the pretend teacher simply

needs to increase the distance between those who are adequated and those who are

distinct. The naming of the distinct individual which follows then serves to situate them

in a pre-constructed social identity. The other test takers often do much at that point in

terms of following the emcee's lead in making sounds of shock and surprise. Similarly

when the emcee constructs an embedded frame in which digressions or pretending of

some sort occurs, other test takers understand that they are able to take part in this as well.

Several people can pretend not to understand who Hamaguche is or can join in

conversations about breakfast cereal. These digressions help to form contrasts that make

the placement into distinction and illegitimacy more powerful.

5.4.4 Reactions to English ridicule.

I will now discuss how those whose English is ridiculed react to this teasing in the

classroom set. This teasing mirrors the bullying that students report occasionally

receiving from their teachers in Japan (Yoneyama, 1999, p. 166-169). It is important to

recognize that the participants being mocked can choose their response to the ridicule and

may benefit from the association between illegitimated-distinct English and stupidity.

The first and most common reaction is for the person being ridiculed to laugh

along with everyone else. Often their laughter has clear signs of shame or embarrassment

with it. In this short excerpt from one of the earlier extracts, everyone is continuing to

laugh at Hamaguchi's spelling error.

Extract 5.4.4.1

```
38   Sano:        Masaru. Ha↑maguche.
39   background:  ((laughter))
40   Kato:        ((laughter))
41   Hamaguchi:   ((puts head down laughing))
42   Yabe:        ((laughter))
```

Kato and Yabe are clearly continuing to laugh at Hamaguchi and Hamaguchi himself

laughs in line 41. In addition to the laughter, he puts his head down on his desk (see

Figure 5.15).

Figure 5.15

Figure 5.16

This is a common reaction and can range from just lowering the head as Hamaguchi does

or can be involve completely putting one's head on the desk as seen in the picture of

Wakatsuki (Figure 5.16) from the sixth *baka* test in 2004. It can also involve covering the

face or cheeks while laughing. If we examine the background of the picture with

Wakatsuki we can see that everyone else laughs with their faces up. Although some laugh

with their mouths covered, the person being made fun of, even when laughing at

themselves, often hides their face. They may also react with shaky breath or trembling

voices as well when asked if they are alright. They may even shed tears while laughing at

themselves.

In rare cases, there are just tears or simple acceptances of stupidity. In this next extract and photo from the tenth *baka* test, Shigemori, one of the new regulars on the show reacts to the ridicule. Shigemori, who has gained popularity due to her image of being *tennen* ('ditzy') primarily from *Mechaike*, explains that she hopes that people will understand that she's not pretending to be stupid but instead that she really is stupid while crying. In this extract she tries to construct her identity using the tactics of authentication/denaturalization in a sort of *true confession* embedded frame. This action takes the ridicule and uses it to counter those who construct her as fake or only pretending to make mistakes on the test.

Extract 5.4.4.2

```
199  Shigemori:   nanka, (.) kono sekai ni haitte, nanka ((eyes
                  tearing))
                  something  this world at enter   something
                  "Somehow, after getting into this business,
                  somehow"

200  Okamura:     mhm.

201  Shigemori:   Shigemori chan wa,
                            AT   TP
                  "I,"

202  Okamura:     hm.

203  Shigemori:   itsumo nanka    baka butteru yo ne? tte
                  always somehow  idiot pretend IP IP QT

204               ((teary voice)) iwarete kite
                                  say:PAS come
                  "They're always saying, you're
                  pretending to be stupid right?"

205  Okamura:     hm.

206  Shigemori:   sore ga sugoku    tsurakatta   kara, ((tears))
                  that S  incredibly difficult:PST because
                  "Because that was so hard,"

207  Okamura:     hm.

208  Yabe:        hm.
```

```
209  staff:        ((laughter))

210  screen:       ((Kojima turning and laughing))

211  Shigemori:    konkai,   honto tada no baka tte iu  koto ga,
                   this time really just N idiot QT say thing S

212                wakatte    moraeta     ka na to omoimasu.
                   understand receiveable Q  IP  Q  think
                   "This time I think maybe they'll understand
                   that I'm just stupid."

213  screen:       ((Akimoto turning around to look at Shigemori))

214                ((concerned expression))

215  staff:        ((laughter))

216                ((class laughing and clapping their hands))

217                ((Yabe smiling))

218  class:        ((laughter))

219  Shigemori:    ((crying))
```


Figure 5.17

The image comes from line 206 where she clearly has tears coming down her face in the

original video broadcast. The other test takers continue to laugh at her as she accepts the

title and description of *baka* for herself. These reactions of embarrassment or suffering

are clear times when the ridicule is being accepted. It is somewhat unusual in that no one

else has ever flat out said that they are *baka* when being ridiculed.

In other cases, the mockery is contested by pointing out the difference between institutionally correct forms and being understood. In this follow up to Hamaguchi being threatened with zero points in sections 5.3.1.1 and 5.3.2, he contests the ridicule by resisting the frame 6 erasure and the placement of his answers into frame 5. Here Hamaguchi contests the move to distinction by claiming adequation.

Extract 5.4.4.3

```
78   Okamura:     Hamaguche san wa, (.) rei  ten   desu.
                            AT  TP      zero point CP
                  'Hamaguche gets, zero points.'

79   Yamamoto:    AAA.

80   Hamaguchi:   sensei   wakarun    ja nai desu ka. setsu-=
                  teacher understand:N  CP NEG  CP  Q   explanation
                  'You know who it is don't you. Even if I ex-'

81   Yabe:                                          =wakaru na!
                                                   understand IP
                  'He knows doesn't he!'

82   Hamaguchi:   ima mite, [hamaguche masaru demo.
                  now look                 even
                  'Even if it says Hamaguche Masaru.'

83   text box:            [hamaguche masaru demo. . ..
                                          even
                  'Even with the Hamaguche Masaru. . .'

84   Hamaguchi:   juubun ja nai desu ka?
                  enough CP NEG CP   Q
                  'Isn't it close enough?'
```

This extract comes from the first *baka* test right after the hosts had made fun of Hamaguchi's name spelling. In line 80, Hamaguchi resists the pretend frame (Frame 6) and the mockery frame (Frame 5) by taking on a serious tone and asserting that Okamura understands that the answers were his despite the spelling error. Yabe actually agrees with this here. In this case what Hamaguchi does is quite interesting in terms of traditional Japanese comedy roles. As stated earlier, Okamura often plays the *boke* role.

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Pretending not to understand whose name is on the test is a type of *boke*. If we consider that the role of the *boke* is to say something that does not make sense or is out of touch with reality and that the role of *tsukkomi* is to voice the straight man's part by pointing out the obvious, Hamaguchi is doing *tsukkomi*, albeit in a gentle and passive manner. Yabe seconds this opinion here even though *he* is the one who normally plays the *tsukkomi* role for Okamura. Yabe and Hamaguchi use the traditional comedy role of straight man or *tsukkomi* to resist the positioning of Hamaguchi's identity as illegitimate and distinct. Despite the fact that Okamura still teases him, he still has attempted to break the two frames (5 and 6) which are being used to construct him this way.

Other such moves of resistance can involve explanations or excuses for the mistaken answers. In one such instance, Naito the boxer, discussed earlier in sections 5.2 and 5.4.1.3, argues that although his English spelling may be bad, his pronunciation is fine.

Extract 5.4.4.4

```
68  Naito:     iya, iu:koto  ga dekiru no yo.
               no   say-thing S  able   N IP
               "Well, I can speak it you know."

69             ((left hand gesturing words coming from mouth))

70  Yabe:      hahaha

71  ?:         ((laughter))

72  narrator:  kaku no wa nigate nara kuchi  de    seikai      wo!
               write N TP bad    if   mouth with correct-answer O
               "If he's bad at writing let's hear the answer from
               his mouth!"

73  Naito:     ye-yestade
               "Ye-yesterday."

74  screen:    shiken ni  deru  baka DATA: kinou ((double ring))
               test   at emerge idiot       yesterday
               "Idiot DATA from the test: yesterday"

75  sound:     ((high pitched double chime))
```

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```
76  Okamura:    yestade
                "Yesterday"

77  Naito:      tu- tu- tude.
                "To-to-today."

78  screen:     kyou ((double ring))
                "Today"

79  sound:      ((high pitched double chime))

80  Okamura:    hai tude.
                "Yes today."
```

In this extract, Naito resists the construction of being distinct and illegitimate by focusing on his ability rather than on his inability. Like Hamaguchi he resists the frame 5 and creates a new frame 6 that has the potential to show his English abilities. The voice of the narrator in situations like this also helps to establish the possibility of Naito having the right answers in line 72. The possibility is realized by the double ring symbols in 74 and 78 which are standard good marks in Japanese schools as well as through the double chimes in 75 and 79 which are signifiers of correct answers on Japanese television. In 76 and 80 Okamura's repetition of these answers is understood as acceptance, especially with his use of *hai* in line 80. This acceptance allows for the possible frame 6 construction that Naito is attempting where his English ability can be showcased. Okamura's acceptance of these two answers shows that this kind of resistance is possible and allows for movement back to legitimacy and adequation. It is unfortunate that in this instance Naito's third answer is the seriously mistaken *mirakuru* which somewhat negates the effect of his correct verbal answers for yesterday and today.

Sometimes people react to the title of *baka* or the other forms of ridicule by taking ownership of the error categorized English or the *baka* title. Few people react this way but those who do may benefit from the ridicule. A simple example of this can be seen

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after Tsuji is crowned *bakajo* ('stupid woman') in the third test. She is given a crown and

a scepter to carry along with her title. After being prompted by Hamaguchi, the former

baka and *supesharu baka* at the time, she puts her hand on her hip and raises and lowers

the scepter like a drum major. She then turns to the laughing Hamaguchi and laughs then

says "*ano chotto ureshii desu*" ('um I'm a little happy.')

A similar type of ownership emerged when Hamaguchi and Yamamoto were both

mocked for their answers to the question that asked for a translation of *watashi ha*

chikyuu no heiwa wo negatteimasu ('I wish for world peace'). Hamaguchi answered this

with the sentence "I was pesu." and Yamamoto answered it with "Peesu I am peesu Oh

my God." One of my informants, Naomi, found this particularly funny because the word

pesu sounds like *pesuto* a word meaning sickness making the statement sound like they

are claiming to be spiritually or morally unclean. Okamura and the other test takers made

fun of these two sentences by repeating them as a rap together. After this Hamaguchi and

Yamamoto also rapped their answers after a cue from Okamura.

Extract 5.4.4.5

```
01   Okamura:     three fo-

02   Yamamoto:    [peesu, I am peesu, oh my go:] ((sing song))

03   jimaku:      [peesu ai amu peesu oo mai goo]

04                [(ai wazu pesu!)

05   Hamaguchi:   [I WAS PESU!

06                ((other test takers clapping))

07   Yamamoto:    peesu, I am peesu, oh my go:

08   Hamaguchi:   I WAS PESU!

09   Yamamoto:    peesu, I am peesu, oh my go: ((rap signs))

10   Hamaguchi:   I WAS PESU! ((points thumbs to self))
```

As comedians, they have the ability to take things which could be embarrassing and turn them into jokes or in this case *ippatsu gei*, a type of Japanese joke that is brief and does not have to make sense to be funny. As entertainers, many of the people that take the test can transform errors this way. Shigemori, who has recently been chosen as *baka* twice, is often thought of as pretending to be stupid. She states this herself in Extract 5.3.4.2.

Similar sentiments were raised in focus groups I have done that have watched her on the show. The focus group members understand that as an entertainer, Shigemori keeps people amused through her persistent inability at English. Kenji, a male college student in Japan stated that he wasn't sure if she was serious but that her answer was somehow impressive.

Kenji: *ko- konna koto kaken no tte (.) terebi no manmae, terebi ni houei sareteru tte shittete ka honma ni sunao de na no ka wakaranaisu kedo (.) you kakeru naa tte.*

Kenji: Is this what you came up with? Knowing you're in front of the camera. I don't know if she knew it was going to air or if she was really serious but you're really something aren't you.

Another male Japanese college student, Ayumu, saw it as a definite skill for an entertainer.

Ayumu: *kore wa sainou aru de, kono kotaekata.*

Ayumu: this is someone with skill, to be able to answer like that.

Whether Shigemori is sincere in her answers on the test is unknown, but she clearly gains camera time because of it. As a new member who only recently joined the program in 2010, it is important for her to leave the viewers with a strong impression and her emotional reaction certainly seemed to have that impact. Answers given by the test takers, especially those given by the ones selected as *baka*, are displayed at an annual summer

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event at the FujiTV building in Odaiba, Tokyo where people can come and laugh at the English answers that were ridiculed on TV. Some of them are also sold on T-shirts for people to buy in the gift shop as well.
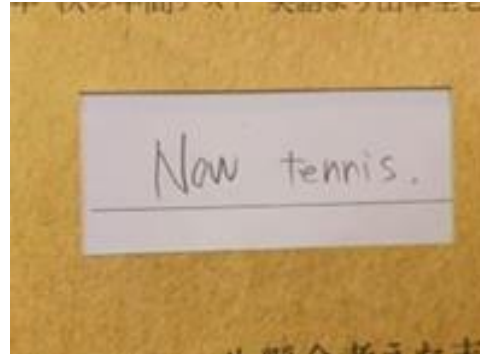
Figure 5.18   Figure 5.19

The first image in Figure 5.18 is of one of the shirts that's sold at this event from a fan's blog (Ayari, 2006). It has the sentence from the English test used in Extract 5.19 written in Japanese first, *watashi ha chikyuu no heiwa wo negatteiru.* ('I wish for world peace.') followed by Hamaguchi's answer *I was pesu* (Nakajima, 2000-2012). The font used on this shirt comes from Hamaguchi's handwriting on the test and creates a shift in chronotope as well as voice/footing by doing so. Figure 5.19 depicts one of Yamamoto's answers from the 2002 test which was displayed during the FujiTV annual summer event for the visitors to see. For this question Yamamoto was asked to take the sentence *You play tennis.* and change it to *genzaikanryoukei* ('present perfect tense') to which he wrote *Now tennis.* as can be seen above. Clearly, despite or perhaps *because* of the ridicule, inability in English can be a financial resource that the *tarento* and the networks can profit from in different ways.

These different responses to English teasing show that those identified on this show as *baka* do not necessarily have to passively accept the mockery that is dealt to

them. It is possible to draw upon the ridicule as a resource or simply to use the understanding of the frames and the roles of the people within those frames to your advantage, as in the case of Hamaguchi's *tsukkomi*.

5.5 Smart English

Lastly, I will examine the reactions given by those who score highly on this English test in order to explore how the perceived existence of intelligence is received in comparison to the earlier examples where test takers were viewed as lacking intelligence because of their English. Interestingly enough although there is some connection between certain aspects of intelligence on the show and English ability; very little focus is given to it. Much more focus is spent on making fun of people's inability and their consequential stupidity. It is also interesting that although there are people who are mentioned as being good at English or scoring high on the English portion of the test and those who score the highest on the test show much pleasure and excitement at their high ranking, there is never any outward mention of someone being smart because of their English. In comparison to the previous examples where distinction was employed to establish 'stupid' identities through illegitimation, we only see some hints at authorization.

In one of the rare occasions when English skills are remarked upon, they are related to studiousness. In this next example from eleventh test, one of the regular cast members, Mitsuura a female comedian, reacts to her high English score.

Extract 5.5.1

```
01   TL telop:     15 shuunen ha 4 jikan han!!
                      years  TP   hour  half

02                 nukiuchi chuukan tesuto
                   surprise midterm test
                   '15ᵗʰ year is 4 and a half hours!!'
```

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Surprise midterm test'

```
03  Okamura:       mou     hitori.
                   already one.person
                   'There's someone else.'

04  Yabe:          o?

05  ?:             o?

06  ?:             o:?

07  Hamaguchi:      mou     hitori     ka?
                   already one.person Q
                   'Someone else?'

08  Okamura:       MITSUURA!

09  sound:         [((chime))]

10  LR telop:      [eigo 90 ten    dai   wo kakutoku
                   English  point level  O  achieve

11                 Mitsuura Yasuko

12                 (Toukyou Gaigo Dai Sotsu)]
                                       graduate
                   'In the 90 point range for English
                   Mitsuura Yasuko (graduate of the
                   Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)'

13  Mitsuura:      HA:I! ((raises hand and stands up))
                   yes
                   'Here!'

14  background:    OI!

15  Okamura:       Mitsuura rika    zenzen   dame deshita ga,
                            science  absolute bad  CP:PST  but

16                 KYUUJUU GO TEN!
                   ninety give point
                   'Mitsuura was terrible at science but she
                   got ninety five points!'

17  Mitsuura:      ((mouth in large O shape))

18                 ((claps and raises right arm))

19  background:    ((clapping))

20  Sano:          Mitsuura san  eigo  kyuujuu go   ten!
                             AT  English ninety five point
                   'Mitsuura got ninety five points in English!'

21  narrator:      inchou mo maketenai!
                   head also lose:NEG
```

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```
                          'The class leader didn't lose!'

22   Yabe:            °subarashii.°
                      'That's fantastic.'

23   Okamura:         yoku ganbarimashita.
                      well try:PST
                      'Well done.'

24   Mitsuura        benkyou ga daisuki dakara des::!
                     study   SB  love    because CP
                      'It's because I love to study!'

25                    ((grimace))

26   Okamura:         benkyou ga daisuki!
                      study  SB  love
                      'She loves to study!'
```

This extract starts off with Okamura reading the names of students who have scored over 90 points on the English section of the test. Mitsuura rises from her chair in character as a serious student, raising her hand and responding to her name being called. In this case, not only is Okamura making her distinct, Mitsuura is also making herself distinct in a way that combines her work role with the recognition of her ability in English. As a comedian, part of her job is to overreact to situations on the show, and her loud response and actions in line 13 are an excellent example of this. Just before this segment, Okamura announced that the female announcer sitting next to Mitsuura scored 92 points (see Figure 5.20). We can compare both of their reactions by looking at the next two figures. In the first picture, the announcer Nishiyama is clapping her hands along with everyone else and smiling after her score is announced. In other words, she appears to be happy to win in a genuine way. In the second picture, from line 13 in the extract, Mitsuura is standing up and yelling her response loudly, clearly stylizing a positive reaction to her score. Her facial expressions continue as Okamura reveals that she scored higher than

Nishiyama. She makes a surprised 'O' with her mouth and raises her hand again (Figure 5.21).

Figure 5.20   Figure 5.21

The narrator adds to Mitsuura's characterization by referring to her as the class *inchou* ('leader'). As *inchou*, the motivated effort put into studying that Mitsuura next describes reinforces the institutional authority of the classroom. When Okamura compliments her on her hard work, Mitsuura explains vehemently that it is because she loves to study. Using stylization in clearly high performance she puts conviction into her statement by putting emphasis and extending the fricative at the end, all for humor's sake. Mitsuura's explanation of her scores as being due to her love of studying is common only to her, being something she frequently states when scoring high on the test. No one else actually says this when taking part in the test. Here we can see that people are constructing their identities through recognition of English ability along the same axes that were used when they constructed others' identities for lack of that same ability. Okamura and Mitsuura both construct her as distinct similar to what is done with those titled as *baka*.The only difference here is that there are no clear moves to increase the distance between the adequate and distinct.

The next example is of someone who does attribute the skill in English to studying but by indexing a different chronotope (Bakhtin, 1981) where she is already

perceived as skilled. In this next extract from the seventh test in 2005, pop singer Sonin

has just been named the high scorer for the English portion of the test. The loud voice

Okamura uses in line 5 constructs her as standing out in a positive way. Sonin gives an

excited shout in line 5 and then proceeds to jump up and pose for the camera. Again,

similar to the previous example with Mitsuura, the test taker voluntarily makes herself

distinct as well though physical movement. Some of her poses are shown below.

Figure 5.22   Figure 5.23

Figure 5.22 comes from line 12. After the announcement of her score as being 96, the

other test takers begin to react and Sonin does a little move that involves snapping her

fingers and posing again in line 24. This pose is shown in the second image (Figure 5.23).

Extract 5.5.2

```
01   TL telop:     daiharan no jun    i   happyou!!
                   big.shake N order rank reveal

02                 nukiuchi kimatsu tesuto
                   surprise term.end test
                   'The shocking announcement of rank!!
                   Surprise final exam'

03   Okamura:      eigo  toppu wa, (3.0)
                   English top TP

04                 SONIN!
                   'The top in English is, Sonin!'

05   Sonin:        YA:::! ((jumps up from seat))

06   LR telop:     eigo    ichi i kakutoku
                   English one rank achieve

07                 Sonin
```

```
08                  (toritsu Shinjuku Yamabuki Koukou   sotsu)
                    public                  high.school graduate
                    'Number one in English Sonin
                    (graduate of the Tokyo Metropolitan Shinjuku
                    Yamabuki High School)'

09   sound:         ((chimes))

10   Sonin:         ((raises hands and puts fists on hips))

11                  ((facing camera, smiles))

12                  ((holds up one then two fingers))

13   Okamura:       subarashii. $omedetou$!
                    fantastic  congratulations

14                  Sonin wa KYUUJUU ROKU TEN   toru!
                         TP ninety  six   point take
                    'Fantastic. Congratulations!
                    Sonin got NINETY SIX POINTS!'

15   sound:         [((beep))]

16   LR telop:      [eigo 96ten   kakutoku
                    English point achieve

17                  sonin

18                  (toritsu Shinjuku Yamabuki Koukou   sotsu)]
                    public                  high.school graduate
                    'Ninety six points in English Sonin
                    (graduate of the Tokyo Metropolitan Shinjuku
                    Yamabuki High School)'

19   Sonin:         ((surprised expression, hand on chest))


20   Isono:         sugoi::.
                    'Amaaazing.'

21   Aoki:          sugoi.
                    'Amazing.'

22   Sato:          {{clapping))

23   Sonin:         wakarimasu? because,
                    understand
                    'Do you know why? Because,'

24   Sonin:         ((snaps fingers,hand on hip, pointing))

25                  I went to E-C-C. ((smiling))

26   Okamura:       E-C-C. sou  na n desu.
                             true CP N  CP
```

```
                        'ECC. That's right.'

27   Yabe:          dore gurai **?
                    which about
                    'How long **?'

28   Okamura:       eigo   ga- (.) eigo ga  aru  teedo   tokui
                    English SB   English SB exist degree skilled

29                  dakara tte iu no de
                    because QT say N CP

30                  shiiemu   moratteru   darou.
                    commercial  receiving   CP:VOL
                    'Your Eng- Because they know your English is to
                    that degree you get those commercials right?'

31   Sonin:         sou desu.
                    true CP
                    'That's right.'
```

In lines 23-25 it becomes clear that what Sonin is doing is a tongue in cheek promotion of

a standard type of TV commercial for an English school named ECC that she is

contracted to do commercials for. What she does is not what actually is said in her

commercial, but is typical of the type of testimonial statement that you might expect to

see in one. She indexes the chronotope of the commercial and embeds into the ongoing

naming-the-high-scorer frame. Okamura then connects the reason for her having the TV

commercial contract with her English ability. It is very important to understand with this

that TV commercials in Japan are extremely sought after jobs for actors, singers and

other *tarento*. One of the major ways of measuring an entertainer's popularity in Japan is

through the number of commercials they are asked to do. For them, doing a commercial

is something to be proud of and to display. Therefore English in this example is not only

linked with studying but also with financial success.

What is interesting here is the fact that in addition to the axes of

adequation/distinction and authorization/illegitimation, some use of the third axis of

authentication and denaturalization comes into play as well (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, pp. 493-505; 2005, pp. 599-605). As in the previous example, we can see that physical gesture was used to create distinction. In addition, the indexing of her commercial for the English school ECC adds whole new levels of framing to what is occurring. Like Mitsuura, Sonin is utilizing her work in conjunction with the recognition of her English ability. Unlike Mitsuura, this connection exists outside the frame of the test itself. Sonin is already well known as a spokesperson/image character for ECC (see Figure 5.24). Although a private business, as an educational institution, ECC represents the social forces of authorization. Like the English classrooms of public middle and high schools, it has an institutional position of power. In addition, being named the top scorer in the English test serves as a type of validation, giving the viewers proof that backs up the advertised claims of the institution. It authenticates the image that is in the commercial and that is connected with Sonin in other situations as having real ability in English, not just in the frame of the TV. By making the claim in her switch to English in line 23, Sonim has constructed herself as a 'real' English speaker by multiple definitions. This makes her look good for more than just this corner on a variety show; she has projected herself as distinct, authorized and authentic.

Other high English scorers on the test will often do other interesting physical movements in reactions to the scores. In the fourth test from 2003, one test taker gave a curious gesture similar to a Hawaiian 'shaka' sign where the thumbs and pinkies are extended and then changed it to something like a heavy metal sign where the index fingers and pinkies are extended instead.

Figure 5.24

Extract 5.5.3

```
01  TL telop:     daiharan no jun  i   happyou!!
                  big.shake N order rank reveal

02                nukiuchi kimatsu tesuto
                  surprise term.end test
                  'The shocking announcement of rank!!
                  Surprise final exam'

03  Okamura:      nanto nanto. (.)
                  'hey hey.'

04  Yabe:         °aa?°

05  Okamura:      kono eigo   de (3.0)
                  this English at

06                MANTEN  GA DE[MASHITA!
                  perfect SB  exit:PST
                  'In this English test
                  we got a perfect score!'

07  Suzuki:                    [oo!=

08  Kato:                         =[EE?

09  LR telop:     shijou hatsu no manten!!
                  history first N perfect
                  'The first perfect score ever!!'

10  Mitsuura:     ee?
                  'huh?'

11  Hamaguchi:    uso darou!
                  lie CP:VOL
                  'You're kidding right!'

12  Okamura:      hajimete, (.) hajimete,
```

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```
                        first           first
13                      hyakuten     manten    ga demashita!
                        hundred.point full.point SB  exit:PST
                        'Our first, someone got our first full
                        one hundred points!'

14  Kato:               sore wa sugoi!
                        that TP amazing
                        'That's amazing!'

15  Suzuki:             sugo:i!
                        'Amazing!'

16  Arino:              sugoi!
                        'Amazing!'

17                      (2.0)

18  Okamura:            ((pointing to Ishida))

19                      Ishida kun!
                                AT
                        'Ishida!'

20  Kato:               wa:

21  Ishida:             ((raises hands up in fists, smiling))

22  background:         ((clapping))

23  Chino:              ((clapping))

24  LR telop:           eigo    de 100ten kakutoku
                        English at   point achieve

25                      Ishida Junichi

26                      (Waseda Daigaku sotsu)
                                          graduate
                        'One hundred points in English Ishida Junichi
                        (Graduate of Waseda University)'

27  Ishida:             ((stands with extended arms, thumbs and pinkies out))

28                      ((sits with arms up, extended indexes and pinkies))
```

In this final example, no specific reference is made to studying other than the fact that the

English ability was measured via test, rather the gestures used are reminiscent of those

done for social appeal. In lines 5 and 6 Okamura starts things off by announcing that

someone got a perfect score in the English section. While some of the other test takers

react with surprise at the announcement, the telop increases the importance of the event with the exclamation points and the word *daiharan* ('big shake'), increasing the distinction. Like Sonin and Mitsuura, after Ishida is revealed as being the high scorer, he stands up. This is something that is never done by those who are ridiculed for lack of English ability. Figure 5.25 below is from line 27 and Figure 5.26 is from line 28.

Figure 5.25   Figure 5.26

All of these gestures are done to increase the distinction of the maker. Ishida enhances his standing as someone distinct by doing so.

5.6 Discussion

This examination of the variety show *Mechaike* has shown that English has a connection with school and that errors in English index a lack of intelligence in Japan. Inability in English is seen in answers from the *nukiuchi tesuto* that are presented to ridicule test takers. These answers are categorized as incorrect in ways that reinforce institutional authority and focus on the lack of ability far more than the opposite.

By analyzing this corner on *Mechaike* I have shown how multiple embedded frames are used to increase the intensity of ridicule. Differences between the larger group of test takers and those being teased are manipulated by moving between frames. Outer frames are used to give telop text and narration a voice of authority by telling the TV

viewing audience how to interpret what they see. Inner frames are used to increase the strength of teasing and jokes and as such add a sense of playfulness along with realism when the participants leave frames constructed as pretend frames to return to ones which in contrast seem to be not-pretend. This constructed reality is a key part of what makes the participants, *tarento*, so appealing. As Lukacs (2010) explains, a major point of the *tarento* system is that consumers develop relationships with the *tarento* by seeing a constructed reality on television and in movies. I have also shown the variety of responses to this English based ridicule as well as how such mocking can be resisted or used as a resource for celebrities whose careers benefit from their lack of English ability. Similarly, this leads to the possibility that English is a source of anxiety (Hiramoto, 2012) mostly because it's framed that way. Finding new ways to construct these frames can lead to different ways for Japanese learners of English to approach the language and the environment of the English classroom.

Various types of errors such as spelling errors or errors in translation are utilized as tools to construct identities that are isolated and distinct from the group. Confusion between orthography, phonology, and language is seen as material to encourage the many to laugh at the few. In particular, confusion as to what is English and what is Japanese is mocked and seen as amusing.

Finally, I have also shown in this chapter how skill in English can be used to establish a positive distinction from others while also constructing those who possess this skill as authentic and legitimate. While some use English ability as a high performance resource to deauthenticate themselves as studious individuals like Mitsuura, they can also be seen as authenticating themselves in other ways by displaying English ability like

Sonin and then connecting this to other chronotopes to strengthen the image connecting intelligence, English, and education.

In the next chapter I will examine the issues of English as a means to construct social 'cool' in variety shows.

CHAPTER 6

ENGLISH COOL

6.1 Introduction

The heavy use of English on T-shirts, hats, bags and other items of clothing is notable to English native speakers visiting Japan. Many find the English printed on them to be strange or unusual, and it has become quite popular for foreigners to take pictures of this English and post it onto blogs and websites where others can read and make fun of the sentences and words they find there. New books are published on this topic all the time as well. One of the most well-known websites for these pictures is Engrish.com (2013). In the FAQ part of their website, they answer the question: Why do the Japanese try to use so much English if they can't do it right? Their response is as follows:

> Most of the Engrish found on Engrish.com is not an attempt to communicate – English is used as a design element in Japanese products and advertising to give them a modern look and feel (or just to "look cool"). There is often no attempt to try to get it right, nor do the vast majority of the Japanese population (= consumers) ever attempt to read the English design element in question (the girl wearing the "Spread Beaver" shirt for example, had no idea what it said until a foreigner pointed it out to her). There is therefore less emphasis on spell checking and grammatical accuracy (note: the same can be said for the addition of Japanese or Chinese characters to hats, shirts and tattoos found in the US or Europe).

> The goal of this chapter is to examine claims such as these on Engrish.com often made about English and a sense of cool in Japan by investigating how this attribute gets discursively constructed on television shows. My analysis contributes to recent

scholarship on the use of foreign language as a local linguistic resource (Piller, 2001; Atkinson & Holmes, 2006; Higgins, 2009, pp. 116-147; Blommaert, 2010). French is also often used this way to gain a sense of fashion or style in Japan. Blommaert (2010, p. 28) found such uses of French linguistic forms to be minimally French while still drawing upon the notion of French chic. In his example of a chocolate shop named "Nina's Derrieré," it was quite clear that the meaning of the shop's name was lost on most people that saw it. Clearly, no customer wants to tell someone that they got the chocolate that they are eating from someone's rear end. As Blommaert explains it, the sign is more of an emblem, serving a semiotic purpose but not really working linguistically because of the rarity of French linguistic knowledge in Japan.

Although ability in French is rare in Japan, English ability is not. As I explained earlier in Chapter 3, most Japanese receive at least six years of formal English education. Because of this, while symbolic French is commonly seen in names of restaurants and patisseries English use is much more prevalent while still retaining some aspects in that usage which are symbolic in nature. Whereas French language serves as a symbol of French chic, English serves as a symbol of English cool. In this chapter, I will first examine reactions to English and the image of English as something fashionable and cool. Then I will show how English is framed in Japanese variety shows and how its use within these frames indexes a multitude of meanings and value systems relating to different kinds of social cool.

6.2 Images of and Reactions Towards Cool English

Seargeant (2011) lists five categories or domains where English is used and seen as part of everyday routines in Japan. These domains are brands and advertising, fashion (specifically slogans on T-shirts), signs used for information, media and entertainment, and IT related hardware or software (p. 196). The regular use of English in these areas, especially in advertising and fashion, has led to the critique and humorous examination of these items by native and non-native speakers of English in books and on the internet. Examples of this kind of English are found often on T-shirts worn by both average people and famous *tarento* on TV. An example of this kind of shirt is seen below in Figure 6.1 where the English is quite confusing and perhaps not meant to be clearly understood by anyone, including the person wearing it. In this example, "Roads out fight time forever to haze in red motev." (Engrish.com, 2013) does not have any clear meaning and the last word is not actually part of the English language.

Figure 6.1 Engrish T-shirt (Engrish.com, 2013)

In a series of interviews with mostly Japanese informants, Seargeant (2011) confirmed Engrish.com's explanation in a more empirical manner, learning that the meaning of the words on such shirts is often seen as irrelevant by many people in Japan. One informant told him "even though they have English words printed on them, people

seem not to care what it means" (p. 197). Such ideas point to English as having a similar

symbolic meaning in fashion as French in Blommaert's example earlier. It is more

relevant that there is English on the shirt rather than what the English is actually saying.

This can be seen even more clearly when we look at other examples that many would

find highly inappropriate if the meanings of the English phrases written on these shirts

were widely understood. In this next example (Figure 6.2), seen on a man shopping in

Tokyo it's perfectly fine that he walks around in a shirt like this because in Japan he's

seen as wearing a T-shirt with English on it, not a shirt that proclaims his gender as

female.

Figure 6.2 Engrish T-shirt seen in Tokyo (Engrish.com, 2013)

This perception of English as a cool language is attributed to an *iconic language*

contact situation in Japan. Seargeant (2009, pp. 184-187) contrasts this with

communicative language contact where the second language is used to communicate

information. A communicative language contact situation would theoretically result in

greater numbers of bilinguals speaking with increased proficiency, or in the use of a

localized, yet meaningful form of English. Examples of this might include the uses of

Konglish in Seoul in business signs for sales and advertising (Lawrence, 2012, pp. 76-77)

or in the ways that Swahinglish is used for social critique in Tanzanian hip hop music

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(Higgins, 2009, pp. 103-111). In the case of Japan, where almost everyone studies English for 6 years or more and yet it is not used for any regular communicative purposes we see a situation where the number of loanwords from English is steadily increasing (Honna, 1995) and occasional syntactic borrowing also taking place (Kachru, 1994) but no other signs of increased ability in the second language. In fact, quite the opposite seems to be taking place. Despite the many years of English education Japan consistently scores near the bottom in terms of English language ability (Gottlieb, 2008, p. 146; Honna, 1995, pp. 56-61). What we see instead of wide-spread use of English for communication is uses of cool English, where English is a sign of being fashionable and also a form of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) for those that embody the habitus of media-centered culture which often utilizes English through music and television (Pennycook, 2003; Moody, 2006) and since the 1990s has tried to focus on the marketing of lifestyles, particularly through the trendy drama format (Lukacs, 2010).

To understand this linguistic capital, it is important to see the difference between *cool English* and *English cool*. I use the term *cool* English to refer to the words, phrases or sentences seen *in situ* as belonging to or indexing the English language for the purposes of displaying linguistic capital. The kind of English used in Figures 6.1 and 6.2 is *cool English*. On the other hand, *English cool* is the type of linguistic capital gained or displayed through English use. The shirts shown earlier are being used to gain English cool by making their wearers seem fashionable. The text on these shirts allows the wearers to gain English cool. I will use the first term to refer to the kind of language being used and the latter to reference to the type of linguistic capital.

6.3 English Cool *in situ* on Variety Shows

   We can better understand how English indexes a sense of cool by looking at how

English is portrayed in the interactions on television shows. One common reaction to

performances of English is the word *sugoi*, which I translate as either 'cool' or 'amazing'.

Ex 6.3.1 provides an example of how the very use of English can be *sugoi* because of its

native-like character. In this case, an actress named Kutsuna Shiori, who grew up in

Australia, is appearing as a guest on a popular variety show called *Himitsu no Arashichan*.

The hosts have asked her to narrate the act of eating cereal in English, which might strike

those not familiar with Japanese television as odd in itself. Nevertheless, this kind of

performance is not uncommon, as this chapter will show. After she states "I will put

honey in my Weet Bix," one of the hosts, Sakurai, repeats her words (line 613), which

leads co-host Aiba to evaluate his performance as *sugoi*.

Extract 6.3.1

610	Kutsuna:	*[I will ↑puẗ (0.7) ↓honey (0.5) in my weet bix.]*
611	screen:	*[I'll put honey in my Weet-Bix.] ((pink))*
612		(0.9)
613	Sakurai:	[*I will ↑puʔ (1.4) ↓honey (0.8) in my weet bix.*
614	screen:	[*I'll put honey in my Weet-Bix.*] ((red))
615	Sakurai:	*yeah.*
616	Aiba:	*sugoi:!* Amazing 'coool!'

Sakurai's rendition of the Weet Bix statement is carefully performed through his pause-

filled production and his overt lenition of word-final /t/ to /ʔ/. His performance can be

seen as a conscious attempt to produce the same native-speaker style as Kutsuna, who is there for the interview. At the same time Sakurai *misrealizes* and *overshoots* (Bell & Gibson, 2011, p. 568) the pronunciation by inserting the glottal stop in stereotypical Australian fashion which Kutsuna did not do in line 610 and puts heavy stress on the nominal groups *honey* and *weet bix* while lengthening the pauses. I refer to this form of cool English as Stylized NSE (Native Speaker English).

Stylized NSE is a variety of English spoken with what I term a hyper-L1 accent, based on the perceived style of native speaker English in Japan. The variety is stylized because it is an attempt to produce an image of another person's language variety (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 362) which is often, although not always, hyperbolic in some way (Coupland, 2007, p. 154). In many ways, this stylized NSE found in Japanese variety shows resembles other forms of stylized English. The *Superstandard* English spoken by nerds in Bucholtz's (2001) research shares many similarities. These nerds in Bucholtz's study were found to speak in a variety of English that was in contrast to the colloquial Standard English thought to be spoken by most white students in her study (p. 91). This Superstandard English is a variety available to English speakers in Bucholtz's study as a type of formal register. In the case of high school students, this language variety served as an un-cool or negative cool factor.

If we consider the Japanese media context in a parallel manner, then the colloquial forms of English words would be those that have been *nativized* (Stanlaw, 2004, p. 16) by Japanese speakers of English into *wasei eigo*, and which can then be written in Japanese orthography. In the case of stylized NSE in Japan, however, an exaggerated pronunciation that strives hard to achieve a native-like pronunication serves

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to create a contrast between this Stylized NSE and the nativized version of *wasei eigo*.
The examples in this chapter will demonstrate that Stylized NSE indexes a sense of cool,
whereas *wasei eigo* is used without this. In many cases Stylized NSE gets a response
related to being fashionable whereas *wasei eigo* receives a more neutral response.

Table 6.1 Stylized NSE from Japanese Variety Shows

word/phrase	nativized form (*wasei eigo*)	Stylized NSE form	(US) NSE
sorry	ソーリー/soorii /soːɾiː/	/soɹːi/	/sɑɾi/
leather	レザー/rezaa /ɾezaː/	/lɛʒːɚ·/	/lɛðɚ/
oh my god	オーマイゴッド/oomaigoddo /oːmaigoddʰo/	/oːmaigɑː/	/oʊmaɪgɑd/

In the stylized NSE examples from Table 6.3.1 there are some significant changes in the
phonology. In the case of *sorry*, Stylized NSE is realized with significant vowel
shortening, and where the *wasei eigo* version contains a flap the Stylized NSE has an
extended /ɹ/ sound. The flap in the nativized version of *leather* also changes, this time
into an /l/. These /l/ and/r/ changes show a particular attempt to compensate for one of the
most fixated difficulties of Japanese speakers learning English, the /l/-/r/ distinction.
Similarly the rhoticized schwa at the end of /lɛʒːɚ·/ also addresses the same issue. The /ð/
sound which is absent in Japanese is shifted to a /ʒ/ sound that is extended as well. The
extensions added to these changes show a particular attempt to change the style away
from the nativized form and closer to the NSE version resulting in Stylized NSE. This is
also seen in final example, a phrase which Park (2009a, p. 161) refers to as *pop culture
English* in the context of Korea, in that it is a type of stock phrase that is commonly
known due to its use in pop culture media such as dramas or music. The typical vowel

insertion found in nativized versions of consonant ending clusters is removed along with the final consonant itself along with a vowel shift from /o/ in the nativized version to the /ɑ/ which is in the NSE version and then extended. This again puts attention on the shifted sound and also does not exist in the standard Japanese phonology pronunciation of the phrase.

In making the case that *sugoi* indexes a sense of cool, it is helpful to see how it gets used as part of other cool English performances. It appears in some of the earlier examples from Chapter 5 when people like Sonin score highly on the English portion of the *nukiuchi tesuto*.

Extract 6.3.2

```
13   Okamura:      subarashii. $omedetou$!
                   fantastic   congratulations

14                 Sonin wa KYUUJUU ROKU TEN   toru!
                       TP ninety  six  point take
                   'Fantastic. Congratulations!
                   Sonin got NINETY SIX POINTS!'

15   sound:        [((beep))]

16   LR telop:     [eigo 96ten   kakutoku
                   English point achieve

17                 sonin

18                 (toritsu Shinjuku Yamabuki Koukou   sotsu)]
                   public                   high.school graduate
                   'Ninety six points in English Sonin
                   (graduate of the Tokyo Metropolitan Shinjuku
                   Yamabuki High School)'

19   Sonin:        ((surprised expression, hand on chest))

20   Isono:        sugoi::.
                   'Amaaazing.'

21   Aoki:         sugoi.
                   'Amazing.'

22   Sato:         {{clapping))
```

Right after Okamura reveals Sonin's score of 96 points out of a hundred, both Isono and

Aoki exclaim, "*sugoi*" in lines 20 and 21. This formulates Sonin's English expertise as

something beyond the ordinary. In this case, because of the sections of this particular test

(vocabulary, basic grammar, antonyms, English-Japanese translation, and English

composition) the *sugoi* is not focused on Stylized NSE or pronunciation, but rather on

grammar and vocabulary knowledge.   Similarly in this next example, the test

takers respond to the possibility of someone getting a perfect score the same way.

Extract 6.3.3

```
12   Okamura:      hajimete, (.) hajimete,
                   first         first

13                 hyakuten      manten     ga demashita!
                   hundred.point full.point SB  exit:PST
                   'Our first, someone got our first full
                   one hundred points!'

14   Kato:         sore wa sugoi!
                   that TP amazing
                   'That's amazing!'

15   Suzuki:       sugo:i!
                   'Amazing!'

16   Arino:        sugoi!
                   'Amazing!'

17                 (2.0)
```

In this situation, three people (Kato, Suzuki, and Arino) all use *sugoi* as an evaluation of

the yet unnamed test taker's English. No specific examples of English use are needed

here or in the previous extract for people to see as *sugoi*. Therefore, English cool can be

derived from the style and pronunciation (as in Extract 6.3.1), as well as from an

institutionally created authority, such as the 'test' of *nukiuchi tesuto* and the legitimation

by 'teachers,' played by Okamura and Sano.

These performances using cool English are often in specifically constructed embedded frames within the larger program. In the data from the *nukiuchi tesuto* they are within a specific subsection of the *nukiuchi tesuto* that relates to English that is always initiated by Okamura. The figure below shows that this constructed space occurs within Frame 5 of this particular analysis. Similar to the frame for making fun of the errors discussed in Chapter 5, it also is embedded within the larger frame of the *nukiuchi tesuto*. This space and the display of English cool work together because it is the existence of the English cool that allows the frame to be constructed. At the same time the frame accrues more cool for the English that is displayed there.

1. As seen on a TV when broadcast

2. Information added in editing process

3. What happened when it was filmed

4. Nukiuchi tesuto

5. Announcing high scorers for English test section
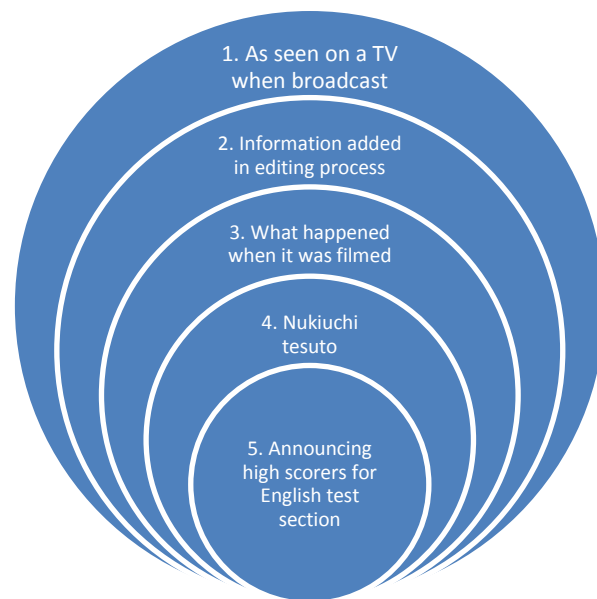
Figure 6.3

Like the T-shirts with cool English written on them, these embedded frames are specific spaces where this kind of language can be used. In the next section I will examine these constructed spaces for cool English and show how English cool is created, manipulated and utilized through indexical connections with performance ability in both quiz and talk embedded frames. Like stupid English, cool English has a particular kind of

frame that it can be displayed in. Certain frames could be used for both, as in the case of Naito in Extract 5.3.4.4 of the previous chapter. The opportunity to display his ability at English pronunciation was created as an embedded frame that contested the mocking of his English, two embedded frames existing side by side where the frame for cool English is broken only because of his mistake in translating the third word. His translation of *mirai* to *mirakuru* in English, a wasei-eigo form of *miracle* broke the cool English frame leaving only the stupid English frame behind. It is the framing of cool English that Naito was unable to complete that I focus on in this next section.

6.4 Performance of Cool English

Quiz shows that embed talk or interview frames are an excellent site for seeing how English cool is utilized to manipulate the flow of social power that comes through this form of linguistic capital. People may use the social power of English cool to construct additional related identities that relate to higher social strata. Many quiz shows offer actual spaces in the form of corners and games for cool English to be displayed and English cool accrued. Quiz questions or games that are centered on the English language give an ideal space for the performance of cool English. These performances are often followed by talk that makes connections between that performance and other socially desirable qualities.

6.4.1 Nep League.

One show that shifts between quiz and talk show format is the program *Nep League* (ネプリーグ). *Nep League* (see Figure 6.4) began as a Fuji Television late night variety show in 2003 and moved to its *gooruden taimu* time slot of Mondays at seven o'clock in the evening in 2005. Nep League (Nagao, 2003-2014) is an example of a *kanmuri bangumi* (see Section 4.2 in Chapter 4) which is centered on the comedy trio Neptune (ネプチューン) and usually involves celebrity teams challenging each other in a series of virtual reality quiz games utilizing green/blue screen technology. It has a wide ranging audience given the fact that it involves questions at a simple level ('*joushiki mondai*') and that the guests can be quite varied in their target groups. Such games and competitions offer many opportunities for *tarento* to display social cool in the form of knowledge and linguistic ability. The prize offered for the team is usually 1,000,000 yen, but more importantly, the program offers an opportunity for *bansen*, so that actors, musicians, and comedians can promote their latest projects.

Figure 6.4. Nep League Logo

The trio Neptune is comprised of Nagura Jun, Harada Taizo, and Horiuchi Ken. In the case of Neptune, Nagura (currently age 45) is the *tsukkomi* of the trio. He has the image of being the most intelligent in the trio and often does the work of the emcee both

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on Nep League and on Neptune's other *kanmuri bangumi*. His appearance is often used as the focal point of many jokes on various programs as many co-stars and other comedians often remark that he looks like he comes from Thailand rather than from Japan and because he usually speaks with a *kansai* dialect, which can be a source of humor[8].

Harada (currently age 43) usually plays the role of *boke* within the trio. He generally takes up the identity of being very manly and good natured although not particularly intelligent. He often does his jokes and gags in a low tone and often uses the catch phrase '*ore ni, makasetoke!*' ('just leave it to me!'), which conveys a sense of masculinity while the repeated nature of the phrase as well as his varying degrees of success in correctly answering quiz questions also makes it one of his signature *ippatsu gyaggu* (see Chapter 4, section 4.5.1).

Horiuchi (age 44) is most often known for playing the *boke* character and is sometimes called the *ooboke* ('big *boke*') of the group. He is well known for gags that are funny because they are strange and often nonsensical. He is usually depicted as being fun loving and mischievous on camera. Horiuchi is often referred to by his nickname Horiken a typical shortened combination of his first and last name similar to the use of *J. Lo* to refer to the US singer Jennifer Lopez.

Both the games that are played and the after game discussions offer many places for the accrual of English cool. There are usually five to six rounds per show, which all

---

[8] When discussions about specific places in Thailand come up in Nagura's presence, other *tarento* often make comments like "Didn't you grow up around there?" as a type of jibe. Nagura often goes along with this for a bit before giving some kind of *tsukkomi* comment like "*aho!*" ('moron') as a *nori tsukkomi* (see section 5.3.2 in Chapter 5).

take place in the studio. Each round is based on a virtual reality type game that is played between two or three teams, each with 5 members. In two team episodes, there is usually one team with all three Neptune members and two celebrity guests referred to as the Neptune Team (*Nepuchuun Chiimu*). The opposing team is usually named after some feature that all the members have in common. Previous opposing teams include the Female Comedians Team (*Onna Geinin Chiimu*), the Intelligentsia Team (*Interi Chiimu*), and the Announcers Team (*Anausaa Chiimu*). Sometimes the opposing team is grouped by the talent management company that all the members work for, or the casts of upcoming dramas and movies. This constant cross promotion is a hallmark of the Japanese *tarento* system and is a highly recursive phenomenon where high performance such as appearing in a drama constructs high performance like appearing on a quiz show. In three team games, each Neptune member is joined by four celebrity guests that share common features and are then named accordingly.

Common games on the show include: *faibu riigu* ('Five League'), *torappu hausu* ('Trap House'), *ingurisshu burein tawaa* ('English Brain Tower'), *nepu reeru* ('Nep Rail' in Figure 6.5), and *paireetsu atakku* ('Pirates Attack' in Figure 6.6). All the names of the games are using nativized English to give a sense of cool. In addition, many times the name of the game when it starts is written in English as seen below in these examples from the start of the *nepu reeru* and *paireetsu atakku* games. There is no real reason for this use of English other than English cool.

Figure 6.5 *nepureeru* ('Nep Rail')

Figure 6.6 *paireetsu atakku* ('Pirates Attack')

One game in particular on Nep League allows for tarento to display their English cool, the *ingurisshu burein tawaa* ('English Brain Tower'). Their displays of English cool allow them to construct new group identities based on the qualities that English cool indexes. When playing this game, one of the teams stands on a platform in front of a green/blue screen that creates the virtual environment of an elevator on the first floor of a tower. For 60 seconds, they are then given Japanese words one at a time, and each team member must verbally give the English translation. If the translation is judged as correct, a chime rings twice and the background changes to make it look as if they are rising up in the elevator to the next floor. This continues until the team gets 10 answers correct in a row. If the translation is judged as incorrect, a buzzer and siren sound along with red light

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and smoke. The elevator then looks like it is falling as the platform that the team stands on actually sways back and forth. The team must then start from the first floor again. After reaching the 10th floor, the challenge is cleared with a futuristic city skyline in the background as if seen from the top of this English Brain Tower. Whichever team ends up on the highest floor out of the competing teams gets 10 points.

This game applies several interesting types of pressure and excitement to the challengers from the perspective of the home viewing audience which enhances the *tarento*'s English cool. Since the time ticks down in the upper left corner of the screen as the game is being played, there is then the pressure of having to quickly perform in English in front of others, a type of anxiety referred to as *seiyou* ('Western') complex by Hiramoto (2012). This *seiyou* complex, which occurs in both educational contexts and in ones totally unrelated to education, combines the belief that "ideal English speakers must necessarily be Caucasians" (p. 237) with the idolizing of the culture in the United Kingdom and United States seen in the discipline of English studies (Tsuda, 2006 as cited in Hiramoto, 2012, p. 237). In addition to this, the loud noises, smoke and shaking that accompanies answers judged as incorrect along with the knowledge that one mistake at the last floors can bring the team right back to the beginning again and undo everyone else's work also give a sense of pressure, anxiety and excitement to the game.

Once the game is over, the contestants of both teams discuss many of the questions and the answers given via video screen. The team who just completed the challenge can see their opponents in a waiting room elsewhere in the studio while discussing everyone's English. This allows us an opportunity to see how performance of cool English is reacted to and what associations are made with this performance.

6.4.2 The impact of English cool.

In this example from the December 5, 2011 broadcast, the Neptune Team has just cleared the top of the English Brain Tower. Connections are made between English and intelligence, much like the *Mechaike* data in the previous chapter, but also with other social categories through English cool. The Neptune Team is comprised of the three members of Neptune plus two very famous veteran musicians, Go Hiromi and Tanimura Shinji. The team that they are challenging in this episode is called the *interi chiimu* ('Intelligentsia Team') based on their graduation from well-respected universities and their overall media images as erudite actors and commentators.

Extract 6.4.2.1

```
01    telop UR:    nepuriigu    GP ((large font))
                   Nep League Grand Prix

02                 zenhansen    choujoushiki        riigu
                   first.half super.basic.knowledge league

03                 Go Hiromi & Tanimura Shinji sansen
                                                battle
                   'Nep League Grand Prix  First a super basic knowledge
                   league Go Hiromi and Tanimura Shinji battle'

04    telop UL:    nepuchuun chiimu
                   'Neptune Team'

05    LM text box: oosama/king yubi/finger

06                 naze/why kaminari/thunder bango/number


07    announcer:   NEPUCHUUN CHIIMU AZAYAKA:!
                   Neptune   team   vivid
                   'The Neptune team is outstanding!'

08    Nep Team:    ((neptune team cheering and high fiving each other))

09    LM text box: joushi/assistant au/meet

10                 iki/breath aida/between yajuu/beast

11    announcer:   INGGURISHU BUREIN TAWAA KURIAA DESU!
```

```
                        English   Brain Tower  clear  CP
                        'They cleared the English Brain Tower!'

12    Nagura:           IYA: ORERA INTE↑RII:!
                        no  we:MASC intelligensia

13                      GO [GO GO GO:::! ((shakes left fist in air))
                        'No we're the brains! GO GO GO GO!'

14    announcer:           [***** MACHIGAI ARIMASEN DESHITA!
                                   mistake  exist:NG  CP:PST

15                      AZAYAKA JUU   MON     RENZOKU
                        vivid   ten question serial

16                         SEIKAI      PAAFEKUTO DESHITA!
                        correct.answer perfect   CP:PST
                        '** no mistake! They brilliantly got ten
                        questions in a row perfect!'

17    rear screen:  CLEARED ((rooftop futuristic city view))
```


Figure 6.7 (lines 1-8 from Extract 6.4.2.1)

The telop text in the upper left and upper right corners give the context of what is occurring on the screen below. The title of the show is in large red and yellow font at the top. The red font for Nep League matches the standard logo of the show (see also Figure 6.7). The letters GP in yellow are a reference to the fact that this is a special double length episode and is therefore being called a *grand prix*. The less stylized red text below

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indicates that viewers are seeing the first half of the show and states the level of the

competition as *choujoushiki* ('extremely common'). It should also be noted that the

gratuitous use of *chou* for 'super' or 'extremely' is often seen as a sign of young people's

speech termed by Miller (2004, p. 232) which functions much the same way that *super* or

totally is a marker of *Valspeak* (Moody, 2010, p. 544; Bucholtz, Bermudez, Fung,

Edwards, & Vargas, 2007, p. 345). The use of *chou* here with *joushiki* ('general

knowledge') gives the challenge a more casual and hip feel which is itself a desirable

quality to indexically link to a variety show if the goal is popularity.

The screen text gives the viewer the general context of what is being seen. The

less stylized text also describes who is competing in this first half of the show and

specifically with the team that is currently on the screen. The two guests, Go and

Tanimura, both admitted that they usually don't appear on quiz shows before taking part

in this first game of the episode. If we look at this in terms of a semantic analysis we can

see a fairly complex understanding of the situation being constructed by the screen text

just in the upper left corner itself (see Figure 6.7). There is the general category of all

Nep League episodes that is shown with the text from the show's logo and a subset of

this created by the yellow GP. In the GP episode we have two halves the first of which is

currently being played at this point and a description of the types of questions in that first

half and finally we have as a point of relevance the fact that two celebrities who do not

usually appear on such programs are currently playing. The text on the upper right tells

the viewers who is currently playing and added to the information from the upper left

informs the home viewer that the two celebrities are playing on the side of the hosts of

the show (Figure 6.8). It is with all this information in the background that the scene in this first extract is understood.
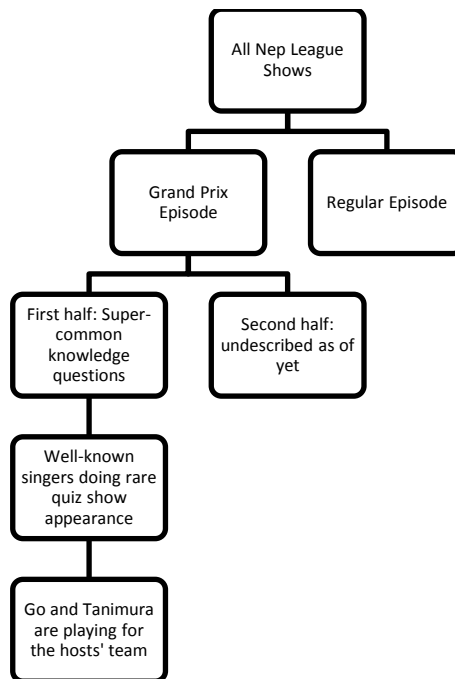
Figure 6.8 A semantic analysis of the information in the upper left telop

What is particularly interesting is how the correct answers provided by the Neptune team are formulated on the show. The talk after finishing a game is concerned with the questions, answers and overall performance during the game play, the team's state as they enjoy their success, and what this means for the other team. The announcer Ito, who serves as the *ten no koe* ('voice of heaven'), the voice of a participant that makes commentary and official announcements for the show but rarely appears on screen, describes the Neptune team as *azayaka* ('vivid' or 'clear'). When describing performance ability, this word means something similar to 'brilliant' implying cleverness or skill. Ito then states in line 11 that the challenge has been cleared by the team. In line 12, Nagura, from the Neptune team, then describes their team as *interi* ('intelligentsia'). Because the opposing team is called the *interi chiimu* ('intelligentsia team') this can be undertsood as

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Nagura effectively stating that the Neptune team members are intelligentsia as well. The statement is also in reference to a conversation before the game about the opposing team. After the opposition is introduced with the title of *interi chiimu* Nagura makes a complaint about going against a team of 'smart' people.

Nagura: chotto matte yo:! nande konna toki ni interi chiimu butsukete kuru ka na:::.

Nagura: Wait a second! Why are we being pitted against an Intelligentsia team at a time like this?

Seen in this light, the statement *orera interi:!* ('We're the brains!') can also be understood as a claim that, despite the avowed identity of the Intelligentsia team, the Neptune Team is the true *interi chiimu* and the opponents are not. Nagura's repetition of the word *go* in line 13 is a fairly common double voicing that occurs when Go Hiromi appears on variety shows being a combination of a cheer in English and a repetition of his last name which is then itself understood as another kind of cheer similar to when the names of certain stars or teams are chanted. Go Hiromi himself is quite famous for saying this phrase and as such it also gets used in his presence this way many times on different shows. The announcer then goes on to describe their answers as *paafekuto* ('perfect').

Of chief interest with regard to the construction of English knowledge as cool, I examine the interaction after clearing the tower. This interaction continues as the two teams talk through the video screen. The next extract comes after the Neptune team discusses how difficult one of the words seemed.

Extract 6.4.2.2

```
35    sound fx:      ((chime run of notes))
36                   ((screen behind changes to video of interi chiimu))
```

```
37    Yamada:       sugoi!
                    'amazing!'

38    Takata:       SUGOKATTA! ((clapping))
                    amazing:PST
                    'that was amazing!'

39    Ishida:       SUTAA CHIIMU. SUTAA CHIIMU SUGOI NE.
                    star  team    star  team  amazing IP
                    'You guys should be the star team. the
                    star team's amazing right?'

40    Takata:       iya. sutaa no sutaa no un wo kanjimasu.
                    no   star  N  star  N  luck O feel
                    'no. it's like they have a star's
                    a star's kind of destiny.'
```

At first here, Yamada and Takata from the opposing team use the word *sugoi* ('amazing')

to describe the Neptune Team's performance. As explained earlier in this chapter, the

word *sugoi* is very commonly used in reaction to cool English performances. Next, Ishida

renames the Neptune team as the *sutaa chiimu* ('Star Team') in line 39. Implying that

their performance was like that of a *sutaa* as opposed to *tarento*. This opposition is fairly

common in variety shows as different classifications of entertainers have varying degrees

of entertainment value or in this case, social cool. The classification of *sutaa* is usually

the highest in terms of desirability. He then uses the adjective *sugoi* again and connects it

to the category *sutaa*. Takata in line 40 then connects the notion of *sutaa* to the idea of *un*.

Un is a fairly difficult concept in Japanese that combines aspects of luck with fate and

destiny. The concept of *un* as used in this case may also be understood by going back to

the fallacies of intelligence (Sternberg, 2003). We know from earlier discussion in

Chapter 5 that there is a general-ability fallacy (p. 46) about intelligence where displays

of academic or in this case English ability on a quiz show indirectly and erroneously

indexes for many people ability in other areas. We also know that there is a stable-trait

fallacy (Sternberg, *loc. cit.*) meaning that this ability in multiple areas is believed to be

constant, a lifelong trait not unlike some interpretations of *un* as a type of fate as well as luck. A third fallacy called the life-success fallacy (Sternberg, *loc. cit.*) refers to the general belief that these abilities lead to success in all major things, again similar to the idea of a positive fate or destiny. The sentence in line 40 can be also understood as a description of the presence that is possessed by the Neptune Team. This kind of presence is also expected from the category of *sutaa* in Japanese. What occurs here is that an indexical field (Eckert, 2008) is established is that associates English with intelligence (like Chapter 5) then to the concept of *sugosa* ('coolness', the noun form of *sugoi*) followed by *sutaa* ('star') and *un* ('fate' or 'luck') as in Figure 6.9 below.
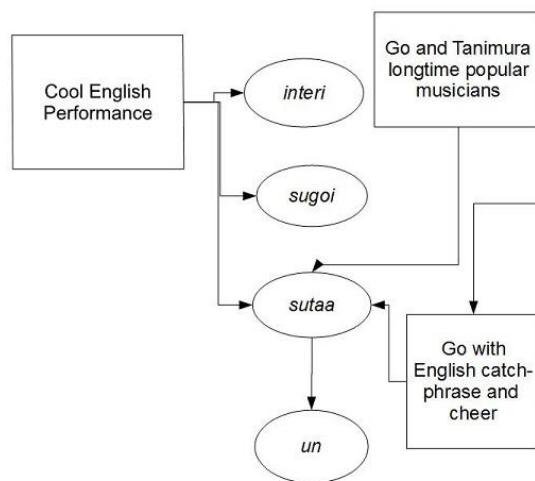
Figure 6.9 English and *sutaa* connections

In the next set of examples, cool English is used in the same game by members of an opposing team to construct one of the Neptune Team members as cool. This particular episode from August 6, 2012 features a boxer named Ioka Kazuto and a popular young male actor named Fukushi Sota as part of the Neptune Team. The opposing team was the *ohitorisama chiimu* ('Singles Team') comprised of unmarried female celebrities. The

Neptune Team was playing the English Brain Tower, which required them to state the

English word that matched the image on the screen.

Extract 6.4.2.3 Playing English Brain Tower

```
223   screen:       1F  kiseki ((aurora borealis))

224   Horiuchi      mirako:! ((/miɾako:/))
                    'miracle!'

225   sound:        ((beep sounds))

226   background:   ((applause))

227   Harada:        ii yo.
                    good IP
                    'Doing fine.'

228   screen:       2F  kawa ((picture of boots and bag))

229   Fukushi:      ano: leazhurr:. ((/ɾezhɚ:/))
                    um
                    'um leather.'

230   sound:        ((beep sounds))

231   background:   ((applause))

232   Nagura:       ee.  kakkou ii.
                    yeah style good
                    'yeah. That's cool.'

233   screen:       3F  issho ni ((couple bicycling))

234   Harada:       togezhur ((/tɯgezhɚ:/))
                    'Together.'

235   sound:        ((beep sounds))

236   Horiuchi:     kakkou  ii
                    style good
                    'Cool.'

237   background:   ((applause))
```

In this particular round of English Brain Tower, Horiuchi gives his answer from the first

floor level. His answer /miɾako:/ is given in fairly standard nativized Japanese as can

be seen from the flap and the extended vowel on the /o/. The response to this answer is a

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beep which tells them that the answer has been accepted, and they move on to the next floor. Correct answers here are usually followed by this standard double beep or chime which signals a correct answer and applause from the production staff in the background which is in line 226. Harada gives a standard positive response to this which is *ii yo* meaning 'doing fine' or 'doing good'. In the next turn, Fukushi gives his answer in Stylized NSE, which contains /zh/ instead of /z/ and makes use of /ɚ/ for the ending sound instead of a more nativized /a/. Moreover, the emphasis and stretch he puts on the end of the word shows this to be in the stylized form. Importantly, the response to this performance of cool English is not a simple *ii yo* like in the case of Horiuchi but a statement from Nagura in line 232 of being *kakkou ii* ('that's cool'). Harada follows this in the next turn by also using Stylized NSE with his answer of *togezhur:* (/tɯgezhɚ:/). The /tɯ/ is also not a part of the standard Japanese phonology and is quite noticeable here as is his use of /zh/ and /ɚ/ which mirrors Fukushi's earlier Stylized NSE. The response to his answer is another *kakko ii* delivered by Horiuchi in 236. The phrase *kakkou ii* literally means 'style good' meaning that their answers can be perceived as something stylish or fashionable. This adds a new level of understanding to how English cool is constructed in use. The nativized pronunciation is fine; it gets a standard positive evaluation of *ii yo*. The stylized NSE version as part of a cool English performance however is specifically remarked upon as being cool in the sense of fashion.

In addition, contextualized performance of cool English outside of the game itself is also well received. In this next extract from the same episode, after the Neptune team finished their round, they ask their opponents in the waiting room whether they knew the answers as well. By this point, all of the answers have already been revealed including

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the word kingdom which stumped the boxer Ioka during the earlier game. Nagura has just

asked them how they did from the waiting room.

Extract 6.4.2.4 Talk about kingdom

```
295   Shimasaki:   Serina chan sugoi.
                         AT   amazing
                   'Serina was amazing.'

296   Serina:      dekitemashita. hai. ((nodding))
                   able:exist:PST yes
                   'I got it, yes.'

297   Nagura:      kingudamu dekita?
                   kingdom    able:PST
                   'Did you get kingdom?'

298   Serina:      kingudamu dekimashita yo.
                   kingdom    able:PST    IP

299                hora, igirisu no yatsu ja nai desu ka.
                   look  England N  thing CP NEG CP    Q

300                yunaitedo kingudamu.
                   united    kingdom
                   'I got kingdom. After all, isn't it part of
                   England or something? United Kingdom.'

301   Harada:      wo sugoi.
                   'Whoa, amazing.'

302   Shimasaki:   wo::
```

Shimasaki starts off by formulating Serina as *sugoi*, again as an evaluation of cool

English. Nagura then asks Serina how she did with the word that Ioka was not able to

answer earlier and she replies that she was able to answer it in line 298. She then

contextualizes her knowledge of the word *kingdom* in lines 299 and 300. Her explanation

that it's part of the country name United Kingdom is met with another *sugoi* and

interjections that show being impressed by both Harada and Shimasaki. In this data, the

first *sugoi* given in 295 is in response to Serina's ability to answer the questions which

were done off camera. The formulation is born out when Harada echoes it after seeing

further proof of Serina's *sugosa* (the noun form of *sugoi*).This shows that the discussion

frame is not just for showing the English cool of those actively playing the game and that

participants outside the embedded frame of the game can 'play along' with the

contestants and show English cool. Those observing the game and answering, similar to

potential viewers at home, can be seen by others as *sugoi*.

Occasionally the positive aspects of cool English performance are stated quite

explicitly on the show in these post-game discussions. In this next extract from the

January 2, 2012 special, a young popular male actor named Mukai Osamu is playing for

the *dorama 'hangurii!' chiimu* ('Drama 'Hungry!' Team') composed of the cast from his

upcoming drama. After giving a correct answer in response the quiz item *gokakukei*

('pentagon') he gets complimented by some of his team mates and the other competing

teams.

Extract 6.4.2.5 Talk about pentagons

```
01    Suzuki:        NE, gokakukei    wakatta     no. gokakukei.
                     IP  pentagon  understand:PST N   pentagon
                     'Hey, he knew pentagon. Pentagon.'

02    LL telop:      ((blue pentagon)) gokakukei
                     'pentagon'

03                   pentagon ((katakana)) pentagon

04    Nagura:        pentagon?

05    Hisamoto:      pentago:n.

06    Mukai:         amerika kokubousoushou        °deshou ne?°
                     America Department.of.Defense   CP:VOL IP
                     'It's the American Department of
                     Defense, isn't it?'

07    LM telop:      ((picture of Pentagon Building))
08                   amerika kokubousoushou
                     America Department.of.Defense

09                   tsuushou:     pentagon ((katakana))
                     colloquially
                     'The American Department of Defense
```

```
                          also known as: The Pentagon.'

10    Harada:         uwa:: kakkou ii.
                      wow   style  good
                      'Wow that's cool.'

11    Hisamoto        mou::.
                      'Jeez.'

12    Asako:          [sou ka!]
                      true Q
                      'That's right!'

13    Harada:         [mou chotto] osaeyou      ka?
                      more little  hold.back:VOL  Q

14                    [miryoku chotto osaeyou.]
                      allure   little hold.back:VOL
                      'Could you dial it down a bit?
                      Let's hold down the charm a bit.'

15    LM telop:       [miryoku chotto osaeyou]
                      allure  little  hold.back:VOL
                      'Let's hold down the charm a bit.'
```

Mukai's teammate Suzuki starts off by saying that despite ending on the bottom floor, their team leader Mukai knew the word pentagon in English. Nagura says the English word with a question intonation as if unsure about the word. Hisamoto then says the word with a vowel stretch in the middle. Mukai then explains his remembering the word in connection with the Pentagon Building in the United States. Both the knowledge of the word and the United States is then evaluated with a *kakkou ii* formulation much like before. After this though, Harada then asks Mukai to hold back his *miryoku* in lines 13 and 14. The word *miryoku* is made up of two characters *mi* (魅) meaning to bewitch or fascinate and *ryoku* (力) meaning power. Although Harada's request in lines 13 and 14 is meant to be a joke, it is understood that along with good looks, knowledge of the US and English adds more allure to Mukai. In the Japanese TV context, stars need to have camera time to display their personalities in order to develop the personal relationships

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that serve to cross market their appearances and projects so this display is an important part of Mukai's work.

This *miryoku* ('allure') is a good way to summarize some of the reactions and formulations of cool English that I have shown so far. It combines aspects of intelligence with *sugosa*, being *kakkou ii* ('stylish') and star quality that the actors and singers place great value on, and which are the reasons they are on the shows in the first place. This allure of English is seen in other situations as well beyond the quiz show format. Since those who come on quiz shows are expected to answer the questions that are given, their answers are not as likely to produce as much awe over English. In the next section, however, I will show the power of English as cool in an example from a talk show, where the guests were not normally expected to perform in English.

6.4.3 Arashi and Kutsuna Shiori in *Himitsu no Arashichan*.

The data in this next section comes primarily from a single episode of a show called *Himitsu no Arashichan!*: Secret Arashi's TV Show (see Figure 6.10). Like Nep League, *Himitsu no Arashichan* (Naganuma, 2008-2013) is also a *kanmuri bangumi*. It is centered on the popular male idol group Arashi, part of the very large and powerful talent management company Johnny's Jimusho. It aired on the TBS network from 2008 through 2013 and usually featured the members of Arashi playing various games or interviewing special guests (usually female). Although typical idol focused *kanmuri bangumi* usually have a target audience based around the age of the idols featured, Arashi has achieved a large fan base that reaches a broader audience. Still, it is often assumed that the viewers of such a show are more women than men and are typically under 40. It was co-hosted at

one point by two female comedians but later this format was dropped for the most part, leaving the Arashi members themselves hosting the show. The use of English here further connects English cool with other fashionable images and concepts while still showing ties to the education context.

Figure 6.10 Himitsu no Arashichan logo

As I mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, Johnny's idols are some of the most prominent figures in Japanese popular media. They are so prevalent in the media that many people often refer to them and their shows as a particular category, *janiizukei* (ジャ ニーズ系). Arashi is unarguably the current top group of the company. During the time when *Himitsu no Arashichan* aired, Arashi had three different *kanmuri bangumi* on three different major TV networks. The five members of Arashi are all quite different in terms of personality and talents and this is often highlighted on the show in terms of how they interact and the types of activities they do. Each member also has a specific color that they are usually identified with, an occasional tactic to enhance individual distinctiveness in idol groups. In this case, the doors to their 'rooms' on the set are colored to match the individual members and the telop representing each members speech is also usually colored accordingly.

The data in this section comes from the June 21, 2012 episode and is mostly centered around a corner on the show called Arashi Share House ('*Arashi Sheaa Hausu'*). Share House refers to a living situation in Japan where one has roommates in one large house or apartment. A share house situation can range from two roommates living together ('not usually romantically involved') to over 50 people sharing a building together where there are communal resources such as communal kitchens and large living rooms that everyone uses together. The set for the Arashi Share House corner looks like a two story house with five bedrooms on the upper floor and a kitchen and living room area on the first. Each bedroom door is colored to match one of the Arashi members and their names are written on each door. The fictional *settei* ('background story') for this segment is that all five members of Arashi live together in this house. Usually two of the members will come downstairs and some celebrity guest will ring the doorbell. The guest then comes inside and spends a pretend evening with two Arashi members. They will then talk about various topics while cooking the guest's favorite food or doing one of the guest's favorite activities. The Arashi members will occasionally refer to things that they were just doing in their fictional bedrooms as part of protecting the fictional *settei* of the corner; however, this is often seen as being relatively unnecessary. Because of this, talk in this segment can range from fictional to factual and even the Arashi members may occasionally confuse themselves when they discuss something like the couch they have at their real homes while sitting on what is supposed to be their couch in the *settei* share house.

Figure 6.11 Arashi Share House set

In this particular episode, the guest is Kutsuna Shiori (19 years old at the time), a popular young Japanese actress who was raised in Sydney, Australia before coming to Japan to pursue modelling and acting. Kutsuna gets interviewed in this segment by two Arashi members: Sakurai Sho and Aiba Masaki. Sakurai (31 years old at the time of this episode) is not the technical leader of the group but often does the work of an emcee when the group members appear together and is usually represented by the color red. Off the set of this program, Sakurai works as a news commentator and has a degree in economics, so he is often seen as intelligent and well-spoken, but physically clumsy. Aiba (29 years old) has the image of being very playful, friendly and good with animals although not particularly intelligent. In this extract, Kutsuna has been talking about growing up in Australia and the two Arashi members have brought out a box of Weet-Bix to ask her about.

Extract 6.4.3.1 Pronouncing Weet-Bix

```
109   UL telop:   arashi ((black font)) shea hausu ((rainbow font))
                                           share house
              'The Arashi Share House'

110   UR telop:   kutsuna shiori (19) ((pink font)) X ((black font))
```

```
111              sakurai ((red font)) X ((black font))

112              aiba ((green font))

113              shiseikatsu nozokimi tooku ((black font))
                 my life       peek      talk
                 'Kutsuna Shiori (age 19) X Sakurai X Aiba
                 talk about lifestyles'

114  LM telop:   ((boxed))Weet-Bix

115              ((logo)) oosutoraria de teiban
                          Australia   at standard

116              no asagohan komugi wo tsukatta
                 N  breakfast wheat O  use:PST

117              shiriaru
                 cereal
                 'Weet-Bix the standard Australian
                 breakfast cereal made from wheat'

118  Kutsuna:    asagohan desu.
                 breakfast CP
                 'It's a breakfast food.'

119  Aiba:       ʔasagohan na n da.
                 breakfast CP N CP
                 'Oh it's breakfast.'

120  Sakurai:    chotto hitsotu onegai
                 little one     request

121              ((palms together))

122              ga arun    dakedo ii desu ka:.
                 S  exist:N but    good CP  Q
                 'I just have one small favor to ask,
                 is that okay?'

123  Kutsuna:    h-hai.
                 'Y-yes.'

124  LM telop:   ['Weet-Bix'((yellow font,blue aura))

125              wo gachi  no  hatsuon    de!] ((red font))
                 O  serious N  pronunciation with
                 'Weet-Bix with a full-on pronunciation!'

126  Sakurai:    [((eyes closed)) uiitobikkusu wo
                                   Weet-bix     O

127              (.) gachi no hatsuon       de] ((eyes open))
                     serious N  pronunciation with

128              itte moratte ii desu ka.
                 say  receive good CP  Q
```

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```
129                    [hatsuon kouza
                       pronunciation lesson
                       'Would you be able to say Weet-Bix with
                       the full-on pronunciation? A pronunciation
                       lesson'

130   Kutsuna:    [anmari kawaru ka? nihongo to.
                   really change  Q  Japanese and
                  'Is it really different? From the Japanese?'

131   Sakurai:    kawarimasu yo.
                  change      IP
                  'It is different.'

132   Kutsuna:    °hai ja.° [Weet Bix.] ((/wiːtˈbɪks))
                  yes  CP
                  'Okay then. Weet-Bix.'

133   LM telop:              [Weet-Bix] ((pink font))

134   Sakurai:    [Weet Bix] ((/wiːtˈbɪks))

135   ML telop:   [Weet-Bix] ((red font))

136   Aiba:       [Weet Bix] ((/wiːtˈbɪks))

137   MR telop:   [Weet-Bix] ((green font))

138   Kutsuna:    Weet Bix. ((laughs)) ((/wiːtˈbɪks))

139   Sakurai:    [Weet Bix] ((/wiːtˈbɪks))

140   Aiba:       [Weet Bix] ((/wiːtˈbɪks))

141   Sakurai:    okay!

142   Aiba:       oue::!

143   Sakurai:    okay!

144   Kutsuna:    hai.
                  'Right.'
```

In this extract Kutsuna explains that Weet-Bix is a breakfast cereal. Sakurai then asks her

for a *gachi* ('serious' or 'intense') pronunciation in lines 120-122 and 126-129. By doing

so, Sakurai creates an embedded frame that is a space for the performance of cool English.

Until this point, the name Weet-Bix has been pronounced with nativized English

pronunciation (*uiitobikkusu* as in line 126). He refers to this created space as a *hatsuon*

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kouza ('pronunciation lesson'). This *hatsuon kouza* embedded frame (Frame 4b) serves as a space in this episode for performing cool English several times during the Share House corner with Kutsuna. The slightly formal request that Sakurai uses in 120-122, coupled with Kutsuna's laughter in 138, shows that the *hatsuon kouza* is slightly off topic and separate from the talk about life in Australia (Frame 4a), creating the frame 4b (see Figure 6.12). There may be an alternate analysis where the *hatsuon kouza* frame is actually a level 5 embedded frame, given that the text from line 113 declares that the activity occurring is relating to life in Australia as well. However, this does not seem to match with Sakurai's continued use of the formal request gesture and Kutsuna's laughter, both of which continue later in the program.

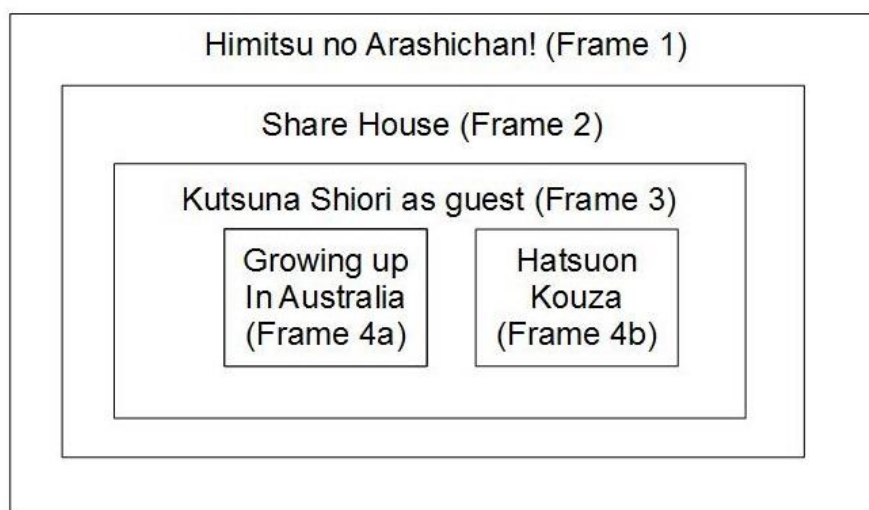Figure 6.12 Himitsu no Arashichan! Frame Map

The *jimaku* and other telop features play a large role in the construction of Sakurai and Aiba's words as English in this segment. The nativized pronunciation is never used in the telop at all either in *katakana* or *roomaji*. Weet-Bix is presented as a clearly English word here. It is obvious that the word is not *roomaji* but English due to the use of

the *We* at the beginning of the word, the syllable final *t* and the use of the *x* at the end. The only way to understand these letters with the sounds given is as an English word. As Kutsuna gives her pronunciation in 132, the telop gives the text in line 133 in overlap with her. The color used is the same as in the key in the upper right telop (line 110) assigned to her. This combination of color coding and overlap tells the viewer to perceive the text as Kutsuna's words. The *jimaku* also leads the viewer to the understanding of Sakurai and Aiba's pronunciation of Weet-Bix as English as well for the same reasons. The repeating of Kutsuna's pronunciation is a standard practice in the teaching of English pronunciation in Japan and is in line with this constructed space as *hatsuon kouza*.

Sakurai and Aiba's reactions here are also very important. Between lines 141-143 both Sakurai and Aiba show a certain level of excitement after their pronunciations. This is not a common part of *hatsuon kouza* as in a classroom but it shows something of their attitude to Native English Speaker pronunciation and by extension their own Stylized NSE, as seen through the performative act of saying it in unison and in the way they are form-focused (Coupland, 2007, p. 147) in the sense that the pronunciation of the word here is made more relevant than meaning or use. Their reactions continue to increase in intensity throughout the segment.

In this next extract Kutsuna is heading to the refrigerator in the kitchen area of the set to get some milk so that they can eat the Weet-Bix. These actions are a part of Frame 4a, showing that Frame 4b, the pronunciation lesson, has been left behind at this point. While getting the milk, Sakurai again uses a request with the same gesture as used in the previous extract to initiate a move back to the pronunciation lesson frame.

Extract 6.4.3.2 Pronouncing Milk

```
294  UL text:   arashi ((black font)) shea hausu ((rainbow font))
                                        share house
             'The Arashi Share House'

295  UR text:   kutsuna shiori (19) ((pink font)) X ((black font))

296             sakurai ((red font)) X ((black font)) aiba ((green))

297             shiseikatsu nozokimi tooku ((black font))
             my life        peek       talk
             'Kutsuna Shiori (age 19) X Sakurai X Aiba
             talk about lifestyles'

298  Kutsuna:   ((picks up and tilts bottle))

299             kore gyuunyuu desu ka ne?
             this    milk     COP  Q  IP
             'this is milk right?'

300  Sakurai:   ((takes bottle and then gives back to Kutsuna))

301             °chotto.°
              Short
             'just a second.'

302  Kutsuna:   hai!
             yes
             'yes!'

303  Sakurai:   ((bows and palms together))

304             [gachi    no      hatsuon         de.]
             serious NOM pronounciation  with
             'with the 'full-on' pronounciation.'

305  screen:    [gachi    no      hatsuon         de] ((red font))
             serious NOM pronounciation with
             'with the full-on pronounication'

306  Kutsuna:   ((laughs))

307  Sakurai:   [miruku] ((/miɾuku/)) onegaishimasu.
              milk                    wish
             'say milk please.'

308  screen:    [ ˩miruku˩ ] ((pink font))
             "milk"

309  Kutsuna:   [MILK.] ((/mɪlk/))

310  screen:    [Milk] ((pink font English))
```

180

```
311   Sakurai:   [milk.] ((/mɛlk/))

312   Aiba:      [milk.] ((/mɪlk/))

313   screen:    [Milk] ((red and green font English))

314   Sakurai:   [okkee. benkyoo ni naru   ze:!]
                 okay   study    to become IP
                 'okay. see, we're learning stuff!'

315   screen:    [okkee benkyoo ni naru   ze!] ((red font gold glow))
                 okay   study    to become IP
                 'okay see we're learning stuff!'

316   Kutsuna:   [((laughs))]
```

As the extract starts, the continued presence of the screen text in the upper right and upper left corners shows that the talk is still centered on the discussion of living in Australia. Sakurai breaks out of this frame by giving the milk back to Kutsuna in line 300. The act of taking the milk from her to check that it truly is milk is perfectly in line with answering the question Kutsuna asks in 299. By giving the bottle back to her and then adding the *chotto* in a lower volume, he breaks them both out of this frame and enters into the pronunciation lesson frame once more. Kutsuna goes along with this by answering *hai* in the next line. At this point, the nature of his reasoning or actions is not clear so they are only understood as being in Frame 3. Similar to the Pronouncing Weet-Bix extract, we can see that Frame 3, in which Kutsuna is the guest, is still clearly in effect by the fact that Sakurai asks Kutsuna for her permission to break from the current task/frame and she gives it. Her laughter in line 306 shows that the pronunciation lesson frame (Frame 4b) is still not actually a part of the same frame in which she is talking about her Australian experiences (Frame 4a), at least for her. There is an interesting case here in line 308 where pink font is used for Sakurai's speech, but this is simply a

projection forward giving future authorship of the word to Kutsuna since he is making the request to her and it is a request that involves speaking.

Again the telop is used to construct both Aiba and Sakurai's utterance as English, this time with an interestingly separated color scheme for their pronunciation of *milk* (see figure below). Not only does this text make both of their utterances English, but it also erases the differences that exist in pronunciation between the two of them and between them and Kutsuna.

Figure 6.13 Sakurai and Aiba's words as text

In this extract, Sakurai's reaction to speaking Stylized NSE has increased in intensity. Sakurai uses Stylized NSE in 311 which can be seen again by being performative, form focused and in this case overshooting the vowel (Bell & Gibson, 2011, p. 568). He then states in line 314 that he is starting to learn something. His use of *benkyou* ('study') here connects the use of English to educational contexts much as the word *kouza* ('lesson') does, something made quite clear from the examples in Chapter 5 as well. By adding the particle *ze* at the end, Sakurai shows a high level of "coarse" or rough intensity (Ochs, 1993, p. 341). This intensity is also reflected in the *jimaku*.

In these two examples of *jimaku* for Sakurai's words the difference is quite clear. The one on the left is from line 314 and the one on the right is from line 304. The left

jimaku with the intensity marker *ze* has a golden glow around the letters showing an additional level of intensity.

Figure 6.14 Intense and not intense *jimaku*

The intensity of Sakurai and Aiba's reactions increase as the interaction continues. In this next extract, taking place right after the previous one, Aiba asks for Kutsuna's pronunciation of a particular plant they have in the Share House set.

Extract 6.4.3.3 Pronouncing Tomato

```
317   Aiba:         suimasen! ano hitotsu ii    desu ka?
                    sorry       um   one   good COP  Q

318                 ((runs across room to plant))

319                 hitotsu dake      o.
                    one     only      O
                    'sorry! um can I ask you to do something?
                     just this one thing.'

320   Kutsuna:      ((laughs and sits down))

321   Aiba:         ((touches tomatoes))

322                 kore onegai shite   ii    desu ka.
                    this  please  do    good COP  Q
                    'can I ask you to do this.'

323   Sakurai:      A: SORE  II   NE!
                    oh  that  good IP
                    'OH THAT'S GREAT ISN'T IT!'

324   Aiba:         kore   ii?
                    this   good
                    'is this good?'

325   Sakurai:      sore   ii   yo ne!
                    that good IP IP
                    'that's great!'
```

```
326    Kutsuna:    sore  nan  desu  ka?  a-  (.)
                   that  what  COP   Q    oh

327                [tomato.]  ((/təmeɪtəʊ/))
                   'what is that? oh-. tomato.'

328    screen:     [Tomato]  ((pink font roomaji))

329    Sakurai:    OOO!  ((throws head back and laughs))

330    Aiba:       OOUUEE!

331                  kita!
                   come:PST
                   'OOUUEE! there it is!'

332    Sakurai:    KITA:::::!
                   come:PST
                   'THERE IT I:::::S!'

333    screen:     kitaa!  ((red font))
                   come:PST
                   'There it is!'

334    Aiba:       kita!     kore.
                   come:PST  this
                   'there it is!'

335    Sakurai:    $kita!$
                   come:PST
                   'there it is!'

336    Aiba:       kore   kiki°takatta    kedo.°
                   this   hear:want:PST   but

337                tomAto!  ((/tomeɪtəʊ/))
                   'I really wanted to hear this.
                   tomAto!'

338    Sakurai:    moo   ikkai  [ch-  ch-.]  ((left hand forward))
                   again once
                   'once more.'

339    Kutsuna:                 [tomato.]  ((/təmeɪtəʊ/))

340    Sakurai:    sit down plea°se°.  ((/ɕit daun pris/))

341                >sensei  onegaishimasu.<
                   teacher     please
                   'tsk tsk. sit down please.
                   miss, if you don't mind?'

342    Kutsuna:    ((nods and smiles))

343                [tomato!]  ((/təmeɪtəʊ/))

344    screen:     [Tomato]  ((pink font roomaji))
```

184

```
345   Sakurai:    [tomado] ((/tomeɪdoʊ/))

346   Aiba:       [tomato] ((/tomeɪtoʊ/))

347   screen:     [Tomato ((red font roomaji))

348               [Tomato ((green font roomaji))]

349   Aiba:       ((laughs))

350   staff:      ((laughter))

351   Sakurai:     yappa    kore da yo na.
                  of.course this COP IP IP
                  'of course that's it.'

352   Aiba:       kore da   yo ne.
                  this COP IP IP
                  'this is the real thing.'

353   Sakurai:    ne tomato ((/tomato/)) wa tomato ((/tomato/)) ja neen
                  IP tomato              TOP tomato            COP NEG

354               da   tte   shunkan bikkuri  shinakatta?
                  COP QT  sudden surprise  do:NEG:PST
                  'hey weren't you surprised to hear that
                  what we call tomato isn't tomato?'

355   screen:     tomato ((roomaji)) wa tomato ((gold glow and dots))
                  tomato             TOP tomato

356                ja   neen  da! ((red font))
                  COP  NEG  COP
                  'what we call tomato isn't tomato!'

357   Aiba:       sore wakaru.
                  that understand

358               tomato? tomato. ((/tomeɪtoʊ tomeɪtoʊ/))
                  'I know. tomato? tomato.'
```

Aiba continues this *hatsuon kouza* frame in lines 317-319 and 321-322 by adding

another pronunciation request for Kutsuna. The running he does as he races across the

room gives a feeling of excitement, similar to the intensity shown by Sakurai at the end

of the previous extract. It is particularly interesting that each move to Frame 4b has begun

with one of the Arashi members using the word *onegai* ('request' or 'wish') towards

Kutsuna in some fashion. This shows that Kutsuna, as both guest and the NS of English

has a certain amount of authority over this embedded frame in that by refusing she could break the frame.

Sakurai's reaction to Aiba's word choice is also interesting here because it shows there is some knowledge about NSE pronunciation. They both treat *tomato* as a good choice for the pronunciation request and that both Sakurai and Aiba believe there will be a clear difference between the nativized pronunciation and the NSE one shows this knowledge. Aiba and Sakurai's reactions get even more dramatic here with extremely raised volume and emphasis in lines 330-337. They use the slang phrase *kita* here which, while meaning 'to come,' is a popular way of expressing excitement as well. Sakurai's switch to English and formality in lines 340-341 show a continued reference to the educational context, as does his use of the title *sensei* ('teacher').

Most important in this extract are the reactions that Aiba and Sakurai have to this lesson. The differences in pronunciation are highlighted in 351 and 352 as they both agree that the clear differences between the nativized /tomato/ and Kutsuna's /təmeɪtəʊ/ were the kind of thing they were searching for in this frame. Sakurai then states how surprising it was that /tomato/ is not /tomato/, implying that only /təmeɪtəʊ/ is correct. The statement here implies that one pronunciation has a greater truth value to it and that is the NSE pronunciation or one that is stylized in the sense of "trying to create the image of another's language" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 362).

While these uses of cool English are still strongly connected to the classroom environment via the pronunciation lesson frame, the excitement shown by Aiba and Sakurai's increasing reactions are anything but related to the class environment. One possible reason for their increasingly excited reactions is the social cool factor that is

separate from that which is gained by performing well at school. This is shown in the

final extract from this show as they ask Kutsuna for help in constructing and then

pronouncing a sentence about Weet-Bix.

Extract 6.4.3.4 Honey and Hollywood

```
601   Sakurai:    sensei. (0.6)
                  teacher

602               [watashi wa wiitobikkusu ni]
                    I    TOP  Weet-Bix    on
                  'Miss. Please.'

603   screen:     [ ⌈watashi wa Weet-Bix ni] ((red, mixed orthog.))
                        I    TOP Weet-Bix on

604               [hachimitsu iremasu⌋ ]
                   honey      insert:POT
                  '"I will put honey in my Weet-Bix"'

605   Sakurai:    [hachimitsu ni iremasu    onegaishimasu.]
                   honey       on insert:POT   please
                  'Say I will put honey in my Weet-Bix.'

606   staff:      ((laughter))

607   Kutsuna:    I will put honey in my weet bix.

608               (0.9)

609   Sakurai:    I w-? ((leans to Kutsuna))

610   Kutsuna:    [I will putʰ (0.7) honey (0.5) in my weet bix.]

611   screen:     [I'll put honey in my Weet-Bix.] ((pink))

612               (0.9)

613   Sakurai:    [I will pu? (1.4) honey (0.8) in my weet bix.

614   screen:     [I'll put honey in my Weet-Bix.] ((red))

615   Sakurai:    yeah.

616   Aiba:       sugoi:!
                  amazing
                  'coool!'

617   Sakurai:    hu::[:::! ((pours honey))

618   Aiba:           [eiga mitee.
                       movie like
```

```
619              [hariuddo  na      kanji shita    ne ima ne.]
                 Hollywood NOM  feel  do:PST IP now IP
                 'it's like a movie. that was just like Hollywood
                 right now wasn't it.'

620  screen:     [hariuddo ((purple+white glow))
                 Hollywood

621               na    kanji  shita   ne!] ((green))
                 NOM    feel   do:PST   IP
                 'just like Hollywood wasn't it!'
```

This segment starts off similar to the others from this episode with Sakurai initiating a move to Frame 4b with *onegaishimasu* in 605 and referring to Kutsuna as *sensei*. However after going through the lesson, Aiba makes a curious formulation about Sakurai's production of English, which is Stylized NSE due to its mis-realization from the glottal substitution and overshooting with all the added stress and lengthened pauses (line 613). He states in 618 that it's like a movie and then compares it to Hollywood. The content of his statement is interpreted in the *jimaku* with Hollywood in purple with a white glow. The purple color belongs to no particular individual in this interaction but this effect shows a different type of cool at work beyond just that of students who do well in classes. This performance of cool English may have started out with a school context but it was then recontextualized through the image of the popular media in the form of Hollywood. This image clearly has a sense of English cool to it; native English speaking actors in big budget films living a wealthy lifestyle.

The performance of cool English in both *Himitsu no Arashichan* and *Nep League* are definitely part of the shows' structures. There are clear rules for how and when it gets used but beyond their performance within these frames, cool English performances can index many levels of social cool. In this chapter I have shown how the ability to perform cool English within certain constructed environments in the form of embedded frames

can lead to associations of stars and the concept of Hollywood. In this next section, I will show how cool English is also associated with the wealthy lifestyle of *serebu* ('celebs') in Japanese variety shows.

6.5 Cool English and Celebs

Cool English use is also often associated with the lifestyles of Japanese celebs. The word *serebu* has a different meaning in Japanese than in English. Although it comes from the English word *celebrity,* Japanese *serebu* are not necessarily famous. *Serebu* has more of a connotation of fabulously wealthy; similar to that which used to be seen on Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous. One such example of Japanese *serebu* are the Kano sisters, who are known for their outrageous characters and lifestyles. In the US context, a comparable person is Paris Hilton, who is not a celebrity due to talent but is famous for her lifestyle, afforded to her by her parents' wealth. They are supposedly sisters, although many people have their doubts about this, and are usually portrayed as incredibly wealthy living a very decadent lifestyle. The older sister Kyoko and younger sister Mika often are shown on TV in incredibly low cut dresses promoting everything from beauty products to books and other items aimed towards advising other people how to live their lives.

The Kano sisters often appear on talk shows and discuss their highly sexualized and glamorous lifestyles. One such talk show is *Downtown DX* (Katsuta, 1994-2014)*,* airing on Thursday nights at 10 o'clock on the Nippon TV Network. This program is often popular with adults of many ages. Cool English is often worked in subtly during

discussions about their lifestyle. In this first extract from May 30 2013, one of the hosts

Hamada reads something the sisters have written about their cats.

Extract 6.5.1

<pre>
Hamada: kanou shimai no wagaya no atarashii kazoku nihiki no
          goojasu kyatoo derakkusu. ichi nen mae wagaya ni nihiki no
          neko ga yattekimashita. namae wa fabyurasu kun to purinsu
          kun bengaru to iu shurui de kenami mo honto kirei de totemo
          goojasu. demo saikin wa ookikunatte genki sugiru node
          namakizu ga taemasen.

Hamada: The Kano Sisters and our house's new family members: two
          gorgeous cats deluxe. One year ago we brought two cats into
          our home. Their names are Fabulous and Prince and they are
          Bengal cats with really beautiful coats and their very
          gorgeous. But lately they've gotten big and too active so
          we keep getting scratched.
</pre>

In this extract I have bolded all the nativized words in the original Japanese, except for

the word deluxe which is in reference to the show. It is clear that there is a certain type of

English word being used here. The word *goojasu* ('gorgeous') carries connotations in the

Japanese context of a wealthy lifestyle. The names they give their cats are Fabulous and

Prince, both words relating to either social status or decadence. It's also interesting to

note that the words *kyatto* ('cat' < English) is used alongside *neko* ('cat') in this. The use

of these words adds emphasis to the wealthy and worldly image being described here in

the discourse. Later in the same segment, the younger sister Mika mentions that her older

sister only gets that look on her face when with her cats or with her *menzu* ('men'). She

uses the word *menzu*, clearly nativized English, to refer to the many good looking white

European descent men that are often seen escorting the two sisters everywhere they go.

Similarly in another segment on July 12, 2012 the message from them read by the

host Hamada also overuses the phrase *basutotoppu* ('bust top') as they discuss the beauty

treatments the sisters give their chests every week.

Extract 6.5.2 Bust Top Care

```
Hamada:   Kanoushimai no mune no anchieijingu derakkusu. basuto toppu
          wa inochi desu. ni mo kakawarazu igai to basuto toppu no
          keaa wo orosoka ni shiteiru kata ga ooi you na no de, kyou
          wa kantan ni dekiru basuto toppu kea wo oshiemasu. kore ni
          ikutsu ni natte mo anata no basuto toppu wa kirei na iro no
          mama desu.

Hamada:   The Kano Sisters' breast antiaging techniques deluxe. Your
          bust top is your life. It should not be trifled with and it
          seems like there are many to neglect the care of their bust
          tops so today we'll teach you how to easily care for your
          bust top. With this no matter how old you get your bust top
          will keep that pretty color.
```

They use the term *bust top* to refer to their nipples here rather than use the Japanese word

for this, *chikubi*. Although the use of the nativized English *basuto toppu* for *chikubi* is a

type of euphemism (Honna, 1995) which is common in Japan, the phrase is still used

very excessively in this description. Beyond the somewhat salacious nature of the topic,

the use of English here is almost gratuitous in nature. These discussions about a rather

sexual topic are made to seem a matter of fashion and beauty upkeep through this

terminology rather than something sexual. English here is a code that everyone has access

to and allows for a discussion of difficult topics to seem commonplace.

The connection between luxury and English can also be found on this show in

their discussions with other *serebu* such as the actor Ishida Junichi and his family. This

segment also from the July 12, 2012 episode starts off with a description of Ishida and his

family as *karei naru Ishida zoku*. This pun is based on the title of a novel by Toyoko

Yamazaki meaning 'the fabulous Ishida family' since both Ishida and his son are actors,

his ex-wife an actress, his current wife a famous pro golfer and his daughter a model and

actress. They are discussing how the Ishida family uses English with Ishida Junichi's

daughter, Sumire, who grew up in Hawai'i and now lives and works in the entertainment industry in Japan.

6.5.3 *Karei naru Ishida zoku*

```
01    Hamada:        kono aida    wa ne, Issei kun ga
                     this between TP IP        AT S
                     'The last time right, Issei said'

02    Matsumoto:     issei gureishii
                     'Issei Gracie'

03    Hamada:        issei gureishii ga
                                     S

04                   sumire oru    kara chotto
                         exist because little

05                   EIgo    de   minna   shaberu toki mo   aru.
                     English with everyone talk    time also exist
                     'Issei Gracie said Sumire is there sometimes you
                     all speak English together.'

06    Sumire:        sou  na n desu
                     true CP N  CP

07                   riko chan mo zenzen   perapera de
                          AT  also at.all  fluently with

08                   papa mo: nnn. de issei kun mo zenzen shaberu kara.
                          also
                     'That's right. Riko's also totally fluent and
                     papa is too. And Issei totally speaks it so.'
```

In this situation, the English language use is part of what makes their family *karei* ('fabulous' or 'luxurious'). The implication here is that in a family of famous people, such as wealthy actors and successful sports stars, everyone is able to speak English. These images of wealthy and popular English speakers add to the overall impression that using English is cool. It's not just as a performance but cool English also indexes a dreamlike lifestyle of the wealthy and the famous.

6.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have shown how the image of English ability travels from the academic setting of schools and tests in Chapter 5 to quiz shows. This is a natural extension of cool English given that both are believed by many to be a means of measuring intellect, which are in turn used to gain other forms of social cool. I have also showed that there are different kinds of constructed spaces made through frame embedding that give a place for people to show their performances of cool English. The data from *Nep League* demonstrated that in these embedded frames, English can take on other meanings, moving from intelligence to *sugosa* as a type of cool, and then to the idea of a star. The data from *Himitsu no Arashichan* showed that although the connections to school and learning are still there, even in talk show settings, there is also excitability about English due to its indexicality with Hollywood and western movies. Then with data from *Downtown Deluxe,* I showed how English words and phrases are used in conjunction with the idea of wealthy and hyper-sexualized *serebu* and also how the use of English is discussed in relation to successful entertainment families. English indexes a commodified lifestyle of fame and wealth. Being a *sutaa* and like Hollywood becomes connected to international showbiz families and sexualized excess.

It is also important to realize that English is not always cool. In the next chapter I will show how this can relate to a type of negative cool as well and how negative cool and lack of English ability can be utilized as a resource in these performances as well. We will see how some people can use a lack of English ability to make successful careers for themselves on Japanese variety shows.

CHAPTER 7

UN-COOL ENGLISH

7.1 Introduction

Now that we have seen how cool English displays index glamorous careers and lifestyles it might be useful to think about the other side of this. In Chapter 5, I showed how Mechaike's *nukiuchi tesuto* corner revealed the connections between English, school and intelligence. In Chapter 6, the data helped us see how this connection is continued from intelligence to cool in the form of *sugosa* and then to stardom, Hollywood, and the luxurious lifestyles accorded to *serebu*. In this chapter I would like to look at how the un-cool lack of English ability can also be a resource on these variety shows.

I will analyze examples of individuals who are perceived as being un-cool in different ways because of their English. I will first discuss the un-cool English using comedians and comedic characters. Several examples will be shown that point to a metalinguistic understanding of how English is used in Japan as well as the archetypal imagery of being gaudy and unfashionable that can also be associated with it. Then I will go into a deeper discussion of the *baka* from *Mechaike* and show how both the *baka* and the comedy characters draw upon English un-cool as resources. Finally I will contextualize this data by looking at un-cool and cool language use in terms of appropriateness.

7.2 Lou Oshiba and Un-cool English Comedy

Lou Oshiba (currently age 60) is perhaps the most commonly thought of comedian when it comes to using English on TV. Lou is often dressed in bright colored printed shirts with his wavy hair slicked to the side. The comedic character that he is known for is best described as corny or cheesy because of the over the top enthusiasm he uses when speaking. Although many people like him as a comedian, few people want to look and dress the way that he does. He appears often on radio and variety programs and is primarily known for his use of nonce borrowings (Poplack, Sankoff, & Miller, 1988) of English into Japanese. As a comedian, it is important get laughs, and in the case of Lou Oshiba it is done through a combination of language and characterization. Lou almost always presents himself as a bold and sometimes pushy old man.

Originally from Tokyo, as a young adult Lou Oshiba travelled around Europe and spent several months in England studying English and then went to work in Japan's entertainment industry as an actor and later a comedian (Oshiba, 2007; Moody & Matsumoto, 2012, p. 107). Although his career was not successful for most of his life, in 2006 he started a blog that quickly became very popular with the younger generation, which led to his appearance on several variety shows, a book, and several commercial contracts. The primary reason for his success, his curious blend of Japanese and English, was dubbed *Lou-go* (ルー語) a combination of his name with the *kanji* for language. The blog still exists today and continues to have many readers. Here is an example of a recent entry on his blog.

スカイツリー

テーマ:ルー大柴ブログ

フェブラリー(2月)21日、東京スカイツリータウン内にあるJ:COMワンダースタジ
オにGO、『J:テレ スタイル』というプログラムに出演しました ♪

帰りがけにスカイツリーを間近でルックしたのですが 👀 、あまりにビックでサ
プライズ 🤯 アット・ワンス(早速)ニアー(近く)にいた方に、テイク・ア・ピクチャー
(写真を撮る)をお願いしたのですが、何とその方はプロのカメラマンさんでした
📷

Figure 7.1 Lou Oshiba's Blog (Oshiba, Sukai Tsurii, 2014)

Extract 7.2.1 Lou's Blog

> sukaitsurii
> teema: ruuoshiba burogu
>
> **feburarii** (nigatsu) 21 nichi toukyou sukaitsuiitaun uchi ni aru J:COM wandaa
> sutajio ni **GO** "J:tere Sutairu" to iu **puroguramu** ni shutsuen shimashita
>
> kaerigake ni sukaitsurii wo majika de **rukku** shita no desu ga, amari ni bikku de
> **sapuraizu atto wansu** (sassoku) **niaa** (chikaku) ni ita kata ni **teiku a pikuchaa**
> (shashin wo toru) wo onegai shita no desu ga nan to sono kata ha puro no kameraman
> san deshita
>
>
> Sky Tree
> Theme: Lou Oshiba blog
>
> On February 21st I went to the J:COM Wonder Studio in Tokyo Sky Tree Town. I
> appeared on the program JTV Style.
>
> On my way home I was looking around the Sky Tree area when I was really
> surprised all of a sudden when some guy close by asked me to take their picture but
> lo and behold that guy was a professional cameraman.

The elements that are typical *Lou-go* have been bolded so you can see their use. Many of

the Lou-go uses are also followed by translations in parentheses showing perhaps terms

that are more difficult. Terms like *Febuarii* ('February'), *supuraize atto wansu* ('surprise

at once'), or *teiku a pikuchaa* ('take a picture') are not as clear as words like go and *rukku*

('look'). This nonce borrowing with occasional translation is typical of how Lou Oshiba

writes and talks when in the public eye such as on his blog or on television shows.

Sometimes *Lou-go* is adopted by the telop as well. In this next extract taken from

the travel variety show, *Wagamama! Kimama! Tabikibun* (Indulgent! Luxurious! In

mood for a trip') from August 6, 2011 (Nunome, 2011). Travel programs like this are

often popular with older adults in Japan. Lou and his two co-stars are enjoying an outdoor

hot springs bath at a hotel and trying to guess the price of an overnight stay there.

Extract 7.2.2 Tabikibun

```
01   UL telop:     onsen  rotenburo    de TG (tugyazaa)
                   spring outdoor.bath at

02                 hamanako ichibou kyou   zekkei   no yado
                            view    shock good.view N  lodging
                   'Together at a hotsprings outdoor bath
                   Lodgings with an amazing view of Hamanako'

03   RU telop      wagamama kimama     tabi   kibun
                   spoiled  indulgence travel feeling
                   'The feel of a luxurious indulgent trip'

04   Wakkii:       E[E?]

05   Lou:           [°Wakki] dore gurai to omou?°
                            how  about QT think
                   'Wakki, how much do you think it is?'

06   Wakkii:       YA:? (.) eeto:- yon man   ijou wa
                            um    4  10,000 over TP

07                 surun ja nai ka?
                   do:N  CP NEG  Q
                   'HUH? Um It's over 40,000 right?'

08   Kimura:       ahaha[ha

09   Lou:          [iya: chotto ueito.=
                   no    little wait
                   'No wait a sec'

10   Kimura:                         =weito? ahahaha
                                      'wait?' ahahaha

11   Lou:          soko   made expensive takakunai yo.
```

```
                          there until          inexpensive IP
                          'It's not that expensive.'

12    Wakkii:             iya de[mo
                          'no but.'

13    Lou:                    [yon man   wa shinai to omou kedo=
                               4  10,000  SB do:NEG  QT think but
                          'I don't think it's 40,000.'
```

 Right away from the beginning of this segment we can see the UL telop text using *Lou-go*. The use of the TG with the furigana *tugyazaa* ('together') is a clear marker of this. The word *tugyazaa* in particular is important since this is the most commonly noted feature of *Lou-go*. It also features prominently in the ads that he does such as the one for mouthwash below (see Figure 7.2). Where the bubble reads *kounai eisei wo tugyazaa shiyou ze!* ('Let's take care of our oral health together!'). The interaction between the people in the show starts from line 4 as Wakkii reacts to Kimura's earlier question about how much one night at this hotel costs. Such discussions about the cost of hotel stays are fairly common in this type of travel program as one of the main purposes is to increase business for the places that are being featured. After Wakkii gives his estimate, Lou uses *Lou-go* to protest the amount saying *chotto ueito* ('chotto wait') instead of the typical Japanese *chotto matte* ('wait a moment'). This use of *uieto* is treated as strange by Kimura who repeats the word with a rising intonation and laughs in line 10. He then later explains in line 11 *soko made expensive takakunai* doing a combination nonce borrowing and translation given that *takakunai* ('inexpensive') contains both the negative *nai* and the adverb *takaku* ('expensively') overusing English in an un-cool way. As a *pin geinin* ('solo comedian') Lou has no partner but his unusual use of language is clearly a *boke* character in that his use of English is out of context (Oshima, 2006, p. 105) and therefore laughable and un-cool.

Figure 7.2 Mouthwash Ad

It is of course understood that this nonce borrowing is part of Lou Oshiba's comedic routine. Kimura shows this by laughing at it in line 10. Such uses of English lexical items are not common occurrences in most Japanese interactions but they are rather the use of a generally understood language that is normally found in English classes but not used in everyday interactions. Such uses of English in everyday situations could easily come across as strange or somewhat smarmy as if someone is trying too hard to achieve English cool. In a sense, this is the kind of character that Lou Oshiba tries to achieve. His loud shirts, and wavy (sometimes greasy) hair harken to that particular archetype that in the US might be referred to as the 'lounge lizard' type. Such types are often undesirable because of the cheap, dated and perverted image associated with them (Safire, 1987). It is the overuse of English which goes from cool to un-cool in its excess which makes characters like Lou Oshiba so amusing. The general public has a metalinguistic awareness of the fact that English can be viewed as cool which some people then try too hard to achieve, making themselves appear un-cool. This combined with his other high performance stylizations of the character type mocks these types of people as a critique of their overuse of symbolic cool such as English to seem more appealing.

Other comedic characters often seen on Japanese variety shows do similar things

with this idea of un-cool English. Dandy Sakano (ダンディ坂野) is another example of this

kind of character. Wearing brightly colored and gaudy tuxedo type suits with a bow tie,

Dandy became incredibly popular in 2003 releasing two CDs focused around his single

ippatsu gyagu of pointing at people with both index fingers and saying "Gets!". In the

image of him shown above from an interview with Dandy for *Tokyo Girls Topics* (Gets!!,

2014)*,* we can see some references to this type of lounge lizard type character. Like Lou

Oshiba he has the gaudy clothes. He also has the use of English written in katakana. The

wink and the disco ball in the background all serve to create this character that is a

parody of those who think they are slick and cool. English is a part of that parody.

Figure 7.3 Dandy Sakano

A similar parodic character can also be found in the work of comedian Moody

Katsuyama who briefly rose to popularity three years after Dandy Sakano in 2006.

Moody is often described in Japanese as *ippatsuya* ('a one hit wonder') in that he did not

find any successful comedic routines after his initial success. Moody played the character

of a lounge singer, always wearing a tuxedo and with slicked back hair, an out of date

look which is also part of the lounge lizard image. In most of his appearances on variety

shows. During his brief time of popularity he always carried a microphone with him and

when asked to perform his comedy routine always started with a cue for background

music saying in an extra deep voice *myujikku sutaato!* ('music start!'). Below is a picture

of Moody taken from an entertainment article in 2007.

Figure 7.4 Moody Katsuyama (Muudii Katsuyama, 2013)

Figure 7.5 Thank You Goro (Haruna, 1996-2014)

Finally on the long running variety show SMAP X SMAP, a *kanmuri bangumi* for

the Johnny's idol group SMAP which began airing in 1996, we see another parodic

character. One of the more distinctive characters belonging to SMAP member Inagaki

Goro is the character Thank You Goro (サンキューゴロー). In skits on this Monday night

variety show from FujiTV, Thank You Goro would always be called on for help when a

young woman was getting accosted by street thugs. Thank You Goro would then appear

from some hidden panel in the set and ask the woman some inconsequential question. After answering, he would vanish without helping her after giving his signature line *sankyuu* ('Thank You') in a deep voice. The routine is seen as funny because the suave character comes across as manly, meaning also that he should help the damsel in distress character but then vanishes after asking a meaningless question and giving thanks in the typically suave fashion by using English without actually helping.

All of these characters have certain features in common. They all have a certain style of dress to them that is flashy. In the case of Thank You Goro it is a designer suit, Moody and Dandy have their tuxedos, and Lou is usually seen wearing a suit or a gaudy shirt. They all have English and Japanese names. Moody, Dandy, and Thank You are clearly English. Although his name originally comes from a shortening of the Japanese name Tooru, Lou Oshiba still uses *katakana* for his first name giving it a foreign feel. Their actions as parodies also construct them as un-cool with the purpose of making fun of the originals that the parodies are based on. Finally, all have tag lines in English using what can be thought of as a type of English un-cool.

7.3 Baka of Mechaike Revisited

In Chapter 5, I showed examples from the popular variety program *Mechaike* which were taken from the *nukiuchi tesuto* corner. In that corner, people's whose answers were viewed as strangely incorrect, and even radically different in a way which could be viewed as incomprehensible at first, were ridiculed by the other test takers as well as by the host, Okamura, who was in the role of teacher for that setting. That ridicule happens in two particular parts of the show. One section in which the genre specific answers are

discussed one by one in the order that they were given in the test: *kokugo*, *suugaku*,

shakai, *rika*, and *eigo* ('Japanese', 'math', 'social studies', science' and 'English'

respectively). The other section came after the class rankings were revealed, where only

the chosen *baka* for that version of the test was ridiculed. The majority of the corner is

taken up by these two sections, indicating the popularity among viewers for segments that

ridicule guests.

Figure 7.6 Shigemori being laughed at by the other test takers

There seems to be a disturbing amount of joy taken in watching scenes like in the

figure 7.6 above where Shigemori is crying with lines of mascara running down her face.

In the back of this picture, one of the other test takers can be seen looking at Shigemori

and laughing with her hand over her mouth. One question that often comes up when I

show this data to people who are not from Japan is: Why do they put up with this? and,

Why don't they just leave? As I explained in Chapter 4, the answer to this is in some

ways very simple and in other ways quite complex. The simple answer is: Because it's

their job. Out of the 13 times that the *nukiuchi tesuto* has been given so far, 12 out of

those times has only been with *geinoujin*, a category that is comprised of all people in the

entertainment industry whose job is to be in front of the camera.

As discussed in Chapter 4, almost all entertainers in Japan, much like in the

United States, are managed by talent management companies. What is different between

Japan and many other countries is that these *geinoujin* are considered employees of these

large companies and as such must answer to a chain of command with the president of

their management company at the top. Deciding to walk off set has severe implications

for not just that specific *geinoujin* but for everyone within their company. When such

things do happen, they tend to occur off camera or if they do occur on camera, they are

often edited out of the program before it airs as in one recent incident where one Japanese

tarento slapped a woman repeatedly on camera for acting rudely which was a planned

part of a dokkiri; since it was a dokkiri, the *tarento* was unaware until after the taping was

over (Japan Today, 2014). Although the incident was heard about later and made it into

several newspapers, it never made it into the show. However most of the time, the

majority of Japan's *geinoujin* realize that going through such situations as being ridiculed

or teased is simply part of the career that they have chosen. It might be hard on them, as

in the case of Shigemori, but it is one of the hazards of the job. This tends to be especially

true for certain categories of *geinoujin* such as comedians, idols that have not quite

reached star status or those *tarento* that primarily work on variety shows.

The difference in attitude towards these shows can be seen in those Japanese

variety shows/corners that have made the transition over to the United States. One classic

variety show corner like this is the *sairento toshokan* ('Silent Library') segment from the

long running *DownTown no gaki no tsukai ya arahende* ('DownTown's This ain't no task

for kids') airing on NipponTV on Sunday evenings since 1989. The show was picked up

by MTV and a US version ran for 4 seasons from 2009-2011.

In the Japanese version of the show, the 5 regular cast members (all male comedians) go into a library set complete with librarian and library patrons all reading quietly. Occasionally other *geinoujin* guests are invited for the purposes of *bansen* (see Chapter 4). They then proceed to play a game where 5 cards are shuffled; four cards have the word *seefu* ('safe') written on it and one has a skull and crossbones. The player who draws the skull and crossbones (referred to as *dokuro maaku* in Japanese) card must then suffer some punishment that is predetermined by flipping a page on an easel with a list of amusing punishments written on it. While the punishment is administered, the person suffering it must attempt to stay silent because of the set being a library. The types of punishments have included things such as: having someone step on your crotch as you lie on the ground, having scalding hot bean curd put on your forehead, getting hit in the rear end by a baseball bat, and getting wasabi paste squeezed up both nostrils. The Japanese version is popular because people find it amusing to watch. As comedians it is part of the cast members' jobs to do it.

After many years of YouTube popularity with college students across the United States trying to play the games on their own in their actual college libraries, the show was picked up for both US and international audiences under the names *Silent Library* for the US and *Fist of Zen* in other countries such as Great Britain and Australia. In these versions, and in keeping with the monetary-reward orientation of these entertainment industries, the corner was turned into a game show where average people (non-celebrities) come onto the show to win cash. By keeping their voices under a certain decibel level they earn varying dollar amounts and get to leave at the end of the show, receiving the cash from the strict Asian librarian/emcee and splitting the prize money

amongst themselves. In the popular celebrity versions of Silent Library, various entertainers such as Jimmy Fallon or Justin Bieber come on the show with their friends or band members and do the exact same games, donating the cash money at the end to charity.

The biggest changes between the two versions are the addition of winning cash for suffering through the games in the American and International version, and the use of non-celebrities. Of course the comedians get paid for appearing on the Japanese version of the show but the pay does not increase based on how well they perform; it is understood that they should perform well because it is their job to do so. This is similar to the fact that tips are not usually given at restaurants in Japan for exceptional service, the generally held belief there being that one will give exceptional service because, as a professional, that is their job. It is for this same reason that the *geinoujin* that are tricked into taking part in the *nukiuchi tesuto* do not simply leave the set. It is their job to be there.

In only one instance did the *nukiuchi tesuto* use non-*geinoujin* as test takers. This was in July of 2004 during the annual FujiTV 27hour special event. Every year during the summer, FujiTV does 27 hours of live television involving all of the affiliate stations in each prefecture. A particularly popular variety show from FujiTV or a well-known celebrity is usually selected to be in charge of this event during which they must be on camera being involved in the various shows for 27 hours. Viewers can go to the main FujiTV building in Odaiba, Tokyo or to any of the affiliate local stations and enjoy food booths and other activities during this time. In the summer of 2004, *Mechaike* was chosen to host the event and as part of that they decided to do a *nukiuchi tesuto* with all of the

FujiTV affiliate stations to find out which employee of Fujisankei (the parent corporation of FujiTV) was the stupidest.

Each affiliate station nominated someone they thought should take the test and told them a month beforehand to go to an important meeting at the FujiTV building in Tokyo. This was the *dokkiri* (see Chapter 4 and Chapter 5) where they found out that they would become the test takers for the nationwide *nukiuchi tesuto* and that they needed to return on the day of the 27 hour broadcast to represent their individual stations and the associated prefectures that those stations were located in. In a very disturbing way, these *ippanjin* ('non-entertainers') were teased on live television across the entire country while their co-workers cheered.

Figure 7.7 ippanjin getting ridiculed

Figure 7.8 Laughing co-workers in Kagoshima

While some of the employees laughed in response to the ridicule, others showed extreme embarrassment. One older female employee, Horinouchi from Kagoshima TV, would not look up as she was ridiculed several times during the shoot. At the same time, her coworkers were shown laughing at her answers and waving flags from a live connection in her home prefecture. The reason why these *ippanjin* did not leave was the same as the reason for *geinoujin*. Although these people are not entertainers, they are employees of FujiTV and its affiliates; as such this becomes part of their jobs.

But what does this mean for people like Shigemori and Hamaguchi who are regularly ridiculed on this program? For people like Shigemori and Hamaguchi, a general variety *tarento* and comedian respectively, being ridiculed on national television is one of their work responsibilities. Both get a large amount of airtime which would otherwise be somewhat difficult to achieve on a show like *Mechaike* which airs in *gooruden taimu* on a major network. They both receive career benefits from the ridiculing process as well as bring profits and viewership for the program, the network, and their management companies.

Hamaguchi has received numerous specials on *Mechaike* where he is the main focus of the episode, particularly when he tried to pass the entrance exams to get into college. Although he scored better than before the attempt, he still did not pass. This was made interesting in the light of his receiving the title of *baka* on the test so many times. He has also gotten his own *kanmuri bangumi* with the Johnny's idol group KIS-MY-FT2 where he occasionally helps them to pass difficult quiz questions. He also is a major draw to the annual summertime event at the FujiTV studios where people can buy T-shirts with some of his more popular ridiculed answers from the *nukiuchi tesuto* on them.

In the examples below we can see the image of Hamaguchi's English (Ayari, 2006) being used on a shirt again as was shown in Chapter 5 (Figure 7.9). In Figure 7.10 there is one of his math answers where he was asked to draw a *sankakusui* ('tetrahedron'). In this case instead of understanding the word as 三角錐 ('*sankakusui'* meaning 'tetrahedron' or 'triangular pyramid') he understood it as 三角水 ('*sankaku'* = 'triangle' + 'sui' = 'water').

Figure 7.9 Hamaguchi's English   Figure 7.10 Hamaguchi's math

Similarly, several of Shigemori's more interesting drawings from the science section of the test were made into an attraction at the annual Fuji summer event as well as being made into stuffed animals for people to collect. When shown a picture of a butterfly coccoon, mantis coccoon, and tadpole the test takers were asked to draw what these things would grow up to become. Her drawings were laughed at by the others but resulted in a water attraction and stuffed animals to be sold to the public and her own segment on the show called *Shigemori no Mori* ('Forrest of Shigemori') a play on the name of a large animation studio famous for creating strange and unusual creatures in their movies. There are also numerous fan blogs that talk about Hamaguchi and Shigemori's answers from the test. She also gets invited on to other variety shows as a *tennen kyara* ('ditzy

character') and has two other regular shows besides *Mechaike* that she appears on (Avilla Co. Ltd., 2014).

Both Hamaguchi and Shigemori gain a certain amount of work due to their *baka* characters and specifically because their answers on the English section are viewed as being so funny. They get more airtime, always a premium for variety show *tarento*, and the also get positions on other shows because of their perceived character from *Mechaike*. This leads to more profits for both of their management companies as well as for the *tarento* themselves. Their 'un-cool' use of English can get turned into T-shirts or can be shown in large displays increasing fans' and viewers' interest in the show which translates to more profit for the networks. While these uses don't exactly make them cool, they do make them popular as *tarento*. With that in mind, Shigemori's lack of English ability is an important resource for her career.

Both other variety show comedians and viewers from focus groups have commented that it's very possible that Shigemori is feigning her lack of ability. This is always a possibility just as it's also possible for students to purposefully fail a test in real life. I have myself met two people who claimed to purposefully do poorly on math placement tests to ensure that they'll have easy homework to do while earning a math credit. One variety *tarento* recently mentioned this about Shigemori on the variety show London Hearts (Yamaoka & Ishimizu, 1999-2014).

Extract 7.3.1

> Sakagami: *Aa iu kyarakutaa no kata: irun ja nai desu ka? Nanto naku. H-honto no tennen na no ka, tsukutta tennen na no ka tte iu tokoro mo arun desu kedo mo.*
>
> Atsushi: *Shokugyou tennen!*

Sakagami: *Sou iu shokugyou tennen no nioi ga suru.*

Sakagami: There are those kinds of people aren't there? Somehow. There's something about [Shigemori] that makes me wonder if she's really ditzy or if she's faking it.

Atsushi: A professional ditz!

Sakagami: I get that professional ditz feeling from her.

In this segment Sakagami is supposed to rank a group of ten women in order of who he would like to go steady with. After ranking Shigemori eighth out of ten, he explains that he's not really sure whether Shigemori is honestly so *tennen* ('ditzy' or 'scatterbrained') or if she's faking it. As I mentioned earlier in Chapter 5, an informant who works in the Japanese television industry, said that they are often looking for people who are naturally *tennen*. That informant, was trying to find someone like this attending classes in the university system. Thinking that I might know someone like this, she said 'they don't have to do or say anything funny, we're trying to find people that are really like that'. Such characters are often comedy gold when they are discovered and can easily turn a short segment in a show into a lifetime career.

One example of this is the *tarento* Bobby Ologun, a Nigerian man who was living and working in Japan when he appeared in a 'man on the street' type segment of *Sanma no Karakuri Terebi* a TBS network show on Sunday nights during *gooruden taimu*. The segment was called Funniest Japanese (a sequel to an earlier segment called Funniest English) where foreigners living in Japan would be interviewed by the bilingual Thane Camus, a variety *tarento*, telling an interesting story first in English and then asked to repeat the story in Japanese. Mistakes in the interviewees' Japanese are highlighted

where people watching the video in studio all laugh at the strange sentences being produced.

Bobby is very expressive, not afraid to use his L2 Japanese, and doesn't seem to care about shocking people. His unusual accent as well as his tendency to say very rude or aggressive things that don't seem to match the situation led to his characterization as a *tennen* character. For Bobby, speaking Japanese with his accent is a major part of his career. He turned an appearance in this one single corner to a regular spot on that show which led to regular spots on other shows and now can also be seen working as a professional narrator on Japanese television for the variety show *You wa nani shini nihon e?* ('Why are you in Japan?) about foreigners who are visiting or living in Japan.

If Bobby were to lose his stylized persona, a significant part of his appeal would be gone as well as many of the jobs that he currently has in the Japanese entertainment field. For him un-cool Japanese is a highly profitable resource that he has used to make himself a popular *tarento* on Japanese TV. For people like Shigemori and Hamaguchi it may be of greater benefit to their careers to avoid cool English and stick to un-cool English instead. Un-cool English for some people like this can be an incredibly valuable entertainment industry resource.

7.4 The Un-cool Side of English

The use of the un-cool English seen here represent an interesting range of situations. With the comedians like Lou Oshiba and Dandy Sakano it is understood that these characters are based on an archetype existing for many people in Japan of those who have a limited understanding of how English and cool can be used together. These

characters epitomize the mistaken belief that some may have about using single words of English, like Dandy's *gets* or Lou Oshiba's *together* ('*tugyazaa'*), making someone look chic despite lacking other features which could also index this kind of social cool. As comedians, they are quite clever in their understanding of how to use English performance to exaggerate the worst features of such an archetype.

For Shigemori and Hamaguchi it is the ability to use code-ambiguation in an environment not seen as linguistically appropriate (Eades & Jacobs, 2003). While blurring the lines between English and Japanese is a highly sought after skill in the world of pop music (Moody & Matsumoto, 2003), it was seen to be highly out of place in the frame of the *nukiuchi tesuto* (Chapter 5). This inappropriate use of code-ambiguation is then drawn upon to construct *baka* and *tennen* characters in Japanese variety shows. It also gives an alternate understanding to the words of one focus group member who said of Shigemori's English "*yoku iu na:!*" (literally 'You really said it' or 'You said it well didn't you'). If taken somewhat sarcastically, it mocks Shigemori's English but it can be taken quite seriously with the knowledge that people like Shigemori and Hamaguchi really understand how to make people laugh and keep them laughing. As a comedian, this is the truly high praise.

What these examples show is that among many comedians who use un-cool English there is a particular social and metalinguistic knowledge that helps to keep Japanese people entertained. They know that there is such a thing as too much English in some situations and that the English ability valued as cool in Japan shows certain features such as going beyond the individual word level or phrase level. They also know that test situations require a type of test taking knowledge that tells us which answers will be

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viewed as close and which will be viewed as off the mark completely. Taking this knowledge and reversing the rules for usage is their resource but it requires a deep understanding of the rules to begin with in order to consistently produce this kind of un-cool English humor.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 Summary of Findings

This dissertation has examined the socio-cultural uses of English in Japanese variety shows with attention to identity construction. My research has been focused on the general process of identity construction on these variety shows and how this relates to the idea of English as a local resource that has global associations since Japan is a largely country where English is rarely used in day to day interactions. I have also focused on the use of English as an entertainment resource for both the variety programs and for the *tarento* that appear in them.

Within a sociocultural linguistics framework, I incorporated tactics of intersubjectivity, framing, indexicality, the semiotics of typography and chronotopes to examine data from several variety shows where the English language is both referenced and used. I also incorporated data from focus groups into my analysis to draw on audience reception and to get a clearer picture of the images of English in the media that Japanese TV viewers are constantly surrounded with.

My analysis of this data allowed me to see the socio-cultural connections that exist between English and concepts like intelligence, social cool, and social un-cool in Japan. The discourses that socially construct these identities utilize shared and generic experiences in Japan often associated with English. As intelligence, coolness, and un-coolness as a comedic resource increase in these variety shows, so does the shows' popularity, which translates to viewership and ratings which in turn serve to fuel the

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medium of Japanese variety shows. Similar to ecological cycles that maintain ecosystems in the world, this cycle maintains itself within the society and culture of Japan.

Certain aspects of these findings have relevance towards the notion of linguistic inadequacy utilized in the media and possibly stemming from meritocratic practices combined with fallacies about the nature of intelligence. Some of my findings may prove to be problematic to the Japanese government's approach to *kokusaika* (internationalization) via the learning and teaching of English. As I mentioned in my introduction, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has stated their belief that the English language is important to both "the future of our children and the further development of Japan as a nation" (MEXT, 2002, section 2.4.1.3). In furtherance of that goal, continued emphasis in the Japanese education system has been placed on learning and using the English language. The perceived lack of success towards this goal (Gottlieb, 2008) only furthers the feelings of inadequacy in general towards English and may put Japanese citizens at a distinct disadvantage when dealing with English native-speakers from inner circle countries through an English/Western culture complex (Hiramoto, 2012, p. 237-238).

At the same time, the linguistic insecurity that many Japanese feel has led to the integration of English into the entertainment medium of Japanese variety programs and produced cultural representations and practices which are in turn consumed as entertainment. Representations of smart, cool, and worldly like hypersexual or famous *serebu* ('wealthy and famous people') are seen and then used for people to appear "like Hollywood" raising their social cool and aiding in overall goals of crossmarketing their products and themselves. Seeing English inability as a sign of *baka* ('stupidity') such as

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in the cases of Hamaguchi or Shigemori result in othering practices while at the same time leading to the production of new products for the market. Situated within this medium, forms of linguistic ability not valued by official institutions like MEXT are utilized as a valuable resource. Code-ambiguation, a valuable resource in Japanese pop and hip-hop music, is made marketable in variety shows in a different way by *tarento* like Hamaguchi and Shigemori. The public ridicule that Hamaguchi and Shigemori receive from Okamura and the other test takers is a resource for both them as *baka* character *tarento* as well as by their management companies and the TV networks.

The perceived general English inability of the Japanese public allows the display of English ability on television to be seen as something fashionable and cool. This relationship works in two directions, meaning that these traits are drawn through English use. For example, when Sonin displays English ability in Chapter 5 by indexing the chronotope of her commercial, she became cool which serves to improve her connection to the English school, a major source of income, and strengthen her image as an English speaker across chronotopes. In variety shows, this use of English is regularly associated with images of stars in Hollywood or wealthy lifestyles, as argued in Chapter 6. Occasionally the relationship with cool and English can work in the other direction as well where those who are fashionable and have social appeal are more associated with English than those who are not so fashionable or appealing, and are even assumed to have more English knowledge like Fukushi in *Nep League*.

Additionally, my analysis of this data has also shown the existence of a discourse that runs counter to the Western complex that Hiramoto (2012) describes as "an inferiority complex about English and the West" (p. 237). In contrast, variety shows can

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parody the overuse of English as a means of critiquing the simplistic equating of English and cool. In this counter-discourse, using too much English is constructed as cheap and flashy, as discussed in Chapter 7. With the parody created by these comedians, we can understand that using English can be an un-cool thing as well and not just something that causes feelings of inadequacy for Japanese people (Hiramoto, *loc. cit.*).

The results of these analyses show that English in this context is extremely complex and varied in its use and impact for the society and culture of Japan. In one sense, and as a first indexical order it is primarily related to the academic setting. This is the case since most Japanese learn and use English at school or in a classroom of some sort, and because despite the fact that English is touted as essential for internationalization, actual use of English is rather limited beyond classroom walls among most Japanese people. At the same time, no part of society or culture exists independently of the other parts. English can be brought out of this setting and used in other environments like TV where the connections to the classroom, while still present, may be backgrounded so that other connections such as humor or glamor can be discursively constructed and brought to the foreground. English can be utilized as a tool for constructing identity and ordering society through use of the tactics of intersubjectivity by both individuals and by institutions. English is also used to maintain and promote the medium of its own transmission within the socio-cultural systems that the media exists in.

In the next section, I summarize each of the previous chapters to show how they helped me to achieve the objectives of this dissertation.

8.2 Overview of Chapters 1-7

In Chapter 1, I situated my research as Sociocultural Linguistics in that my focus is on how language use shapes and is shaped by both society and culture. The context of my research was also situated as an exploration of globalization, in particular in what Robertson (2003) terms the third wave of globalization which starts from the early 20th century and is still ongoing. I explained how my focus is on how English is used in postmodern Japanese variety television for the purposes of identity construction and also on the relationship between these identities and concepts of English as a local language and resource with global connections.

In Chapter 2, I described my framework and methodology. I explained that I aimed to analyze the use of English on Japanese television as part of an interactional process by using data from Japanese variety shows where English is used, focus groups, interviews with people who work with Japanese television programs and my own observations from taking part in the filming both in front of the camera and behind the scenes. I then explained how by using the specific analytical devices of framing, indexicality, the semiotics of typography and chronotopes my research is able to examine how English is used at multiple levels ranging from the microlevel of interaction to the macrolevel of producing ideologies which are produced and reproduced across several forms of media.

In Chapter 3, I explained the broader context of English in Japan as an essential basis for analyzing the identities that English is used to construct in variety shows. First I explained it historically by examining the early introduction of English to Japan and the policies of *sakoku* and *kokusaika* that continue to influence Japan and its interactions with

other countries today. I also described early English education in Japan and the conflicts that arose around it leading to public debates, changes in government policies, and to a certain extent, the assassination of the first minister of Education in Japan. Then I explained the current state of Japanese English education in the public school system and the discussion of the English/Western complex. This was followed by a brief description of the Japanese language as an important part of the linguistic environment that English is taught and used with including Japanese phonology and orthography.

In Chapter 4, I explained the more specific context of my research by giving information on Japanese television. I started this by explaining what a Japanese variety show is by briefly looking at the various categories of Japanese television programs from a variety of sources. I then explained the genre of variety shows in Japan and also explained the existence of subgenres as well as corners in Japanese variety programs. This was followed by an explanation of visual and audio effects commonly seen in the variety show format as well as an explanation of the *tarento* system in Japanese entertainment. Two specific types of *tarento* were explained in detail as they feature heavily in most variety shows: *geinin* ('comedians') and *aidoru* ('idols'). I then briefly explained the concept of a dirty show (*kitanai bangumi*) and how the shows that I draw my data from are often seen as inappropriate for study and research. This final point is significant for pointing out how under researched this subject is in Japan and the need to explore the ideologies and discourses they utilize.

In Chapter 5, I analyzed how variety shows connect English and intelliegence. In the analysis, I demonstrated that the context of education, a major source of exposure to English for most Japanese, remains socially and culturally connected to English even

after formal education is finished through continuous indexes in variety shows. These indexes are then used as building blocks for constructing interpretive frames such as the classroom setting for *Mechaike*'s Nukiuchi Tesuto corner. I then examined how these indexes and frames were utilized in the structure of the program to establish connections between English and intelligence or the lack of intelligence. This was accomplished through framed acts of ridicule where those who lack English ability are othered by the processes of distinction and adequation. Furthermore, the kinds of answers that are judged as correct and incorrect reinforce institutional authority through focusing on that which is lacking and different rather than seeing the language abilities and understandings that are being displayed.In particular, I found that spelling and translation errors are utilized by Japanese variety shows like *Mechaike* to construct identities as isolated and different from a larger community. I illustrated how confusion between different orthographies and phonological systems serves as a comedic resource in many of these programs, and I examined how explicit attempts to separate English and Japanese can also be particularly humorous and amusing. In my approach, I relied on the idea of embedded frames to analyze how the intensity of the linguistic ridicule is carried off and how identity work is accomplished there. Moving between frames in the medium of Japanese variety shows can be a tactic for increasing the discursively constructed differences between individuals and larger social groups. Finally, I introduced the idea of using the distinction tactic for positive purposes in these programs.

In Chapter 6 I began to examine uses of English that were seen as having social cool. I showed that English ability can leave the academic related settings and move to the quiz show format. I showed how embedded frames were specifically used to create a

space for *tarento* to give performances of cool English. I also illustrated how English can move from signifying intelligence to other forms of social cool like *sugosa*, being a star, and the image of Hollywood while still connected to context of education. I also showed how English is used to convey glamorous and hypersexualized lifestyles. I also revealed how the connection between English and cool can work in two different directions where English can help to stylize someone as cool but also how cool people can become associated with English over those that have less social cool.

In Chapter 7 I showed how un-cool English can also be used as a resource. Taking as a starting point how distinction can be used for positive purposes, I analyzed how social and metalinguistic understanding of English is used for entertainment purposes. This is accomplished by creating characters and displaying English use that goes against notions of social cool and test-taking strategies. I then point out how having such knowledge is a valuable resource for the careers of these *tarento* while still combined with institutionally aligned normative discourses.

8.3 Implications of this Research

This dissertation has been focused on two major objectives: 1) to analyze how English is used for identity construction on Japanese variety shows and the relation of this to its use as a local linguistic resource with global connections and 2) to examine the use of English as an entertainment resource for variety shows and *tarento* in Japan. In the process of doing this, research certain other implications have become clear.

One implication is the connection that exists between English and education. It is quite interesting that when English is used on variety shows there is often some reference

to the education system. In some shows like *Mechaike*, it can come in through indexes made through the set and sound effects, in other shows it may be referenced only verbally like in the *Himitsu no Arashichan* data. Other times, the references may be even more subtle such as in recent episodes of *Nep League* where an English teacher from a famous school explains the answer to an English related question. Although in some English cool situations like with the Kanou sisters data in Chapter 6, no specific reference to education is made, in others like the case of Sakurai, English is both cool and class related at the same time with glamor as part of the indexical field that connects the two different uses.

Also, while the primary introduction to English for most Japanese citizens may start off with the education system it is definitely not limited to educational or classroom related contexts. English is representative of personality traits such as intelligence or cool, lifestyles such as those that come with wealth or fame, and socioculturally situated phenomena such as humor. The context of English education leads through many environments. If we see the classroom as part of Appadurai's (1990) *ideoscape*, the landscape of images and ideologies, it is then transmitted and changed through various other scapes. These images when converted to a set or costumes as in Mechaike are broadcast in the mediascape. From the mediascape they can become merchandise for consumers, as in the case of the t-shirts for sale that used answers from the *nukiuchi tesuto*. Such objects exist at the intersection of the mediascape and the finanscape. Money from the finanscape also goes to the various *tarento* in the ethnoscape who can travel across national borders like Kutsuna Shiori in Chapter 6 or between different parts of the mediascape like Lou Oshiba who uses English on TV as well as in advertisements and on his blog which is also part of the technoscape as well. We must understand that it's all

interconnected, and that thinking just in terms of what is good for English education ignores the fact that English is already integrated into countless other areas of Japanese culture and society. It is in the media, in education, in the economy, in technology, in their ideologies, and most importantly it has become a part of people's regular practices there.

Another issue that has become clear is the need to see media data in context. Every part of the mediascape is situated in some fashion. Movies are always movies and television shows are always television shows. Trying to analyze them as casual conversation leads to just missing half of the story; however, understanding that a TV show is part of a process can lead to great insights as to the joint construction of discourse and can broaden our understanding of social and cultural interaction particularly in the way that embedded frames can be used to analyze the multiple layers of interaction found in the media. Embedded frames would seem to be well suited to analyzing media data in that they require an analysis of not just the embedded frame but the external frame as well. Studying Japanese variety shows has been particularly productive because of these embedded frames. Often these frames are visible due to the use of telop on the screen and how the visuals are arranged. In the process of doing so the production of the show is literally placed on top of what was recorded in studio which helps the researcher to see more of the overall process of production compared to most TV.

8.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

One major limitation to this research is that there are still parts of the television process that remain unexplored. If possible it would be ideal to follow an episode of a variety show from conception to viewing. As I understand it from my interviews with professionals who work in the Japanese television industry, writers come up with a general outline and script over several meetings, which is then presented to the production staff and the *tarento* involved in a series of meetings. The episode is then taped and various people sometimes work in the editing process to create the show as it is meant to be broadcast. Getting permission to record and interview the writers, production crew and *tarento* during these meetings and the editing process would be quite difficult but invaluable for understanding the overall process. It is something that can only be achieved by establishing a long term relationship with the people involved and those who are highly placed in the network and talent agencies. I hope to start establishing stronger relationships with these professionals if I have the opportunity to live in Japan for an extended period of time.

Another possible future direction to this research is to focus more on the audience reception. I know many friends who get together and watch various programs here in the U.S. and have also heard of people doing similar things in Japan. If I can manage to contact people who already have such parties and get their permission to interview them and record them as they watch their favorite programs or if I can find a family that likes to watch certain programs together that will also greatly add to the overall understanding of how media discourse is perceived and received by the home viewing audience. Again,

such a request is best made after establishing a personal relationship with the participants, something I also hope to be able to do in Japan over the long term.

I believe that adding more contextual information about how English is used in other contexts of Japan, such as in medical encounters or in retail environments, will also strengthen this line of inquiry, but it is still quite clear that the use of English in Japanese television is a marketable resource for both programs and *tarento*. Knowledge of English, gained after years of study in school, is effectively utilized despite the low test scores. Additionally, this leaves us to question what these scores do *not* measure and what are they *not* showing us about the people who take these tests such as skill at using English with different groups of people or talent with the poetic aspects of language.

Appendix: Transcription Conventions

Transcription Symbols

:	tone stretch
$	laughing tone
(( ))	detailed description
?:	unknown speaker
(.)	pause
?	rising tone
.	falling tone
!	animated tone
<u>underlined words</u>	slight emphasis
CAPS	heavy emphasis
[ ]	overlap

Intralinnear Gloss Symbols

N	nominative
IP	interactional particle
CP	copula
S	subject marker
TP	topic marker
AT	address term
QT	quotative
Q	question marker
VOL	volitional form
AT	address title
PAS	passive form
PST	past tense
NEG	negative form

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