RESISTANCE AGAINST BEING FORMULATED AS CULTURAL OTHER: THE CASE OF A CHINESE STUDENT IN JAPAN

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Abstract

So-called traditional theories in second language acquisition (SLA) have been criticized for their neglect to examine interactional, social, and political aspects in language practices. The present study will illustrate exoticization, one of the political phenomena observed in interactions between native-speaker and non-native speaker (NS/NNS). Exoticization is known as a covert power exercise where 'self' creates inferior 'other' in order to establish and maintain its superiority (Said 1978), which involves identity construction and categorization. Adopting a conversation analysis (CA) approach and utilizing NS-NNS conversations in Japanese, this study will first demonstrate how exoticization is discursively constructed through the development of interactions. Then the study will explore how the NNS participant tries to resist such practices. By so doing, this study will shed light on interactional and ideological aspects of language practices and society as a learning environment. The study will also suggest the necessity for exploring what NNSs face in real L2 societies in order to develop emic perspectives in SLA studies.

Keywords: Exoticization; Power and ideology; Identity construction; Categorization; Japanese conversation analysis (CA).

1. Introduction

So-called traditional studies of second language acquisition (SLA) have been criticized for neglecting to examine interactional, social, and political aspects of native speaker and non-native speaker (NS/NNS) interaction (e.g., Firth & Wagner 1997; Markee & Kaspar 2004; Pavlenko 2002; Pennycook 2001; Roberts 1998; Shea 1994). These critiques have pointed out that the traditional studies hold etic perspectives (i.e., researcher-relevant) rather than emic ones (participant-relevant), thereby ignoring issues such as identity construction and the host society as a learning environment. Following these critiques, an increasing number of studies explore language practices between NS and NNS from interactional and critical perspectives (e.g., Baquedano-López 1997; Daft 2002; Garrett and Baquedano-López 2002; Harklau 2003; He 2003; Lo 2004; Talmi 2004, 2005).

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In accordance with this approach, the present study will illustrate one political phenomenon, exoticization (Talmy 2004, 2005), in NS-NNS conversations in Japanese. Utilizing Conversation Analysis (CA) and the concept of epistemic and affective stances (Ochs 2002) as analytic tools, this study will attempt to twofold. First, it will demonstrate how exoticization is discursively constructed through the development of talk-in-interaction. Then the study will explore how the NNS subject tries to resist such practices. By so doing, this study will suggest the necessity for exploring interactional aspects and socio-political issues in order to grasp what the participants are doing in locally situated interactions. This will also serve as a counterexample to idealized ethic perspectives in the traditional studies of SLA, thereby contributing to the development of more emic perspectives in the field.

2. Previous studies

2.1. Language and power: What is neglected in traditional SLA

Language is a primary resource that people use in order to create their social realities. Through social interaction, mainly mediated by language, one can realize his/her worldview. The worldview is revealed in the form of orientation in interaction in which participants make certain things relevant, utilizing various verbal and non-verbal resources. In such interaction, categorization and construction of identity play a significant role in order to examine, not only orientation of participants (i.e., at the micro-level), but also that of the society (the macro-level). Hall defines the micro and macro interrelation as follows:

"Identity formulation can be described as an ongoing negotiation between the individual and the social context or environment, with particular attention paid to oral culture and power relations. Individuals bring life histories to activities and events in situated environments, and it is through communications and interactions with others in these environments that learners negotiate and co-construct their views of themselves and the world. The activities and contexts, however, are imbued with and represent specific values and ideologies (which privilege certain practices over others), and these shape the dynamics of the interactions." (2001: 61)

Thus, examining ordinary conversations reveals the interplay and negotiation between micro-level discursive practices and macro-level social order. However, these aspects have been marginalized in traditional SLA research. Firth and Wagner describe this phenomenon as "the prioritizing of the individual-as-'NNS'/learner' over the participant-as-language 'user' in social interaction" (1997: 286). They also point out the binary concept of the NS as model/ideal whereas the NNS as deficient/incompetent in traditional research. By so doing, this research has neglected to examine what the participants are doing in interaction (emic perspective), while mapping out the NS/NNS labels in the studies.

Researchers supporting this criticism have discussed NS-NNS interaction, deploying ethnography, discourse analysis, CA, and critical theories. In this area, ideological issues such as linguicism, teacher-student power relations, and learners' resistance have recently garnered significant attention (e.g., Baquedano-López 1997; Day 1994, 1998; Duff 2002; Garret & Baquedano-López 2002; Harklau 2003, Lo 2004; Norton 2000; Talmy 2004, 2005; Watson-Ggeo 2003). 'Ideology' in this study is defined as a "system of ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes, and categories by reference to which a person, a group, or society perceives, comprehends, and interprets the world" (Oktar 2001: 313-4) or a "particular framework of knowledge that is tied to social power and may be manifest in language" (Pennycook 2001: 82). Exoticization is one manifestation of such social power.

2.2. Exoticizing others and exoticizing self

Exoticization is one of the political issues that involves categorization and identity construction. Exoticization indicates regarding 'others' as exotic, mysterious, primitive, strange, and quite different from 'self.' It can take various forms that are recognized as seemingly apolitical. However, as Said (1978) clarified in his concept of Orientalism, the fundamental framework underlying exoticizing practices is the dialectic relationship or binary categorization between 'superior self' and 'inferior others.' In other words, 'self' necessitates 'other' in order to establish and maintain its superiority. Hall, based on Derrida's (1981) work, asserts: "There are very few neutral binary oppositions. One pole of the binary [...] is usually the dominant one, the one that includes the other within its field of operations. There is always a relation of power between the poles of a binary opposition" (2001: 329). Thus, exoticization may serve as covert and indirect power exertion in daily life, as demonstrated by some SLA and language socialization (LS) studies discussed below.

In their studies, Duff (2002) and Talmy (2004, 2005) problematize the exoticization by ESL teachers and NS classmates in their classroom interactions. In traditional theories of SLA/LS, the NS/expert, such as teachers and NS peers, are assumed to be those who are capable enough to lead NNS/novices to proper behaviors. Their studies, however, refute the concept of the idealized NS by revealing covert power exercise in the exoticization of immigrant students.

In particular, Talmy's (2004, 2005) critical ethnography illuminates how teachers and NS peers formulate an immigrant ESL student as the "exoticized cultural and linguistic Other" (2004: 149) through linguicism - in a more sophisticated, socially acceptable form of racism and classism (p. 152). By soliciting a Micronesian student for more 'exotic' holiday practices (in this case, 'dancing around a fire on the beach') in his native country, the teacher and NS peers formulate the student as a cultural Other, which evokes "a racist imagery of mysterious, fire-walking 'savage' (p. 167).

In addition to previous study of exoticizing others NS-NNS interaction in Japan (e.g., Siegal 1994), Kasper and Rose (2002) observed 'ethnolinguistic ideology,' which indicates 'auto-exoticizing' views of Japanese culture and language (Coulmas 1992). This ideology often manifests in NS-NNS conversations, such as overemphasizing the uniqueness of the Japanese language and culture. This is widely observed in Japan (ino 1996; Kusota 2002). Iino (1996) calls this phenomenon where NNS treat NNS/ foreigners as someone quite different from the Japanese 'gaijinization' or 'foreignization.' Gaijinization or alienation of foreigners includes both exoticizing self and exoticizing others. It also involves categorization and identity construction, given that one's identity consists of an 'identity asserted by self' and an 'identity assigned by others' (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998; Cornell and Hartmann 1998).
2.3. Identity, categorization, and interculturality

In the constructivist approach, identity is not given, static, a priori, or monolithic but complex, fluid, dynamic, and hybrid. It emerges in locally situated interactions (e.g., Kondo 1990). Given that exoticization inherently entails categorization and identity construction of one interlocutor as a member of one culture and another interlocutor as another, exoticization should also be analyzed as such. In other words, interculturality (i.e., the fact that participants come from different cultures) should not be taken for granted by researchers, but should be explored in terms of “how it is that the fact of being intercultural is organized as a social phenomenon” (Nishizaka 1995: 302). Following Nishizaka’s (1995) approach, Mori’s (2003) study explicates how interculturality is interactively achieved in the moment-by-moment shift of participation structure. Through the analysis of initial encounter conversations between Japanese and American students, Mori demonstrates how interculturality emerges through the sequential arrangement of the participants’ conduct, such as in question-answer sequences or the procedures for the next-speaker selection. In such sequences, categorization may be accomplished not only by an explicit, direct reference to a particular category in talk, but also by inference, drawn from a reference to a social relationship or activity bound to a particular category, i.e., “category-bound activities” (Sacks 1972).

In Mori’s data, however, direct categorization, such as ‘are you Japanese/American?’ never occurs; rather, interculturality becomes relevant through several actions. These factors are: The assumptions underlying questions that reflect on their categorization (‘category-activity question’), delivery, and the selection of respondents to the questions, all of which emerge in the development of interactions. For example, the question ‘have you ever seen Japanese movies?’ assigns ‘discourse identity’ (e.g., C. Goodwin 1987; Zimmerman 1998) as a qualified respondent as well as ‘social identity’ (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998) as a novice of Japanese movies/culture. That is, the question categorizes the respondents (discourse identity), not as natives, but as novices to the Japanese language and culture (social identity), making the question interculturally relevant.

However, after setting up such a context, their talks do not necessarily remain interculturally oriented. It is contingent on how the participants develop the talk, i.e., how the participants treat certain topics, items, questions, problems, etc., as a resource of the sequential development of talk-in-interaction. Mori observes that in some sequences interculturality becomes salient (e.g., treating cultural items, solving a linguistic problem), but not in others. For example, in an excerpt in which the participants are talking about a Japanese comedian in an American movie, it is not whether the participants are American/Japanese but whether they have seen the movie or not that determines the participation structure in the talk.

In the similar vein, Day (1994) explored ‘ethnification’ processes through the analysis of conversations among multi-ethnic coworkers (Swedish, Yugoslav, Sino-Vietnamese, etc.) in Sweden. ‘Ethnification’ indicates “a series of actions which either directly or indirectly make an ethnic characterization of some individual or group a normatively and/or conventionally ‘proper’ description” (p. 315). He illustrated how the participants discursively categorize people and how these categorizations find expression through proper descriptions, in the enactment of particular social interactions.

Just like Mori’s (2003) study, ethnic categorization emerged through the sequential organization of the talk. For example, one worker, Malia, tried to ethnify her coworker, Tang, as Chinese. Without explicitly naming her, Malia specified Tang as a qualified respondent by asking the meaning of stereotypical Chinese words. Tang, however, resisted Malia’s ethnification by providing a minimal response.

3. Methodology and data

3.1. Methodology and research questions

As is the case of Mori’s (2003) study, interculturality is not always made relevant in NS-NNS interactions in my data, either. However, for the purpose of exploring exoticizing practices, the present study will take up cases where interculturality becomes salient. This study will follow Mori’s framework based on several CA notions, i.e., categorization, discourse identity, and social identity.

The present study will also adopt the concept of ‘epistemic and affective stances’ (Ochs 2002) in conjunction with ‘indexicality’ and ‘lexical choice,’ which are important concepts in CA. Epistemic stance indicates “knowledge or belief, including sources of knowledge and degrees of commitment to truth and certainty of propositions,” whereas affective stance includes “a person’s mood, attitude, feeling, or disposition as well as degree of emotional intensity” (Ochs 2002: 109). These stances, or the speaker’s attitudes or orientations toward the proposition, are indexed through the choice of words that fit to these stances, the context, their roles there, and the like, as well as participation structure. For example, while someone may use ‘cop’ in ordinary conversation, when they are giving evidence in court, they are more likely to select ‘police officer’ instead (Sack 1979), thereby indexing stance and contextual differences.

Lexical choice that displays epistemic and affective stances can shape whole sequence and the overall patterns of the interaction (Heritage 2004: 235). Thus, incorporating the concept of stances in CA is worthwhile to explicate participants’ orientation in interaction. Utilizing these analytic tools, the present study will address the following questions:

1. How do the participants make interculturality/ethnification relevant in the development of talk, in terms of question-answer sequences, topic selection and delivery, and procedures for next-speaker selection?
2. What kind of categorization and identities are constructed, assigned, or asserted in such interactions and how?
3. Together with sequential organization of talk, what kinds of linguistic and non-linguistic (e.g., prosodic) resources are used to index epistemic and affective stances of the participants?

The transcription conventions are explained in the Appendix. Japanese utterances are followed by word-by-word glosses (also see Appendix for abbreviation) and English translation.
3.2. The subjects

The data was audio-recorded during the summer of 2004 in a large city in western Japan (Kansai). The main participants were Mr. and Mrs. K, NSs of Japanese (Kansai dialect) in their 70’s and 60’s, and a female graduate student T from China, a NNS of Japanese with near-native fluency. T had studied Japanese at a Chinese university for four years before coming to Japan in 2001 and is currently majoring in Japanese history in a Master’s program at a city university. T is a scholarship student sponsored by an organization to which Mr. K belongs. The organization has monthly meetings so that members and scholarship students can interact. T and Mr. K became acquainted with each other at such meetings but have not yet become close. Mr. K invited T to his house, and the researcher, H, a Japanese NS and former student of Mr. K, joined the meeting.

4. Analysis

(1) They were talking about H’s life in the U.S. After this topic is over, Mr. K initiates a new topic as follows.

1. Mr. K: "Oh, they are talking about Chinese people. It is bad...
   H: 'kōnin en go-rui" 10000 yen around Tag... "Around 10000 yen.
2. Mr. K: "Moncho o tomo geno more arare Tag... "There is more, isn’t there?"
3. H: "Moncho o geno more arare Tag... "There is more"
4. Mr. K: "Moncho o more arare Tag... "There is more"
5. Mr. K: "Moncho o more arare Tag... "Yes, it is."

In line 1-2, Mr. K directly says that the salary of Chinese people is bad. The use of the word ‘Chinese people’ makes this sequence interculturally relevant. A topic marker can also indicate comparison between one thing and another (Kuno 1978; Yamaguchi 2003). In this case, it indicates a binary categorization between China and Japan. This becomes clear when Mr. K mentions Japan in line 8. Together with this categorization, Mr. K’s use of the evaluative word ‘bad’ without any modal auxiliary or hedge indicates categorization of China as a lower income and quite different country from Japan. It also reveals not only exoticization but also obvious diminishment of China as such. H also aligns with Mr. K in line 9 and asks Mr. K whether the average monthly salary in China is about 10000 yen. Upon hearing this, T tries to reframe this orientation by initiating repair, with the concessions that it is correct if what they are talking about is an average.

(2) After talking about the average salary in China, Mr. K extends the topic to Xinjiang Uigur, T’s hometown.

1. Mr. K: "Ah, um, what is the average in Xinjiang Uigur?"
2. Mr. K: "Well, what is the average salary?"
3. T: "Well, I think it is lower than in Xinjiang Uigur."
4. Mr. K: "Tell me what you think.
5. T: "Well, I guess so. I think it is lower in Xinjiang Uigur than in other places."
6. Mr. K: "Huh"
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In line 1-2, Mr. K asks about an average salary in Xinjiang Uighur, using a negative question *motto hiki ni no to eshigai*? "an average salary in Xinjiang Uighur" is lower than other places in China, isn't it? *Use of tag question implies the strength of Mr. K's assumption of Xinjiang Uighur as such. T shows alignment, by saying *so desu yo me 'I guess so; I agree' and affirms what Mr. K said with a hedge to consciousness 'I think.' In line 4, Mr. K further asks whether people in Xinjiang Uighur breed sheep for livelihood. It is noteworthy that Mr. K does not ask a wh-question but a yes-no question. Use of a yes-no question implies the strength of Mr. K's assumption of Xinjiang Uighur as a place where people live on sheep breeding, relying on a stereotypical image. It is also indicated by the use of a modal adverb *sugiru* 'after all;' as expected, you know;' which connotes that an actual situation expectedly conforms to a standard based on past experience, comparison with other people, or common sense (Makino & Tatsuta 1989: 538). Maynard states that modal verbs can reveal the very manner of how the speaking self perceives, epistemically characterizes, and contextualizes the propositional content within a given discourse framework (1991: 40). This is identical to Ochs' concept of stances. In this case, the strength of Mr. K's personal view or stereotypical image that people in Xinjiang Uighur make a living by breeding sheep is reflected.

T does not immediately understand what Mr. K said and shows trouble in hearing/understanding what Mr. K said by *"huh?"* in line 5, which triggers other-initiated repair from Mr. K. Mr. K elaborates the question, offering the word *setheki* 'freedom.' It is not clear whether this incomprehension indicates that what Mr. K said is totally outside of T's current assumptions or that T cannot understand the word *bokategyu* 'sheep breeding' since the word is uncommon even for native speakers. In line 9, T starts to explain how people in Xinjiang Uighur make a living. After T mentions farming, Mr. K is surprised to know farming is possible there, saying *moogyo go deku taka* 'oh, so you can farm there' in line 13. This sentence can be regarded as an assessment that signifies surprise and unexpectedness for Mr. K. When T refers to pasturage in line 14, Mr. K ratifies it by saying *hooboku ya nee* 'pasturage, that's what I thought.' In the Kansai dialect is equivalent to copula *da* in standard Japanese (Benesford, SJ), which indicates affirmation and assertion (Maynard 1999) about what Mr. K said, e.g., Xinjiang Uighur is a place where people live on sheep breeding. A sentence final particle *ne(e)* soliciting agreement from the interlocutor also indexes the strength of Mr. K's epistemic stance toward his utterance.

Through the sequence of tag-question (line 2), alignment (line 3), related question (line 4), answer (line 12), assessment/surprise (line 13), further answer (line 14), and ratification (line 15), Mr. K's assumption about Xinjiang Uighur with no industry other than sheep breeding is revealed. Furthermore, in lines 20 and 24, Mr. K says that Xinjiang Uighur where people can farm is better-situated than other places in China, since people in Xinjiang Uighur can farm and produce rice, cotton, and fruits. Mr. K's statements imply that there are other further underprivileged areas in China. It also follows Mr. K's statement of China as a low income country as seen in excerpt (1). By contrast, Japan is assumed by Mr. K to be a country of higher economic status.
Mr. K. initiates a new topic about the manufacturing industry in Xinjiang Uighur with a negative question *koogyoo wa aru na ne?* (in SJ, *nai* *nai* *da* *ne?*) "there is not so much of a manufacturing industry, is there?" This negative question assumes that few manufacturing industries exist in Xinjiang Uighur. Use of *nai da* and *ne* soliciting involvement and agreement, respectively, signifies the strong certainty of Mr. K.'s that Xinjiang Uighur lacks manufacturing capabilities. Furthermore, these linguistic devices reveal Mr. K.'s epistemic stance: A bias toward a negative answer. He does not expect a negative answer to this question; rather, he asks this question as a confirmation of what he thinks and as a soliciting agreement with it. However, T negates his assumption in line 2.

Upon hearing that there is a manufacturing industry in Xinjiang Uighur, Mr. K. asks a further question *koogyoo wa aru na ne?* "is there a manufacturing industry?" for confirmation with surprising intonation in line 3, and T affirms it. Mr. K. further asks what they 'make.' What is noticeable here is the word Mr. K chooses, *koshiraeru* 'to make; to produce' in general, never evokes mass-production in modern factories. That is, the lexical choice also reflects Mr. K.'s assumption that factories in Xinjiang Uighur are cottage industries rather than large scale ones. Furthermore, if there is manufacturing, it follows that there are factories as well. However, in line 9, Mr. K. asks whether there are factories in Xinjiang Uighur, and T affirms it. When T mentions the oil industry in line 14, Mr. K. shows his surprise by an interjection *kore* 'oh, really?' After T explains about the amount of oil production, Mr. K. again shows surprise with *lee* 'oh, my, indeed,' a news-recipient token (Mori 2003) in line 17.

Thus, there is a sequence of question-answer-confirmation question-answer-assessment/surprise-further confirmation question. Mr. K. keeps asking questions for confirmation and continues being surprised at T's answers. Inversely speaking, this sequence, together with other lexical resources and prosodic features, implies persistence of Mr. K.'s skepticism about Xinjiang Uighur as an industrialized area. Given the excerpts (1) and (2), Mr. K. assumes Xinjiang Uighur as an unindustrialized, developing, exotic place where people live on sheep breeding, quite different from Japan.

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* In Japanese, an affirmative answer to a negative question is *ite or (yee) no*, which negates a meaning of a whole sentence (here, a sentence 'there isn't much of a manufacturing industry.')

* Sino dege in no relates 'I parse so I agree'; however, T seems to mistake it for *see dege ne* ('let me see'). *See dege ne* has two functions, depending on the context: 'I agree; that's right' and 'let me see' and the latter is discussed here. This phenomenon is observed in excerpt (4) as well. This is discussed later.
In Shanghai and Beijing, there aren't such things, are there?

Mr. K: [The topic has changed to Mr. and Mrs. K's travel in China a couple of months prior to the discussion on the abandoned buildings.]

In Shanghai and Beijing, there aren't such things, are there?

Mr. K: Well, it is because the development is extremely rapid.

Mrs. K: [The Japanese-speaking local guide, who Mr. and Mrs. K hired, explains the reason for the abandoned structures.]

Shanghai buildings have only pillars indeed. It was extremely outstanding.

Mr. K: That means [the government] stopped so that Chengdu won't develop so much!

Mrs. K: Chengdu won't develop so much?

Mr. K: [The guide said] something.

Mrs. K: Something.

Well, if Chengdu develops so much then... I wonder if people (in the government) does that, I guess.

Mrs. K: [The guide said] something.

Well, if people (in the government) orders to stop, then too much developing therefore.

Well, it is developing so rapidly, so mini 50 stop order. I wonder what it means. I don't know.

Oh, well, it is right.

Mrs. K: Well, if they ordered to stop. I wonder what it means. I don't know.

Mr. K: Shinjuku is like that, isn't it?

Mr. K: [The guide said] something.

Oh, well, it is right.

Well, if they ordered to stop, then too much developing therefore.

Well, it is developing so rapidly, so mini 50 stop order. I wonder what it means. I don't know.

Well, if they ordered to stop. I wonder what it means. I don't know.

Mrs. K: [The guide said] something.

Well, if they ordered to stop. I wonder what it means. I don't know.
Responding to T's reframing, Mr. K affirms that they did not see such buildings in Shanghai in line 17 and 18. In line 32, after Mr. and Mrs. K elaborate their impressions based on what they saw and heard, Mrs. K solicits agreement again, from T and/or H, by saying "changi gaku te soo desu wa ne 'China is like that, isn't it?'" Another solicitation displays Mrs. K's epistemic stance that China is a highly centralized country.

(5)

1. Mrs. K: "Sorihata wa... ryokoo nanka suren no... then when you travel, you mean domestic travel?"
   "Well, then, when you travel.
   " sappai kreika moo de du ka?"
   "as expected permission get Cop Q" you have to get permission (as I expected)?"
   2. T: "(O) Rynkoo te kokumari ryokoo desu ka?" "Huh? You mean domestic travel?"
   "Rynkoo te kokumari ryokoo desu ka?" "Do you mean domestic travel?"
   "Domestic travel."

In lines 1-7, Mr. and Mrs. K explain that the Chinese government ordered construction to stop in Chengdu since economic progress there is so rapid. In line 8, Mrs. K solicits agreement, by saying "soo desu ne? Changaku te 'China is like that, isn't it?'" This question does not necessarily specify T as an addressee because the political system in China is known in Japan. Deshoor with rising intonation asks for the hearer's agreement (Makino & Tsutsui 1989) or indexes a strong imposition of what the speaker says (Segal 1996), although it takes the form of interrogation. Here, what Mrs. K indicates is that the governmental order is absolute in China even though it might be unreasonable. This is indexed by Mr. K's use of sekka... yarikaketeta "not despite the great effort/pain for construction, (it was ordered to stop)" in line 5. The phrase sekka... yarikaketeta "not" indicates a negative feeling (regret, blame) about effort/pain that is not rewarded (Makino & Tsutsui 1989). Drawing on her alleged expertise and authentic knowledge through her travel to China as a resource or authority, Mrs. K solicits her epistemic stance in line 8. By soliciting T in this manner, Mrs. K categorizes China as a highly centralized country. In a negative sense, it could be constructed as a totalitarian country. At the same time, such a sequence results in assigning T a social identity as a member of such a country.

With reference to such practices, T attempts to refute what Mr. and Mrs. K solicit. In line 10, she is ambiguous with her answer, self-questioning "sloo dareu? well, I wonder." In line 12, T says "soo desu yo ne 'I guess so; I agree.' As mentioned in excerpt (3), T might minimize soo desu yo ne 'I guess so; I agree.' for soo desu "I let me see." If not, here, T shows tentative alignment by saying "soo desu yo ne and immediately afterwards withdraws the alignment. Immediately after this utterance, T brings her own travel experience to Chengdu as a basis of her refutation. After indicating that she is perplexed about the deserted buildings, T refutes what Mr. and Mrs. K have said by asking negative questions in 15 and 16: "fudan wa somma nai n ja nai desu ka? 'usually there aren't such things, are there?'" and "pekin toka shirujiru toka amari nai n ja nai desu ka?' in Beijing and Shanghai, there aren't such things, are there?' Here, T's use of a negative question n ja nai desu ka? deserves close attention. N ja nai is a negative form of nai do. Nai do is used in order to involve the hearer in the affair the speaker is talking about and/or to impose his/her idea upon the hearer, or at least to emphasize his/her idea emotively (Makino & Tsutsui 1989: 227). The use of n ja nai desu ka? indexes T's stances toward their proposition that there are not such things with great certainty (epistemic stance) and emotional intensity (affective stance). Given that, these utterances may serve as rhetorical questions indicating T's strong negation 'it should not be'.

In line 1, Mrs. K's question assumes that people in China need permission when traveling. The word support 'as expected' again indicates that this idea is not only Mrs. K's but also what other people think, or common sense knowledge. T shows bewilderment or trouble in understanding Mrs. K's question, which is known by a repair initiator "huh?" and a pause before that in line 3. T prompts other-initiated repair by asking a confirmation question ryokoo te kokumari ryokoo desu ka? 'you mean domestic travel?' and Mrs. K affirms it. Unlike a display of trouble which may be ascribed to the word itself (e.g., hokno, "sheep breeding") as observed in line 5 of excerpt (3), this trouble seems to be caused by the content of the question. That is, the question of
whether people need permission for domestic travel in China itself is quite out of T's realm of expectation. This seems to be why T provides an initiation of repair to clarify whether or not Mrs. K means domestic travel. After T replies that domestic travel is unrestricted, Mr. and Mrs. K show surprise, which is indicated by a news-receipt token,  a and  suffix ka 'really'. Is that so?' with surprising intonation. T further affirms what she said by repeating furii, jiyuu ni doko demo 'domestic travel is free, freely, anywhere.' Various types of words to mention 'unrestricted' (furii 'free' in an English loan word, jiyuu ni 'freely' in a Sino-Japanese adverb, and doko demo 'anywhere' in native-Japanese) signify T's emphasis on freedom of travel as well as her reframing of Mrs. K's assumption. Nonetheless, Mrs. K again tries to confirm by a cross-question whether what T said is true when they go to another province. When T ratifies that there is no need for permission for domestic travel, Mrs. K responds with a goo desu ka again, with stress and surprising intonation in line 11. Here, Mrs. K's epistemic stance - her persistent assumption that people in China cannot travel freely even within the country - emerges through the repeated sequence of question - answer - assessment - confirmation question. This sequential analysis, in particular, lines 5-10 also shows T's change in epistemic and affective stance: Increasingly stronger rejection of Mrs. K's assumption regarding travel restrictions, in response to her continued display of surprise. By so doing, T is resisting Mrs. K's stereotypical categorization of China as a country without freedom.

(6) [Mrs. K serves maccha (whipped, ceremony-style tea) to T and H.]

1. Mr. K: No monda kara aru. Drink have an experience.
   - She said it is no problem at all.
2. T: Haha. Well. Have you ever had maccha?
3. Mr. K: Maccha. maccha
   - T: Ito nanka arimasu. I have had maccha.
4. T: ( ) deyye ne. ha. drink have an experience
   - Mr. K: 'It seems to be a little hot.'
5. Mrs. K: jyou, jyou. jyou yante no bon goi desu. drink have an experience
   - It is hot. hot. hot. little hot may be
6. Mr. K: (toward T) Ko-kochi maccha is a better drink to serve than coffee to foreigners since the tea ceremony is considered a traditional Japanese cultural practice. The word maccha indicates downplaying/degrading of a reference (Suzuki 1996), in this case, coffee. Darsee, a plain form of deshoo, signifies
Mr. K’s strong assumption about matcha service. At the same time, this statement assigns T a social identity as a non-native of Japanese culture. In line 10, Mr. K mentions that T does not have to finish matcha if it is too hard to drink for her. He then asks whether T is okay with the matcha in line 12. This implies that Mr. K regards T as a novice of tea ceremony practice. Likewise, in line 16, Mrs. K instructs T how to have matcha by telling her to have sweets first [then drink the tea]. In lines 15-22, T attempts to reframe this ‘novice’ categorization by talking about her experience of having matcha in Uji (a city in Kyoto prefecture). Nonetheless, after a while, in line 22, Mrs. K again asks T to leave the tea if it is hard to drink. T negates this with the intensifier ‘no, not at all’ in line 24, but again Mrs. K asks T whether she is really fine with the tea in line 25. Thus, Mr. and Mrs. K repeatedly say that T does not have to finish drinking and ask T the same confirmation question despite T’s repeated answer. Contrary to Mr. and Mrs. K’s consideration, this results in gaijinization (Hino 1996), i.e., auto-exoticizing the Japanese culture (Kasper & Rose 2002; Coulmas 1992), which alienates T to the rank of a Japanese cultural novice, treating a cultural item as ‘my own.’

(7) [After excerpt (7), H mentions that she has learned tea ceremony before.]

1. H: Gochisoo sama de [shita]. Thank you Cop
   Gochisoo sama deshiatl. thank you Cop
   ‘Thank you for the tea.’
2. T: [gochisoo sama deshitu] Mr. K: [laughing]
   ‘Thank you.’
3. H: Kekko na otemae deshita. Nice way of making tea Cop
   Kekkoo na otemae deshidu ('nice way of making tea').
4. Mrs. K: To no otemae deshita. (laugh) no so no at all Cop P
   ‘No, not at all.’
5. Mr. K: Kekko na otemae deshita to nihongo de yuu. [we say] Kekko na otemae deshita. In Japanese say
   ‘We say ‘nice way of making tea’ in Japanese.’
6. T: E? kekkoo? (0.5)
   ‘Uh, kekkoo?’
   ‘Otemae. In Japanese, we call it otemae (‘way of making tea’).’
8. T: [ah]
9. Mr. K: Ocha no saba. Tea 1.R way of making tea
   Tea. The way of making tea.’
    ‘Yes, sakihodo (‘just a while ago’)...’
11. H: [Um] ‘noh
    ‘Huh?’
12. Mr. K: [Haa, chigyo
    ‘No, that’s mistaken.’

What H said in line 3 is a set phrase uttered when one finishes drinking tea in the ceremony. Following that, in line 5, Mr. K says kekkoo na otemae deshita to nihongo de yuu ‘[we say] kekkoo na otemae deshita (‘nice way of making tea’) in Japanese.’ This utterance is an example of ‘recipient design,’ which categorizes T as a NNS of Japanese, thereby assigning T a social identity as such. Despite the absence of specific nomination of the recipient, by stating nihongo de ‘in Japanese,’ Mr. K directs this utterance to T, not to H or Mrs. K. T seems to display trouble with hearing or understanding the phrase kekkoo na otemae deshita ‘nice way of making tea,’ which is speculated by her repair initiation of ‘huh’ and a short pause. Upon hearing this, Mr. K supplies other repair: The word otemae following kekkoo in line 7. Here, he again mentions ‘in Japanese’ that orients the talk to the categorization of NSs and NNSs of Japanese. Mr. K paraphrases the term otemae to ocha no sakihodo ‘ways of making tea’ in line 9, and T tried to practice the set phrase but makes a mistake in uttering it in line 10. This triggers two pieces of repair initiation: ‘huh?’ with rising intonation made by Hand Mr. K’s utterance ‘Nihongo de otemae deshita.’

This repair sequence reveals T’s social identity as a novice of tea ceremony as well as a NNS of Japanese. Mr. K lectures about phrases used for tea ceremony as well as in general use. When T makes a mistake, Mr. K also initiates T’s repair by pointing it out. T replies to this other-initiated repair with H’s help. Furthermore, in line 16, Mr. K asks H, who had learned tea ceremony, to explain more for T’s benefit. By so doing, Mr. K treats T as an ‘unknown recipient’ who is assumed not to have prior knowledge of the event (Goodwin 1981). The beneficiary auxiliary verb in agaru (‘explain for her’) also indicates the categorization of T as a novice to receive explanation, whereas H is marked as an expert. Thus, through this interaction, cultural membership becomes salient: Mr. K assigns social identities to T as a NNS of Japanese, a cultural novice, and non-Japanese; whereas T also accepts these identities by co-constructing the repair process.

(8) [Per Mr. K’s request, H explains the tea ceremony]

1. H: De, sono ato ni, koro omo ni in, chotto kani yatte omu no then after this QT called a light little one O
2. Mr. K: Yappari kore, sonoha dokana omu yoo no? as expected this little tea because once say P
3. H: (0.5) To amaramu kado. QT to think but
Given that H explains tea ceremony immediately prior to excerpt (8) and T provides a news-recipient token *heee ohh* and assessment a *sago* *ohh* great in line 4, the categorization between H as an expert and T as a novice of tea ceremony/Japanese culture has been set up. In line 5, Mrs. K initiates a topic by asking a question *bunka mura no nai* or *bunka mura no nai*? [you have to study Japanese culture [for the future]]. This time, Mrs. K uses not a question but the obligatory phrase *bunkakuma mura* (in SJ, *shite shibukan na mura no nai*) [you have to study Japanese culture [for the future]] with sentence final particles *no* and *nai*. Here, so is used to impose the speaker's idea upon the hearer, or, at the least, to emphasize the speaker's idea emotionally (Makino & Tsutsui 1989: 327). *Nai* solicits agreement from the hearer, and here this function is emphasized by the prolongation of the vowel and stress. T shows tentative alignment by saying *so::: de: su *[I guess so] (in SJ, *so omowaharu desho? [you] think so, don't you?*). Here, the significant prolongation of the vowel indicates T's hesitation to immediately agree with Mrs. K. In line 14, Mrs. K further solicits agreement from T, saying *so omowaharu desho? (in SJ, *so omowaharu desho? [you] think so, don't you?*). T provides no clear uptake or alignment this time either. She just says *w.n. mmm* and laughs in line 15.

Likewise, in line 16, although Mrs. K further elaborates solicitation, T responds to it with a longer prolonged token and laughter alone. The sequential analysis reveals a different participation structure from previous ones. There are no clear adjacency pairs, such as question and answer, repair-initiation and repair, or solicitation and reply. T's responses are totally uncommitted to Mrs. K's response-pursuing that continues to coercively assign T a social identity as a novice cultural learner. In other words, the interaction is not mutually ratified. It is not clear, either, whether this lack of clear response is considered as T's covert disagreement or resistance to the social identity assigned by Mrs. K, or as mere time buying necessary to deliver her opinion. The former is probable, given that T delivers alignment without hesitation in other situations (e.g., lines 21, 25 in excerpt (2), line 34 in (4)). It seems reasonable to consider that T tried to show her resistance against being coercively formulated as a learner of Japanese culture by not providing a clear uptake. In other words, T tries to reject the assigned social identity by refusing the assigned discourse identity as a respondent to Mrs. K's question and solicitation.

There are some noteworthy items to mention with respect to epistemic stance. Unlike T's reframing of Mrs. K's utterance in excerpts (1), (4), and (5) where T can base her opinion on the objective facts, T is asked her own opinion. That is, T's ground for reframing is less tenable than in former cases where she ascribes opposite views to facts she saw rather than to her personal thoughts. It leads T to a more difficult situation to handle. If she directly disagrees with Mrs. K, it would result in a face-threatening act toward the hostess and scholarship sponsor. Given these analyses, it seems reasonable to consider that T tried to resist against being discursively formulated as a learner of Japanese culture by means of not providing clear uptake. Nonetheless, Mr. and Mrs. K do not notice it and return to lecturing about the tea ceremony, by pursuing a prior topic in line 18. Even after the topic develops in a different direction, participants may retrieve it by coercively referring to the prior topic, as seen in this utterance. This may imply power relationships where one person has control over another, just like the phenomenon of interruption (e.g., Zimmerman & West 1975).
5. Discussion

5.1. Discursive construction of exoticization

The analysis above has illustrated how the participants make exoticization and/or interculturality relevant in the development of talk. There are several means for discursively carrying out this process: 1) topic selection and how to deliver it; 2) sequential development of participation in talk; and 3) use of linguistic and non-linguistic resources as stance markers.

Delivering a topic with clear specificication of culture/nationality (e.g., excerpts (1) and (2)) makes the talk interculturally relevant, orients the participants to follow the topic, and may designate the person who should respond (recipient design). Based on an initiated topic, participants collaboratively develop talk, following a certain order of turns, such as the question-answer-assessment-confirmation question sequences, each of which may designate the person who should respond. Participants assign or are assigned and/or assert or are asserted their discourse and social identities in the sequences. They discursively create categorization, such as developing country vs. developed country (excerpts (1) and (2)), NS vs. NNS (excerpt (7)), novice of Japanese culture vs. expert (excerpt (8)), and so on. Talk-in-interaction is a locus of identity assignment, assertion, and negotiation as well, as seen in several excerpts above. As a form of resistance against assigned identities, T asserts different identities in excerpts (3), (4), and (5). T reframes negative images of Xinjiang Uigur and China that assign T a social identity as a learner of Japanese culture by not providing a clear uptake, i.e., refusing discourse identities. This is similar to Day's (1994) findings that Tang resisted ethinification by providing only a minimal response.

In addition to construction of identities and categorization through organization of talk, there are several means to index epistemic and affective stances and speakers' assumptions: Choice of the types of question, i.e., negative-, yes-no-, wh-, or cross-questions (e.g., excerpts (2), (3), and (5)); modal expressions (e.g., yappari 'as expected', dasshodeshou 'isn't it?'); and lexical choice of a word with a certain connotation (e.g., koshiraeru 'to make' in excerpt (3)); interactional particles, such as no and ne(e); and prosodic features (rising intonation in excerpts (5) and (7)). Utilizing these means as a resource, the participants interactively organize their participation and orientation in talk.

5.2. Common sense knowledge problematized

Maynard and Zimmerman (1984) state that in the selection of social categories, 'common sense knowledge' plays an important role. As is often argued in critical theories, common sense knowledge is a social construction (e.g., Foucault 1980; Pennycook 2001). Hall, grounded in Douglas' (1966) work, states: "social groups impose meaning on their world by ordering and organizing things into a classificatory system" (2001: 329-330). Nishizaka (1995) also mentions, in arguing ideological issues in NS-NNS interactions, that whether a NNS does not really know Japanese culture or does not matter, what matters is what the speaker assumes about NNSs (emphasis added).

Through the interactions in the data above, several assumptions of Mr. and Mrs. K emerged. Xinjiang Uigur as well as China is a developing region; also, China is perceived as a highly centralized country, or one without freedom. The above can be regarded as examples of exoticization of Xinjiang Uigur and China through being seen as developing, mysterious, different from, and even inferior to Japan. Also, just like Lino's (1996) host families, Mr. and Mrs. K exoticize Japanese culture by assuming that maccha is better to serve to foreigners.

Thus, this study has demonstrated exoticization where social identities/categories are discursively constructed, thereby delineating and perpetuating the boundaries between self and others. These practices may further contribute to the exercise of power of NS over NNS. In intercultural communication, it is a fact that there is a difference between participants from different cultures; however, if the difference is utilized as a resource for formulating a sense of superiority/inferiority, a bias, or discrimination, it definitely affects SLA processes and should be problematized. Mr. and Mrs. K had no intention to mistreat T; nonetheless, their interaction with T turned out to be a covert power exercise in a form they consider 'common sense knowledge' (e.g., maccha is hard to drink for foreigners; assertion that foreign students have to learn Japanese culture). The analysis of the data also reveals T's covert resistance; however, Mr. and Mrs. K did not seem to notice it at all. As Garret and Baquedano-López criticized, such ideologies disguised as common sense knowledge "go partially or wholly unrecognized (or misrecognized) by those whose actions and practices are bringing them about" (2002: 354).

Mrs. K's statement that foreigners/NNSs should learn the host culture is parallel to the traditional concept in SLA that it is the NNS, not the NS, who have to be responsible for communication in host societies. As Pennycook keenly points out, "applied linguistics is rife with problematic construction of otherness" (2001: 142). This is also applicable to any interaction. Heritage states: "all social interaction must inevitably be asymmetric on moment-to-moment basis and many interactions are likely to embody substantial asymmetry when moment-to-moment participation is aggregated over the course of one or more encounters" (2004: 237). What one assumes as 'common sense' may become a power exercise to others, whether among researchers or among ordinary people.

6. Conclusion and implications

As SLA studies taking a critical perspective point out, NSs and host societies are not neutral or fair but largely influenced by ideologies. This study illustrated exoticization, one such ideological phenomenon. The identity of a cultural Other is formulated by the NSs embodying such ideologies, rather than the NNS's language ability. Traditional theories have exclusively focused on L2 ability as their research agenda. However, given T's near-native fluency, it is clear that SLA studies should also direct attention to social and ideological issues in a host society as a learning environment.

Thus, analyzing NS-NNS interaction from interactional, social, and political perspectives reveals the power exercise of NS over NNS, neglected in traditional studies. It also provides further evidence that intercultural communication is co-constructed (e.g., Jacoby & Okhu 1990), and NNSs are not passive participants but "selective and active
contributors to the meaning and outcome of interaction" (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986: 165), as exemplified by T's resistance in this study. As Kasper (1997) states, total convergence to a host culture is not desirable for learners. Also, it is problematic that learners internalize assigned identity (e.g., perpetual foreigner) by monolingual NSs (Code & Zaegler 2003). In order to raise consciousness about ideological issues in a host society, more studies from interactional and critical perspectives are called for.

This is beyond the scope of this study, but the historical and structural processes which set the parameter of social boundaries (Williams 1992: 218) should also be examined for a better understanding of SLA. What underlies the speakers' assumption is a historically and socially constructed set of ideologies, which becomes naturalized as 'common sense.' Idealized models in traditional SLA may force researchers to overlook what learners face in reality in L2 environments, which are not necessarily ideal for learners. Critical views and examination of naturally occurring data from an interactional perspective will become more and more necessary in order to gain more eremic understanding of SLA studies.

References


Resistance against being formulated as cultural Other: The case of a Chinese student in Japan


Appendix

Transcription conventions

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Abbreviations

Aux: Auxiliary
Cop: Copula
COP: Copula verb be
LK: Linking nominal
Neg: Negative morpheme
Nom: Nominative
O: Object marker
P: Participle
Q: Question marker
QT: Quotative marker
S: Subject marker
Tag: Tag-like expression
Top: Topic marker