

# Discourse and Social Change

--from “personal” to “political”--

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The term ‘discourse,’ as it is commonly understood by researchers today, cuts across a variety of disciplines, and its definition varies significantly depending upon the background disciplines and the theoretical orientations of researchers. The change that I analyze here requires a socially dynamic conception of discourse as will be seen as it is described in the following sections. I draw upon insights of discourse theorists influenced by Michel Foucault (e.g., 1984), such as, Norman Fairclough (1992), Jay Lemke (1995), R Hodge and G Kress (1988), and Sara Mills (1997). They assume that discourse is not a group of signs or a stretch of text, but ‘practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak’ (Foucault, 1972:49). Thus, Fairclough (1992) maintains, “Discourses do not just reflect or represent social entities and relations, they construct or ‘constitute’ them .....” (3). What is particularly useful for my purpose is the notion of discourse as a site for power struggles, the dominant attempting to keep their control over the dominated, and the dominated to resist the dominant. The purpose of this study is to present a case of socio-political change that took place in Japan through power struggles in discourse and to consider the role of mass media in the process.

Section 1 is a macro-level analysis of a case I call the case of the Prime Minister’s Affair (PMA). It was initiated by a 40-year-old woman (throughout this study I refer to her as Ms A as it appeared in the *Sunday Mainichi* although she was identified at a certain point as Mitsuko Nakanishi) in early June of the year 1989 and was concluded with the resignation of the Prime Minister (PM) at the end of July of the same year. There is no doubt that the nationwide public discourse on PMA is an outgrowth of the initially personal discourse of PMA. Section 2 is a micro-analysis of the interview texts taken from a TV program, which are the closest to the actual conversational discourse of Ms A. I call this material “real conversation” and distinguish it from “fictional conversation” published in the *Sunday Mainichi*. In Section 3, I compare real conversation and fictional conversation, critically analyzing how the real conversation is represented in the magazine article. In section 4, I examine quotations in the newspaper reports in

comparison with the real conversation and the fictional conversation, and point out that the secondary discourses are so systematically demodalized that they do not give clues to the subjectivity one way or another. In conclusion, I argue that the *Sunday Mainichi* played an important role as the mediator of the personal and the political.

### 1. Breaking a Taboo

The PMA was brought to the public's attention as a scandal by the *Sunday Mainichi*, a major weekly magazine with a circulation of 350,000, which was placed for sale on the 5th of June. Mr Uno was appointed Prime Minister just three days before. According to the article, the "interview" part of the article was based on a 6-hour interview with Ms A; she confided to the magazine that she had entered a long term contract with Mr Uno, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs, as a geisha -- a form of concubinage -- for 300,000 yen per month in 1985.

Foreign journalists became interested in that publication, particularly those who had known that "following a centuries-old tradition, politicians and businessmen not infrequently keep mistresses, sometimes raising and legally acknowledging second families" (The *Washington Post*, June 7). The traditional thought held that being able to have financial abilities to keep a mistress is a man's virtue. It was a taboo among Japanese journalists to write about the private affairs, particularly extra-marital relationships, of politicians. Why did the *Sunday Mainichi* publish the story about Ms A and PM? The *Washington Post* journalist was perplexed about the intention of the magazine. He phoned the magazine editor and was told that the magazine editorial staff decided on the publication despite the taboo because they perceived that the consciousness of the Japanese people had changed. "The Japanese culture is changing!" The *Washington Post* (June 7, 1989) ran a lengthy (approx. 1200 words) article headlined "Sex Scandal Hits New Leader -- Japanese Magazine Breaks Taboo With Geisha Story." And it was followed by many other dailies and weeklies in the USA, UK, Australia, France, China, etc.

The publication of Ms A's story in the *Sunday Mainichi* did not immediately mean that the taboo had been broken. Even though the *Sunday Mainichi* is a 'respected' (the *Washington Post* and the *London Times*) magazine, it is not comparable in quality and prestige to *Newsweek* and *Time* in the USA. The word *shuukanshi* (weekly magazine) connotes some "voyeuristic" interest

typical of tabloids. Even established weekly magazines like the *Sunday Mainichi* are not of the caliber of daily newspapers when it comes to public discourse. In order for the PMA story to count as an object of the public knowledge, it had to be 'circulated' in the major dailies, which no doubt represented the voice of the public in the eyes of the Japanese people. According to the *London Times* (June 10) no Japanese newspapers followed up the story except for some sports newspapers. "Even Japanese television, which has a lower common denominator than most, has been too shy to break the taboo about meddling in the affairs of politicians and kept women ... The boisterous opposition MPs ... say that they are not planning to make an issue of the geisha's allegations."

On June 9th, however, during the Diet questioning session, Ms Sanae Kubota, a Socialist Senator, hoisted the *Washington Post* and asked in an accusatory pitch "We Japanese, especially, women, are sad and ashamed. Is this true? If not, we want you to immediately protest the magazine." To this, Prime Minister only said, "I do not wish to comment on a private matter in public." To another senator's question, PM repeated the same.

Ms Kubota's rhetoric using the *Washington Post* as a prop was very effective within the Japanese cultural context. She made recourse to one of the salient traits of the Japanese psychology, i.e., their sensitivity to what the *seken* ('world' in the sense of 'the generalized other') may think<sup>1</sup>. In this case, all the Japanese are identified as in-group members and foreigners as out-group members. For a Japanese person, when facing the out-group members, the misconduct of his/her in-group member(s) is a disgrace that all the in-group fellows should be ashamed of. The knowledge that the foreign media are watching "us" awakens the self-consciousness of the Japanese. Showing the *Washington Post*, the symbol of the watching foreigners, and saying "We Japanese are sad and ashamed" was a rhetorical strategy to persuade the Japanese public. The following day (June 10) all three major dailies reported Ms Kubota's question and PM's response and thus supported the idea that the PMA was a public issue.

In the Budget Committee of the Lower House, the same question was asked by members of opposition parties, but the Committee Chair, a conservative member, interrupted the questioning by referring to the Diet Law (Articles 119 and 120) that prohibits discussing private matters of the Diet Members.

At this juncture, the nature of the PMA discourse became more clearly definable as a struggle between the dominant power and the dominated, the former

insisting on the traditional definition of public discourse that the PMA is a private matter and the latter claiming that it concerns the morality of politicians, representatives of the public. Is PMA his private matter? Or is it relevant to his job as PM? Opposition party leaders expressed their positions concerning PMA; Politicians of the local governments joined this debate -- Kawasaki City Council, for example, unanimously adopted a resolution prepared by women members demanding PM to answer or to resign. In some cases women politicians were met with strong counterattacks from conservatives; one woman council member of Kawaguchi City brought the issue to the Council meeting table and was punished with a week suspension. All the media participated in the debate in various forms: the editorials of dailies expressing their positions regarding PMA, the letters pouring in to the Letters to Editor section of newspapers; scholars and critics giving their opinions in newspapers and on TV. The Japan Association of Women's Studies and many other women's groups convened special meetings to prepare their resolutions demanding the PM's resignation. The *Sunday Mainichi* ran a follow up article in the following issue. It was equally sensational as their first "scoop." On the 25th Ms A showed up on TV and told her story in front of the nation.

The ruling party was totally defeated by the socialist party in the June 25th special election to fill the vacancies in the Upper House and in the July 2nd Tokyo election. The result of the general election held on the July 23rd was even worse for the government, the power balance in the upper house being reversed. On the 24th of July Mr Uno finally announced his intention to resign from the PM position. It was less than 2 months after his inauguration. During the two months numerous PMA-related texts were produced in newspapers, in weekly magazines, on TV, in newsletters of various women's organizations, in the form of flyers, etc.

There is no doubt that the PMA was a process of transformation of the private discourse of Ms A into the public discourse, causing the resignation of PM. In the following sections, I will analyze three kinds of texts which played key roles in the process, (i) conversational, (ii) fictional conversational, and (iii) direct quotations in newspaper reports, and will examine what was taking place in these texts.

## 2. Conversational Discourse

Bronislaw Malinowski (1923), in observing "primitive languages,"

introduced the notion of “phatic communion.” He states, “There is in all human beings the well-known tendency to congregate, to be together, to enjoy each other’s company. .... Now speech is the intimate correlate of this tendency, for, to a natural man [SIC], another man’s silence is not a reassuring fact, but, on the contrary, something alarming and dangerous” (314). So, always affirming, consenting, and occasionally disagreeing, people create the bonds of antipathy. The phatic aspect, which used to be considered marginal in the mainstream linguistics, is now in the most focused area in the emerging theories of language use, such as conversational analysis, pragmatics and discourse analysis. In comparing conversational discourses with literary discourses, Deborah Tannen (1997) introduces the notion of “involvement strategy,” and she states, “Involvement is created through what I call audience participation in sensemaking: by doing some of the work of making meaning, hearers or readers become participants in the creation of the discourse” (141). Discourse analysts view this aspect of communication in terms of modality, which is concerned with the affinity between the text producer, other discourse participants and the proposition that s/he is discoursing. Japanese is a hyper-phatic language, there are a number of phatic devices expressing speaker’s commitment to the proposition, and different degrees of the hearer’s cooperation<sup>2</sup>.

My first samples are from Ms A’s confessional conversation. I have recorded a year-end special “Women Who Ran This Year” produced by the Asahi TV in December, 1989. Several excerpts of previously broadcast interviews of Ms A were used in the program. Each excerpt is short, but all the excerpts available together provide sufficient material for my purposes.

There were several different interviews broadcast during PMA. Sample 1 is probably from one of the earliest interviews. The text shows that Ms A is distancing herself from the embarrassing story and constantly attempts to involve the listener -- the interviewer and the invisible audience. There are many markers of “involvement,” which I did not translate into English simply because there is no adequate way of reflecting them in English. The English translation therefore is not the exact representation of the Japanese text. On the other hand, I have not tried to make the translation particularly fluid from the English point of view so that the reader gets a sense of the original structure. Single slashes show minor phrasal or clausal boundaries and double slashes sentence boundaries. Vertical lines are used when a word or part of word is repeated or repaired. Main verbs and

auxiliary elements are separated by a hyphen. Affixes and affixed elements are connected to main elements by hyphens.

#### Example 1

- 1 ikinari sonoo te o desu ne/ ano koo/koo nigitte-ori-mashi-ta desu ne// kono
- 2 mannaka-no sanbon-no yubi o gyutto nigiri-mashite ne/ kore de sono ano sono
- 3 mendoo mi-tai kedo doo-da/ to yuu-koto osshatta-n-desu ne// kore de doo-da/
- 4 mendoo-miru tte koto osshara-nai/ kore de doo-da tte osshatta no kana?

(Suddenly he caught my hand firmly this, this way, holding these three fingers in the middle, he said, "I want to patronize you for this (price). What do you say?" "What do you say about this (price)?" He didn't say "I will patronize you." He just said "What do you say about this?" I'm not sure.)

Setting aside intonational variations and other phonetic features, there are three easily recognizable strategies of involvement in this discourse (and perhaps in most conversational discourses in Japanese), the use of Sentence Final Particles (SFP) *ne* and *yo*, the use of addressee honorific forms of the verb phrases, and the use of hesitation/hedging.

Particle *ne* is often categorized as a sentence final particle, but in actual conversations it occurs almost anywhere. It has the function described by many researchers as a marker of the speaker's intention to involve the hearer. When it occurs in the nonfinal position, it can be combined with *desu* the polite form of the copula, forming *desune*. In line 1 there are two instances of *desune*, the first being placed after *te o* (*te* 'hand' plus *o* Direct Object Marker) and the second in the sentence final position. Although *desu* is a copula verb, it does not contribute to the propositional meaning at all when used for this discourse purpose. It simply adds politeness to the phatic particle *ne*. In line 2, *ne* is used after a subordinate clause. In line 3, *ne* is added to the sentence ending with *-n-desu*, so-called *no-desu*-construction (the subordinate clause embedded to this construction is an explanation for the previous statement).

The second strategy is the use of *ano*, *kono* and *sono*, which I called demonstrative fillers in my previous study (Reynolds, 1984). They are metaphorical extensions of regular deictic demonstratives *ano* (pointing an object equally distant from the speaker and the hearer), *kono* (pointing an object on the speaker's side), and *sono* (pointing an object on the hearer's side)<sup>3</sup>. Since deictic demonstratives define the locus of a pointing object by making reference to the speaker's and the

hearer's position, demonstrative fillers seem to be used to define the relation of the speaker and the hearer to the discourse, thus giving the hearer a sense of involvement. Their function as hesitation markers may be primary in most contexts. They also signify politeness as opposed to some other forms of pause fillers. Involvement, hesitation, and politeness intricately interact with each other and may be manifested in the same form. These forms are generally polysemic; one of the many meanings may be clearly foregrounded or the meaning remains ambiguous. When the second syllable is prolonged, like the first instance in line 1, it may give a stronger sense of hesitation. Three demonstrative fillers are used in succession in line 2. It is when she is just about to tell the reporter the exact words of PM's, the negotiation of the price of her body, which would be the most embarrassing for a woman. After she manages starting to say, she still has difficulty; she says, "He said 'I want to patronize you for this (price). What do you say about it?'" But she stops there, and repeats "What do you say about it?" as if trying to recall the exact wording, and quickly corrects what she just said, "Oh, no. He didn't say 'I will patronize you.' He just said 'What do you say about this?'" This is one of the most embarrassing situations in her story, and so she hedges again by adding particle *kana* 'I'm not sure' at the end of the sentence. The interviewer, a male reporter, was probably not as responsive or supportive as she wanted him to be partly because of the constraint related to the purpose of interviewing, i.e., to let the audience hear all that she says. Too many backchannels would be interruptive. But it is also because of his position vis-a-vis Ms A. He is a male journalist and she is an "ex-geisha," something of an outcast as a Japanese woman. He backchannels with *un* or *uun*, an informal version of *hai*. In more usual TV interviews, where the interviewee would have a status as a guest, the interviewer would not use this informal backchannel. Moreover, the prolonged *uun* is mostly pronounced with a subtle rising intonation as if he does not agree with Ms A.

Involvement intimately interacts with modality. Or, it may be part of modality. Fairclough (1992) states, "Modality concerns the extent to which producers commit themselves to, or conversely distance themselves from, propositions" (142). It is expressed by modal auxiliary verbs, which interact with tense, adverbs, hedges, intonation patterns, etc. Hodge and Kress (1988) called this "affinity" with the proposition. In Example 1, for instance, Ms A comes closer to the addressee by using *ne/desune*, demonstrative fillers and the polite style of verbs, but in so doing she distances herself from the proposition. The first sentence

of Example 1 is particularly interesting in this regard. It has a very convoluted structure, expressing Ms A's complex feeling; *ori* (the humble form of the 'be' verb used as an auxiliary) has a modality effect of distancing Ms A herself from what was happening to her fingers as if she were a third party watching the PM's gripping. The verb phrase of the proposition *nigitte-ori-mashi-ta* '(he) was gripping (three fingers ....)' itself is therefore already quite low in the degree of affinity. But she further distances herself from this incident by adding *desu-ne*.

Example 2 below is the opposite of Example 1 in terms of the modality. She sounds very determined. It was taken from an interview produced when the story had triggered a lot of criticism as well as encouragement from social critics and from individuals. According to the *Sunday Mainichi*, the editorial section received hundreds of phone calls expressing pros and cons. Ms A was compelled to defend herself against harsh comments, such as, "She volunteered to become a geisha and agreed to the contract with PM according to the traditional ritual. Why does she complain now?" "She is not a true geisha -- a true geisha would not talk about her patron," "It concerns only the bottom half of the body." In the part of the interview she had to defend herself, two or three contesting voices are clearly heard -- the voices of her critics and her own voice. The degree of her commitment to the proposition is extremely high, thus showing little solidarity with the interviewer. (I include the interviewer's backchannels in this example. The numbers in angular brackets are for the ease of reference.)

## Example 2

- 1 A:<1-1>watashi damatte-ori-mashi-ta deshoo//<1-2>Nakineiri-shite-ori-mashi-  
 2 ta//<2-1> Demo ano kata-ga sonoo ano sooridaijin ni narare-ta toki ni ne/  
 3 zettaini kore-wa ikenai to omot-ta-n desu [yo//  
 4 T: [uun  
 5 A:<2-2> kokode kae-nakereba [dooni mo nara-nai [to//  
 6 T: [un [un  
 7 A:<2-3> sonna koto ga ima at-te ii hazu-wa-ari-masen//::<3-1> kore wa  
 8 saisho kara mooshi-age-ta toori ( ) shihun kamoshiremasen yo//<3-2> demo  
 9 watashi dake no mondai de wa nai to omoi-masu//:<3-3> soshite,  
 10 shimo|shimo-hanshin no koto dakara tte koto na-n-desu kere [domo  
 11 T: [un  
 12 A: shimo-hanshin no mondai ja-nai desu//  
 13 T: uuun?  
 14 A:<3-4> ningensei no mondai desu//::<3-5> betsuni ano kata o ano ne  
 15 T: un



- 16 A: otoshi-ire-yoo toka nanka de wa nai//<4-1> [jijitsu o watashi o-hanashi shite  
 17 T: [uuun?  
 18 A: kore o minasan ga watashi no koto o waruku omotte mo kamai-masen//  
 19 T: uuun?  
 20 A:<4-2> demo ji|ho|honto-no koto o yoosuruni ji|jijitsu o o-shirase shi-tai tte  
 21 koto desu//

(<1-1> I kept silence until now. <1-2> I have put up with it helplessly. <2-1> But when he became Prime Minister, I thought this should never be allowed. <2-2> That if I don't change, nothing can happen. <2-3> There should not be such a thing today. <3-1> As I said in the beginning this may be my personal anger. <3-2> I do think this is not a problem of mine alone. <3-3> They say that this concerns the lower part of the body, but it is not a matter of the lower part of the body. <3-4> It is a question of humanity. <4-1> It is not particularly that I attempt to do things such as trapping him. <4-2> I wanted to tell the truth, and I do not care if people may criticize me. But, I want to tell the truth, to let the truth be known.)

There are only two instances of *ne* (Line 2, Line 14) and only three demonstrative fillers (Line 2 and Line 14). It is interesting that in both cases hesitation occurs right after *ano kata* 'that person,' a polite noun phrase referring to PM. She feels it embarrassing to mention him and needs to distance herself from him.

Also, features which are usually associated with high degrees of emotion and tension occur instead of those used for involvement. She stammers several times. When she attempts to discuss the criticism that her accusation concerns only *shimo-hanshin* 'the lower part of the body,' the word that "decent Japanese women" would not mention in public, she stammers (*shimo|shimo-hanshin* in line 10). In line 20 she starts to say *jijitsu*, a Sino-Japanese word meaning 'fact,' but she changes her mind and chooses to use *honto-no koto*, the native Japanese expression with the same meaning as *jijitsu*. After having said *honto no koto o* ('truthful thing' - object marker), she changes her mind again and re-articulates the Sinico-Japanese word stammering ("ji|jijitsu"). This indicates, not her uncertainty about the content of the proposition, but the intensity of her commitment to it. Attempting to choose the most effective powerful style for her purpose of persuading the interviewer and the invisible audience, she oscillates between the authoritative style that the Sinico-Japanese words imply and the colloquial Japanese style, which may have more appeal to the majority of average Japanese people.

The overall text structure also generates a sense of strong commitment. Sentences in <1> are markedly simple and precise, constituting a pair of a

rhetorical question and an answer to it -- "I was being silent, wasn't I?" "Yes, I have been putting up with it with no protest." The complex verb phrase *nakineiri-shite-ori-mashi-ta* is a figurative expression commonly used in the "lifeworld" discourse. It literally means "I slept while crying" and conveys a sad condition of a person who put up with unfair treatment without protest. Such short sentences ending with the finite form of verbs with no modification are extremely high in the degree of commitment and rather rare in Japanese conversations. Japanese speakers tend to avoid clear articulation of the speech act. They prefer incomplete sentences leaving the speech act ambiguous. In this example, however, no incomplete sentences are used. Her assertive intention is unambiguously expressed. She even doubles the assertive force by adding SFP *yo* (Lines 3 & 8)<sup>4</sup>. The involvement strategy here lacks the politeness observed in example 1. She is not tentative. She is precise and imperative. The second part of this paragraph consists of three sentences, the first telling the speaker's sudden awakening to a new consciousness that 'such a thing should not be allowed' in the contemporary society, second particularizing 'such a thing,' and the last being her moral judgement. Part 3 of this paragraph is particularly dialogic; she is addressing the conservatives who harshly criticized her action. In <3-1> she admits that her anger may be her personal anger -- as some critics said, but she denies that it is a personal issue in <3-2>. She refers to the voice of the conservatives that this is a matter of the lower part of the body, i.e., sex, but she refutes it and claims that it is not a personal matter but it concerns the human rights of women, a political issue. She concludes the paragraph with a clear and strong statement that she intends to "tell the world the truth." Her discourse echoes the voice of feminism in this part.

### 3. Fictional Conversation

The conversational interview printed in the *Sunday Mainichi* is quite different from any of the conversational texts in terms of strategies of involvement. The readers of the magazine version may have a crucially different impression of Ms A from the impression that the audience of the TV interview may have. Example 3 has the same content as Example 1, but the texture is strikingly different.

### Example 3

sorede, seiza-shite hiza no-ue-ni oite-i-ta te no mannaka-no sanbon-no yubi o gyutto nigiri, “kore de doo da” to yuu no desu.

((he) gripped the three fingers of my hand, which I had on the knees of the formal sitting, and said, “What do you say about this?”)

This version contains no hesitation, no rephrasing, no particle of involvement and very few incomplete sentences although it somehow sounds conversational. Most of the 165 utterances of Ms A’s end with the polite finite form of the predicate (showing politeness towards the addressee and indicating the speech act clearly), which may be followed by a SFP. Of the 165 utterances, 80 utterances are with a SFP; *yo* (43), *ne* (22), *yone* (5), *wa* (5), *mono* (1), or *ka* (4). *Yo* indicates a high degree of affinity with the proposition as well as intention of hearer involvement, thus generating a sense of imposition. In most parts of the TV interview *yo* is used very sparingly while *ne* is constantly used. In the magazine version, however, it is *yo* that is used twice as frequently as *ne*. The use of feminine particle *wa* is also unusual. The *wa* attached to the polite form of the verb is outdated and it is rarely heard today. Ms A never uses it in the TV interview. The interview article of the magazine is apparently a fictional conversation made to sound real “by a process of synecdoche” (Tannen, 1997: 142). By watching the TV interview, the listener senses the hesitation, the intention to get the listener’s empathy, the fervor to convey the truth, etc., through many subtle conversational strategies. The readers of the magazine interview article, on the other hand, are likely to interpret Ms A as a shameless woman who has the nerve to talk about her sexual relationship with PM without hesitation in public.

One may argue that the transformation was necessary since a 6-hour conversation had to be represented within 9 magazine pages and that there are things that cannot be expressed in print media. However, it seems to me only partially true. Although the editor told the *Washington Post* journalist that they decided to publish the story because they perceive a change in the Japanese people’s consciousness, it is undeniable that they are under great economic pressure. In order to maintain a high circulation they must accommodate the needs of the target readers, white collar salary men who spend hours commuting on the train. Although they are higher in terms of the reading level than those who habitually

read pornographic comic magazines and tabloids on the train, they do not concern themselves with the current social and political events. The production of the interview article must have been influenced by the need to entertain their male readers, if it was not the sole reason. The headlines and the section titles produced through “condensation” (Fairclough, 1992) attest to it.

Example 4

- (a) “anata wa sanjuuman-en de watahino karada o jiyuu-ni shi-ta”  
 (“You had your way with my body for 300,000 yen”)
- (b) “yubi san-bon de ‘yoko ni nari-nasai’ ”  
 (“For three fingers, ‘Lie down there’ ”)
- (c) “saisho wa hoteru nyuuootani de”  
 (“First time was in Hotel New Otani”)

Example 4-(a), part of the headline printed boldly in extra-large characters (1.2 inches in height), is a condensation of two propositions given in separate points of Ms A’s confession. It foregrounds two things “money” and “a woman’s body as sex object,” basic words of pornographic discourse, and it is presented as Ms A’s accusation towards PM by the use of *anata* ‘you’ and the quotation marks. Example 4-(b) is one of the four section titles in the interview text. By condensing the phrase describing PM’s gesture (gripping three fingers) and PM’s order to “Lie down there” (his immediate sexual want), it conjures up a pornographic image of the scene. 4-(c), another section title, consists of the topic part taken from the reporter’s question *saisho wa itsu, doko de?* (Where and when was the first time?) and *hoteru nyuu ootani de* from Ms A’s answer to it *juu-ni-gatsu ni-juu-yok-ka ni hoteru nyuu ootani ni yobare-mashi-ta* (I was summoned to Hotel New Otani on the 24th of December). The two parts are condensed into one whole and presented as Ms A’s utterance.

It was an effective political strategy to discuss the PMA case as a problem of prostitution by magnifying the “money” and the “sex object” ideas in view of the international criticism of Japanese men’s “prostitution tours” to neighboring Asian countries and the exploitation of women from poorer countries in the Japanese sex industry. However, by setting the agenda in such a way as the payment was the only important issue of PMA, it never seriously addressed Ms

A's claim that the problem is not hers alone but it is a manifestation of the problem facing Japanese society particularly with respect to women.

Although the magazine deserves recognition because it gave Ms A access to the public discourse, the agenda they set for the discourse was probably based more on their own commercial interest than on the social criticism. The fictional conversation constructed by the magazine editorial staff depicts Ms A as a shameless woman who is willing to expose her private life to the public, a woman who can talk about sexual matters without hesitation.

#### 4. Public Discourses

In the newspaper report discourse Ms A is placed in the farthest area of the background and almost invisible; she is referred to as "a 40-year-old woman" instead of by name and her complaint is abstracted as *shushoo no josei mondai* ('PM's woman problem'). Ms A is quoted briefly in one report of the *Asahi* on the 10th of June. Ms A's discourse is represented by a brief summary consisting of 4 items in a very matter-of-fact style. There is only one instance which looks like a direct quotation.

##### Example 5

A-ko-san wa "<1> Uno-shi to no kankei de, okiya-no o-kaa san made itametsuke-rareru yoona toraburu ga ari, <2> watashi mo geisha ni iya-ke ga sashite yame, <3> ima mo seishinteki-na kooishoo ga aru. <4> Watashi-tachi wa mushikera de wa nai to omoi, <5> ik-ken o kokuhaku suru koto ni shi-ta" to setsumei shite-iru.

(Ms A has explained, "In connection with Mr Uno, there was an incident in which even the madam of the geisha house was hurt, and I loathed being a geisha, so quit; but even now I suffer from post-traumatic symptoms. Thinking that we are not worms, I decided to confide about the case.")

Even though Ms A's discourse is in quotation marks, it is even more different from Ms A's real voice than the magazine interview. First, sentences end with the neutral or dictionary form of a verb (*aru* 'to be/have' at the end of <2> and *shi-ta* 'did' at the end of <5> ). It seems that the relationship between the utterer and the addressee is nullified. Second, no SFP is used. However, it can not be taken as an indirect quotation since there are some direct discourse features, such as, the use of the first person pronoun *watashi*. Also, *okiya-no o-kaa-san* (Lit: mother in

the geisha house) seems to be the words that Ms A actually used. I call this “quasi-conversation.” It seems to be a general rule for newspaper discourse to transform secondary discourse into quasi-conversational. It is not only in the quotation of Ms A’s discourse but in almost all the quotations in newspapers that sentences end with the neutral dictionary form of the predicate.

#### Example 6

“watakushi wa .... Josei o keibetsu shi-tari, bubetsu shita koto wa nai.”  
 (“I ..... have never slighted or shown contempt toward women.”)

This is quoted as PM’s response in the “Summary of the Diet Questioning Session” of the *Mainichi*. It is impossible that PM actually said this sentence ending with *nai*, the neutral (=non-polite) negative. This scene was caught by a TV camera and was shown in the news. He said on TV “..... *koto wa gozai-masen*” using the most formal negative *gozai-masen*.

I checked all the PMA related reports in the issues from June 10 through 13 of the major three daily newspapers and recognized 95 sentences as sentences in the seemingly direct quotations (39 from the *Mainichi*, 36 from the *Asahi*, and 20 from the *Yomiuri*)<sup>5</sup>. They are systematically depersonalized according to the same rule with a few exceptions. One interesting exception was the quotation of Ms Kubota’s “we are ashamed” speech.

Fairclough (1995), discussing tendencies in the representation of discourse in the news media, states as follows:

News tends to be seen as very much a conceptual and ideational business, a matter of statements, claims, beliefs, positions -- rather than feelings, circumstances, qualities of social and interpersonal relationships, and so forth. Correspondingly the focus is upon *what* is said by the mainly public figures and organizations whose discourse is reported -- to the extent that there is rarely any concession to the commonplace within the social studies of language that what is said, the ideational meaning, may depend upon how it is said and under what social circumstances (64).

Japanese news discourses have the same tendency. The depersonalization is “characteristic of what is generally regarded as within the ‘public’ domain as

opposed to the 'private' domain" (op.cit.). And he also points out that the public has greater prestige than the private. The fact that newspapers reported very little of the meaning that Ms A intended to convey can be interpreted as a reflection of the dominant thought -- women do not count in the public, women's words are not important, and women's feelings are not relevant.

## 5. Conclusion

It is apparent in the macro-analysis of the case of PMA that the transformation of the private discourse of Ms A into the public discourse was made possible by the *Sunday Mainichi*, who made a bold decision to publish Ms A's story. The *Sunday Mainichi*, as a weekly magazine, is interdiscursively complex in the sense that various genres and discourses are creatively mixed -- from serious political theses to purely entertaining articles with comics, illustrations and photos. I found that the intermediary nature of the magazine is manifested for one thing in the way the modality is far more limited in fictional conversations than in real conversations, but that fictional conversations are closer to real conversations when compared with quasi-conversations in the newspapers. It is this intermediary nature of the magazine production that allows it to be innovative as a mediator of the contesting powers in discourse. I also reiterate the fact that the foreign media played a crucial role in the process of transformation. In the age of internationalization of information, it is certain that it will become increasingly important to research the influence of foreign media on the formation of the Japanese public's opinion.

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## Notes

1. In the discussion of Japanese sense of self, Takie Sugiyama Lebra (1992) applies Goffman's theory of "face" and states, "the Japanese self, or face here, is often addressed to the world of

audience not in immediate presence here and now. This world of audience is called *seken*. ....” (106-7). She identifies *seken* as the generalized audience or jury surrounding the self in an inseparable way. Kin'ya Abe's (1995) definition of *seken* is slightly different from Lebra's: “*seken* is a circle of relations connecting people.”

2. Roman Jakobson (1960) picked up this notion and included the Phatic Function as one of the six basic functions of communication. Language pedagogists (e.g., Jack Richards, 1983) and sociolinguists (e.g., Elaine Chaika, 1982) also discussed the phatic communication. In my previous study (1996), I characterized Japanese as a hyper-phatic language because Japanese has many linguistic forms with phatic functions, and Japanese people often engage in “phatic communion.”
3. John Hinds (1975) was the first who attempted to relate “interjective demonstratives” to deictic demonstratives and anaphoric demonstratives.
4. I discussed Japanese Sentence Final Particles in terms of degrees of assertion in Reynolds (1985).
5. The distinction between “direct quotation” and “indirect quotation” is harder to define in Japanese than in English. There is no shift in pronouns, tenses, or deictics. I identified constructions that meet three conditions as direct quotations; (i) the matrix main verb is a verb of saying; (ii) the secondary discourse is marked with parentheses; (iii) the quotation is embedded to the matrix with complementizer *to*.

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