

# English Intonation System as Interpersonal Embodiment: Contrast with Japanese and Chinese Particles

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sentence-final particle (SFP), mood structure

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The most important purpose of this paper is to testify that various systems to indicate personal-related subtle nuances can be uniformly explicable under the rubric of interpersonal metafunction within the framework of the Systemic Functional Linguistics <sup>1</sup> (henceforth abbreviated as *SFL*), though they are expressed in assorted ways from one language to another. This is to show that SFL is an appropriate model for grasping the interpersonal dimension even though it is expressed with diverse systems across languages, such as intonation in English, and particles in Japanese and Chinese.

The subject languages and the categories concerned with the interpersonal meaning are: English, whose intonational system is well documented so far; Japanese and Chinese in which particles play a major role in expressing both ideational and interpersonal meanings. It will be demonstrated in the following sections that these systems of intonation and particles function as the carrier of the nuances of interpersonal relationship.

Below are the first examples showing the differences in interpersonal meaning, one in English intonation system (1)<sup>2</sup> and another in Japanese particles (2):

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\*1 Halliday (1994) is the most introductory and fundamental reference of the systemic linguistics.

\*2 The notations of the intonational system is after Halliday (1994): single slash for foot boundary, double slash for tone boundary, bold type for nuclei.

- (1) a. //1 you have / **beautiful** / eyes // (with a falling tone)  
 b. //4 you have / beautiful / **eyes** // (with a fall-rise tone)
- (2) a. kimi-wa me-ga kirei-da  
 you-TOPIC eye-NOM beautiful 'your eyes are beautiful'  
 b. kimi-wa me-wa kirei-da

The two utterances in (1) is a minimal pair with the difference of the intonation pattern and tonality (the detail will be presented in the next section), whereas in (2) is a pair of the alteration of the case-particle *ga/wa*<sup>\*3</sup>. Both in (1) and (2), the first instances (a), are unmarked in the interpersonal meaning, but the latter in (b) are marked; both in English and in Japanese, a hidden message or an implicit suggestion is included that 'your eyes are beautiful but other parts are not so much ...'

Henceforth we will refer to this kind of the speaker's covert intention as *interpersonal nuances*. Tench (1996: 74) introduces the following interpretation with regard to the tone system in English, which also fits into the definition of the interpersonal nuances of the categories in other languages:

... the tone system produces contrasts in the communicative, or illocutionary, function; that is, they help to indicate differences between telling and asking, between commanding and requesting, between congratulating and wishing, and a whole host of similar functions that language is used to fulfil.

In a sense, interpersonal nuances reflect '[n]ot what they said, but the way they said it,' which 'refers to the mood of the speaker or the attitude shown to the addressee or the message' (*ibid.* : 20).

If we choose the option to make interpersonal nuance in (2b) less implicit, we can give an utterance below:

- (2) c. kimi-wa me-wa kirei-da kedo<sup>\*4</sup> ...  
 though  
 'though you have beautiful eyes, ...'

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\*3 Hinds *et al.* (1987) is a volume of the collection of the papers on the case-particles *wa* and *ga*.

\*4 In (2c), the use of 'kedo' is informal and/or colloquial. More formal/literal forms will be 'keredo' or 'keredomo.'

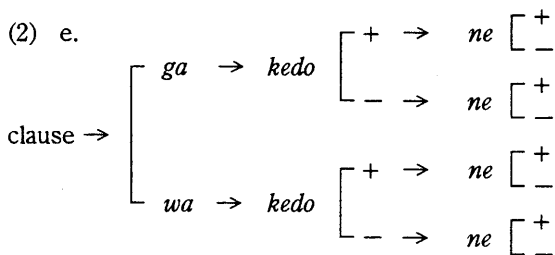
By the addition an adversative conjunction particle 'kedo', the intention to explicitly refer to other parts than eyes is overt. This is in parallel with the English counterpart 'though you have beautiful eyes, ...' or 'your eyes are beautiful, but ...' It is needless to say that (2c) is not a complete statement by itself, but it will be one of the speaker's options not to finish the conclusion and leave it open. Though it is syntactically incanonical, it is stylistically possible because the concluding statement 'you are not beautiful except your eyes' will threaten the hearer's face; it is too rude to assume such attitude.

The third option to the unmarked statement (2a) is the attachment of a sentence-final particle (SFP) *ne*, as in below (2d):

- (2) d. kimi-wa me-wa kirei-da ne ...  
SFP

Compared with the conjuncted version (2c) above, (2d) with the SFP *ne* is felt to be accomplished by itself. If the vowel of this particle *ne* is prolonged as *nee*, the whole statement will be more emotional; it would be felt as an exclamation.

Considering that the speaker's choices range far beyond the speculations in (2a-d) above in terms of age, sex and regional dialect, the stylistic variations will be uncountable, if we would stick to the ideational content of the utterance. In the SFL tradition, a series of the selections such as in (2a-d) are illustrated by the system network as follows:



These eight patterns presented here are only a tip of an iceberg among the plethoric variations of stylistic preferences.

The structure of this paper is: sections 2 and 3 for English intonation and tag question, 4 and 5 for Japanese accent, intonation and particles, and 6 for the Chinese data. Preceding the concluding statements is section 7, some comments and suggestions on SFL.

## 2. ENGLISH INTONATION SYSTEM

Intonation in English is one of the well documented subjects of the past studies among all of the phonological materials. It dates back as far as to the latter half of the eighteenth century (Cruttenden (1997: xv)). To name only a few among the recent publications, O'Connor and Arnold (1973), Bolinger (1978), Cruttenden (1997), and Gussenhoven (1986, 1992).

How many patterns of intonation contours to posit differs from one author to another. In either literature, meaning of the utterance and/or the situation, and the participants in the dialogue are taken into account more or less. The glosses assigned to each intonation pattern differ from one author to another. Chapter 6 of Tench (1996) concisely reviews the major literature of both of the patterns and the interpretations.

Since the 1960's, the SFL scheme has distinguished five simple and two compound tones (Halliday 1967, 1970<sup>\*5</sup>):

- |            |                            |                                   |          |                |                |
|------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| (3) simple | 1: fall                    | 2: rise                           | 3: level | 4: fall — rise | 5: rise — fall |
| compound   | 13: fall followed by level | 53: rise — fall followed by level |          |                |                |

Such detailed and minute distinction in the intonational system, of which semantic sphere will be reviewed soon in this section, is peculiar in English in that intonation is prerequisite in the spoken mode. Other languages do not necessarily utilize intonation in expressing and distinguishing interpersonal meaning.

Among the various phenomena in phonology, it is characteristic with the intonation system in English that intonation is deeply connected with the meaning and situation of the utterance, such as the speaker and the hearer and the relation between them. In this sense, it can be concluded that intonation in English is deeply concerned with the domain of semantics and pragmatics. Within the SFL framework, it would be concerned with interpersonal metafunction. The domain of SFL, and the traditional division of semantics and pragmatics will be a topic in section 7.

Tench (1996: 4) explicates the functions of intonation as 'what changes is its effect on the dialogue,' while 'the basic meaning ... has not changed' as for the utterance itself.

In the very beginning, Tench (1992: 161) defines clearly the SFL concepts of *tonality*, *tonicity* and *tone* (in the below citation, these terms are indicated with

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\*5 Halliday (1967: 7) mentions that the basic concepts of the intonation system in English further dates back to early 1960s.

the capital letters):

The three subsystems of intonation — TONALITY, TONICITY and TONE — are each involved in the speaker's organization of information. Whereas tonality represents the speaker's division of discourse into units of information, tone represents the speaker's classification of the STATUS of information. (emphasis original)

More comprehensive explanation for this triplet is in Tench (1996: 17-19). To supplement the definition of *tonicity* which is missing from the above excerpt, it is 'the structure of new and given information within each unit' (*ibid.*).

As shown with the system network in the Appendix of Halliday (1967), which combines the English intonation system with the meaning of the utterances, it is understood that semantic and pragmatic consideration was indispensable within the SFL scheme of the lexicogrammar.

As is typically given with the examples below, the exactly same utterances can present diverse interpersonal nuances only with the alteration of intonation in English (Greaves: 1998):

(4) To the question: *Do you like this painting?*

//1 I like it // (neutral)

//2 I like it // (challenging; *what makes you think I don't?*):

defensive viewer when just accused of not appreciating the painting

//3 I like it // (non-committal; *I don't object to it*): indecisive viewer

//4 I like it // (reserved; *I do like it but...*): budget conscious buyer

//5 I like it // (strong; *I really like it*): awestruck art critic

One of the possible problems in these *interpretations* is that too much situation is presupposed outside the linguistic facts. Additionally, it is certain that these intuitional data are not obtainable by non-native speakers. These situations and supposed speakers should be understood as typical realizations of the *artificial* examples above. More important is the fact that such subtle suggestion can be made only with the alteration of the intonation patterns.

The first instance of the same kind of set is found in Halliday (1970: 24), in which only intonation is altered:

(5) //1  $\wedge$  he / **could** do //<sup>\*6</sup> (simple statement)

//2  $\wedge$  he / **could** do // ('is that what you think? could he?')

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\*6 A caret ( $\wedge$ ) signifies a silent beat (Halliday (1994: 294)).

- /3 ʌ he / **could** do // ('I think he could, but it's of no importance')  
 /4 ʌ he / **could** do // ('but he won't', 'but it won't help you', etc.)  
 /5 ʌ he / **could** do // ('so don't you imagine he couldn't!')

The postulated situation is less elaborated than in (3) above in that, for example, the speaker is not identified, but the basic concept lying the alteration of the typical intonation patterns is consistent since Halliday (1967, 1970) or even before them: intonation is the only key which distinguishes the interpersonal nuances. In Tench's (1996: 21) wording, 'intonation has been solely responsible for the expression of attitude.'

It is also the case with not only the complete set of five simple tones as in (4) and (5) but also with the two, three and four combinations that such subtle nuances are conveyed with the intonation pattern.

What about the Japanese equivalent to each Tone patterns 1 through 5 in (5)? Let us look at the following Japanese versions corresponding to each of (5):

- (6) a. kare-wa dekiru (yo)            b. kare-wa dekiru ka            na  
he-TOP can SFP            INTER SFP
- c. kare-wa dekiru darou kedo ...      d. kare-wa dekiru darou kedo ...  
would though
- e. kare-wa dekiru yo

The difference between Tone 3 and 4 in (5) can not be explicitly declared in Japanese, so (6c) and (6d) are glossed undifferentiated. The parenthesized SFP *yo* in (a) is optional.

Contrary to English, Japanese intonation does not function to distinguish such minute interpersonal nuances denoted in (5). Instead, Japanese SFPs help suggest these subtle implications. The conjunctive particle *kedo* functions as a adversative conjunction on the one hand and an SFP on the other. It is desirable for the speaker to continue the utterance until it is perceived to be formally ended, but the style (6c, d) is also possible.

The modal auxiliary *darou* shows itself in (6c) and (6d), but not in (6a, b, e). If we interpret the original utterance in English as implying 'he could do if he wanted,' this modal *darou* would be necessary in the Japanese counterpart (6a) (*kare-wa dekiru darou*), but still not in (6b, e):

- (6)' b. \*kare-wa dekiru-darou ka na  
e. \*kare-wa dekiru-darou yo

Further consideration on modal auxiliary will be postponed to a later occasion.

The whole system of English intonation appears extremely complicated when one looks at a system network in Halliday (1967: Appendix). The final output variations are seven patterns of five simple and two compound tones, but the selections to reach these ends are of great diversity. Further, the results as the final outputs are scattered among the whole table; there are altogether 37 terminals in the table.

The table in Halliday (1967: Appendix) divides each tone more minutely as *secondary tone system*:

- (7) 1 → wide, medium, narrow; 2 → straight, broken;  
4 & 5 → high & low, respectively

For the notion *secondary tone system*, Tench (1996: 74) gives comments as follows:

The secondary tones do not function, as such, in the organization of information — or, for that matter, in either grammar or the communicative functions. Their role is in the expression of attitudes, ...

This description suggests that the secondary tone system is a more appropriate model for indicating interpersonal nuances.

Though the details are not always coincident with that of Halliday's, Watt (1992: 138) subclassifies Tone 1 into four minor groups and glosses each of them for the simple utterance *the police!*:

- |                                           |                             |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (8) 1+n: <i>look out! they're coming!</i> | 1+w: ... <i>that's who!</i> |
| 1.: neutral                               | 1 -: ... <i>who else</i>    |

This subdivision of the falling Tone 1 class is in parallel with the division of simple Tones 1 through 5 and compound 13, 53; 'what changes is its effect on the dialogue' (Tench (1996: 4)).

Chapter 8 in Halliday (1994), however, has abandoned such subclassification, probably due to the space limitation of the volume. It is idiosyncratic there that intonation, together with the rhythm system, is scrutinized in the light of the information structure Given + New. In short, 'tonic foot ... marks where the New element ends' (Halliday (1994: 196)).

My point is that there is no holistic and systematic incorporation of the intonation system into the modal system in the current framework of SFL. This will need more consideration in depth, and that would be one of the most suitable ex-

amples of the branch of the *Systemic Phonology* (Tench (ed., 1992)); rather than pursuing phonology by using system networks, the integration of intonation as a phonological system and the interpersonal metafunction will be more worthy of a systemic approach.

### 3. ENGLISH TAG QUESTIONS

There is no exact counterpart in English to the particles in Japanese and Chinese. We can point out that the discourse particles (DPs; Schourup (1985) is the first attempt to highlight DPs from the linguistic perspective) such as *you know*, *I mean*, and tag questions in English are functionally and semantically similar to them to some extent. In this section we will examine the similarities and differences between the two systems of tag in English and SFPs in Japanese. The consideration of English DPs will be given to a next opportunity.

Tench (1996: 4) gives an explanation that the tag with the falling pitch 'sounds as if you are pretty sure of your facts': if it is with a rising pitch, 'you will sound as if you are not so sure of your facts.'

English tag clauses convey varied connotations *vis-à-vis* untagged counterparts. Typically they are demanding of consent and confirmation, and less generally information-seeking, which is almost analogous to mere interrogation without tags. The former will be realized with the falling pitch and the latter with the rising tone. Pragmatic background behind the demanding of consent and confirmation is that the speaker knows the answer or the circumstances beforehand.

Below is an instance of the English tag question (quoted from Quirk *et al.* (1985: 1600)), with the indication of a rising nucleus (shown with an acute accent) in the main clause followed by a falling nucleus (a grave accent) in the tag<sup>7</sup>:

(9) She was | looking HÁPpy tonight| | WÁSn't she|

For the untagged version (*she was looking happy tonight*), Quirk *et al.* (1985: 1600) comments as follows:

This would make it not a question but a polite suggestion that a (confirmatory) comment would be welcome.

In the tagged one, this nuance 'might be expanded' (*op. cit.*, p. 1600).

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\*7 The notations here are after the one in Quirk *et al.* (1985): thin verticals are symbols of boundaries of tone units; thick one is the terminal boundaries; nuclei are designated by capitals.

In Japanese, instead of tag questions, such confirmatory process is expressed with the addition of sentence-final particles, as the following translation of (9) show:

- (10) a. kanozyo-wa siawase-sou dat-ta  
           she-TOP happy-looking ASSERT-Past  
           'she was looking happy'
- b. kanozyo-wa siawase-sou dat-ta yo ne  
                                                   SFP SFP  
           'she was looking happy, wasn't she?'

(10a) is the plain version without an SFP, and (b) is the 'tagged' counterpart. The double particles 'yo ne' in (b) corresponds to a tag in English. In my observation, a prominence falls on this confirmation in Japanese — often the vowel of the SFP *ne* is prolonged as *nee* and with the falling nucleus on it. This is so that the intention to ascertain the statement should be emphasized.

Halliday (1967: 26), on the other hand, classifies the tag clauses first by polarity: reversed versus constant. Each pattern is with the examples of Tones 1 and 2, therefore altogether four clauses are demonstrated, including one marked tonality — Tone 1 in polarity constant<sup>8</sup>:

(11) Polarity reversed

Tone 2: question (neutral) ("I think I know the answer")  
 //1  $\wedge$  and in fact / most of the / **Zoo** department were / there //  
 2 weren't they //  
 //1 **Jack's** been here //2 hasn't he //

Tone 1 : demand question ("I know the answer; admit it!")  
 //1 —  $\wedge$  this / isn't quite / **true** //1 — **is** it //  
 //1 **Jack's** been here //1 hasn't he//

Polarity constant

Tone 2: echo statement ("I have just gathered")  
 //1 used to be ... the / habit in / **China** //2 **did** it //  
 //1 **Jack's** been here //2 **has** he //

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\*8 The original notation for the nuclei with underlining is substituted with the bold types, following the later modification as in Halliday (1994).

Marked tonality; tag forming one tone group with preceding clause  
Tone 1: echo statement ("I have just learnt"; "I see")  
//1 Jack's been here / has he // (sic)<sup>9</sup>

These are the simple presentations of the combinations of tones 1/2 and the two polarities, and there is no argumentation on which patterns are marked and which are unmarked. In general, the reversed polarity and tone 1 are unmarked.

In the reversed Polarity Tones 1 and 2, the connotation implied is that 'I know the answer.' Of the two tone variations, the speaker's attitude is more determined with Tone 1; this is in a sense as expected since the rising intonation insinuates uncertainty.

The constant polarity is marked itself. The implication here is that the speaker has just known the fact. If an example of the Polarity constant with Tone 1 falling on the tag foot were included, the system would be 'perfect' in that the possible four combinations would be completed. Instead, the 'missing' one presented above in (11) is the one in which its own tone does not fall in the tag foot.

In Tench's (1996: 38-39) terminology, the reversed polarity is referred to as a *checking tag* and the constant polarity is a *copy tag*. The four versions of the combinations of the polarities and Tone in Tench (1996: 39) are completely congruous to the pattern in (11) above. As to the lack of Tone 1 in copy tag, he notes that 'it will sound distinctly odd.'

Generally speaking, the semantic function of English tag questions and Japanese SFPs overlap significantly. It would not be accidental that both of the two categories occupy the clause-final positions. The subtler differentiation in meaning is done with the intonation in English, and the choice/combination of particles in Japanese.

To summarize the contents in sections 2 and 3; the expression of the interpersonal nuance in English is undertaken by intonation to a considerable extent, and some with tag questions. In Japanese, on the other hand, it is expressed mainly with the sentence-final particles, which is the topic in the next few sections.

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\*9 It seems strange that Halliday (1967: 26) introduces this example without the notations of nuclei for the entire utterance. Judging from the preceding comments, it should be indicated as follows:

//1 **Jack's** been here / has he //

## 4. JAPANESE ACCENT/INTONATION

In this and the next section, we will look at how interpersonal nuances are embodied in Japanese. Before going to the argument in Japanese particles in the next section, let us briefly look at the Japanese intonation/accent system.

As far as I know, the Japanese intonation system has not been subject to integral analysis such as in English. This is because intonation does not function as carrier of interpersonal nuances in Japanese. Instead, sentence-final particles play major roles in the domain of semantics and pragmatics.

What is called *accent* in Japanese is the contour in pitch<sup>10</sup>, unlike the stress placement system in English. While intonation system is to be contrasted in the level of the sentences in English, Japanese accent system is valid in distinguishing the minimal pairs in the stratum of words, as in below (my own accent — basically belongs to Keihan dialect —, which is drastically different from the Tokyo accent):

- |      |      |             |      |          |      |        |
|------|------|-------------|------|----------|------|--------|
| (12) | hasi | 'chopstick' | hasi | 'bridge' | hasi | 'edge' |
|      | L-H  |             | H-L  |          | H-H  |        |

In the sense that these make minimal pairs, it is certain that pitch accent can be regarded as phonemes in Japanese.

On the other hand, the Japanese language makes use of the intonation system in the stratum of sentences, though its usage is more restricted than in English. One of the few instances is the rising intonation in interrogative utterances. Below is the minimal pair with the falling and rising tone in the utterance final positions:

- |      |    |           |     |                       |               |
|------|----|-----------|-----|-----------------------|---------------|
| (13) | a. | sou-desu  | ka  | (with a falling tone) | 'Oh, I see.'  |
|      |    | so-COPULA | SFP |                       |               |
|      | b. | sou-desu  | ka  | (with a rising tone)  | 'Is that so?' |
|      |    |           |     | INTERROGATIVE         |               |

(13a) is a response in which the speaker chimed in with what was said before, while (b) is a mere interrogation to the previous statement asking whether it is true or not. Here (b) requires the answer by the rising intonation, but (a) does not. It is a universal inclination that rising tone symbolizes the query for information (see, for instance, Halliday (1994: 302)).

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\*10 Pierrehumbert and Beckman (1988) and Kubozono (1995) are detailed argumentation on the Japanese accent system.

Another minimal pair in intonation distinction:

- (14) a. kore taberu no (with the rising intonation)  
this eat INTER 'Do I eat this one?'"<sup>11</sup>  
b. kore taberu no (with the falling intonation)  
IMPERATIVE 'Eat this one!'

As well as the pair in (12) above, the contrast shown here reflects the colloquial and informal situation of the utterance. Of the two, (b) is typically understood as in a situation that the mother is telling her young child to eat something. Such style is seldom adopted for addressing an adult.

In contrast with the English intonation system for which so many studies are accumulated, the intonation system in Japanese has been a rather minor subject from the semantic perspective. Vance (1987), an introductory reading on Japanese phonology, does not found an independent chapter nor section on sentence intonation. Nor is it argued in detail in Sugito, Kunihiro *et al.* (1997) , Jo-o (1998). Though some phonetic descriptions of the pitch contour pattern in the whole utterances are found in e.g. Saida (1997), Sugito (1997), those are rare in which semantic consideration is incorporated into them. Koori (1997) is one of the few exceptions to this tendency.

It is now evident, however, that the Japanese intonation system is parallel to that of English as an interpersonal nuance carrier, though its systematicity and the semantic range which it covers are limited.

## 5. JAPANESE PARTICLES

At the beginning of this section, it must be noticed that it is not the purpose here to detect the entire system of the Japanese SFPs. It is enough at the moment to present the minimum examples of the Japanese SFPs participating in the interpersonal nuance distinctions.

The Japanese SFPs, though those listed below are only a few among them, denote the modal meanings such as interrogation, imperative, exclamation, consent and confirmation:

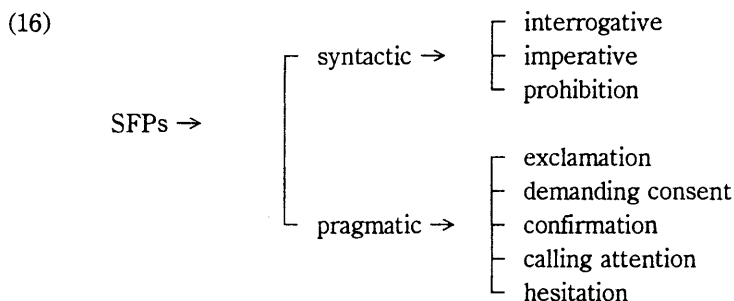
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\*11 It is needless to point out here that the subject is not explicit in Japanese; so it is possible to interpret this utterance as indicating 'Do you eat this one?' But the latter is less probable since to ask someone if he/she wants to eat something may imply that the one who asks himself/herself wants to eat it, which may sound impudent.

(15) *ka, na, no, koto, zo, wa, yo, tomo, ne, sa*

It is distinctive in Japanese SFPs that each item is far from homogeneous as regards to age, sex, and geographical origin of the speaker. Common with all of them are that they are colloquial and informal. The above entries are typical with the Tokyoite speakers; *zo, tomo* are almost exclusively belong to the utterance by the male speakers, while *no, wa* are those of the female counterparts.

Among the various modal meaning denoted by the SFPs, some are concerned with the syntactic and semantic structure — interrogative, imperative, prohibition —, and others with interpersonal nuances of exclamation, demanding consent, confirmation, attention-calling, and hesitation. In a system network, this dichotomy can be illustrated as below:



Of these categories, some such as the interrogative *ka* have been considered so far in relation to the clause intonation system. We will concentrate on the latter group in the rest of this section, as they would be parallel to English intonation and the Chinese particle systems.

The first category is the clauses of exclamation:

- (17) a. *kirei-da naa*  
           beautiful SFP      'How beautiful!'  
       b. //1 ∧ it's / **very** / beautiful //

This type of the emotional announcement is akin to English clauses initiated with *How, What*. Another possible substitute in English is of a phonological nature as in (b): to emphasize with prominence falling on the modifier, in this case *very*. Semantically, such emphasis on the modifier is comparable to exclamatory clauses. The direct 'translation' of English *How beautiful!* into Japanese is *nante kirei (nan-darou)!*, which sounds too theatrical and showy, and is seldom to be

uttered.

Next to be examined is demanding consent, and the resembling category of confirmation:

- (18) a. atui ne  
hot SFP 'It's hot, isn't it?'  
b. kyou wa kayoubi dat-ta ne  
today TOPIC Tuesday COPULA-PAST SFP  
'It's Tuesday today, isn't it?'

As the English translations manifest themselves, these categories of the demanding of consent and confirmation in Japanese are perfectly in agreement with tag questions in English. The most curious point with these categories is that the SFPs are obligatory in them. When speaking to another person / other people, they are ungrammatical without SFPs:

- (18)' a. \*atui b. \*kyou-wa kayoubi dat-ta

These versions (18)' are OK if they are spoken to the speaker himself/herself. In this regard, the interpersonal aspect is not important with these categories than in others — exclamation, attention-calling and hesitation — in which SFPs are optional.

The next examination is on the category of attention-calling:

- (19) abunai yo!  
dangerous SFP 'Danger! / Watch out!'

As a function of the clause, it needs no more explanation than the label *attention-calling*. The possible situations suitable to this utterance will be of great diversity: a car is approaching to the hearer, or something is in front of the hearer while he/she walking and looking away from it, and so on. When any of the SFPs are attached, the utterance became tedious, as if any serious danger were far away.

The last consideration is on hesitation, or the self-questioning:

- (20) dou si-you ka na  
how do-FUTURE SFP SFP 'What shall I do?'

The English translation is with the intention of self-questioning, and it will be strengthened with the level intonation — tone 3. Opposite to the examples in (18) above and not in (18)', this category is mainly construed as self-utterance; in

other words, this class of utterances are not intended to talking to others as communicating something.

To conclude this section: the entire system of the Japanese SFPs would be enormous and need large amount of data and argumentation. As far as that which has been done in this section, however, it is clarified the category of Japanese SFPs embodies rich varieties of the interpersonal nuances. The English equivalents of the nuances implied in Japanese are: exclamatory clauses, phonological prominence, tag questions and intonation. These correspondences will be diagrammed in section 8 below.

Though there are numbers of similarities between Japanese and Chinese SFPs, the direct comparison has not been made in this section. That will be one of the topics to be contrasted in the next section.

## 6. CHINESE PARTICLES

As a typical tone language, intonation of Chinese does not function in the interpersonal metafunction as in English. In that regard, the Chinese phonological system represented by tone is connected with the levels of lexicon, not that of clause.

Beijing Mandarin<sup>\*12</sup>, referred to as *Putonghua* in Mainland China, distinguishes four tones idiosyncratic to each of *Hanzi* or Chinese character, and the reduced tone *qingsheng* — literally, *light voice*<sup>\*13</sup>. In one sense, tone languages, represented by Chinese, can not depend on the intonation system to express interpersonal nuances, since the move in pitch is reserved for the lexicon. This should be testified with other tone languages.

Being one of such tone languages, Chinese is similar to Japanese in that both of them depend on sentence-final particles to verbalize interpersonal nuances. But Japanese depends on an intonation system to some extent in distinguishing semantic differences of declarative — interrogative and interrogative — imperative, as reviewed in section 4.

There are three subcategories in Chinese particles: structural, manner and

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\*12 Mandarin is currently the most prestigious dialect in not only Mainland China but also in Taiwan, and Hong Kong after its return from Britain.

\*13 For the introductory description of the four tones and *qingsheng*, see Kadooka (1998: 233).

SFP<sup>\*14</sup>. Of the three, only the last one focusing on the mood structure is concerned here. The following description about SFP is from Shang, Hishinuma *et al.* (1992: 1937, my translation):

The sentence-final particles directly reflect the speakers' attitude on the occasion of the utterances, undertaking the expression of the emotional and sensitive aspects in addition to the ideational meanings of the sentence.

As far as looking at this definition, Chinese SFPs are similar to the Japanese counterparts with regard to the syntactic and semantic functions. But it is not always the case that the Japanese and Chinese SFPs are completely equivalent to each other from the semantic and syntactic perspective. The detail will be below in this section.

Altogether 12 SFPs are listed in Shang, Hishinuma *et al.* (1992: 1937)<sup>\*15</sup>:

(21) ba, a, ya, ne, na, ma, le, la, lei, lie, lou, lo

One of the phonological peculiarities particular to these particles is that they are pronounced in the qingsheng tone, and that they are always in the terminal positions of the clauses, as exemplified below.

These 12 SFPs can be divided into several groups from the derivational viewpoint. The largest is the one derived from *le*: *le*, *la*, *lei*, *lie*, *lou*, *lo*. Most of them are compounds of *le* (phonetically [lɛ]<sup>\*16</sup>) and monosyllabic interjection-like particles, as follows:

(22) la = le + a, lie = le + ei, lou = le + ou, lo = le + o

That so many compounds are formed with *le* might be related to the fact that *le* is rather an aspect marker than a mere SFP, indicating perfective status. In that

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\*14 Chinese traditional term for this third category is *yuqi-zhuzi*: mood particle. As will be elaborated in the main text, it has much in common with the Japanese SFPs. Mainly for the purpose of the unification with the Japanese grammar, it will be referred to as *SFP* throughout the discussion in this paper.

\*15 The Chinese examples in this section are from this dictionary unless otherwise mentioned. Romanization is based on the Pin'yin system, though tone critics (23-4) above the vowel symbols will be omitted.

\*16 This use as a particle *le* is a reduced form of a full verb *liao* (to finish), with the lenition of the vowel and the tone; as a verb it has the third tone.

sense, the compounds in (22) should be regarded as PERFECTIVE + SFP instead of the duplication of SFP + SFP.

Similarly, *na* is a compound of *ne* + *a*. *A* and *ya* are in complementary distribution (see footnote 20 below), though it may not be always the case.

In the rest of this section, we will look at not all of these 12 particles, due to the restriction of pages, but the typical SFPs as modal embodiment.

Among these 12 SFPs, the interrogative particle *ma* is different from the others in that it is syntactically obligatory whereas the other particles are stylistically optional. In many aspects it is analogous with the Japanese counterpart *ka*, as the following instances illustrate:

- (23) *ni qu ma*  
       you go INTER 'Are you going?'  
 (24) *kimi-wa iku ka*<sup>\*17</sup>  
       you-TOP go INTER 'Are you going?'

The Chinese interrogation (23) can be interchangeable with (25) below without any change in interpersonal nuance, while the Japanese counterpart (26) is syntactically possible, but it is something like an intense questioning:

- (25) *ni qu-bu-qu*  
       not 'Are you going or not?'  
 (26) *kimi-wa iku ka, ika-nai ka*  
                                   NEG 'Are you going or not?'

(26) is pragmatically marked, when comparing with the neutral version (24). Japanese can express the interrogative meaning by the rising intonation without *ka*:  
 (27) *kimi-wa iku* (with rising intonation) 'Are you going?'

This is in contrast with Chinese which can not have such option since there is no semantic distinction by the sentence intonation.

*Ne* (phonetically [nɛ]) is another interrogative particle, but it is used in *wh*-questions, not obligatorily:

- (28) *zhe shi shenme (ne)*  
       this COPULA what SFP 'What is this?'

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\*17 It is unmarked for this utterance with rising intonation. If it is said with a falling intonation, it is felt like the self consent, not addressing the partner in the conversation.

By the addition of the SFP *ne*, the intention of quest of information and the nuance of curiosity are more explicit.

Again this is comparable with Japanese *ka*, which is also optional in the *wh*-interrogation:

- (29) kore-wa          nan-desu          (ka)  
       this-TOP        what-COPULA        'What is this?'

With the existence of the interrogative *nan*<sup>18</sup>, the utterance itself is immediately interpreted as a question. In my observation, this expression either with or without *ka* is rather unmarked with a falling intonation; if with a rising, it sounds as if it were purposefully asked. The version without *ka* is stylistically strange to some extent, though it is syntactically adequate.

Though Chinese *ma* and Japanese *ka* have much in common, there is one syntactic disparity; that is, Chinese *ma* is ungrammatical when added to the *wh*-question as in below (my construction)<sup>19</sup>, whereas Japanese *ka* is acceptable as shown in (29) above:

- (30) \*zhe shi shenme ma

The grammatical contrast between (28) and (30) is because of the co-occurrence restriction of *ma* in the *wh*-interrogatives.

As a summary so far in this section, it can be conjectured that Chinese *ma/ne* and Japanese *ka* are parallel in both syntactic and semantic spheres, but it is not the case that both are exactly similar to each other. In Japanese *ka* can terminate an *wh*-interrogation, as instantiated in (29) above.

Besides the above demonstration of the obligatory use of the SFPs *ma* and

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\*18 Etymologically this form *nan* derives from more formal *nani*. In this particular case, *nani* is not interchangeable with *nan*: "kore-wa nani desu-ka. It will be another topic why *nani* is not appropriate here.

\*19 Some exceptions to the co-occurrence restriction are instanced in Shang, Hishinuma *et al.* (1992: 1002), in which *shei* and *shenme* designate some particular person or thing, respectively:

- |    |                                                                |    |                                                                                          |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a. | shei dou zhidao ma<br>who all know<br>'Does anyone know (it)?' | b. | ni xiang mai xie shenme ma<br>you think buy some what<br>'Do you want to buy something?' |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

ne, below is the stylistic explanation of the SFPs *a* and *ya*<sup>\*20</sup> in Shang, Hishinuma *et al.* (1992: 1937, my translation):

For example, when replying formally to a senior partner, one should say *shi* 'yes.' When talking in a relaxed mood to each other, however, one can add the SFP *a* or *ya*, and can utter as *shi-a*, *shi-ya*; these styles indicate the direct expression of the open-mindedness as well as frankness between the parties.

It is in one sense strange that the bare form *shi* is politer than the version with *a* or *ya*. Consider the English counterpart 'yes, sir' or 'yes, ma'am' in which the addition of honorifics sound courteous.

Below are further elucidations of the SFP *a* (*op. cit.* p.2):

- (31) a. zhe-ci      kaoshi      zhen nan      a  
           this-time examination truly difficult SFP  
           'How difficult is the examination this time!'
- b. wo zhao ta      shi      yinwei      youshi      a  
           I visit him COPULA because be engaged SFP  
           'That I visited him was because I had something to do with him.'
- c. ni      zenme      hai bu      qu a  
           you why still not go SPF      'Why haven't you left yet?'
- d. ni a, zhen you-benshi!  
                                  skillful      'As for you, truly skillful!'
- e. zheli-de      shan a,      shui a, shu a, cao a,  
           here-of mountain river tree grass  
  
           dou shi      wo cong-shao      jiu      feichang shuxi-de.  
           all COPULA since-young EXPLETIVE<sup>\*21</sup> very familiar  
           'The mountains, rivers, trees and grass here, I feel familiar with all of  
           them since I was a child.'

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\*20 Shang, Hishinuma *et al.* (1992: 1669) mention that *ya* is in complementary distribution with *a* in that the former appears following the vowel sounds.

\*21 *Jiu* is originally an adverb with the meaning 'immediately; at once,' and the use as an expletive derives from this.

According to the exposition in Shang, Hishinuma *et al.* (1992: 2), (a) is the announcement of exclamation, (b) vindication in the pseudo-cleft form, (c) interrogation suggesting a nuance like 'why on earth,' (d) topicalization or calling attention and (e) listing of things.

In relation to intonation in English, the use of SFP *a* in (31e) above can be compared with what-is-called listing intonation; that is to say, the SFL *a* is attached to each item listed to indicate that more thing(s) will follow, or some comment is after it. The disaccord is that in English the last entry of the list is realized with the falling tone, whereas *a* is assigned to the last item in Chinese.

Another insightful point with (31e) is that the Japanese counterpart *ya*, though it is a case particle, functions similarly as Chinese *a*:

- (32) koko-no        yama-ya, kawa-ya, ki-ya, kusa-wa, minna tiisai toki kara  
       here-GEN    mountain river    tree grass    all    young time since  
       nare-sitasin-de iru  
       familiar with    STATE

As well as Chinese *a* in the use (31e) above, Japanese *ya* is not in the sentence-final position.

In all of the instances (31a) through (31e), the particle *a* is optional; it can be omitted in all of the above utterances.

Another crucial SFP in Chinese is *ba*, one of the most frequently used particles. We will look at the four major denotations of this particle.

The first uses are for indicating consultation, suggestion, demand, and command.

- (33) a. Women kuai zou ba.  
       we        soon go SFP        'Let's go now.'        (suggestion)  
       b. Gei women chang yi-zhi ger ba.  
       give us        sing one-MEASURE song SFP  
       'Please sing a song for us.'        (demand)  
       c. Bang-bang ta ba  
       help        him SFP        'Help him.'        (command)

This first group of usages are the most fundamental significance of *ba*. The versions without it — (a) *women kuai zou*, (b) *gei women chang yi-zhi ger* — they are syntactically correct and will be felt weaker in addressing suggestion or demand to the hearer, though the intentions will be communicated. The reduplication of the verb *bang* in (c) is almost obligatory with the one-syllable verbs.

The second usage is the expression of agreement or approval:

- (34) Hao ba, wo daying ni le.  
OK SFP I undertake you PERF  
'OK, I will comply with you.' (agreement)

In (34), *ba* is attached to the monosyllabic adjective *hao* (good), which is in contrast with the three examples in (33) in which it is in the clause-final positions. It will need more consideration whether the sentence-final versions as in (34)' are possible or not:

- (34)' a. Hao, wo daying ni le ba  
b. Hao ba, wo daying ni le ba.

In the Japanese counterpart, all of (34) and (34)' will be translated as follows:

- (34)" Ii-yo, hikiuketa (yo).  
OK-SFP undertake 'OK, I will comply with you.'

Whereas the first *yo* is obligatory, the second one is not. This is because the sharing of the information is stronger with the first one than in the second one. In other words, the action of undertaking something belongs to the doer, and in that sense it is a personal matter rather than a interpersonal.

The next implication is interrogative and guessing:

- (35) Zhe-ban huoche bu hui wan-dian ba.  
this-MEASURE train not may be late SFP  
'This train should not be late, should it?'

This utterance is to intend to ascertain that the train would not be late. The addition of the SFP *ba* strongly presupposes the existence of the hearer, since it would be unnatural without *ba*, even though it is uttered to the speaker himself/herself.

As well as *a* and *ya*, *ba* is sometimes in the midst of clauses. In such cases, the label *sentence-final* is slightly unsuitable. The resolution in Shang, Hishinuma et al. (1992: 26) for (36) is intricate; the whole clause consists of antithesis, and each of them is with *ba*:

- (36) Zou ba, bu hao, bu zou ba, ye bu hao.  
go SFP not good also

'If I should go, it is not good; if I should not, it is not good, either.'<sup>\*22</sup>

In the first half of (36), the verb is positive and in the second half negative; the polarity of the adjective *hao* is reversed — negative in the former and positive in the latter, thus making an antithesis. In this contrast of polarity, SFP *ba* is predominant in the rhetoric effect in this particular case.

As a problem to be solved in the next occasions, I would point out that Chinese particles listed so far in this section correspond to the Japanese SFPs and case particles. This would be due to a syntactic variable that there is no equivalent in Chinese to Japanese case particles, hence its use is undertaken by *a*, as exhibited in the example (31e).

## 7. THE SFL FRAMEWORK

One of the major advantages of SFL is, it seems, that any text can be subject to analysis whether it may be written or spoken. This entails naturally that suprasegmental phonemes such as pitch, stress, and intonation are parallel to syntactic categories such as nouns, adjectives and verbs in that they constitute semiotic code — language — as a whole. In this regard, SFL is quite different from the exclusively syntax-oriented approach to language, represented by that of Chomsky.

Under the SFL framework, languages are considered to be an interacted compound of semiotic code and the culture surrounding it. In those linguistic methodology other than the SFL approach, the similarity might have not been captured between intonation in English and the SFPs in Chinese and Japanese, with regard to the interpersonal nuances.

Under the rubric of *interpersonal metafunction*, those categories belonging to the spoken and the written modes can be contrasted directly. For the more detailed comparison, the framework should be strengthened.

In my understanding, there is one criterion to distinguish semantics from pragmatics; semantics is related in the ideational difference, whereas pragmatics is not. When just examining the instances in this paper so far, we can see that the distinction between these two approaches is not always clear-cut. The distinction of the case particles *wa/ga* in Japanese, as briefly acknowledged in section 1, is of a syntactic nature in that topic and nominative case is marked re-

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\*22 Just as in a Japanese subjectless case (14a), the subject of this can be interpreted as 'you.'

spectively; it is pragmatically significant when we face the minimal pair such as (2a) and (2b). In the SFL scheme, such discernment itself is meaningless.

As a matter of fact, however, the SFL framework is constructed upon the English basis. Its typical example is Halliday (1994) in which intonation system is woven into the information structure Given + New. But now that it has been demonstrated so far in this paper that the interpersonal nuances expressed in English intonation are realized with SFPs in Japanese and Chinese, the grammars of the two languages should be quite different from that of English as depicted in Halliday (1994). The contrast among these three languages will be diagrammed in the next section.

It seems unexpected that the intonation patterns bear various interpersonal nuances in English on the one hand, but it is excluded from the argumentation on the polarity and modality system in Chapter 4 in Halliday (1994). Contemplating that intonation is indispensable in the expressing of interpersonal nuances in the spoken mode, my suggestion is that it should be incorporated into the SFL system.

The strict definition of the *interpersonal nuances* should be elaborated within the Systemic scheme; and to what extent it is valid, the relative position to the ideational and textual metafunctions, and so on.

## 8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Summarizing the contrast among the three languages attested so far is the table below, adding the syntactic categories which have not been subject here, such as the classical tripartite inflectional/agglutinative/isolating and the word order of subject, verb and object. The shadowed items are the principal means for communicating interpersonal nuances:

(37)

|                           | English      | Japanese      | Chinese   |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|
| typological class         | inflectional | agglutinative | isolating |
| word order                | SVO          | SOV           | SVO       |
| <i>wh</i> -interrogatives | initial      | free          | free      |
| modal auxiliaries         | +            | +             | +         |
| accent pattern            | stress       | pitch         | tone      |
| intonation                | ++           | +             | —         |

| SFP          | $\pm$ <sup>*23</sup> | $\pm$ | $\pm$ |
|--------------|----------------------|-------|-------|
| tag question | $\pm$                | —     | —     |
| exclamation  | $\pm$                | —     | —     |

If we look at this table without scrutinizing the data in each language, the conclusion may be that 'Japanese and Chinese SFPs assume interpersonal nuances instead of English intonation,' which is not always the case. This is true to some extent, but the correspondences among the three languages are not straightforward, as shown in a chart (40) below.

The tripartite stress/pitch/tone for the rubric *accent pattern* may be controversial. On the one hand, English and Japanese are in contrast with the accent patterns of stress and pitch, respectively; these are relative criteria in stressed — unstressed, high — low, respectively. On the other hand, Chinese is a tone language whereas neither English nor Japanese is; a tone language is an absolute concept that some particular contour is attached to each lexical item. This is another theme for the future development.

Tench (1996: 21-23) exemplifies the minimal pairs of the tonality, under the rubric of 'syntactic structure':

- (38) a. He *asked* himself  
b. He asked himself<sup>\*24</sup>

In (a), the verb *asked* is transitive while its counterpart in (b) is intransitive; in (a) the action was self-questioning, and (b) implies that 'he himself asked (to someone), no one else did the asking.'

Another amusing pair of the tonality in Tench (1996: 22):

- (39) a. *Cut* yourself.  
b. Cut yourself.

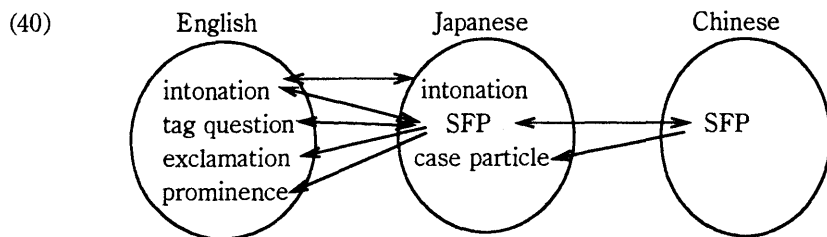
(a) is syntactically unmarked but semantically marked, and in (b) vice versa. (a) is telling that the addresser commands the addressee to wound himself/ herself(b) is to intend to ask the hearer to cut the cake himself/herself.

Below is a diagram depicting the interrelations of the functional categories of the three languages; but the relation between English and Chinese is not attest-

<sup>\*23</sup> English DPs are tentatively included in this category, hence its value is designated as  $\pm$ .

<sup>\*24</sup> The tonality indication with underlining is substituted with italics here.

ed, hence not indicated. The arrow denotes the dependent direction — e.g. English intonation and Japanese SFPs are interdependent or bilateral, whereas Japanese SFPs depends on English prominence unidirectionally:



Notice again that these listed categories are not thoroughgoing; this is only a hinting illustration, needing more pursuit.

It would be more intriguing if we distinguished the degree of correspondence with, for instance, the width of the lines between the categories. Then it would be apparent which relation is predominant and which is subsidiary. The most conspicuous is that the two categories of SFPs in Japanese and Chinese would be related to each other noticeably.

There seem to be two ways of the future direction. On the one hand, each system — English intonation, Japanese and Chinese SFPs — should be elaborated with more detailed data and argumentation, especially SFPs of the two languages since there has been few preceding studies accumulated on them. It will be possible to consider this as the centripetal direction.

One of the possible obstacles to this approach is that it is not the case that the only one category participates in the modal embodiment in a particular language. As shown in the table (37) in this section, the modal system is complicated in that it consists of several independent categories: for example, auxiliaries, intonation, and tags for English.

The other direction, an extensional approach, is to expand the line developed so far in this paper to a typological study of investigating in which system the interpersonal meaning is realized in each language. The ultimate goal may be that the accumulation of the data and argumentation be resulted in a system network.

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