

Discourse of Change among Young Japanese Sojourners : A Case of “I’ve Changed.”¹⁾

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1 Introduction

Japanese and American people sometimes say that their life has changed (cf. Maynard 2004). Utterances such as “Since I got married with A rather than B, my life has changed” and “since I chose College C rather than D, my subsequent life course changed” are fictional examples. In this paper, the discourse describing one’s change in life are called “discourse of change.” A rough equivalent of the English intransitive verb “to change” is “*kawaru*.” The paper focuses on the utterances among Japanese young people which include the usage of “*kawaru*” and “*kaeru*,” the latter being the transitive verb.

I studied some 30 Japanese families who had stayed in S-City, California in 1990–91. It was found that command of English and school grades of the children vary to a great deal depending on the factors such as the age and the length of sojourn, and the parents’ attitude towards Japanese school subjects (Minami 1993, 1995, 2003, 2005). Since 2001, I have been conducting follow-up study and interviewing the families. Thus far I have conducted more than 30 interviews.

The data for this paper consists of 14 interviews. I will examine one of the interviews later in detail, which was with two people. The rest were with one informant. Twelve of the 14 interviews were conducted in Japan while the other two in S-City. All of the interviews were recorded : four with an IC recorder and the other ten with a mini disc recorder. The length of the recording ranges from 103 minutes to 187 minutes with the median of 140 minutes and the mean of 143 minutes. The total

recording time is about 2000 minutes. Except for the small portion with one informant, the interview was conducted in Japanese. All part of the recordings were transcribed. Ten interviews were conducted at restaurants while eating lunch or dinner. Because of eating, considerable silences exist in those recordings.

All of the fourteen informants have the experiences of going to school in California. At the time of the interviews they were 19 to 30 years old. Except for Mika, whose interview will be examined in this paper, they were more than 23 years old and had graduated from college or an equivalent institution at least one year before. Two informants were born in the States while the other 12 in Japan. All of their parents were born in Japan and speak Japanese as first language. The length of life in Japan and the States varies from informant to informant. The shortest length of time in the States was three years and four months by one 25-year-old female informant. The shortest length of life in Japan was Mika's five years.

In a word, the topic of the interviews was "cultural identity." In the original research, I interviewed the mothers of the nine informants. On those occasions, I talked with four of the current informants when they were 13 to 17 years old. With these previously contacted informants, I asked them about their life in the previous 12 years after the original contact in addition to their own recollection of the period before the original contact. With the five newly contacted informants, I tried to collect biographic information with an emphasis on cultural and linguistic aspects of their life.

2 Cultural Identity and Discourse of Change

Citing Redfield, Linton, & Herskovitz (1936), Ward says "acculturation refers to changes that occur as a result of continuous firsthand contact between individuals of differing cultural origins" (1996 : 124). However, acculturation "is more often discussed in connection with those individuals who make cross-cultural relocations, such as

sojourners, immigrants, and refugees” (Ward 1996: 124). The acculturation process and experience is considered to have various outcomes, including cultural identity.

In Paige’s words (1996: 155), “[c]ultural identity refers to the sense persons have of their own values, attitudes, beliefs, style of communication, and patterns of behavior. Put another way, it means what cultural community they identify themselves with.”

In his review of “research dealing with the psychological adjustment of relatively short-term visitors” (1982: 540), Church says “[s]tudies have depended largely on survey questionnaires and problem checklists” (1982: 561). “Such studies tend to be superficial and generally fail to relate sojourn behavior and adjustment difficulties to specific sojourn experiences or cultural differences.” As “methodologies that have been suggested for use in studies of sojourner adjustment,” Church includes “more in-depth interviews, intensive case studies of successful sojourners, autobiographies, naturalistic and participant observation, cultural distance scales, small group experiments, and various obtrusive measures” (1982: 561).

This paper attempts to provide an alternative approach to psychologically oriented studies utilizing self-reports collected with questionnaires consisting of multiple-level scales and “problem checklists,” which have, as Cicourel (1982) points out, problems of “ecological validity”.

Maynard’s (2003, 2004) study of how people tell “good news and bad news” provides a useful point of departure for the present paper. He collected the data from ordinary conversations and analyzed their organizational aspects.

As a social scientist born in Japan and studying people using Japanese language, I see the problem of “translation” exists in almost every aspect of research. Detail transcripts constitute a method of inquiring into the process of “intercultural interpretation.” Not only what is modified or lost in translation, but also how living in another culture can alter the way one speaks and/or writes their native language. I focus

on discourse collected during “in-depth” interviews.

In the data gathered, the informants used the Japanese words “change” (“*kawaru*” and “*kaeru*”) 140 times. I distinguish several groups of usage among them. First is the use of “*kawaru*” which could be translated into “to replace” instead of “to change.” In ordinary written Japanese three kinds of letters are used: *hiragana*, *katakana*, and Chinese characters. Both *hiragana* and *katakana* are syllabic. Chinese characters represent both sounds and meanings. To write “*kawaru*,” we use one Chinese character for “*ka*” and one hiragana each for “*wa*” and “*ru*.” In everyday use, we use four Chinese characters in the place of “*ka*” of “*kawaru*.” The one for “to change” is most often used. The other three characters represent “to replace,” “to substitute,” and “to exchange.” It is often the case that the Chinese character for “to change” is used in place of the other three. Among the 140, three usages of meaning “to replace” are found.

The second group consists of variations of “*kawaranai*” which can be stated as “to be the same.” “*Kawaranai*” is a conjugated form of the verb root “*kawar*” and an auxiliary verb of negation “*nai*.” Its classic form is “*kawarazu*” and three uses of an idiomatic expression “*aikawarazu*” are included here. With variations of “*kawannai*,” “*kawattenai*,” and “*kawariwanai*,” there are sixteen uses of “*kawaranai*” in the corpus.

There are variations regarding the degree to which each expression is established as an idiom and, hence, becomes a kind of adjective. “*Aikawarazu*” stands on the idiomatic extreme while some uses of “*kawarinai*” are located on the other extreme such as in the utterance, “My pronunciation of English has not changed regardless of not speaking the language recently.” I group the usages on the understanding that all category members emphasize the sameness of the referent/subject.

The third group consists of the expression “*kawarimono* (an eccentric person)” and its variations. According to Webster’s dictionary, “eccentric” means “deviating from some established pattern or from

accepted usage or conduct.” Eleven usages of this meaning are observed in the corpus including one marginal case.

In considering cultural identity of Japanese sojourners, these usages are intriguing since they seem to reflect “success” or “failure” of acculturation. In most of the usages, informants called their sojourner friends “*kawarimono*.” In one case, a male informant called his little brother “*kawarimono*.” To “ordinary” Japanese who have never lived abroad, calling a person “*kawarimono*” sounds like a harsh criticism and should be carefully used. Although it is necessary to look into what judgments lie behind calling their friends “*kawarimono*,” the sheer frequency of this expression in the corpus seems to show that the informants, in contrast to ordinary Japanese, attach rather positive evaluations to this expression and, subsequently, to the person called so.

Let me note here that all of the informants seem to be people with common sense and proper demeanor in terms of ordinary Japanese standards. For example, one male informant asked me to stop the recording mini disc recorder while he talked about one of his friends who suffered a mental breakdown while in college. Suffering mental illness is considered a private matter in Japan.

The forth group are the ones with the transitive meanings. Earlier, I said that “*kawaru*” is the intransitive verb and “*kaeru*” is the transitive. But this distinction is not as absolute as it is in English grammar. People sometimes say “*gakko : wo kawaru* (to change schools)” as well as “*gakko : wo kaeru*.” When both usages are combined, 40 “transitive” usages are observed. Twelve of those refer to action other than by the informants, including a statement such as “we need to change Japanese education and model it after the American educational system.” As a college professor, the current researcher was interested in the informants’ ideas about Japanese education. In the corpus, when referring to their own actions, the targets/objects of “to change” included school, job, and major.

In Japanese, moving one’s residence is also described with “*kawaru*.” In the data there are three examples of this. Thus far 74

usages are categorized into 5 groups. The remaining 66 usages have “intransitive” meanings of “to change.”

In order to consider cultural identity, it is useful to distinguish the subject of change. Twenty-three usages refer to the change of things that are distant from the immediate existence of the informants such as “society in general,” “young people,” and “S-city.” This leaves 45 usages.

In the remainder of the paper, I will focus on a portion of the interview in which the word “kawaru” was used intensively. In those uses, valuable findings about cultural identity seem to emerge.

3 “I’ve Changed.”

I will examine the way the sample people talked about changes in their life. Linde (1993) studied life stories and found that “coherence” is an integral part of life stories. In contrast, some of the people I am studying seem to have the needs to claim that they have changed.

Figure 1 Gloss Translation of Excerpt 1

01-02 Mika : yeah, but, before, I wanted to go back to Japan, didn't I?
03 when I was in high school
04 Mo. : yeah, when you were in high school
05 Mika : well
06 Mo. : approximately until you were a high school junior
07 Mika : while I was in junior high and high schools or so
08 Re. : AC
09 Mo. : well
10 Mika : “I am going back to Japan,”
11 that's the only thing I used to say everyday then
12 Re. : oh, really?
13 Mo. : yeah
14 Mika : and then, I joined an activity team or something
15 Re. : AC
16 Mika and made many friends
17 Re. : AC
18-19 Mika well, somehow I've changed, haven't I?

20 Mo. : somehow suddenly you've changed, right
 21 Mika : suddenly I've changed radically
 22 Re. : AC
 23 Mo. : In the final year (in high school), suddenly you've changed (to
 my slight surprise)
 24 Mika : AC
 25 Re. : I see.
 26 Mika : suddenly I have really changed, then
 27 Mo. : yes,
 28 Mika : well, now I think good that I've changed
 29 Re. : is that so.
 30 Mika : 'cause whoever has gone to Japan says he wants to come back,
 right?
 31 Re. : oh, is that so?
 32 Mika : like Tamo (laugh)
 33 Mo. : oh, not only him but everybody is like that, you know.
 34 Re. : AC
 35 Mo. : those who've come back to Japan, too,
 36 Re. : AC
 37-38 Mo. : after all, you know, well, (they) found that they had wrong
 image (about Japan),
 39 Re. : is that so.
 40 Mika : (laugh)
 41 Mo. : it is indeed difficult to live in Japan, and,
 42 Re. : AC
 43 Mika : AC
 44 Re. : but, (new question)

KEY:

AC : acknowlegement token

Figure 1 on page 6 is a gloss translation from an interview (Excerpt 1 on page 21) in which Mika and her mother were interviewed in California by the author. Mika was born in Japan and came to the States when she was five years old. She was to be a sophomore of college at the time of the interview, which was held in August 2002.

The excerpt presented here is about 44 seconds long. In this portion, the word “changed (*kawatta* in Japanese)” was used five times.

Moreover, in the sequence (lines 18–28 in Figure 2) in which the word “changed” appeared, the word is uttered in every turn by Mika’s and her mother except for the researcher’s acknowledgment. What kind of work is being done through this repetition is an intriguing problem.

The translations, as suggested, are tentative. But I will present “I’ve changed” as a hypothetical one for the sake of discussion. In order to interpret the Japanese utterance this way, we need to consider a number of points.

First, I will deal with a substantive issue : what kind of change it is that is claimed to have taken place. Mika has two brothers, one older and one younger. The interview was started by Mika’s mother and the researcher. Mika joined later. In the first part of the interview, the talk was mainly concerned with Tamo, two years senior to Mika. Tamo was in Japan at the time of interview. He had finished twelfth grade in S-City and went back to Japan.

After discussing Tamo, Mika became the topic. Then Mika’s mother asked Mika to join the interview for the sake of the researcher. The first topic was Mika’s college life. Then various questions about her language use were asked. The portion glossed in Figure 1 took place then. Mika uttered the utterance in line 01 without explicit solicitation from the researcher.

Figure 2 Excerpt of “Changed” : Lines 18–28 ²⁾

18	Mika :	(.) un (.)	nanka	kawatta	
18b			well	something	changePA
18c			well,	somehow	I have changed.
19		yo ne :	[: :		
19b		P	P		
19c			haven't	I?	
20	Mo. :	[(nanka)	kyu : ni	[kawatta	() ne
20b		something	suddenly	changePA	P
20c			somehow	you have suddenly	changed, haven't you?

21	Mika :		[KYU : NI KAWA	[TTA				
21b			suddenly	changePA				
21c			I have changed	suddenly.				
22	Re. :			[hun				
22b				AC				
22c				I see.				
23	Mo. :	saigo no ichinende	kyu : ni	kawatta	mo	[nne :		
23b		final	P	one-year-in	suddenly	changePA	p	p p
23c		during the final year	you have	suddenly	changed,	that's true!		
24	Mika :				[u : [n			
24b					AC			
24c					Yes,			
25	Re. :				[hu : : n			
25b					AC			
25c					So.			
26	Mika	kyu : ni	kawac	chat	te			
26b		suddenly	change	AUPA	P			
26c		I have changed	suddenly,	and				
27	Mo. :	hu : n						
27b		AC						
27c		Yeah.						
28	Mika :	(.)	demo	kawat	te	yokatta	to	omotteru
28b		but	change	P	goodPA	as	thinkPR	
28c		But I think	it's good	that I have	changed.			

KEYS :

P :	particle	PA :	past tense
PR :	present tense	AC :	acknowledgement token
AU :	auxiliary verb meaning “to complete”		

Figure 2 has two additional lines. Line b puts the closest English word on the original Japanese word order and line c provides a gloss of the English translation. Line 18 in Figure 1 and Figure 2 is the first time Mika uttered the word “changed (*kawatta*).” Two puzzles need to be solved to interpret line 18. First, in Japanese conversation, the subject of the sentence is often left implicit. In this case, “*nanka* (something)” could be a subject. I created the gloss translation of “somehow I have changed.” Instead, I could have put it as “something has changed in

me.” I presume both English sentences share a similar meaning for the time being. I will come back to this issue later.

The second puzzle addresses the fact that Japanese verbs do not reflect the grammatical distinction between the past tense form and present perfect or past perfect tense. In order to signal that some action has been completed, auxiliary verbs with a particle such as “te-shimau” are often used. “*Kawacchatte*” in line 26 is an abbreviated form of “*kawatte shimau,*” which can be put into “to have changed.” This usage suggests that “*kawatta*” in this sequence should be interpreted as a present perfect or past perfect tense form.

In line 28, Mika says something like, “but I think it’s good that I have changed.” Since the “*kawacchatte*” in line 26 is a perfect tense, “*kawatte*” should be also in the perfect tense. The next question is whether it is a present perfect or past perfect. Put in another way, is the “change” presented as continuing until the point of this utterance or not?

The word “*omotteru*” in line 28 is in the present tense and refers to a current action of thinking/feeling. “*Yokatta*” is either a past tense or a perfect tense form. If “change” is interpreted as a present perfect tense form, “*yokatta*” should also receive this form. This leads to the interpretation that “I am currently feeling that the change that has taken place (that happened and its consequence has been remaining until the point of this utterance) is a good thing.” Or, “I am glad that I have changed.”

4 State before the “Change”

Once the time reference is set, the next question is the content of the “change.” When describing a change, both states before and after are often mentioned. However, in this portion only the state before the change is made explicit. Through lines 01 to 11 in Excerpt 1, Mika describes the state before the change with the help of her mother. The topic just before line 01 was a use of thinking through language. Within the family Mika speaks to her parents in Japanese. It is a kind of a

house rule and “otherwise, I get reprimanded.” With her younger brother, Mika in most cases speaks Japanese. Then the researcher asked whether Mika uses Japanese when thinking academic subjects. Mika responded that she uses Japanese to make rote calculations but utters the result in English. The researcher asked in what mental activity other than calculation does Mika “think in Japanese.” She did not provide a clear answer but said “sometimes Japanese language is used.” Following the researcher’s token acknowledgment, Mika also uses one and starts describing her former state in line 01.

“*Demo* (but)” is used to make a contrast, or to start a new topic. It is not clear whether “old days (*mukashi*)” is introduced as a part of a contrasting pair or just a new topic. “Before, Mika wanted to go back to Japan when she was in high school” (lines 01-03). “*Yo ne* : ” in line 02 works like a tag question and solicits a confirmation. Since the researcher was not in position to confirm this question concerning Mika’s former “B-events” (Labov & Fanschel 1977 : 100), it was apparently addressed to her mother. Her mother supplied the requested confirmation in line 04.

Figure 3 Cause of Change : Lines 14-17

10	Mika :	atashi wa nihon ni kaeru	
10b		I P Japan to return	
10c		”I am going back to Japan,”	
11		to ka (.) shika mainichi itte nakute	
11b		P P only everyday say AU (negation)	
11c		that’s the only thing I used to say everyday then	
12	Re. :	a honto: hhh	
12b		oh really	
12c		oh really	
13	Mo. :	u : n	
13b		AC	
13c		yeah	
14	Mika :	de sorede bukatsu to ka ni hait te	
14b		and then circle-activity P P to joinPA P	
14c		and then, I joined an activity team or something like that	

continuer. “A” in the first part of line 12 can be considered equivalent of the English change-of-state token “oh” (Heritage 1984; Nishizaka 1995). “*Honto* : ” means literally “to be real” or “really.” “A *honto* : ” claims that the researcher understands the state before the change and its seriousness. Mika’s mother utters an acknowledgment token as if confirming the researcher’s understanding. Subsequently Mika moves on to the next topic.

5 Cause and Manner of the Change

“*De*” in line 14 in Figure 3 marks an introduction of a topic related to the previous but slightly different topic. Mika joined the drill team in the American high school and made many good friends. Joining a team and having made friends can be considered the content of the “change.” She changed from the state of wanting go back to Japan to the state of being the team member and having made friends. However, Mika says in line 18, “somehow I have changed.” It does not seem that Mika is claiming that being the team member and having made friends is the state after the “change.”

The word “*sorede*” in line 14 can be translated as “then.” Elsewhere, Mika’s mother said that Mika was active in team activity for three years, which could mean the period of grade 10 through 12. If “*sorede*” in line 14 is taken to be a precise time marker, the timing of the change is after high school since with lines 07 and 10–11 Mika claims that “while I was in junior high and high schools or so, ‘I am going back to Japan,’ that’s the only thing I used to say everyday then.”

Judging from the mother’s claim Mika joined the team when she was in the tenth grade. “*Sorede*,” then, should be taken as marking a logical order not a temporal one. Before, Mika was in the state of wanting to go back to Japan. After she joined the team and made many good friends, she stopped expressing that hope any more.

After the report is made that joining the drill team and having made friends is the trigger or the content of the change, Mika again requests

a confirmation from her mother in line 19 in Figure 2. In line 20 Mika's mother provides a description of the change "*kyu: ni* (suddenly or radically)." It is notable that the mother does not supply the confirmation requested by Mika with "*yone: .*" In contrast, in line 04 the mother gives the token acknowledgment in response to Mika's "*yone: .*" in line 02.

In line 21, Mika agrees with her mother. She starts her utterance just after her mother began uttering the word "*kyu: ni,*" almost making it in "unison" (cf. Kushida 2001). The reason why the word "*kyu: ni*" is repeated four times here and made a focus of attention is not so clear. However, the following two points can be made. By describing the change as a sudden, radical, abrupt one, the conflicting time reference between Mika and her mother can be lessened. Mika refers to the change before and after joining the team in the tenth grade. Mika's mother insists that Mika changed during the final year in high school, the twelfth grade.

The change claimed to have happened here is one Mika has stopped saying, namely, "I'm going back to Japan" everyday. It is rather difficult to specify the point of occurrence of a change of stopping a habitual action. It's different from stopping such active, continuous behavior as chatting and laughing. "*Kyu: ni*" might be used to emphasize the fact that Mika's saying the phrase literally stopped.

6 Declaration of Cultural Identity

After the point that the change was sudden and radical is established in lines 20–26, Mika provides her evaluation about the change in line 28, "but I think it's good that I have changed." She then explains the reason saying that "cause whoever has gone to Japan, such as my brother, who now says he wants to come back, right?" in lines 30 and 32. Here Mika talks about what will happen if she had not changed and fulfilled her hope of going back to Japan. Tamo, her brother, is one of those who did go back to Japan. Now he says he wants to "return" to

the States.

It is curious that Mika implicitly requests from her mother the background information supporting her explanation. It might be the case that Mika does not feel her Japanese is good enough or she just wants her mother to talk about Tamo. It is notable that not only the researcher but also Mika in lines 40 and 44 provide an acknowledgment to the statements by Mika's mother in line 37-38 and 41. Mika's response in line 40 is an exaggerated one with laughing.

In summary, Mika's line in 28 sounds like a declaration of her cultural identity. When she was in junior high and high schools, she wanted to go back to Japan and expressed the desire almost "everyday." However, after she joined the drill team when she was in the 10th grade, she made good "American" friends and stopped expressing the hope. As a college sophomore, she concludes that her not going back to Japan was a correct decision. For those (like her brother) who achieved the hope are discontent with life in Japan.

Elsewhere, Mika says she does not plan to live in Japan in the near future except on a college exchange program. She is thinking of going to Japan for one year as an exchange student. All in all, the discourse of change in Excerpt 1 constitutes talk of cultural identity in which Mika has chosen the "community" of American people instead the one in which Japanese language and cultural codes dominate.

7 Co-construction

Utterances in interview situations cannot be assumed to be "natural" in the sense as those observed in ordinary conversation. Discourse in Excerpt 1 seems to be located somewhere between the typical one-to-one interview and the typical conversation between a daughter and a mother. All of the researcher's turns consist of acknowledgments, mostly "*u: n*" and "*hu: n,*" and one each "*a honto:*" in line 12 and "*a ::::*" in line 31.

While the contributions from the researcher look minimal, Mika's

mother contributes a great deal. In addition to the sequence describing how Tamo and others who have gone back to Japan are dissatisfied with the life in Japan, she makes two critical contributions in the portion transcribed in Excerpt 1. One is that Mika's change was sudden and radical, which was discussed in the previous section.

The other is that she pinpoints the timing of Mika's change as in line 06, "approximately until (Mika was) a high school junior." The point is reiterated in the mother's line 23, "in the final year (in high school), suddenly you've changed (to my surprise)."

One issue which is very interesting from the perspective of the current analysis is whether and how the mother's contribution and the relative lack of the researcher's contribution have affected the way Mika makes the utterance in line 28. In this regard, Mika's line 05 is critical if it is a repair initiated by her mother. Listening to the way it is uttered, it sounds like a self-repair. Mika sounds like she is repairing herself.

Figure 4 Lines 01–10 of Excerpt 1

03– Mika: [ko : ko : jidai] e [CHU : KO : gurai de]
 04– Mo.: [u : n ko : ko : jidai ()] ko : ko : [ninen gurai made]
 09 eto
 10 Mika : atashiwa nihon ni kaeru

After listening carefully to aspects of prosody and paralinguistic elements in lines 01–10 of Excerpt 1, Figure 4 is made to show the details of sequential organization. It is as if Mika and her mother talked in parallel. The emphasis of "*CHU: KO:*" in line 07 now seems like a claim to the floor. Mika's mother subsequently pauses with "*eto,*" which is used as a filler as well as initiating a repair.

If the utterances were indeed parallel, it could be argued that Mika's utterance was not affected by the substance of the mother's remarks. However, even though it is the case that Mika's lines in 07 and 10–11 were not affected by her mother's contributions, it may be still the case that the following part was somehow affected. In case the mother

had not specified the end of the former state of the change as “approximately until you were a high school junior” in line 06, it seems that Mika had not brought up the topic of joining the team and having made friends.

In summary, although the discourse of change occurred in an interview situation presumably different from ordinary conversation, they are constructed between two informants collaboratively and the researcher could be seen as a passive listener. Thus, the exchange between Mika and her mother could be viewed as more like an informal conversation.

8 Other Examples

In the interview with Mika and her mother the word “*kawaru*” was used 17 times. Nine were concerned with Mika’s change analyzed above. Three of the remaining were used by Mika’s mother in talking about Tamo. His decision to go back to Japan was firm and “did not change.” The other two denoted Mika’s change in college.

In the corpus, I’ve found a similar usage of “*kawaru*” with two other sojourners. One is Kengo. He was 30 years old at the time of the interview. He was born and raised in the States. After graduating from high school in California, he went back to Japan and became a college freshmen. He suffered severely from so-called culture shock in the first year of Japan. In the second year, he “cleared away (*fukkiireta*).” Previously, Kengo was concerned with whether the behavior which he was supposed to produce was correct or not, and if it made sense. After one point he stopped worrying and started “to adjust flexibly.” “After that, to a great extent, suddenly he has changed.”

It is notable that Kengo initiated the sequence in which the above utterance is nested without explicit solicitation from the researcher. Also note that the word “*kyu: ni* (suddenly)” is used to modify the change.

In the other case, Hisako said she hasn’t changed. The 29-year-old female informant also reported that her friends from the pre-sojourn

days said that she had not changed.

In the case of Mika and Kengo, the change is presented not only as sudden and radical but also as general and pervasive. General orientation towards Japan or a community in which Japanese culture dominates is claimed to have been changed.

Among the 14 informants, five were enrolled in college in the States. Three of them took leave of absence because they felt they were not ready for college life. After more than one year, all of the three went back and earned college diplomas. Among the nine informants who had higher education in Japan, two took five years to finish college, which is unusual in Japan where more than two-thirds of the students earn the bachelor's degree in the minimum four years.

In that sense, those five had difficult experiences. However, only one of the five, Keigo, reports the change in the interview. The others used expressions such as "That was the time when I had been the least confident in my life," and "At some point, I've found that if I continued the way I am, I would go nowhere." One informant said "matured" instead of "changed."

Other ways of expressing change is making a contrast. "Now I do not feel like leaving Japan," and "I thought I was good at math" are the examples.

This paper provides a detailed analysis of one way of reporting change in one's self conception through the discourse of change. Discourse of change seems to be constructed so that the confirmation of the current state is established. There are other expressions which look do the same work. We need to look for other ways that parallel the discourse of talk.

NOTES

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2) Symbols and keys for transcripts are as follows (cf. Schegloff 2007 : 265-269) :

[Separate left square brackets on two successive lines with utterances by different speakers indicates a point of overlap onset, whether at the start of an utterance or later.

(.) A dot in parentheses indicates a “micropause,” hearable but not readily measurable ; ordinarily less than 0.2 second.

:: Colons are used to indicate the prolongation or stretching of the sound just preceding them. The more colons, the longer the stretching.

WORD Upper case is used to indicate some form of stress or emphasis, either by increased loudness or higher pitch.

() When all part or part of an utterance is in parentheses, or the speaker identification is, this indicates uncertainty on the transcriber’s part, but represents a likely possibility. Empty parentheses indicate that something is being said, but no hearing can be achieved.

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APPENDIX

Excerpt 1 Interview with Mika and Her Mother

- 01 Mika : u : n (.) demo mukashi(wa) watashi nihon ni
 02 kaeri takatta yo ne :
 03 [ko : ko : jidai
 04 Mo. : [u : n ko : ko : jidai ()
 05 Mika : e
 06 Mo. : ko : ko : [ninen gurai made
 07 Mika : [CHU : KO : gurai de
 08 Re. : u : n
 09 Mo. : eto
 10 Mika : atashiwa nihon ni kaeru
 11 toka (.) shika mainichi itte nakute
 12 Re. : a honto : hhh
 13 Mo. : u : n
 14 Mika : de sorede bukatsu tokani haitte
 15 Re. : un
 16 Mika : tomodachi ga fueete
 17 Re : u : n
 18 Mika : (.) un (.) nanka kawatta
 19 yo ne : [: :
 20 Mo. : [(nanka) kyu : ni [kawatta () ne
 21 Mika : [KYU : NI KAWA [TTA
 22 Re. : [hun
 23 Mo. : saigo no ichinende kyu : ni kawatta mo [nne :
 24 Mika : [u : [n
 25 Re. : [hu : : n
 26 Mika kyu : ni kawacchatte
 27 Mo. : hu : n
 28 Mika : (.) demo kawatte yokattato omotteru
 29 Re. : hu : : n
 30 Mika : datte minna nihon ni ikuko wa kaette kitai toka yu : shi ne
 31 Re. : a : : :
 32 Mika : Tamo toka hhhh
 33 Mo. : a minna so : nandesuyone
 34 Re. : u : : n
 35 Mo. : nihon ni kaettekita (.) kata tachi mo,
 36 Re. : u : n
 37 Mo. : kekkyoku yappari (.) a nanka ko : ime egaiteta

38 ime : ji to chotto [chiga [tte ne
39 Re. : [hu : : n
40 Mika : [aha hhhh
41 Mo. nihon ga (.) yappa kurashi nikuku te
42 Re. : hu : : [: n
43 Mo. : [hu : : n
44 Mika : u : n
45 Re. : demo (next question)

Discourse of Change among Young Japanese Sojourners :
A Case of “I’ve Changed.”

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ABSTRACT

In talking about their life, people sometimes says that they have changed. From transcripts of the interviews with young Japanese people conducted in Japanese language, the usages of the verb “kawaru” were collected and categorized into six groups. One discourse portion includes the use of the word which can be translated “I’ve changed.” A detailed analysis of the transcripts shows the states before and after the change and how the manner of the change is presented in the discourse.

KEY WORDS : cultural identity, discourse of change, Japanese sojourners