Comparison of Organizational Patterns of Paragraphs between Native Speakers of English and Japanese Learners

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1. Introduction

In recent years, as it has become easier to have access to native speakers of English, we have increasing opportunities to enhance mutual understanding through communication in English. Experiences of contact with people with different cultural backgrounds and patterns also bring Japanese learners considerable recognition of, and perception of, their own cultural and thought patterns.

I often hear native speakers of English express their frustration with how Japanese learners express themselves. They complain that it is hard to understand Japanese people's indirect or non-linear expressions, compared with the direct and linear way in which they express themselves.

Kaplan claims that native language patterns are negatively transferred to English compositions and presents, diagrammatically, five different cultural thought patterns: English, Semitic, Oriental, Romance and Russian (1966). In his diagram, Oriental cultural thought patterns are described as circular and non-linear, while English cultural thought patterns are represented as direct and linear. In spite of later criticism of his article, it is undeniable that his theory has had considerable influence upon ESL and FL pedagogical research.

Focussing on the sequencing of the paragraphs of written texts, this paper presents an investigation into how the rhetorical organizational patterns of expository prose differ between native speakers of English and Japanese learners.

2. Organizational Patterns of Paragraphs in English and Japanese Expository Prose

American students are given instructions on organizing compositions in their English classes. They are taught a model of English expository prose that aims to be organized deductively, although both deductive and inductive styles, sometimes a combination of the two are developed in the writing. In the deductive style, a general statement begins a text with subtopics following it to support and develop the main ideas. In the conclusion, the writer presents his or her concluding opinion regarding the topic of the text. On the other hand, while they are taught how to read and write Chinese characters, Japanese students are not given
special instructions on how to organize compositions. Common Japanese expository prose is organized inductively, though deductive style may be exhibited, too. Some other organizational styles are also observed in Japanese written texts. In inductive manner, a concrete fact is initiated with a general statement following it. In the conclusion, the writer sometimes does not express his or her concluding opinions, leaving them to the reader's imagination.

According to Hinds (1980), while English paragraphs have a hierarchical structure with an indefinite number of subtopics or perspectives, Japanese paragraphs tend to be organized by a return to a baseline theme at the initiation of each subtopics or perspective. The paragraph is a vital minimum segment of a text written in English. English expository paragraphs are organized centering around the topic sentence, and other sentences in the paragraphs support the topic. In Japan, the idea of a paragraph has hardly been developed. Hinds defines typical organizational patterns of Japanese expository prose as ki, sho, ten, and ketsu, referring to Tenseijingo, a column of the Asahi Newspaper. This rhetorical style is derived from old Chinese poems. According to his definitions, ki introduces the writer's argument. Next, sho develops that argument. Ten turns the idea to a subtheme that does have some connection with the major theme but does not have a direct explicit connection with it. This is an aspect of Japanese organizational development that does not seem to be present in English texts. Lastly, ketsu brings all of this together into a conclusion. Hinds concludes that the different styles of organization of English and Japanese are due to a difference in cognitive perception.

3. Experiment

3.1. Object

Distinctive differences in organizational patterns of expository prose have been observed between English and Japanese. Rhetorical organizations of paragraphs that constitute expository prose are assumed to show distinct characteristics. What are the causes of the differences between the two? Kaplan has suggested that it is due to the cultural thought patterns. Hinds further develops Kaplan's ideas, arguing that the difference in organizational patterns is due to differences in cognitive perception, although he does not accept Kaplan's exclusive ideas of negative transfer to ESL and EFL learners. It has already been recognized for a long time that English native speakers' cultural thought patterns are linear and direct, while Japanese counterparts are relatively non-linear and indirect. In order to be able to improve Japanese learners' discourse strategies, it is very valuable to put this long-established theory to the test by administering an experiment. How do different readers whose mother tongue is English or Japanese organize the paragraphs of expository prose which were originally written in English
and Japanese? How does each reader react to the rhetorical organizational patterns reflected through texts from the other culture, compared with that of their own mother tongue? I would like to compare the difference between the perceptions of native speakers of English and Japanese learners.

3.2. Subjects

The subjects were 45 Japanese students of English and 16 native speakers of English living in Hiroshima. (The number of subjects differs in each experiment because of the separate days of experiments.)

The Japanese learners (henceforth referred to as JL) were first-year and second-year English major students at the YMCA International Business College in Hiroshima. This school provides the students, most of whom graduated from senior high school, with a two-year English course comprising classes such as reading, writing, conversation, interpretation, preparation for Eiken Step, etc. Among the students, 12 students had passed Eiken 2nd Step Test, and 12 students had passed pre-2nd Step Test when the experiment was conducted. Their average scores of TOEIC administered in May, 1994 was 345. The 16 native speakers of English (henceforth NS) live in Hiroshima City, are aged between twenties to forties and come from the U. S. A., England, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. They are all teachers of English as a foreign language.

3.3. Materials

Two written texts were distributed to the subjects. One is "Harvard Three Lies" written by Steven Wardell in Weekly Student Times. The other is "Otakuzoku", a rewritten English version of the Japanese 'Tenseijingo' in the Asahi Newspaper.

3.4. Procedures

The seven paragraphs of each article (A-G) were re-ordered. The subjects were then asked to read and organize them into a logical and coherent order. The JL did this under the supervision of a teacher in their English classroom in 80 minutes. They were allowed to consult dictionaries. The NS were asked to submit their answers as soon as they completed them. Later, they were interviewed on their general impressions of the texts and the reasons for their answers concerning their sequential styles.

4. Results

4.1. Correlation between JL's Correct Percentage and Proficiency Level
The term 'correct percentage' might cause misunderstanding here because there are no exclusive answers in organizing the story; one person's organization of the paragraphs may, for example, be justified as being as valid as the order of the original text. Each person has his or her own way of developing it. However, I would like to use the expression of 'correct percentage' for the sake of convenience in order to identify the number of NS and JL who put the paragraphs in the same order as they were in the original articles, or in an order that is judged to be acceptable from the viewpoint of cohesion and coherence. The correlation between JL's correct percentage and TOEIC was investigated as follows.

---Harvard and Three Lies
\[ n = 43, \quad r = -0.0175 \quad (n: \text{the number of subjects}, \quad r: \text{Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient}) \]

---Otakozoku
\[ n = 34, \quad r = -0.3118 \]

The above figures suggest that there is no correlation between JL's correct percentage and their proficiency level, judging from the present data of the experiment (p>.05).

4.2. Comparison of Correct Percentage between NS and JL

(1) Harvard and Three Lies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JL</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As variance between NS and JL was equal, t-test was conducted. The result indicates that for this text NS's correct percentage is far higher than JL's \( t(59) = 4.84, \quad p(.001) \).

(2) Otakozoku

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JL</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As variance between NS and JL was equal, t-test was conducted. The result indicates that for this text there is no difference in correct percentage between the NPs and the JLS (t(52)=1.48, n.s.)

4.3. Comparison of Correct Percentage in Each Paragraph

(1) Harvard and Three Lies

As the results below show, NSs gave more correct answers as compared with the original text than JLS in numbering the paragraphs of this text.

Table 1
Correct Number Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position of Paragraph</th>
<th>Correct Number</th>
<th>Incorrect Number</th>
<th>*Comparison of Correct Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>JL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 --- Fisher's exact test
3.5 --- chi-square test

(2) Otakuzoku

Because there is no difference in the 'correct percentage' between JLS and NSs, it is not significant to compare the 'correct percentage' of each paragraph between the two groups of subjects.

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### 4.4. Sequences

(1) Harvard and Three Lies

Table 2 shows each of the paragraphs of the text "Harvard and three lies", the percentage of the two groups of subjects who chose which paragraph should follow that paragraph.

All the native speakers selected Paragraph E as the beginning paragraph, the same as the original article. Almost all the NSs selected Paragraph D as the final paragraph (94%). Several sequential patterns become apparent in Table 2. The selection of the sequence of Paragraph G followed by Paragraph B occurs extremely frequently (94%). The sequence of Paragraph E followed by Paragraph G and Paragraph F followed by Paragraph A are also rather high (75% and 63% respectively).

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pa</th>
<th>*</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* the initial paragraph  
** the final paragraph
As for the JLs, a variety of sequential patterns are apparent. A relatively high number of JLs chose the same paragraphs as NSs at the beginning and at the end of the text (60% and 49% respectively). The sequence of Paragraph C followed by Paragraph F and Paragraph E followed by Paragraph G are also rather high (36%, 33% respectively).

(2) Otakuzzoku

Table 3

Percentage of Sequential Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pa</th>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>JL</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**8 82 3 0 8 0 5 0 19 0 24 0 32 18**

* the initial paragraph

** the final paragraph

Table 3 shows the sequential percentage in Otakuzzoku between each paragraph and that which follows it. As for the JLs, they showed a variety of sequential patterns which suggest no peculiar organizational styles. Although the percentage is much lower than that of the NSs, the JLs do show a rather high percentage in their choice of the initial paragraph (Paragraph C-38%). Noticeable sequences are Paragraph A followed by Paragraph B and Paragraph B followed by Paragraph G (30%, 46% respectively).
The NSs, on the other hand, indicated distinctive sequential patterns that reflect their thought patterns, although it is worth noticing that their rhetorical organizational patterns are different from that reflected through original text order. They showed extremely high uniformity in their choice of the final paragraph (82%), and in the sequence of Paragraph C followed by Paragraph E (82%). They also indicated considerable concurrence as to the initial paragraph (56%) which is the same as in the original paragraph, in the sequences of Paragraph B followed by Paragraph G (53%), Paragraph F followed by Paragraph E (65%) and Paragraph G followed by Paragraph A (41%).

5. Discussion

I would like to develop my speculations on thought patterns between NSs and JLS, synthesizing the results of the three main sources of information in this research: correct percentage, sequential patterns and interviews with NSs.

5.1. Harvard and Three Lies

(1) NSs' rhetorical organizational patterns

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of Other Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0 (0/16)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25 (4/16)</td>
<td>2 (Paragraph 3,6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>31 (5/16)</td>
<td>3 (Paragraph 3,6,7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>63 (10/16)</td>
<td>3 (Paragraph 1,2,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>44 (7/16)</td>
<td>3 (Paragraph 2,6,7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25 (4/16)</td>
<td>3 (Paragraph 2,4,6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>13 (2/16)</td>
<td>2 (Paragraph 1,2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows an analysis of the variation between the native speakers as to which paragraph should be placed first, second, third etc. in paragraph choices. It is significant to perceive that the lowest percentage of variance occurs with the first and last paragraphs (0% and 13% variance, respectively), while that of the middle paragraphs is the highest (eg. position of paragraph 1:0%, position of paragraph 7:13%, position of paragraph 4:63%). This suggests that among NSs there
is a generally accepted perception as to how expository prose begins and ends but several strategies in developing a story in the middle. In terms of "correct percentage", 100% of the NSs chose the same first paragraph as in the original text, while 94% chose the same final paragraphs as in the original text.

The sequential patterns as decided by the NSs are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequences</th>
<th>Number of people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. E-G-B-F-A-C-D (or E-G-B-F-C-A-D)</td>
<td>5 (the same as the original text)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-G-B-F-C-D-A</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. E-G-B-C-F-A-D</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. E-G-B-A-C-F-D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. E-G-F-A-B-C-D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. E-F-C-A-G-B-D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-F-G-B-C-A-D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. E-C-G-B-A-F-D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-C-G-B-F-A-D</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In spite of several different sequences, certain types of rhetorical styles as reflected by the NSs' choices can be observed. (I have to admit, however, that there are some flows of thought that I could not comprehend, even after the interview.)

The common thought patterns that are reflected in the sequential patterns are described as follows.

1. Introduction --- General introductory statement

   The topic of the article is a statue. The first paragraph talks about something very general on the statue and catches the reader's attention, starting with 'there is'.

2. Development --- Explanation of the topic by giving more information.

   There are two rhetorical strategies of developing a theme: deductive and inductive. As seen above, sequential pattern of F followed by C develops from general information to specific details in a deductive style. In F, very general information is given about how people feel about the statue. Next, C gives the reader more specific information about how people respond to the statue. And A is the continuation, giving the reader more specific information about how the statue is used or how people respond to it.
On the other hand, as seen in b and c, sequential pattern of C followed by F develops from specific information to general information, using an inductive style. In C, the students, tourists, and various people have found this statue to be interesting and ironic as this school's truth was revealed. Then, F provides general information regarding this statue, saying that incorrect information on this statue provides many laughs.

3. Conclusion — Ending statement

The following phrase seems to conclude the point. 'So Mr. Harvard, calmly looking out over Harvard Yard from his right seat-- ' is a kind of closing remark. It talks about the statue as a teacher, referring back to the points that the law professors are giving a lecture to the students.

(2) JL's rhetorical organizational patterns

It is difficult to draw a conclusion of specific organizational patterns unique to the JLs because of the variety of their answers. Unlike the NSs, their answers vary widely, so that obvious sequential patterns are not identifiable. Those paragraphs and sequences that do exhibit a comparatively high percentage are as follows:

the beginning—Paragraph E (60%), the end—Paragraph D (49%).

Two noticeable sequential patterns are as follows: C-F (36%), E-G (33%).

What can be derived from this information? The selection of the first and last paragraphs, which are the same as in the original text, suggest that it is easy for them to find both the beginning and the end of the text because of the identifiable rhetorical styles. It might be assumed that the rhetorical style of 'there's' indicates the beginning of a story, or that the paragraph starting with 'So' and ending with the sentence 'Nobody gets upset about his lies.' seems to be the concluding paragraph. It is impossible to synthesize developmental process in the middle of the text. As for sequence of E followed by G, some JLs chose this because of cohesive ties. The reference 'that' in Paragraph E refers to 'That's what the words under the statue say' in Paragraph G (underline was drawn by a writer).

In terms of inductive and deductive methods, the number of JLs who chose the inductive sequential pattern of C-F (36%) is higher than that of those who chose the deductive sequential patterns of F-C (19%). It may be assumed that this is due to the fact that an inductive approach is more common in Japanese thought patterns. It is, however, dangerous to draw a general conclusion from the limited data and low percentage here.
5.2. Otakuzoku

The original Japanese article was 'Tenseijingo' in the Asahi Newspaper. The article, dealing with change of supermarkets and young people's tendency to be unable to communicate, comprises seven paragraphs. The English version of the article was rewritten so that the JLS would be able to interpret the meaning of the story more easily. John Hinds argues that the organization of Japanese paragraphs is 'a return to a baseline theme at the initiation of each subtopic or perspective' (1980). This article is typical of his description. The theme of each paragraph always goes back to the changing of traditional markets into supermarkets and young people's lack of communication. In terms of ki-sho-ten-ketsu, it might be acceptable to say that it contains old Chinese poetry style of ki, sho, several Ten and undecisive ending of Ketsu or no Ketsu (there is no clearly decisive conclusion here). As shown in Table 3, it is worth considering one specific sequential pattern unique to the NSs. More than half of the NSs developed their own sequential patterns for the seven paragraphs which were different from that of the original text.

(1) NSs' rhetorical organizational patterns

The most common sequential patterns of the NSs are as follows.

C→F→E→D→B→G→A

(82%) (65%) (35%) (59%) (53%) (35%)

As initial paragraphs: C(59%), B(12%), D(21%), E(12%)
As final paragraphs: A(87%), G(21%)
cf. original order D-B-G-A-E-C-F

The extremely high percentage of Paragraph 3 being chosen as the initial paragraph (82%) and Paragraph A as the final paragraph (87%) suggests that the NSs have rhetorical thought patterns that they have acquired through their own writing strategies. After showing the original article to the NS subjects, they all criticized the Japanese writer's thought patterns, saying that they could not grasp what the main topics, whether the change of the markets or Otakuzoku. The NSs were skeptical whether the two topics were related. The writer's practice of going back to the two baseline themes made the NSs feel that there is no logical flow in the article.

In terms of deductive and inductive styles, the NSs organized the paragraphs deductively, while the original article is organized inductively. The NSs chose Paragraph C as the introduction with the reason that the most general statement comes first to give the reader interesting background information. Paragraph C
tells of Otakuzoku in general and Paragraphs F, E and D explain concrete facts about the current Japanese situation. Lastly, a rather general statement about the Osaka markets comes as a conclusion. This is not a decisive conclusion but the best way to end a story because of the nostalgic phrase 'We will miss hearing it all'. As one of the English native speakers suggested, this is a typical ending of American newspaper article.

On the other hand, however, the original article uses an inductive approach. First, starting with Paragraph D that describes concrete facts about public markets followed by Paragraph B, G, and A providing general information.

(2) JLS' rhetorical organizational patterns

Compared with the NSs' distinctive sequential patterns, the JLS' sequential patterns are less easy to identify. However, there are some sequential patterns which can be observed:

\[ C(38\%) \rightarrow F \rightarrow A \rightarrow B \rightarrow G(32\%) \]

\[ 54\% \quad 30\% \quad 46\% \]

It is surprising that more than half of the JLS selected Paragraph C as the initial paragraph. The connection between Paragraphs C-F is easy to recognize because of the reference: in Paragraph F, 'acting like this' refers to the former statement about Otakuzoku in Paragraph C. This shows that the JLS interpreted cohesive ties properly. Their organizing styles in the central portion of the text are hard to identify or specify. The sequence of A-B is connected because of the same topic of markets. The sequential pattern of C-G is selected because of semantic meaning. The JLS presumably thought that Paragraph B's 'In this system, customers bring what they want to buy to the register' is connected to the 'many storekeepers who feel that young customers don't want to talk to them' in Paragraph G. Although the most commonly chosen final paragraph is different from almost all the NSs, it is interesting to recognize some similar sequential patterns between the JLS and NSs, which also occur in the original article. It is summarized from the results that some JL (presumably high proficient students) and most NS selected some part of sequence the same as the writer's intention when cohesion and coherence are considerably obvious. However, what comes first and last is different from in the original article. Considering the fact that some JLS chose the same first paragraphs as the NSs, it is speculated that some Japanese learners will tend to acquire English organizational patterns through their English classes.

6. Conclusion

Several speculations were confirmed through the research project described
above. As John Hinds has suggested, Japanese paragraphs in journal-style expository prose are organized by a return to a baseline with non-linear flowing, while English paragraphs have hierarchical structures with one main theme followed by subtopics. Japanese expository prose is organized inductively, while typical rhetorical English expository prose is organized deductively.

As native English speakers tend to see their thought patterns as linear and direct, they might feel somehow confused in reading texts written using Japanese organizational patterns that they are unfamiliar with. It is, however, worth noticing that native speakers of English take both deductive and inductive approach in developing their thoughts. The young Japanese learners of English who were subjects for this research did not display any organizational patterns that could be said to be typically Japanese but, rather, tended to reflect organizational patterns similar to the English native speakers. This brings into questions Kaplan's view of learners' having negative transfer from their mother tongue, a phenomenon that was not apparent in this research.

Although definitive conclusions cannot be stated here giving the limited nature and scale of the research undertaken, it is suggested that young Japanese learners of English, especially highly proficient students, showed a tendency to be influenced by English organizational patterns. This might bring hope to the Japanese pedagogical perspective that, a native speaker level of proficiency in English is within the reach of Japanese EFL learners through proper teaching methodology.

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Bibliography


Appendix

(1) The following story is from an article which appeared in The Student Times. It is composed of seven paragraphs. They are not put in order. Read the following paragraphs and put them in order in order to make the connections logical and coherent. Write the number of each paragraph later.

A. Law professors sometimes take their first-year class over to the statue, from their classrooms a couple of blocks away, to give a lecture about truth and the need to question authority. They expose the three lies, and conclude. "Don't even trust Harvard. Don't believe totally what I tell you. Learn and prove things for yourself."

B. First, the college was founded in 1636, not 1638. John Harvard made a significant gift to the college in 1638, so that is the date associated with him. Second, John Harvard was not Harvard's "Founder." He was the first major contributor, donating his books and half his money. Third, no one knows what John Harvard looked like. Many years ago the students held a contest to dress the way Mr. Harvard may have looked. The winner became the model for this statue by America's best sculptor. So the statue is not, in fact, of John Harvard.

C. Many people who visit Harvard stop to have a photo taken beside the famous "lying statue." This includes crowds of eager high school students and their parents, who are visiting colleges before applying to them. And it also includes tourists from all over the world, especially Japan, who can be seen in large groups surrounding the statue at almost any hour of the day, patiently waiting while each person steps up beside the statue and smiles for a photo.

D. So Mr. Harvard, calmly looking out over Harvard Yard from his high seat, is a teacher himself from time to time. And every day he leads the pleasant life of a popular celebrity. Nobody gets upset about his lies.

E. In Harvard Yard - the center of our campus - there's a collection of handsome, old buildings and one more thing: a statue of John Harvard himself. Or that's what it appears to be.

F. This statue's incorrect information provides many laughs among students and tourists, especially because the school's motto is "Veritas." (Veritas is Latin for "Truth.")

G. That's what the words under the statue say:
   John Harvard
   Founder
   1638

But don't believe everything you read. This famous statue's also called "The Statue of the Three Lies."
(II) The following passage is a retold translation of an article which appeared in a Japanese newspaper. It is composed of seven paragraphs. They are not put in order. Read the following paragraphs and put them in order to make the connection logical and coherent. Write the number of each paragraph later.

A. The Osaka markets are famous for their lively dealing and bargaining. Storekeepers welcome customers and try to sell their produce, while customers say what they want and complain about price and quality. We will miss hearing it all.

B. Japan's second largest city has 37 public markets, with about 1,200 stores. The markets started losing customers in 1970 when supermarkets came to Japan. The number of customers increased when some store remodeled to a self-service system. In this system, customers bring what they want to buy to the register at the store's exit.

C. There is a new popular slang word, "otaku-zoku." It means: "people who are obsessed with a single, narrow topic and are poor communicators." According to Chiezo, a yearly Asahi Shimbun magazine on new words and phrases, this is how the word was started: Two young men were both obsessed with completely different topics, so they couldn't understand each other. One man asked the other, "Otaku wa dodesuka (What are you crazy about)?" That's where we get otaku-zoku (otaku tribe).

D. In order to deal with an increase of customers who don't really want to speak to storekeepers, public markets in Osaka are quickly changing to supermarket-style management.

E. Really, chances to speak are disappearing all over these days. At the train station, you don't even have to speak to buy a ticket. You buy it from a vending machine. After you get where you're going, you can eat at a restaurant using tickets from yet another machine. When we shop at a supermarket, we just pick up the groceries and put them in a basket. Some vending machines are even programmed to say "Thank you" after you buy something.

F. Recently, both adults and children have been seen acting like this. Conversations between strangers have already become rare in our society. If we have fewer chances to speak to each other, that means that we have fewer chances to practice communication.

G. Recently, there have been many storekeepers who feel that young customers don't want to talk to them. From this, about 10 Osaka markets may change to the self-service system. About 20 city markets, more than half of the total, will be like supermarkets by 1995.