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MA TEFL

**Reactive Tokens at Turning Points**

**Module One Essay**

‘Certain strategies are commonly used in English for taking, holding onto, and relinquishing ‘the floor’ in conversation. Try to find example exchanges which illustrate these strategies (e.g. by recording and transcribing a very short piece of spontaneous, authentic conversation conducted in English – the staff room might be a good place). How many of these are used in the L1 of your students? If none, what forms are used to produce an equivalent effect? Discuss the implications for teaching conversational English in your own teaching context.’

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## 1.0 Introduction

Conversation should touch everything, but should concentrate itself on nothing.

- Oscar Wilde

The conversation is a universal form of communication. Young and Lee (2004: 380) defined conversation as a 'process of speech exchange between two or more persons.' Occurring in a casual, spontaneous manner, the conversation's structure has been much studied by researchers. The conversation reveals the communicative competence of its participants and the interactional structure of the culture that it happens in (Furo, 2001: 26).

Reactive tokens are short verbal signs provided by the listener(s) in English conversation that primarily affirm that the speaker can continue talking (Clancy et al., 1996: 356). In the form of expressions like 'yeah' and 'uhm', reactive tokens demonstrate the cooperation between speaker and listener(s) and the structure of the conversation. Reactive tokens are often placed at turning points, locations that the speaker provides that show she or he is willing to stop talking and allow the listener(s) to talk (Sacks et al. cited in Young and Lee, 2004: 388). Turning points are also where the speaker can decide to speed-up her or his rate of speech, not permitting the listener a speaking opportunity at a turning point (Furo, 2001: 75).

This study investigated the happenings at turning points. It examined the placement of reactive tokens in two English conversations: between two native North American English speakers, and between a native North American English speaker and a Japanese speaker of English. The conversations' characteristics were scrutinized and compared to my situation in teaching at Takao Junior High School in Kitakyushu Japan.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 English Conversation**

#### **2.1.1 Holding the Floor**

How the conversation's structure is maintained by its participants is an important element in successful communication. During a conversation, 'holding the floor' is when a participant, the person speaking, talks and the other participant(s) choose to continue as listener(s) and not become the main speaker. The talker remains the main speaker and holds the floor (Young and Lee, 2004: 380). Listeners are not always silent but are often communicating through utterances and gestures. A conversation is a joint product created by all its participants. Recipient design refers to the active role the listener(s) plays in the conversation's design (Goodwin and Heritage cited in Furo, 2001: 27).

#### **2.1.2 Turn-Taking**

When a conversation's participant is holding the floor, she or he is the main speaker and is taking a turn (Young and Lee, 2004: 380). The listener's contributions to the turn-taking process can include to remain silent, or to provide small verbal cues like 'mhm' or 'yeah' or visual signs like head movements or gazing (Young and Lee, 2004: 380). Schegloff (cited in Clancy et al., 1996: 356) referred to the small verbal cues as continuers, signals provided by a listener expressing consent that the speaker can continue to hold the floor. The listener is communicating that she or he does not wish to gain possession of the floor.

#### **2.1.3 Reactive Tokens**

Clancy et al. (1996: 356) defined a reactive token as 'a short utterance produced by an interlocutor who is playing a listener's role during the other interlocutor's speakership (sic).' Reactive tokens do not commonly disrupt the speaker's floor turn and do not in

themselves claim the floor (Clancy et al., 1996: 356).

#### **2.1.4 Types of Reactive Tokens**

Reactive tokens can be categorized into five types. Backchannels are non-lexical vocal signs (Clancy et al., 1996: 359). Common examples in English are ‘mhm’ and ‘ah’. Reactive expressions are short lexical words or phrases like ‘yeah’ and ‘okay’ (Clancy et al., 1996: 359). Collaborative finishes occur when the listener finishes the previous speaker’s utterance (Clancy et al., 1996: 360). An example could be if speaker A says ‘Let’s meet’ and speaker B finishes the statement with ‘at 8:00’. Repetitions are when the listener reacts to the primary speaker by repeating a portion of her or his speech (Clancy et al., 1996: 361). Speaker B is using a repetition by saying ‘at 8:00’ after speaker A had said ‘Let’s meet at 8:00’. Resumptive openers are non-lexical phrases like ‘mhm’ and ‘ah’ that appear at the beginning of a new speaker’s turn with her or his full turn appearing after it (Clancy et al., 1996: 362). Unlike the other types of reactive tokens, the primary role of resumptive openers is not to indicate a pass of a turn-taking opportunity, but instead to recognize the previous speaker’s turn and to begin a new turn.

#### **2.1.5 TRPs**

In a conversation, the location of the placement of reactive tokens is meaningful. If the reactive token’s primary role is to help in the co-construction of the conversation and that the listener is passing-up the opportunity to take the floor, a reactive token should be placed at or near where there is an opportunity to change speakers in conversation (Young and Lee, 2004: 388). Sacks et al. (cited in Young and Lee, 2004: 388) called the position where an opportunity exists to change speakers the ‘turn transition relevance’ (TRP), a turn being cued by the completion or projected completion of a syntactic unit.

Ford and Thompson (cited in Young and Lee, 2004: 388) defined a syntactically complete delivery as ‘if, in its discourse context, it could be interpreted as a complete clause, that (sic) is with an overt or directly recoverable predicate’. This would include elliptical clauses where a phrase has missing words but it is clear what they are, and answers to questions. Ford and Thompson’s definition of the composition of a TRP also included pragmatic completion and intonational completion. Pragmatic completion is the completion or projected completion of a conversational action within its sequential context (Ford and Thompson cited in Young and Lee, 2004: 388). Intonational completion is an utterance with a falling intonational contour (a phrase) or a rising intonational contour (a question) (Furo, 2001: 14).

## **2.2 Japanese Conversation**

### **2.2.1 Aizuchis**

Aizuchi is the term used in Japanese for a reactive token (Kita and Ide, 2007: 1243). Iwasaki (cited in Miyata and Nisisawa, 2007: 1256) classified aizuchis into three types: a closed set of non-lexical vocalic sounds without referential meaning (ee, hai); a closed set of phrasal aizuchis which are formulaic responses with meaning (honto ‘really’); an open class of aizuchi of substantial expressions.

### **2.2.2 Functions of Aizuchis**

Aizuchis seem to have more functions as communication tools for Japanese speakers than do reactive tokens in English. Besides used for turn-management, aizuchis are often also utilized by the Japanese listener for expressing understanding, agreement, strong feelings and empathy with the speaker (Maynard cited in Miyata and Nisisawa, 2007: 1258).



Aizuchis are also utilized for coordination in Japanese conversation (Kita and Ide, 2007: 1250). The presence of Aizuchis by both the listener and speaker seem to help in harmonizing communication in a conversation, allowing for closer social bonding. It appears that the content of a Japanese conversation is less important for the placement and use of aizuchis than in English with reactive tokens (Kita and Ide, 2007: 1250). Aizuchis are placed much more throughout conversations and are not put at turning points as much as reactive tokens in English conversations.

### **2.3 TRPs and Reactive Tokens**

Aizuchis often appear at non-transition points in Japanese conversations, where there is no opportunity for a potential turn-change between speakers (Kita and Ide, 2007: 1243). At times aizuchis are even used by the floor-holder in Japanese (Kita and Ide, 2007: 1242). Clancy et al. (1996: 369) found that there are not a significantly greater number of reactive tokens used by English speakers than the numbers of aizuchis used by Japanese speakers in conversation. English listeners do, however, place a greater number of their reactive tokens at or near turning point locations than do Japanese speakers (Clancy et al., 1996: 372). This would suggest that, for English speakers, reactive tokens' major role is in passing-up the opportunity to take a turn and allowing the speaker to continue her or his turn.

## **3.0 Methodology**

### **3.1 Location and Subjects**

Two conversations were recorded on November 11th and 18th, 2007 at the Kitakyushu City Board of Education. Both of the conversations were tape-recorded in casual environments following the conclusions of meetings.

The participants in the conversations were: Jon, a 32-year old Canadian male assistant language teacher; Allan, a 30-year old American male assistant language teacher; and Abe, a 49-year old Japanese male junior high school English teacher. The two assistant language teachers have been in Japan since August 2006 with the JET Programme teaching at junior high schools in Kitakyushu City, Japan. Two of the participants, Abe and Jon, had previously worked together, team-teaching at a school in Kitakyushu City. Abe has been teaching English for approximately 25 years, principally at junior high schools in Kitakyushu City. He has also lived in America for several periods of time while on teaching training programs, and worked in Taiwan for two years teaching Japanese students English. All three participants were chosen because of their friendships with each other, allowing for natural and open conversation. The participants were not informed about the nature of the research, and all three asked that their names be changed for the study.

### **3.2 Recording Methods**

Two casual conversations, each four minutes in length, were recorded and transcribed. The conversations were between: the two native North American speakers of English (NS-NS), and a native North American speaker of English and the Japanese speaker of English (NS-NNS). One of the subjects, Jon, participated in both conversations. The conversations were recorded using a hand-held tape recorder placed by the side and the subjects were left alone for the duration of the recordings. The ‘observer’s paradox’ effect of subjects’ behavior being altered by the mere fact of being monitored was attempted to be minimized (Labov cited in Swann, 2001: 324). The conversations were spontaneous and unscripted.

### **3.3 Transcribing Methods**

The transcriptions of the two conversations were modeled on the Furo (2001) and Young and Lee (2004) studies. Appendix A contains the transcription key. As listed in the Literature Review section 2.1.4, the study used Clancy's model (1996) of the five types of reactive tokens. The classifications were: backchannels (including laughter), reactive expressions, repetitions, collaborative finishes, and resumptive openers. Ford and Thompson's TRP model was used as the criteria for a turning point. TRPs occurred where syntactic, pragmatic and intonational completion points all occurred together (Young and Lee, 2004: 388).

### **3.4 Counting Methods and Statistical Treatment**

In each transcript, all reactive tokens, TRPs, and reactive tokens at TRPs were counted for each participant and for the conversation in total. Appendix B contains the transcript for the NS-NS conversation between Jon and Allan. Appendix C contains the transcript for the NS-NNS between Jon and Abe.

Statistically, the chi-square was calculated to find if there was a significant difference between each of the conversation's speakers' use of reactive tokens at turning points. The independent variable was the speaker's first language and the dependent variable was the total number of reactive tokens used at TRPs. The chi-square was also calculated to find if there was a significant difference between each conversation's participants' total number of reactive tokens used at turning points. The independent variable was the conversation's participants' first languages and the dependent variable was the total number of reactive tokens used at TRPs.

## 4.0 Results

### 4.1 NS-NS Conversation

The results in Table 1 show that there was not a significant difference found between Allan and Jon in the number of reactive tokens placed at or near TRPs ( $\chi^2=1.37$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $P=.25$ ). Although this result could be attributed to the small sample size, it suggests that the shared first language of Allan and Jon contributed to their similar use of placing reactive tokens. Although Allan and Jon both followed the typical English speaker's pattern of placing many of their reactive tokens at or near turning points (Clancy et al., 1996: 372), both had many TRPs with no reactive tokens.

**Table 1**  
**Placement of Reactive Tokens at TRPs**  
**NS-NS Conversation**

Listener	Count of Reactive Tokens	Count of TRPs as Listener	Number of Reactive Tokens at TRPs
Jon	14	35	9
Allan	15	25	10

### 4.2 NS-NNS Conversation

Table 2's results show that there was a significant difference found between Abe and Jon in the number of reactive tokens placed at TRPs ( $\chi^2=9.63$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $P=.0021$ ). Jon, the NS, had a significant higher number of reactive tokens placed at TRPs than Abe, the Japanese NNS. Although this can be attributed to the limited sample size, the results do suggest that the speaker's native language has an affect on where he places reactive tokens when speaking English. Abe's results resemble Clancy et al.'s (1996: 372) findings of Japanese speakers

utilizing aizuchis in wider distribution in conversation than English speakers' concentration of reactive tokens around turning points.

**Table 2**

**Placement of Reactive Tokens at TRPs**

**NS-NNS Conversation**

<b>Listener</b>	<b>Count of Reactive Tokens</b>	<b>Count of TRPs as Listener</b>	<b>Number of Reactive Tokens at TRPs</b>
Jon	47	27	22
Abe	24	17	6

**4.3 NS-NS Conversation and NS-NNS Conversation**

The results in Table 3 indicate there was a significant difference found between the two conversations with the number of reactive tokens placed at or near TRPs ( $\chi^2=10.49$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $P=.0013$ ). This could be due to the small sample size. In constructing their conversation, Jon and Abe had a significant greater number of reactive tokens placed at TRPs than Jon and Allan's conversation. In contrasting the two conversations, the NS-NNS conversation had a greater number of reactive tokens, 71, than the NS-NS conversation, 29. The NS-NS conversation had a greater number of turning point opportunities, TRPs, (60) than the NS-NNS conversation (44).

**Table 3**  
**Placement of Reactive Tokens at TRPs**  
**NS-NS Conversation and NS-NNS Conversation**

Conversation	Count of Reactive Tokens	Count of TRPs as Listener	Number of Reactive Tokens at TRPs
Jon, Allan (NS-NS)	29	60	19
Jon, Abe (NS-NNS)	71	44	28

## 5.0 Discussion of Results

### 5.1 Number of TRPs in the NS-NS Conversation

#### Excerpt 1

The following excerpt was taken from the NS-NS conversation. The # symbolizes a TRP, or a turning point opportunity. The = indicates a latched utterance, when the speaker who has the floor speeds up his rate of speech and minimizes the spaces between utterances in order to hold the floor (Furo, 2001: 75).

- 62 Allan: the thing with the Whi- the thing with the White Sox  
63 is that I don- don't think they're planning to win anything  
64 this year./># I think wha- unless unless they can get  
65 like Aaron Rowland, / ( ) or if they can get the prospect  
66 from the Chinichi/> maybe but,  
67 Jon: but that guy that guy from Japan,  
68 Allan: yeah.  
69 Jon: he's going to be a centerfielder/ in America?/># that's  
70 what they're projecting him as?/>#  
71 Allan: that's what they're projecting him as,/ like that's that's why  
72 that's why the Cubs want him./># they want hi- if they can  
73 have an outfield with, ( ) like ah Soriano and then him/

74                    they're  
                       they're thinking they're set./>#

Excerpt 1 illustrates the high number of TRPs and low number of reactive tokens in the NS-NS conversation. Jon and Allan were in the middle of talking about a baseball player. Lines 64, 69, and 72 contain latched utterances. In lines 64 and 72, Allan used latched utterances to hold the floor at turn opportunities and Jon used one in line 69. The speakers in this conversation had more TRPs than the NS-NNS conversation. There should have been more opportunities for floor changes and reactive tokens. This conversation, however, contained fewer turns and reactive tokens.

Excerpt 1 has three instances where the participants did not allow for the natural turn to occur and hurried through the TRP in order to hold the floor. There seems to be fewer examples of the participants co-constructing the turns and communication together than in the other conversation. Also in this excerpt are examples of a collaborative finish reactive token in line 67 by Jon, a reactive expression reactive token in line 68 by Allan that was not situated at a turn, and repetition reactive token by Allan in line 71 as he repeated what Jon just said to begin a new turn.

## 5.2 Number of Reactive Tokens by NS

### Excerpt 2

The following excerpt was taken from the NS-NNS conversation.

38        Abe:     or ( ) ah,( ) we we have a we have the special dinner bento./># ( )  
 39        Jon:     oh:..  
 40        Abe:     yeah it is ose- osechi./>#  
 41        Jon:     okay.

- 42 Abe: so that ah:: many many kinds of food,/  
 43 Jon: umm.  
 44 Abe: put into the small boxes./>#  
 45 Jon: [ah:: ].  
 46 Abe: [okay].  
 47 Jon: okay.  
 48 Abe: and ah:: we eat that in the morning of the New Year's  
 49 Day.># ( )  
 50 Jon: oh::.

Excerpt 2 is an example of the high number of reactive tokens used by the NS, Jon, in the NS-NNS conversation. In the excerpt, Jon was responding to Abe's comments about New Year food in Japan. In lines 43 and 47, Jon used reactive expressions at non-turn points, while in lines 39, 41, 45, and 50, Jon used reactive tokens at TRPs. Jon used a greater number of reactive tokens at turning points than Abe, and the conversation they co-constructed had a greater number of reactive tokens at TRPs than the NS-NS conversation.

One reason for Jon's high number of reactive tokens is that Abe's turns at speaking were shorter than the native English speakers' turns. Second language learners will have shorter turns in English and greater difficulty in holding turns than native speakers (Shortall, 1998: 131). By providing more turning points, Abe was allowing Jon more opportunities to take the floor. Jon's high number of reactive tokens at turning points follows the traditional pattern of native English speakers (Clancy et al., 1996: 372).

### 5.3 Reactive Token Placement by a Japanese NNS

Excerpt 3

The following excerpt was taken from the NS-NNS conversation.



- 76 Jon: and we watched the Red and [White ],  
 77 Abe: [umhmm].  
 78 Jon: show on television?/># the the,  
 79 Abe: [yeah yeah ].  
 80 Jon: [the singing show]?/>#  
 81 Abe: the singing show./>#  
 82 Jon: [yeah ].  
 83 Abe: [umhmm].  
 84 Jon: it was like like really [interesting],/  
 85 Abe: [yeah:: ].  
 86 Jon: for me./>#  
 87 Abe: yeah yeah we (inaudible) at my house,

In excerpt 3, Abe and Jon were in the middle of discussing the Red and White television show. Abe used reactive tokens in lines 77, 79, 83, and 85. Only the reactive expression ‘yeah, yeah’ in line 79 appeared near a TRP from Jon. The other reactive tokens did not follow the typical pattern in English conversations of appearing at or near a TRP (Clancy et al., 1996: 372). Abe’s use of reactive tokens was not involved with turn taking, and resembled a typical Japanese speaker’s use of *aizuchis* (Maynard cited in Miyata and Nisisawa, 2007: 1258). Abe’s reactive backchannels in line 77 and 83 (‘umhmm’) and his reactive expression in line 85 (‘yeah’) seem to confirm understanding as well as coordinate the conversation. There were two TRPs where there were no attached reactive tokens, in lines 80 and 86. In both situations, however, Abe took possession of the floor, suggesting a clean speaker change.

One explanation for the discrepancy between Abe’s and Jon’s reactive token placement is that Abe learned English as a second language. Abe has had fewer opportunities to speak and practice English than a native speaker. His use of reactive tokens is affected from his first language, Japanese. These results suggest that Japanese speakers of English will not

only use reactive tokens just to signal to the conversation's speaker that it is acceptable to continue the speaking turn. It is apparent that Abe used reactive tokens for other purposes. Another possible reason for the results is that Abe might be slower in processing when a turn is occurring in the English conversation and his placement is then different from a native speaker's usage.

Kogure's (2007: 1276) theory is that aizuchis are an example of an aspect of Japanese conversation that does not fit into a common assumption. There is a view held by many people that Japanese speakers have a higher preference for silence than Westerners in conversation (Kogure, 2007: 1275). Perhaps, as Kogure suggests, the high usage of aizuchis by Japanese people demonstrates that they are not comfortable with silence and use the aizuchis to get through any silent, potentially uncomfortable moments. This feature of aizuchis might have an effect when a Japanese speaker like Abe uses reactive tokens in English.

## **6.0 Implications for Takao Junior High School**

In my position as an assistant language teacher at Takao Junior High School, I team-teach together with the Japanese teachers of English to all three grades of students. Takao's students were observed from October 29<sup>th</sup> to November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Takao is located in the Tobata ward of Kitakyushu City and has an enrollment of 298 students. The observations at Takao were kept by field notes and were recorded as soon as possible after the behavior was noted.

## **6.1 Takao's Students' Use of Aizuchis**

Takao's students were observed using aizuchis heavily in Japanese conversations inside and outside of class (Takao, 2007). In addition, the students, like Japanese speakers in general, used a great deal of nodding as a visual tool in aiding communication (Takao, 2007). The only situation where students did not use aizuchis heavily was when they were engaged in talking to a teacher, a person who has a higher societal position than themselves (Takao, 2007). At some points in conversations, the students would use aizuchis in turn-taking. On other occasions, the speaker would lapse into silence at turn-taking points, only to continue when the listener(s) would respond in silence (Takao, 2007). Like Abe, they placed aizuchis throughout the conversation, using them for different purposes.

### **6.1.1 Implications for the Classroom**

One of the team-teaching strategies utilized at Takao Junior High School is the collaborative method. A common example is when the two teachers discuss ideas with each other in front of the class (Fukuoka Prefecture JET Programme, 2007). This technique is often used at the beginning of class, and the students will jump in to comment or ask questions about the conversation. After the exchange, students are asked content questions. The tone of the exchanges is casual and the topics are not chosen beforehand. The Japanese teachers are second language speakers of English and often will use aizuchis in the conversations instead of reactive tokens. The use of Japanese may assist with the students' possible difficulties with the different roles and forms of reactive tokens. Sometimes in class, artificiality has to be assumed in order to teach English (Swan, 1985: 82). The process of acquiring a new language does not mean the same as actually using the new language. Like Abe in the study, the teachers use reactive tokens in a different way than native English speakers.

Students are also videotaped at Takao at various times when they are engaged with me or other native speakers of English. The students are usually surprised when viewing the recordings to see themselves engaged in natural English conversation with a native speaker. They often comment on their behavior compared to the native English speaker in the conversation. At some points, the students seem to over compensate for the lack of reactive tokens (compared to aizuchis) and engage in a lot of visual cues that usually include bowing (Takao, 2007). Students are bringing Japanese aspects of conversation into their English language.

## **6.2 Takao's Students' Use of the Particle 'Ne'**

The usage of the particles 'ne' and 'cha' (the Northern Kyushu's dialect's 'ne') was high among students (Takao, 2007). These particles are used when the speaker is seeking the listener's confirmation or agreement to what has been said (Banno et al., 1999: 38). It is placed at a turning point in Japanese conversation and the speaker is often looking for a listener's aizuchi as confirmation (Kita and Ide, 2007: 1246).

### **6.2.1 Implications for the Classroom**

Abe's use of reactive tokens in the conversation illustrates that Japanese speakers of English do not place reactive tokens primarily at turning points. Whether because they are not able to predict an upcoming TRP or they are influenced by their native language, Japanese speakers of English do not treat turning points the same as English speakers. Many of Takao's students have commented that they find English 'rude' and 'difficult' (Takao, 2007). This impression might be caused in part because of differences in the way that Japanese and English speakers present turning points. There is no equivalent for the

particle ‘ne’ in English. In fact, many aizuchis do not have an equivalent in English. Japanese speakers might find it rude that there is no sign in English to signal that the speaker is willing to concede the floor.

### **6.3 Marked Structures and Reactive Tokens**

Marked grammatical structures are difficult for second language learners to understand because they either: appear infrequently, do not stand out in discourse, or do not have a strong, obvious contrast with the learners’ first language (Shortall, 1998: 86). While reactive tokens do not perform a grammatical role, they do have shared characteristics with marked structures. At times, reactive tokens do not stand out in the discourse and many do not have lexical meaning. In addition, many backchannels sound similar to Japanese aizuchis and some do share similar functions which do not allow Japanese students to make a clear distinction between them. This can cause confusion and could lead to a Japanese speaker utilizing and interpreting reactive tokens differently than a native speaker of English.

### **7.0 Conclusion**

In English, a speaker will present turning-points to the listener(s) as a way to relinquish the floor in conversation. The listener can, in turn, provide a reactive token to allow the speaker to hold the floor, or take the floor themselves. The speaker can also hold the floor by using a latched utterance.

This study’s aims were to investigate what happens at turning points in a conversation between native English speakers and a conversation between a native English speaker and a Japanese speaker of English. The amount and placement of reactive tokens were

investigated between subjects and between conversations. The implications of the results were discussed as they impacted my position as assistant language teacher at Takao Junior High School.

A significant difference was found in the amount of reactive tokens used at TRPs between the Japanese speaker and the native North American English speaker. There was not a significant difference found between the two native North American English speakers. In comparing the two conversations, there was a significant difference in the number of reactive tokens used at TRPs.

Abe's use of reactive tokens was found to be similar to Japanese speakers' use of aizuchis (Kita and Ide, 2007: 1244). He did not place them predominantly around turning points and seemed to use them for other functions besides turn-taking. The North American English speakers used reactive tokens more frequently around turning points. In constructing their conversation, Abe and Jon surprisingly used more reactive tokens overall at TRPs than Allan and Jon. This might be due to the shorter turns Abe used as speaker, and the higher number of turning point opportunities he presented to Jon.

The North American English conversation overall had a greater number of TRPs but fewer reactive tokens. When holding the floor, both Allan and Jon seemed to present the listener with greater opportunity to become speaker. Yet, both participants used fewer reactive tokens than in the other conversation. This is partly explained by Allan and Jon's conversation having a lack of co-operation at turning points. Their conversation had longer turns with a higher use of latched utterances which did not allow the listener to participate.

The students at Takao Junior High School use aizuchis heavily and often spread them

throughout conversation. The difference between aizuchi and reactive token usage is addressed in class by using listening activities that bring aizuchis and their functions into conversation. The marked structure nature of reactive tokens makes it difficult for learners.

In future, researchers will want to use a larger sample size when comparing English and Japanese speakers. Besides the number of reactive tokens at turning points, other phenomenon to study are: the use of reactive tokens and their similarity in sound to aizuchis, the use of aizuchis by English speakers of Japanese, and the use of reactive tokens in English as a second language by a variety of first language speakers.

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## Appendix A

### Transcription Key

[ ]	overlapping utterances
( )	perceivable pause
::	lengthened syllable
-	cut-off sound
=	latched utterance
?	rising intonation contour, intonational completion point
.	falling intonation contour, intonational completion point
,	continuing intonation contour
/	syntactic completion point
>	pragmatic completion point
#	turn transition relevance (TRP)

## Appendix B

### Conversation: North American English

- 1        Jon:    so did you hear about the trade today?/>#
- 2        Allan:  which one would that be?/>#
- 3        Jon:    Florida and Detroit?/>#
- 4        Allan:  yeah. ( )
- 5        Jon:    ah Florida moved Willis, ( )
- 6        Allan:  right.
- 7        Jon:    and Cabrera,
- 8        Allan:  yeah.
- 9        Jon:    to Detroit, / ( ) for six prospects.( )/>#
- 10       Allan:  I had heard about the Cabrera/ like the possibility of
- 11       Cabrera/ but I didn't know./># I heard like that the Angels
- 12       were going to pull him for some reason./>#
- 13       Jon:    yeah yeah but apparently Detroit offered like their two
- 14       best prospects, / ( ) and like four four other minor leaguers./># ( )
- 15       Allan:  do they even mention the prospects though?/>#
- 16       Jon:    ah:: a guy who played center field for them last year,/
- 17       Allan:  okay.
- 18       Jon:    Maybin./>#
- 19       Allan:  okay.
- 20       Jon:    and Miller./>#
- 21       Allan:  right.
- 22       Jon:    I think he was in their starting rotation for part of last
- 23       year./>#
- 24       Allan:  okay.
- 25       Jon:    but I think that puts Detroit like over the top for next year, / ( )
- 26       as like a as like a favorite/ for sure./># ( )
- 27       Allan:  well (hhhh) I don't know about that./># I'm still looking
- 28       at the,( ) ah they had had the, ( ) ah:: what do you call that? ( )
- 29       I mean like the Angels/ are looking pretty powerful
- 30       [right now]./>#
- 31       Jon:    [hmm  ].
- 32       Allan:  I mean like if they could like get a few prospects it would

- 33       probably be perfect/># but, ( )
- 34       Jon:     I still like,
- 35       Allan:  yeah(hhhh) the other ( ) the other day I was reading
- 36               the Blue Jays' website / and [they],
- 37       Jon:                               [okay].
- 38       Allan:  were like the Blue Jays manager says that we're going to
- 39               keep our our league ( ) ah:: conservatively kept./># I'm like
- 40               that's a real nice way of saying we aren't really going
- 41               to try for [anything huh]./>#
- 42       Jon:               [(hhh) ]but do you think but do you think
- 43       that affects the White Sox at all, / what what they're going
- 44       to do?/>#
- 45       Allan:  no [no    ]./>#
- 46       Jon:     [I mean ] since since Detroit's ( ) like ah has like gotten all
- 47       these guys on their team/ now./>#
- 48       Allan:  [well].
- 49       Jon:     [I:: ] mean look at the Detroit lineup, / it's unbelievable
- 50               now./>#
- 51       Allan:  yeah but I I think I think that the Tigers like already
- 52               have a really powerful team./># I mean they have Magglio
- 53               from us,/ you know a free agent/ [from a   ],
- 54       Jon:                               [yeah yeah].
- 55       Allan:  few years ago right?/>#
- 56       Jon:     and they got Sheffield last year right?/>#
- 57       Allan:  they got Sheffield last year./># they basically have a very
- 58               good team./># the only problem is that none of the guys
- 59               know how to do clutch performance, / which is a problem
- 60               if they're getting prospects/ right?/># ( )
- 61       Jon:     okay( ) but ah::
- 62       Allan:  the thing with the Whi- the thing with the White Sox
- 63               is that I don- don't think they're planning to win anything
- 64               this year./># I think wha- unless unless they can get
- 65               like Aaron Rowland, / ( ) or if they can get the prospect
- 66               from the Chinichi/> maybe but,
- 67       Jon:     but that guy that guy from Japan,
- 68       Allan:  yeah.

- 69 Jon: he's going to be a centerfielder/ in America?/># that's  
 70 what they're projecting him as?/>#
- 71 Allan: that's what they're projecting him as,/ like that's that's why  
 72 that's why the Cubs want him./># they want hi- if they can  
 73 have an outfield with, ( ) like ah Soriano and then him/ they're  
 74 they're thinking they're set./>#
- 75 Jon: oh:: so they would move Soriano to left field then./>#
- 76 Allan: right.
- 77 Jon: the Cubs./>#
- 78 Allan: I think I think the Cubs might take him as just a right  
 79 fielder/ or left fielder./># but I think like, ( ) with a lot of the  
 80 teams that are in the bidding they're going to try they're  
 81 going to try like scout him, ( ) as a centre-fielder/ cause that's  
 82 what all the teams need right now/ and that's what his agent's  
 83 trying to sell too./>#
- 84 Jon: but there's so many centerfielders available/ still/ like in  
 85 free agency./># to me that just sounds,
- 86 Allan: it seems it seems like they're actually aren't./># cause all  
 87 they're talking all they're talking is you've got Torii Hunter./>#
- 88 Jon: yeah who's gone./>#
- 89 Allan: you got Coco Crisp./>#
- 90 Jon: yeah.
- 91 Allan: and you've [got ],
- 92 Jon: [Andruw Jones ]./>#
- 93 Allan: like Aaron Rowland./>#
- 94 Jon: Andruw Jones./>#
- 95 Allan: Andruw Jones sure,/ but like Andruw Jones like,( ) a  
 96 lot of people are kind of like paranoid about him./># I mean  
 97 don't even remember they were like talking about the Sox  
 98 picking-up a guy/ who who could be our centerfielder/but  
 99 they're saying, ( ) that like his, ( ) like injury pra- his injury tolerance  
 100 is quite low/ so they're like keeping him just in case every other  
 101 prospect like fails/ that they [got ],/  
 102 Jon: [whose]?/>#
- 103 Allan: at least somebody./>#
- 104 Jon: whose whose [that ]?/>#

- 105 Allan: [to be honest]= I don't know who it was./># but  
 106 they were like talking like about this acquisition in the newspaper/  
 107 and that's where they were like,( ) they were saying it/ basically  
 108 you know in the event that the Sox don't pick-up in the event that  
 109 the Sox don't pick-up ah::, ( ) ah Fukodome,/  
 110 Jon: [okay].  
 111 Allan: [or ] Aaron Rowland./>#  
 112 Jon: okay.  
 113 Allan: and like they keep chasing Rowland./>#= I'm I'm I don't see  
 114 it/ but I'd like to see it./>#  
 115 Jon: but the White Sox have a lot of money, ( ) for next year don't  
 116 they?/>#  
 117 Allan: believe it or not they do, yeah./>#  
 118 Jon: to spend right?/>#  
 119 Allan: absolutely./>#  
 120 Jon: okay.  
 121 Allan: they're like one of the only teams who turns like a really  
 122 heavy profit./>#  
 123 Jon: really?/>#  
 124 Allan: yeah./>#  
 125 Jon: why?/>#  
 126 Allan: primarily because ( ) they've been able to negotiate really good  
 127 like deals/ in terms of like television./>#  
 128 Jon: okay.  
 129 Allan: like instead of like trying to like get broadcast on a nationwide  
 130 level they always try to do it on a local level/ and those companies  
 131 like Comcast,

## Appendix C

### Conversation: North American and Japanese English

- 1        Jon:     I'm thinking like New Years./>#
- 2        Abe:     New Years holiday./># ah:: New Years holiday,/
- 3        Jon:     [New Years holiday ].
- 4        Abe:     [New Years holidays]. [or ],
- 5        Jon:                                [yeah] yeah.
- 6        Abe:     or that kind of vacation time./>#
- 7        Jon:     mhm.
- 8        Abe:     ah ( ) ah:: the winter vacation New Year's Day ah::
- 9                we stay home./>#
- 10       Jon:     hmm::.
- 11       Abe:     and ah:: make,( ) some special dinner, / or the special
- 12                dishes / for the oshougatsu,/
- 13       Jon:     okay.
- 14       Abe:     New Year's Eve./>#
- 15       Jon:     okay.
- 16       Abe:     okay.
- 17       Jon:     and,
- 18       Abe:     and.
- 19       Jon:     and do you do you do anything on New Year's?/>#=#
- 20        like do you do you like do anything special?/#=do you like
- 21        go to a shrine or a temple?/>#
- 22       Abe:     ahh yes yes yes yes so that ah New Year's Eve,
- 23       Jon:     umm.
- 24       Abe:     on New Year's Eve ah::,( ) we ahh clean-up./>#
- 25       Jon:     umm.
- 26       Abe:     even (inaudible) even before the New Year's,/
- 27       Jon:     hmm.
- 28       Abe:     (inaudible) December 31st,
- 29       Jon:     okay.
- 30       Abe:     we clean-up our room./>#
- 31       Jon:     okay.
- 32       Abe:     and ah:: ( ) in the in the evening we:: ah make some ( )

- 33 special good dishes./>#
- 34 Jon: ah what what sort of food what sort of food
- 35 [do you make]?/>#
- 36 Abe: [mmm:: ] mainly we:: ( ) have:: ah:: ( ) Japanese sashimi,/ ( )
- 37 Jon: oh:: okay.
- 38 Abe: or ( ) ah,( ) we we have a we have the special dinner bento./># ( )
- 39 Jon: oh::.
- 40 Abe: yeah it is ose- osechi./>#
- 41 Jon: okay.
- 42 Abe: so that ah:: many many kinds of food,/
- 43 Jon: umm.
- 44 Abe: put into the small boxes./>#
- 45 Jon: [ah:: ].
- 46 Abe: [okay].
- 47 Jon: okay.
- 48 Abe: and ah:: we eat that in the morning of the New Year's
- 49 Day.># ( )
- 50 Jon: oh::.
- 51 Abe: New Year's Eve ah:: maybe we have ah:: what we
- 52 [want to eat],/
- 53 Jon: [umm:: ].
- 54 Abe: we make./>#
- 55 Jon: ohh::.
- 56 Abe: so I ask the ahh:: my daughters,/ and son,/ ( ) my wife,/ ( ) and I
- 57 maybe I I cook for them./>#
- 58 Jon: oh [you cook ]?/>#
- 59 Abe: [yeah yeah ]./>#
- 60 Jon: [ohh ].
- 61 Abe: [mhm ].
- 62 Jon: because you like to cook?/>#
- 63 Abe: yeah I like to cook./>#
- 64 Jon: ohh that's great./># and last year,
- 65 Abe: umm.
- 66 Jon: last year was my first New Year's,
- 67 Abe: mmhmm.
- 68 Jon: in Japan./>#



- 69 Abe: mmhmm.
- 70 Jon: so for the first time,( ) I spent with my wife's [my wife's],
- 71 Abe: [ahh:: ].
- 72 Jon: family./>#
- 73 Abe: in Shizuoka?
- 74 Jon: in in Shizuoka./>#
- 75 Abe: mmhmm.
- 76 Jon: and we watched the Red and [White ],
- 77 Abe: [umhmm].
- 78 Jon: show on television?/># the the,
- 79 Abe: [yeah yeah ].
- 80 Jon: [the singing show]?/>#
- 81 Abe: the singing show./>#
- 82 Jon: [yeah ].
- 83 Abe: [umhmm].
- 84 Jon: it was like like really [interesting],/
- 85 Abe: [yeah:: ].
- 86 Jon: for me./>#
- 87 Abe: yeah yeah we (inaudible) at my house,
- 88 Jon: hmm.
- 89 Abe: at the the, ( ) ahh:: the ahh:: the my tv has a ahh remote
- 90 controller,/
- 91 Jon: hmm.
- 92 Abe: and the children have that/ and switch to many programs
- 93 [(hhhh)]./>#
- 94 Jon: [(hhhh)].
- 95 Abe: switch around/ so, ( ) so sometimes I watch the ahh:: watch
- 96 white and and red show,/
- 97 Jon: and.
- 98 Abe: and sometimes a movie/ or sometimes some [drama ]./>#
- 99 Jon: [(hhhh)].
- 100 Abe: or something the mix-up,/ but ahh we enjoy the the
- 101 watching tv and talking,/
- 102 Jon: ohh::.
- 103 Abe: and ah eating,/( ) ahh:: but we we eat dinner (inaudible)
- 104 dinner at nine/ or eight or nine./>#

- 105 Jon: okay.
- 106 Abe: and I am still drinking till the midnight [(hhhh)]./>#
- 107 Jon: [(hhhh)].
- 108 Abe: okay so the this and the white ahh:: the singing show,
- 109 Jon: ummhmm.
- 110 Abe: ahh until ahh mm eleven:: thirty or so?/>#
- 111 Jon: I think so mmm.:/>#
- 112 Abe: and e-e- eleven forty-five a special a tv program [for the],
- 113 Jon: [mmm ].
- 114 Abe: ahh:: saying goodbye to the old year/ and, ( )
- 115 Jon: [ohh::].
- 116 Abe: [hello] to the new years./>#
- 117 Jon: okay.
- 118 Abe: and in in Japanese yukutoshi kurutoshi./>#
- 119 Jon: eh::.
- 120 Abe: yukutoshi means ahh the ahh the old year./>#
- 121 Jon: umm.
- 122 Abe: and kurutoshi means the ah coming new years./>#
- 123 Jon: ohh::.
- 124 Abe: So ahh,( ) they have a ahh relay:: report,/
- 125 Jon: okay.
- 126 Abe: from the Hokkaido to Kyushu./># how do they,
- 127 Jon: [(hhhh) ].
- 128 Abe: [the New Year's Eve ] (hhhh),( )/ and also the ahh in the
- 129 [shrine],
- 130 Jon: [yeah ].
- 131 Abe: in in the temple at ah Kyoto,/
- 132 Jon: yeah.
- 133 Abe: they are ringing the ahh bell./>#
- 134 Jon: ohh::.
- 135 Abe: yeah.
- 136 Jon: okay okay.
- 137 Abe: so.
- 138 Jon: and on on the tv show,
- 139 Abe: umm.
- 140 Jon: the Red and White Show,

- 141 Abe: umm.
- 142 Jon: are those really famous singers in Japan?/># = like
- 143 (inaudible) are those like the most [famous ],/
- 144 Abe: [yeah yeah] yeah.
- 145 Jon: famous [singers]?/>#
- 146 Abe: [yeah ] so the NHK,
- 147 Jon: umm.
- 148 Abe: will select the singers./>#
- 149 Jon: umm.
- 150 Abe: so that during this year,
- 151 Jon: umm.
- 152 Abe: the many many singers make a great hit./>#