

A Contrastive Analysis of American and Japanese Online Communication: A Study of UMC Function and Usage in Popular Personal Weblogs

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Barry Kavanagh

Abstract

The goal of this thesis is to examine how Unconventional Means of Communication (UMC) function within American and Japanese popular personal weblog posts and their comments. UMCs were divided into non-verbal and verbal categories over a four year period from an 80,000 sentence corpora created by the author. The non-verbal category comprised of 4 types that included emoticons (text and graphic based), *emoji* also known as pictograms and codes or *kigou* such as the use of ★ or ♥. Verbal UMCs fell into the two categories of phonographic and logographic representations. The former consisted of unconventional phonetic spelling and phonetic laughter representations. The latter comprised of the multiple use of exclamation marks and logographical depictions of laughter. The purpose of UMCs as semantic, pragmatic and politeness highlighters is discussed and reasons given for their use. The data is compared between the American and Japanese corpus and further consideration is given to how they are used per gender. Within the face-to-face communication literature Japanese are described as having an implicit communication style geared toward harmonious interaction, while Americans are described as being more clear and concise. Women are thought to display more positive politeness strategies than men, and Japanese is considered to be a negatively polite orientated language and culture. In addition to comparing how the function of UMCs this thesis also attempts to address how these descriptions are applicable to the online personal blog?

Results showed that Japanese blog users used significantly more UMCs than American personal blog writers and blog comment contributors. Japanese UMC usage reflected cultural themes such as language play, cute culture, and the technology from which it stems. In addition to expressing explicit semantic and pragmatic meaning these UMCs helped display the writer's "public image" or positive face wants. Emoticons were found to highlight politeness strategies that led to a harmonious online environment and Japanese used significantly more to promote positive politeness which challenges the assumptions of Japanese being a negatively polite language and culture. In addition Japanese personal blog users relied on UMCs to compensate for the missing visual and auditory cues online. This it is argued is a reflection of Japanese face-to-face communication which is said to be reliant on non-verbal cues.

The function of UMCs to make explicit the comment meaning and intention was found to be the responsibility of the comment writer. This it is argued challenges the assumptions of

Japanese being a listener responsibility culture where the listener needs to decipher the exact meaning of the intended utterance. In an online environment void of non-verbal cues Japanese writers used UMCs to aid in how their comments were to be interpreted. Common to both Japanese face-to-face communication and online blog communication is the need for harmonious smooth communication, but the root to achieve this is different. Unlike face-to-face communication styles where verbal and non-verbal cues exist, the lack of them within the CMC environment gives rise to the use of UMCs that make online blog comments explicit in semantic meaning and pragmatic intention. Blog writers were brought closer together through politeness strategies such as the showing of rapport and support.

Japanese women used significantly more UMCs than any other gender pairing and both American and Japanese women were found to use multiple UMCs attached to comments and emotive adjectives in comparison to the male data. Japanese men used significantly more UMCs than American women in some categories but this it is suggested is influenced by Japanese pop culture such as *manga* rather than gender alone. There was no evidence in the data that women through UMCs use more positive politeness strategies or adhere to more rapport talk than men.

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Chapter 1

Background to the Research

The goal of this thesis is to examine how Unconventional Means of Communication (UMC) function within American and Japanese popular personal weblogs. UMCs were divided into non-verbal and verbal categories over a four year period from corpora created by the author. The non-verbal category comprised of 4 types that included emoticons (text and graphic based), *emoji* also known as pictograms and codes or *kigou* such as the use of ★ or ♥. Verbal UMCs fell into the two categories of phonographic and logographic representations. The former consisted of unconventional phonetic spelling and phonetic laughter representations. The latter comprised of the multiple use of exclamation marks and logographical depictions of laughter.

From a corpora of nearly 80,000 sentences the purpose of UMCs as semantic, pragmatic and politeness highlighters is discussed and reasons given for their use. The data is compared between the American and Japanese corpus and further consideration is given to how they are used per gender.

Within the face-to-face communication literature Japanese are described as having an implicit communication style geared toward harmonious interaction, while Americans are described as being more clear and concise. Women are thought to display more positive politeness strategies than men, and Japanese is considered to be a negatively polite orientated language and culture. In addition to comparing how the function of UMCs this thesis also attempts to address how these descriptions are applicable to Computer Mediated Communication (CMC)? Specifically, is the face-to-face literature which describes American and Japanese linguistic and communicative behavior duplicated through the use of UMCs in the online personal blog? The face-to-face and CMC platforms are very different; the former usually means your interlocutor is visibly present, the latter usually means a text based communication platform where the interlocutor may not be present and may also not communicate with you in real time. How then would this influence online

communication and the use of UMCs?

In order to address these questions, the use of UMCs as expressed through the medium of CMC and within the popular personal weblog was examined in relation to and in comparison with the face-to-face communication (FTFC) literature. This literature falls within the areas of intercultural communication, politeness and gender, and is discussed briefly within this chapter and in more detail within the literature review in chapter 2.

CMC is communication conducted predominately online with or without the aid of visual and auditory cues or a seen or heard human presence. With the use of a microphone or webcam as in the popular Skype programme, families and friends can be brought together from around the world in what is perhaps the closest thing to face-to-face communication that CMC and its technology provide us. However, without the use of webcams and microphones which make up the bulk of online CMC these auditory and visual cues or pieces of information are missing. In essence a human visual or auditory presence is not felt. This is essentially what makes CMC and FTFC different, and since its conception researchers have proposed CMC theories that have examined the social psychological effects of these missing cues. Examples include the effect it has on interpersonal relations and how CMC users adopt the existing technology to invent innovative ways to compensate for this lack of a social presence (Walther, 1992, 1996). This research aims to examine and compare how Japanese and American blog writers convey semantic and pragmatic meaning in text based online personal blogs through the use of unconventional means of communication (UMC).

The personal blog of which the data comprises is an ongoing diary or commentary by an individual and is considered to be the traditional, most common blog type. Personal bloggers can discuss their thoughts on a whole wide range of experiences, opinions and ideas through the posts they write. These posts are essentially for a wide audience or readership and are not aimed at one person in particular. In essence, it is a one to many communication process. Personal diary bloggers, however, can write on each other's blogs. These comments may display the opinion of the writer or give encouragement and support to the blog writer. Comments

can be posted online anonymously where no name is given, or through a handle or real name. These blog comments allow the reader to ‘speak’ directly to the blog author and for the blog author to reply to such comments. These interactions are essentially one to one in nature. This study will look at the usage of UMC in both the blog posts and comments, but the bulk of the results and data will look specifically at the comments themselves and these one to one interactions. Chapter 4 looks at UMC function within the blog entries or posts and how they function. The remaining chapters, however, look at how blog interaction between the blog author and comment writer and their UMC usage mirrors or is in contrast to face-to-face interactions as depicted within the literature.

Some of the questions this thesis aims to address comprise of the following: How do Japanese and Americans compensate for the lack of auditory and visual cues in their blogs? What function do UMCs have? What role do they play in maintaining good interpersonal relations? Are there differences in their function and use according to language and the gender of the user?

The research focus is divided into four areas of enquiry:

- a. The function and usage of UMCs
- b. UMC usage and culture
- c. Emoticons and politeness strategies
- d. Gender and UMC usage

These areas of enquiry are described below and a more detailed examination of the issues and studies involved within these areas are given in the literature review in chapter 2.

1.1 Research Enquiry One: The Function and Usage of UMCs.

Early research on emoticons looked at how they were used to compensate for the lack of non-verbal cues online, and as the name emoticon suggests they are icons that express emotion (Derks et al., 2007). Subsequent studies looked at how they were used according to gender, how they are used to create impression formation, and how they were used for socio-emotional chat (Luor et al., 2010; Fullwood & Martino, 2006). Very few studies have looked at the pragmatic function of emoticons. In addition no studies have compared the function and usage of Japanese and American emoticons. Extra linguistic signs such as *emoji* or pictograms and symbols such as ♪, ★ and ♥ have also been largely neglected in the literature and their usage and function has not received adequate investigation especially within online synchronous communication such as the online personal weblogs. Further still linguistic based UMCs (phonographic and logographic representations) have received very little attention in both the Japanese and English based CMC literature. This area of enquiry aims to address that gap. The two main enquiries to be addressed are stated below.

Research enquiry one: The function and usage of UMCs.

- a. How do non-verbal and verbal UMCs function to express or supplement, semantic meaning and pragmatic intention within American and Japanese online personal blog articles and their comments?
- b. Are there technological parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

1.1.2 Research Enquiry Two: UMC Usage and Culture

The second research enquiry will attempt to examine (1) how UMC usage is a reflection of the culture that it comes from, (2) how face-to-face communication influences UMC usage, and (3) how popular culture impacts the types and forms of UMCs that are found in online personal blogs.

Within the intercultural communication literature Japan is characterized as a

high context culture, and Japanese face-to-face communication (FTFC) is described as indirect, implicit and vague with a reliance on non-verbal communication (Doi, 1973, 1996; Tsujimura, 1987; Hall, 1976; Akasu & Asao, 1993; McClure, 2000; Midooka, 1990; Yamada1997).

America is described as low context culture, and American FTFC is categorized as direct, explicit and more reliant on words for effective communication (Gudykunst & Matsumoto; 1996, Hall; 1976, Lewis; 2005, Hofstede; 1980). Interestingly however, these descriptions, as intuitive as they may be, are mostly based on opinion, observation and anecdotes as opposed to concrete empirical evidence.

There are studies, however, that aimed to test these observations and will be given full coverage in chapter 2. The empirical evidence as demonstrated through these studies seems to suggest that Japanese communication can be vague and implicit making interaction primarily a listener responsible process. The listener, therefore, needs to understand what the speaker means even if they are not explicit in their dialogue. If Japanese is primarily a listener responsible language that is also implicit, how is this reflected online? In addition, how do these concepts relate to UMC usage?

The emphasis within this thesis is not on perceived assumptions of the linguistic and communicative patterns of Japanese or Americans, but what they actually do through the empirically tested data within this study and how this reflects the empirically tested data that has examined face-to-face communication styles. The second research enquiry, therefore, examines how these cultural characteristics of language and communication styles are reflected in online blogs through the use of UMCs and the language they are attached to. The two main enquiries to be addressed within this research area are stated below.

Research enquiry two: UMC usage and culture

- a. Does UMC usage mirror the language and culture from which it stems from?
- b. Are there cultural parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

1.1.3 Research Enquiry Three: Emoticons and Politeness Strategies

Japanese culture is considered to be a negative politeness culture (Ide, 2006) and American culture perceived as a positive politeness one in terms of language use and cultural orientation (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Positive politeness is the expression of friendliness, camaraderie and intimacy. However, Japanese is considered to be a negative politeness language and culture based on its use of honorifics (Ide, 2006). The argument suggests that deference, therefore, cannot be expressed without employing the honorific polite style.

Ide (1991b) suggests that Japanese linguistic politeness is therefore the conforming to social conventions which stipulate a set of linguistic forms. Negative politeness strategies allow the speaker to maintain harmony with their listeners, a concept deeply embedded within Japanese culture (Shigemitsu, 2001, 2002). Negative politeness strategies as reflected in *keigo* or honorifics aid in the avoidance of potential conflicts among speakers and promote the maintenance of good interpersonal relations between people (Ide et al, 1986). This leads to the question as to how these politeness strategies are reflected in UMC usage and are these negative politeness assumptions held true in an online environment. In addition, Japanese interaction is said to stem from a need to create harmonious dialogue. How then is this reflected online through the use of extra-linguistic signs such as emoticons? If it is true that Japanese rely on harmonious communication styles as a means of getting along, how is relational communication achieved in a text based medium that lacks a social visible presence? The two research questions below aim to address these issues.

Research enquiry three: Emoticons, politeness and language usage

- a. How are expressions of solidarity and interpersonal communication realized through emoticons in this text based faceless medium?
- b. How do emoticons supplement the verbal language content? Are emoticons used in conjunction with particular politeness strategies?

1.1.4 Research Enquiry Four: Gender and UMC Usage

The sociolinguistic literature is abundant with studies that describe how men and women have vastly different talking styles (Eckert&McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Holmes, 1995; Lakoff, 1973; Mulac, Bradac, & Gibbons, 2001; Tannen, 1990). Tannen (1990) divides this seemingly different way women and men talk by using the term *report talk* and *rapport talk*. She states that for women the language of conversation is largely the language of rapport which promotes intimate relationships that stress common ground and comparable experiences. These descriptions parallel some of Brown & Levinson's (1987) positive politeness strategies.

Pilkington (1998) found that women in interaction with the same gender groups use a large number of positive-politeness strategies while men in analogous situations do not. In addition, non-verbal studies conducted by Hall (1984) found that in comparison to males, females are more likely to use non-verbal cues, are better verbal encoders and decoders, and smile and laugh more in conversation.

Japanese honorifics, which Brown and Levinson (1987) use as a reason to label Japanese as a negative politeness language have been shown to be used more often by Japanese women than men (Ide, 1991a; Ogino, 1986). Studies that suggest Japanese women use more politeness strategies than their male counterparts, however, are lacking in the literature. One of the questions this thesis addresses is will these results as reflected in these studies be duplicated online through UMC use?

Some studies have aimed to look at the online behavior of the sexes. The majority of this research is on emoticon usage and suggests that women use more emoticons than men. These studies relate to women being more emotionally expressive than men (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Holmes, 1995). Very few studies, however, have examined linguistic based UMCs (phonetic spelling, laughter representations etc). This research aims to address that.

Research enquiries four: Gender, language and UMC usage

- a. How does UMC deployment reflect the face-to-face literature descriptions

concerning language and gender usage?

- b. Through UMCs, are female blog writers inclined to a more rapport orientated communication style than males?
- c. Do women use more UMCs and through them use more positive politeness strategies than men?

1.1.5 Motivation for the Study

There is a growing body of research on the relatively new discipline of CMC and the new innovative forms of language and extra-linguistic signs that it produces. These studies will be given coverage within the next chapter that will focus on the literature review. However, very few studies have examined the pragmatic usage of UMCs in relation to politeness strategies and how they function to enable smooth cyberspace communication. Most of the current studies simply focus on how emoticons are used to express emotion with no significant research that examines other UMCs such as phonetic spelling. Studies tend to be descriptive rather than analytical and do not examine the function and role these unorthodoxies play.

Most of the written English CMC literature just focuses on emoticon usage and is mainly concerned with just English language based online analysis. In addition, very few studies have given a contrastive analysis of two online languages, and very few still have analyzed the role that culture plays in determining UMC usage and how these oral and visual depictions can mirror offline interaction or present a new style of communication that differs from its face-to-face counterpart.

CMC as a field of study will continue to grow as people become more networked with each other through computers. The technology available allows for inventive ways of communicating with each other, and this communication is done primarily behind a computer where the writer can choose to be anonymous. The writer may know little about to whom they are interacting with and the only cues they have of this person is through the text they write or the UMCs they use which can not only present semantic and pragmatic information but also hint as to what the person is like

or wishes to be perceived as. The online platform, therefore, differs greatly to traditional face-to-face interactions, and, therefore, may produce differing forms of communication styles. These differing styles may challenge our assumptions of how Japanese and Americans communicate and open up the possibilities of further research questions that can be pursued.

American and Japanese communication styles are often cited within the ever growing literature as being widely different. This was the motivation for choosing American blogs over British or Australian blogs where the face to face communication literature is less substantial. In addition American blogs far outnumber any other English speaking nationality blogs within the blogosphere. (see page 17 in this chapter). This concept is discussed again latter within this chapter.

1.1.6 About This Chapter

This introductory chapter will initially clarify the nature of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) in relation to face-to-face communication (FTFC), and then outline the background issues relevant to the study.

Firstly, definitions, history and the types of CMC will be given followed by descriptions of the online personal diary CMC genre. As CMC is referred to in relation to FTFC an examination of CMC theories which address how CMC differs from FTFC is given in a separate section. This is followed by descriptions of the Japanese and American (alphabet based) online UMCs detailing their structure, history and cultural relevance.

1.2 CMC vs FTFC

As previously described CMC is communication done predominately online with or without the aid of visual and auditory cues or a seen or heard human presence. This is essentially what makes CMC and FTFC different. The CMC environment and the technology afforded them allow users to create unique ways to compensate for the

lack of vocal tone and facial expression (Walther, 1992, 1996).

CMC theories that address this lack of human presence will be examined in this chapter, and the research on CMC with regard to these issues in relation to UMC usage is described in the literature review chapter.

In an all text based CMC environment, messages are typed on the computer keyboard. The user may know the person who they are interacting with, or may know the person by name but may never have met him or her. Alternatively, they may 'know' the person by a fictitious handle name, or the message may be completely anonymous, a nameless person who interacts with someone, for example, on a discussion bulletin board would be an example of this. Time frame or chronemic time related messages differ according to the CMC platform the user is engaged in, synchronous communication as in chat rooms is done in real time whereas asynchronous CMC as in e-mail has no time constraints and the user can respond and interact at their leisure. How then does CMC (as represented by personal weblogs) differ from FTF communication?

The list below, although not exhaustive, gives a brief overview of the main differences CMC, in particular asynchronous communication, has with FTFC.

Asynchronous online communication characteristics

1. Conversation is essentially asynchronous

2. Visual or audio clues of the interlocutor are missing, which can mean:

*Rank, age, gender, position, occupation of the interlocutor can be unknown
(especially in anonymous communication)*

Appearance is unknown

Voice is unheard

3. Communication is text based, which means:

No Back channeling or aizuchi, interruptions or turn taking, false starts are not present. Emotion, tone or nature of the message is difficult to interpret. A Possible result of this is 'flaming'.

4. Conversations take place in a virtual rather than physical world

5. Easy access to communicate with people (known or unknown) on a global scale

The relatively new field of CMC forms the backdrop to this research. It is a discipline that attracts a variety of scholars from different fields and has already generated a vast interdisciplinary research literature. Herring (1996a) defines CMC as “communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers” (p.1). The term was introduced in the 1980s and gained popularity in the 1990s. A reputable journal of the same name was also launched, and the discipline is now growing nearly as fast as the computer technology and media that it aims to research. However, as Crystal (2011) states, the term may now be too broad from a linguistic point of view as it encompasses all forms of communication such as music, video, and photographs as well as language in the true sense of the word. The development of new forms of communication technologies such as mobile devices which can be used for mailing, use of social network services and blogging may also not fall under the term of ‘computer’ mediated in the traditional sense. Communication technologies have now moved beyond computer use. Mobile phones may now be considered ‘on the move’ computers but voice calls, and televised mediated conversation via text messages may sit awkwardly under the description of the computer.

An influx of new terms that have attempted to define the field, Baron (2004) suggests ‘Electronically Mediated Communication’ (EMC), Thurlow & Mroczek (2011) put forward the term ‘Digital Discourse’. For Crystal (2011) however these terms remain too broad and subsequently blur the distinction between language and other forms of communication and proposes the name ‘Internet Linguistics’ to cover the scientific study of all manifestations of language in the electronic medium.

A universally accepted term, however, one that is not too narrow or broad, has yet to be decided. For the purpose of this thesis ‘CMC’ will be used as the descriptive label paralleling Herring’s (2013) thoughts that the term is based on established tradition and is currently the preferred choice among communication scholars. My own personal definition of CMC is written discourse that is conducted through the medium

of the computer which sits comfortably with my interpretation of the personal online blog.

Let us now take a brief look at CMC history. Crystal (2005) writes that

the emergence of a new branch of an academic discipline does not take place very often, but the arrival of the internet has had such an impact on language that I believe the time is right to recognize and explore the scope of a putative ‘internet linguistics (p.1).

This has since led to the publication of his book in 2011 titled *Internet linguistics*. In her introduction to the book ‘Pragmatics of Computer Mediated Communication’ Herring (2013) states that the collection of papers within the book can be interpreted as the state of the art ‘in an emergent field rather than as a distillation of time-honored knowledge’(p.4). These observations are testament to the fact that even after a large body of research has been done within CMC, the scope and speed of change that technology provides, means there is still a lot of gaps within the research that have not been filled as this discipline continues to grow.

The advent of the internet allowed millions of people to connect with each other online, and this connection led to people communicating with each other on a wide scale. In 1990, the internet, devised by computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee, was originally a means of enabling high energy physicists in different institutions to share information within their field. This then spread to other fields, and is now all-inclusive in subject matter, and designed for multimedia interaction between computer users anywhere in the world (Crystal, 2010).

In the 1990’s search engines started to appear enabling users to search for the material they needed, and in 1998 the now world famous ‘Google’ made its introduction. Along with these search engines and earlier functions that were transported into the web the exchange of information and communication became a lot easier. The web became a device for the transmission of written language online. It is this written language that has fascinated linguists from various disciplines and has

gradually seen a body of work develop and is still developing. The type of CMC that the research has examined is also varied.

Herring (2002) states that CMC varies according to the technology on which it is based and to the context it is used in. Synchronous CMC, such as chat rooms and instant messaging, is carried out in real time with a physically present interlocutor and differs from asynchronous text based communication that takes place through weblogs, internet forums and e-mails where communication is not conducted in real time. These distinctions influence message length, complexity, language use, formality and interactivity as a result of time, and temporal constraints on the processing and writing of the message (Ko 1996). Herring (2002) also claims that user demographics, such as age or gender, can influence the CMC technology used and the communication style employed.

Both modes of communication can be transmitted from one user to many, or more personally as one user to another as in e-mails or blog comments. Common to all forms of CMC when visual equipment, such as webcams, is not present is that non-verbal communication, and the expression of emotion, is greatly limited in comparison to physical face-to-face communication.

Table 1.1 *Types of CMC*

	Asynchronous	Synchronous
1 to 1	E-mail Weblog comments	IM (Instant messaging) Chat rooms
1 to many	Bulletin boards, listservs, weblogs articles	Chat rooms Internet Relay Chat (IRC)

(For more detailed descriptions of the types of CMC as illustrated in the above table, please refer to Baron, 2004, Crystal, 2004, Herring, 1996b.)

The field of CMC that this thesis will specifically focus on revolves around text based CMC through weblogs whereby users communicate via the written word that is read and replied to at a later time and this is defined as an asynchronous mode of CMC. This is in contrast to messages sent and replied to in real time as in synchronous forms of CMC.

Attention will now turn to the online blog as an online genre of writing, an introduction to its history and background and the types that exist.

1.3 The Personal Blog

The data on which this study is based came specifically from online personal weblogs or the online diary which forms the basis of the traditional and popular blog form. They can be categorized as an asynchronous mode of CMC derived from usually one writer. Their thoughts, opinions and description of events from the trivial to the dramatic, are written in diary-like entries to a broad audience without a specific reader in mind. Blog creators can write using a handle name or pseudonym or use their real name if they wish.

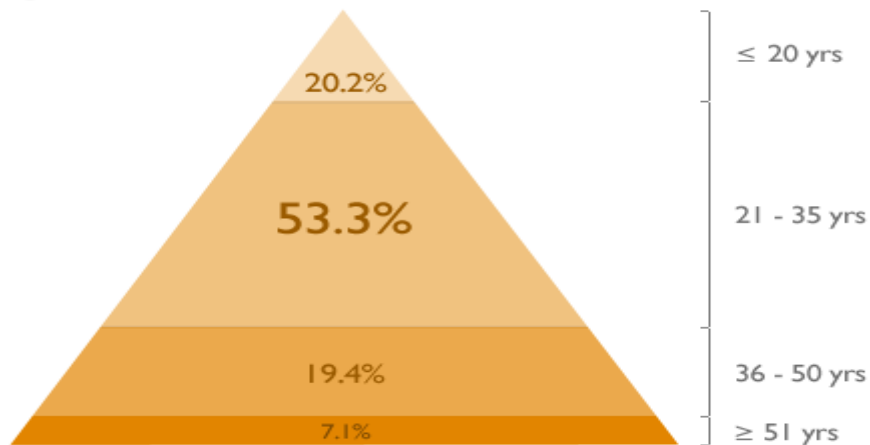
Entries on these blogs are usually posted in reverse chronological order on a daily or weekly basis and invite comments from their readership after each article or entry.

The author of the blog can respond to and interact with those who leave comments on their entries. Blogs can gain an extensive following of ‘fans’ who comment on each other’s blogs, which can lead to the formation of a blog community. These written blog comments are effectively interactions between two people, and this thesis will concentrate on these comments. The function of UMCs within the blog articles or posts was analyzed and the results are discussed in chapter 4. These UMCs however are written for the blog readership rather than one specific reader. UMCs included in comments were written for one particular reader. The interaction therefore is 1 to 1 focused.

The term ‘weblogs’ was first coined by John Barger in December 1997, and the terms blog and blogging were included in the *Oxford English dictionary* in 2003 and subsequently ‘blog’ was elected as Merriam-Websters word of the year in 2004 (Puschmann, 2013).

There are many statistical surveys that have been conducted by various organizations which aim to track and document the demographics of blog users. Surveys such as Sysomos in an analysis of more than 100 million blogs (nationality of blog writers not specified but the assumption is that it includes all blogs and genres within the blogosphere) found in 2010 that 53.3% of all blog users are within the 21-35 years of age bracket with the explanation that this generation or demographic group grew up with the blogging revolution.

Age distribution



Over 100 million blog posts analyzed. Source: sysomos.com

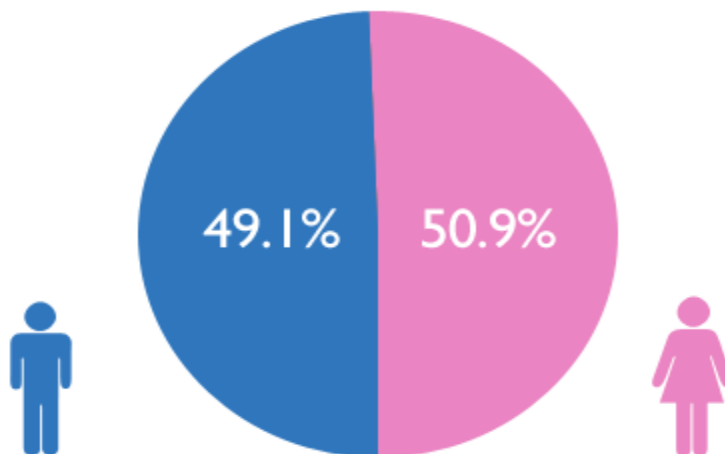
sysomos

Figure 1.1 Age Distribution of Over 100 Million Blog Users Worldwide

From: Sysomos Inc (2010)

In terms of gender the survey suggests that the blogosphere is equally balanced in terms of gender and blog usage which they claim is a gender neutral environment.

Gender distribution



Over 100 million blog posts analyzed. Source: sysomos.com

sysomos

Figure 1.2 Gender Distributions of Over 100 Million Blog Users Worldwide

From: Sysomos Inc (2010)

Blogging has now gone global, written in many languages by various communities across differing genres of weblog. Figure 1.3 ranks the distribution of over 100 million blog users worldwide according to country. America accounts for 29% of bloggers in the world with Japan lying 3rd at 4.9%. However, Sysomos suggests that 81% of Japanese web users visit blogs each month, which ranks them under the ‘spectators’ category. They suggest that blogging has become a part of Japanese culture with as many as 1 million blog posts written each month.
















Country	Share percentage
 USA	29.22%
 UK	6.75%
 Japan	4.88%
 Brazil	4.19%
 Canada	3.93%
 Germany	3.34%
 Italy	3.21%
 Spain	3.14%
 France	2.87%
 Russia	2.31%
 Australia	2.22%
 India	2.14%
 Sweden	2.05%
 Malaysia	1.7%
 Netherlands	1.69%
Source: sysomos.com	

Figure 1.3 Distributions of Over 100 Million Blog Users Worldwide by Country
From: Sysomos Inc (2010)

Technorati, an Internet search engine that monitors the blogosphere, has conducted a variety of surveys investigating the demographics, populations and gender of blog users. Sifry (2007) writes that in a 2006 survey that examined blog posts by language, Japanese was ranked first at 37% of the total posts in the 4th quarter of the

year. English was second at 36%, followed by Chinese (8%) and Italian (3%). This seems to concur with the Sysomos finding that Japanese post over a million blog posts a month.

English, as a global language, is understandably ranked high, but considering that Japanese is predominantly only spoken in Japan these figures are quite remarkable. Kirkpatrick (2008) writes that in an additional 2008 Technorati survey it concluded that the number of global weblogs has surpassed one hundred million. In the following year their ‘state of the blogosphere’ report found that the majority of the 2,828 US bloggers surveyed were male aged between 14-44, educated and with a substantial income (McLean, 2009). Table 1.2 gives a summary of the findings according to a December 2011 social digital mobile Japanese survey. These results clearly indicate the popularity of blogs in Japan, although the data does not state what kind of blog.

Table 1.2 *Japan’s Blog Usage Statistics*

81% of Japanese web users visit blogs each month
Audience for blogs in Japan is at 73,500,000
The average Japanese user spends about 63 minutes on blogs each month
Combined blog reading adds up to around 6 million years every year.
The Japanese are the most enthusiastic bloggers on earth, making more than 1,000,000 blog posts each month
7,000,000 Japanese internet users have their own blog

From Digital Media in Japan (2012)

Table 1.3 gives a brief summary of American blogging habits based on surveys investigating blog user habits. The surveys do not indicate what kind of blogs but the statistics show that blogging is an online habit that is also widespread within the United States.

Table 1.3 America's Blog Usage Statistics

59% of bloggers spend just one or two hours per week tending their blog
One in ten bloggers spend ten or more hours per week on their blog.
42,000,000 blogs in the US
329 million people view a Blog monthly
25 billion pages viewed monthly
500,000 daily new posts
400,000 daily comments

From Crestodina (2014), John Rampton (2012), The Pew Charitable Trusts (2006)

Pew Internet and American life project published results in 2006 that stated that blog readers were likely to be male, educated, and computer savvy. In addition, 55% of American bloggers use a pseudonym or handle name, with 45% writing in their real name. In contrast to this in a survey conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication in 2009 (as cited in Kimura, 2010) 31% of respondents stated they wrote anonymously, with 59% using a handle name. Bloggers using their real name amounted to a mere 2%.

However, these surveys as outlined above do not take into account the genre or types of weblog that exist and merely give collective overviews of every type of blog when publishing their findings. A discussion of the different types of blog is therefore needed to explain the evolution of the weblogs and the diverse forms that it is composed of.

Weblogs are defined as web-pages that are consistently updated that consist of archived posts in a typically reverse chronological order (Nardi et al, 2004). Lomborg (2009) describes the weblog as a complex communicative genre, and it has been categorized by Herring et al. (2005) under the following 5 definitions.

1. Diaries / personal weblog. The writer expresses their feelings on experiences and their life.
2. Filters. Filter blogs refer to web content via links accompanied by opinions of the

blog user.

3. K-blogs. This blog classifies information via other resources on a particular topic.
4. Mixed. At least two of the above are included in the blog.
5. Other. Unclassifiable using the criteria stated in 1-3.

K-blogs or knowledge blogs are created by educators, institutions or corporations and aim to share knowledge of a particular topic. Private individuals tend to write personal journals or filter blogs which according to Blood (2002) allow for the freedom of self expression and empowerment.

Blood (2000) writes that the original weblog was a link driven site. These so-called 'filter blogs' allowed the author to post links to internet content with blog author comments. Barger (1999), the man who coined the term weblogs describes these early manifestations of the blog as "a web page where a weblogger 'logs' all the other web pages she finds interesting" (cit. by Blood, 2004, p. 54). These weblogs were written by a computer literate web enthusiast who had knowledge of HTML and the relevant technical skills. The late 1990's saw the introduction of do it yourself weblog tools such as Blogger. These tools allowed less technically literate users to post articles about their everyday life. Updated on a regular basis these blogs gradually built up a following and then a community whereby users posted links to each other's blogs and through the introduction of blog comments allowed readers to engage in a form of written conversation with each other. Like the 'filter blog' these blogs were date stamped in reverse chronological order but became more author centric rather than web content focused. Entries concentrated on their thoughts and feelings on the trivial to issues of a more serious nature. Blood (2000) writes that these free, easily accessible and user friendly tools allowed for the move away from filter blogs to a more journal style of blogging.

The first online journal or diary first appeared in 1995 in English (Karlsson, 2006) and the same year in Japanese (Kawaura, 1998). It was in 2000 that the blogs made the online diary widespread and gave it a more interactive format where readers

could leave comments on blog posts.

The online diary or personal weblog is now the most popular genre of blog among general users (as opposed to journalist or corporate blogs). Tecnorati in 2009 reported that 53% of those surveyed regarded their blogs as ‘personal musings’ and Viegas (2005) found that to be 83% in a similar survey, albeit on a smaller scale. Herring et al (2004)’s sample of blogs collected in 2003 consisted of diary weblogs at 70.4%, 12.6% as filter blogs, 3% as K-blogs, 9.5% as mixed and the rest falling under ‘other’. However, at the time of writing, there are many more forms of blogs emerging as technology develops such as photoblogs, audioblogs and microblogs.

Nevertheless, the personal weblog seems to be the most popular form of self expression and blog genre on the web.

Puschmann (2013) states that “blogs share characteristics with genres that are author-centric in terms of mode and sequential in terms of text organization, such as the diary and the personal letter, and these common characteristics are sometimes suggested to have been inherited by the blog in a genealogical sense” (p.3). Karlsson (2006) dismisses suggestions by Blood (2000) that the online journal / diary weblog is simply the transition of the paper diary to the computer screen. Karlsson (2006) calls the paper diary the blogs “evident offline antecedent” (p.1) but stresses that the diary is not merely a reproduced form in digital mode but a hybrid that draws upon online and offline genres.

These genres include the traditional paper diary, advice columns as found in print media and the personal homepage (a new genre of online writing that did not exist before the internet). Herring et al. (2005) states “a question that arises is whether blogs are an emergent or a reproduced genre. Our analysis suggests that blogs are neither unique nor reproduced entirely from offline genres, but rather constitute a hybrid genre that draws from multiple sources, including other communication genres” (p.3).

The traditional diary which is a deeply personal narration of events and personal feelings is in theory not intended to be read by anyone (with the exception of the author), or members of the general public. In contrast, the online personal weblog

has been given a public platform. The majority of these blogs allow readers to write comments after blog posts, commentating on the post, and the author, in what is paramount to one-to-one communication between a blog author and a blog comment writer. These comments can be made public or if the writer wishes can remain hidden from public view by selecting the appropriate option from the blog tools menu.

The discussion within this section has proved that the weblog is not just one single genre and the works of Lomborg (2009), Herring et al (2005) and Karlsson (2006) have attempted to create a topological framework for the classification of these weblogs. However, while the question of blog genre is an interesting one, it is beyond the scope of this paper but remains a question that will need further research. The focus will now turn to why do people write personal online blogs.

Miura & Yamashita (2004) found in their study through a survey of blog and personal blog users that the main difference between them is that the personal blog writer's intention or motivation for writing the blog is, along with self disclosure of personal events or information, the enjoyment of interacting with others. On the other hand, a blog user's main objective is the offering of information and the sharing of knowledge.

According to Miura & Kitayama (2005), who asked the question "What is the motivation to write"? Blogs user's responses consisted mostly of 1. The ability to write a personal journal, 2. An outlet to express their feelings and 3. The chance to communicate their opinions.

In a similar study in reference to blog benefits Yoshida (2006) found that users noted that blogs were a good method to get rid of stress and that they could be utilized as a communication tool and to aid in self understanding.

Jung et al. (2007) state that blogging allows its users to create 'a virtual space where they strategically construct their desired identities'. In an online environment, where nobody knows your real identity, the opportunity to create a persona, through your real name or handle name is an option. Through this option users can create a unique online identity that may differ considerably from their own one, an alter ego if

you will. The writer can then be seen to be appealing to their positive face, a face that wants to be liked and admired.

Other studies have shown that it is women more so than men who write personal blogs (Chen, 2012). Some research suggests that these female authors' personal blogs mirror face to face communication in that these women seek social outlets, the opinions of others and to express emotion and release tension (Huang et al., 2007; Nardi, Schiano, & Swartz, 2004). In addition, Chen (2012) suggests that the need for self-disclosure and the need for affiliation certainly play a role in why women write personal blogs. These findings seem to parallel the motivations found in research on Japanese blog user motivations.

The personal online blog, therefore, seems to fulfill the need to express emotion or embrace self disclosure (under a real or handle name) and the writing of blog articles or entries can accomplish this. The writing of comments on these blog posts in turn accomplishes the need to interact with others, to find affiliation and to seek or exchange opinions.

The diary is regarded as a female written genre both in Japanese and English. The personal blog unlike filter or political blogs is also more likely to be written by women (Chen, 2012).

In Japan there has been a long tradition of diary writing before the creation of the internet, for example, the tradition of students keeping written diaries that were assigned as homework assignments in the summer school holidays.

Iwamoto (2002) suggests that literature in diary form has been prosperous since medieval times and that the diary form is firmly a part of Japanese culture.

Harden (2007) writing in the Washington Post, described the Japanese as 'blog wild' stemming from their dominance of the blogosphere when at that time of publication 31.3 million Japanese people blogged with 40% of Japanese blogging done on mobile phones by some estimates. However, according to Digital media in Japan (2012), in a survey of mobile behavior, 17% of Japanese and 21.3% of Americans use their mobile phones to access social networking sites or blogs.

The Washington Post article further comments that blogging in Japan is a far

‘tamer beast’ in Japan than in America. Japan’s conformist culture has embraced the blog for a non-confrontational medium for getting along, in comparison to Americans’ use of the blog for abrasive self-promotion. In terms of content the article suggests there are striking differences as the following quote suggests (2007:para.5).

Bloggers here (Japan) shy away from politics and barbed language. They rarely trumpet their expertise. While Americans blog to stand out, the Japanese do it to fit in, blogging about small stuff: cats and flowers, bicycles and breakfast, gadgets and TV stars. Compared with Americans, they write at less length, they write anonymously, and they write a whole lot more often.

In addition to content Joichi Ito, a board member at Technorati suggests within the newspaper article that "Behavior is more important than technology," and that "In Japan, it is not socially acceptable to pursue fame." (2007:para.6). These online behavioral observations would point to the Japanese proverb that the nail that sticks up gets hammered down. In addition the Washington Post states that 40% of English speaking bloggers used the blog as a tool to raise the visibility of their authority in their field compared to 5% of Japanese. In contrast, Japanese bloggers said their primary aim was to create a record of their thoughts and information that they have collected.

These observations, however, are perhaps subjective and are not rooted in empirical evidence, but these notions will be again be referred to in the results chapter. Having discussed the genre of CMC and the personal online blog the next step is to enter a theoretical discussion of the mode or medium in which these written communications occur. This will then lead us into the question of how people communicate via computers in non face-to-face situations where visual and auditory cues remain non-existent.

1.4 CMC Theories

This thesis will examine how users create interpersonal communication online, in what is essentially a text based environment, through the use of UMCs. CMC theories have addressed the issue of how interpersonal communication can or cannot be achieved because of the lack of visual and audio cues. Within face-to-face communication, the use of non-verbal cues is regarded as a necessity for the correct interpretation of messages received and also how we convey messages to others.

Vargas (1987) suggests that when communication between two people is conducted only 35% of its content is relayed through words. The remaining 65% consists of nonverbal information such as gesture, speech pace, vocalization and other behavior.

However, in CMC due to the lack of these visual and auditory cues the true intention that the writer wishes to convey can often be difficult (Sugitani, 2006). There are multiple theories of CMC that look specifically at how this missing non-verbal communication may have an influence on CMC users from a social-psychological perspective. The main theories fall into one of two camps. The cues filtered out and cues filtered in theories.

The cues filtered out theories are as Walther (2011) suggests a “group of theories sharing the premise that CMC has no non-verbal cues and therefore occludes the accomplishment of social functions that typically involve those cues” (p.445). In other words, nonverbal cues such as tone of voice, facial and emotional expressions can enhance the warmth of online dialogue and interactions and that a lack of these can lead to a cold and sometimes hostile online environment (Kiesler, 1986). This first theoretical approach consisted of theories that make up what has been deemed the ‘impersonal perspective’ of CMC.

In contrast, the other camp which can be described under the umbrella term ‘cues filtered in’ are as Walter & Parks (2002) points out theories that explicitly reject “the view that the absence of nonverbal cues restricts communicator’s capability to exchange individuating information” (p.535). These theories insist that individual

users can develop affinity with other users even though they may be denied these nonverbal cues which are readily available in face-to-face interaction. CMC users, the theories assert, can simply seek other ways to relay relational messages from the cues available in text based CMC. These empirical findings which offered a contrast to the cues filtered out approach create what is known as the ‘interpersonal perspective’ of CMC.

1.4.1 Cues Filtered Out Theories

The advent of CMC inspired discussions on how the foundation of interpersonal communication is achieved, how the impressions we receive on first face to face encounters are duplicated online and how the expression of emotion and relation communication is expressed in text based CMC. This has led researchers to state that the lack of nonverbal or social cues diminishes CMC’s ability to foster impression formation and management (Kiesler, 1986; Kiesler, et al., 1984; Short et al, 1976).

Culnan & Markus (1987) combines these approaches and refers to them as the cues filtered out model. Their common ground is that they all share the claim that the functions that nonverbal cues serve in face to face communication go unmet in CMC as these cues are not readily available or absent.

These cues filtered out theories are predominant within perspectives on social interaction in CMC. However, the initial theories which stemmed from this approach originally placed a focus on other media and were created before the advent of CMC as it is known now. The social presence theory is an example of this.

1.4.2 Social Presence Theory

The social presence theory was conceived in 1976 by Short, Williams and Christie long before the widespread use of the internet as a communication tool. The basic premise of the theory state Spears & Lea (1992) is that “Social presence is

conceived as a single factor that comprises a number of dimensions relating to the degree of interpersonal contact. It is closely related to the notions of ‘intimacy’ and ‘immediacy’” (p.32). Social presence is, therefore, to what extent the interlocutor is aware of the emotional state as represented in auditory and nonverbal cues of the person he is interacting with. In rating social presence Short et al. (1976) characterized whether communications media could be ranked according to their dimensions of unsociable-sociable, insensitive-sensitive, cold-warm, and impersonal-personal. These ratings suggested that media could be ranked according to a high or low social presence. If we extrapolate this data to electronic mail for example this communication medium would be low on this rating scale as it is a text based medium void of these nonverbal cues (Spears & Lee, 1992).

In measuring bandwidth, which refers to the number of communication cue systems (visual and auditory) a technology can convey, the theory states that the lower the bandwidth the lower the ability for social presence. The assumption the theory makes is that for task orientated communication such as business correspondence CMC may serve the purpose well, however in relationship orientated communication which requires a ‘high personal involvement’ CMC may be lacking as the nonverbal cues necessary for the successful completion of social orientated interaction are missing. Therefore, the theory leads to the assumption that text based CMC is less socially orientated in comparison to what can be achieved in face-to-face (interpersonal) communication.

1.4.3 Reduced Social Cues Theory

The reduced social cues theory is another influential approach within CMC theory and unlike the social presence theory it is directly related to CMC. It parallels the social presence theory in that it states that the absence of nonverbal cues can explain the social psychological effects linked with CMC.

However, Kiesler et al. (1984) worked within the field which collectively is termed the reduced social cues theory, and focused on the notion that the CMC text

only environment is deplete of social and contextual cues as a result of the lack of rich nonverbal and environmental cues that are present in face to face interaction. This can lead to the reduced impact of social norms and constraints.

The theory examines the effects that a text based CMC void of socioemotive cues can have, one that leads negatively to a disinhibition effect and the other more positively to a liberation effect. The disinhibition effect suggests that as a result of the lack of cues that express roles, status and setting, hostility and flaming (the sending of offensive messages to people on the internet) are more frequent in comparison to a face-to-face environment (Kiesler, 1986). Spears, Lea, & Postmes (2001) suggest that the disinhibition effect is the consequence of slow and inefficient of information exchange in CMC.

However Kiesler et al (1984) and Kiesler (1986) state that there are also advantages to the inability to present socio-emotive cues and term them the liberation effect. It can democratize relationships as hierarchy found in face-to-face interaction is absent in CMC, especially in anonymous interactions, and this can, therefore, lead to less inhibited communication as it can liberate users from the constraints that social hierarchy imposes in relationships. Social position, gender and age can all be concealed within CMC, and Sproull & Kiesler (1991) states that the absences of these perceived social barriers allow people to express themselves more openly.

Regardless of the cues filtered out model's intuitive appeal these theories came under criticism as research from a larger variety of online settings were conducted which gave alternative perspectives and theories to this model.

Walther (1992) points out that it may simply take longer to achieve the same degree of content exchange in CMC than in face to face communication and that this may be the cause of task orientated rather than social orientated communication styles. Walther, Anderson & Park (1994) dispute early research that states that CMC is unable to convey relational dynamics and suggest that time limitations within CMC are the primary causes for their findings. In other words, "CMC takes a great deal longer than face to face interaction to accomplish more than simple data transfer" (Walther et al;.1994.p.80). They suggest that alternatively CMC users develop 'individuating

impressions of others' through the accumulation of interaction within the online environment.

The cues filtered out model has been largely rejected within CMC research. It has been, however, revisited by Gallagher, Sproull, & Kiesler (1998). These studies, only evaluated the first generation of CMC, notably text based only communications such as e-mail. The new second generation of CMC arrived along with new technology that permits the use of photos, self created avatars and videos. Walther (2011) writes that although the notion that CMC is inferior to traditional means of communication in respect to social presence has been rejected there are still studies that evaluate social presence in the second generation CMC. This is testament to the fact that the concept of social presence as an inherent consequence of missing multiple cues is still a topic of research. As recently as 2008, Bente et al analyzed the influence of avatars on social presence, interpersonal trust, and perceived communication quality. Nevertheless, even with the advent of a new second generation of CMC, text based CMC is still alive and well as witnessed through the widespread use of e-mail, smart phones and twitter. Therefore, there still remains a need to examine how relational nonverbal cues are conveyed in a CMC faceless medium.

The following perspectives can be grouped together under the umbrella term 'cues filtered in' and argue that the absence of nonverbal cues does not mean users cannot convey a more interpersonal communication style.

1.4.4 Social Identity Model of Deindividuation Effects (SIDE model)

The SIDE model concurs with assumptions that missing nonverbal cues within CMC filters out interpersonal and individual identity information (Lea & Spears, 1992; Spears & Lea, 1992). However, there is a shift from self awareness and identity from a personal level to a group level. Therefore, individual CMC users are not defined as separate entities, but rather by which group they belong to. For example, gender, ethnicity and occupation.

The theory looks at how contextual cues that display the common

characteristics and social categories of the group influence CMC interaction. Users can utilize these clues about these collectives or groups as a basis for relating to group members. Lea, O'Shea, Fung & Spears (1992) suggest that CMC users can evaluate the content of group user messages not on the basis of individuating characteristics, but on the basis of the cues that create or reinforce group norms. Thus, rather than base their impressions of others based on the little individual information available, they base their impressions based on similarity and common ground, resulting in an attraction to the group and subsequently its group members.

Lea & Spears (1992) suggest that through paralinguistic or typographic cues within online interaction users developed stronger positive feelings to in-group members rather than to out-group members. In a further study in 1995, they argue that the theory can help explain the development of romantic relationships online. Rather than physical attraction, intimacy can be a consequence of online user perceptions of their similarities that stem from a couple's shared membership of a variety of social categories.

In contrast to the 'liberation effect' as proposed in the 'reduced social cues theory', Postmes, Spears, & Lea (1998) insist that CMC reinforces existing social boundaries as people tend to display behavior according to the groups they belong to. Postmes, Spears, & Lea (1998) state that if identity is concealed but gender is known then individuals tend to behave according to gender norms. The assumption is that these social categories remain unaltered or effected in anonymous CMC. According to the theory, the anonymous CMC environment reduces individual differences and subsequently enhances group identity.

1.4.5 Social Information Processing (SIP) Model

The SIP model acknowledges that CMC is devoid of the nonverbal cues that are present in face-to-face interactions but that these do not hinder the development of relational communication online. The model implies that if CMC users interact with each other over time that social relationships will be formed. Not at just a group level

as in the SIDE model but at a personal individual level. Walther (1992) writes “If the relational tone effects of the cues-filtered-out research are indeed limited to initial interactions among strangers, what changes take place when such communicators continue their interactions over time?” (p.67). The development of relationships in CMC, he argues, is dependent on the passing of time and sufficient message exchange. As nonverbal cues are absent this requires that users adapt their interpersonal communication to whatever cues remain available through the channel they are using. Walther (1997) and Walther & Burgoon (1992) found that CMC users achieved relational communication through their e-mails to the same degree or higher than face-to-face interaction.

The SIP theory originally focused on language content and chronemic adaptations as methods to convey an interpersonal communication style. Through a series of studies conducted by Walther users are able to bypass the lack of cues through questions and disclosures (Tidwell & Walther, 2002), careful observation of chronemic cues, or the timing of communication, as in a swift versus slow reply and work or after work hours (Walther & Tidwell, 1995).

Walther (1992) suggests that ‘other devices’ can also be employed as strategies to enhance relationality online. These devices can include UMCs which will be detailed in the UMC section within this chapter. The theory did not specify extra-linguistic signs such as emoticons or graphical symbols as devices that can promote interpersonal communication, and writing in 2011, Walter states that language and style content as more primary conduits of interpersonal information. However, researchers have adopted his theory in an explanation of the role of emoticons (Derks, Bos, & von Grumbkow, 2007, Utz (2000).

1.4.6 Hyper-personal Model

In an extension of the SIP model above, Walther (1996) suggests through his hyper-personal model that CMC message senders can depict themselves in a favorable light socially or otherwise in order to capture the attention of the person to whom the

message is being relayed. This he argues can lead to friendly conversation that may surpass face to face conversation in terms of sociality. Message receivers may consequently enhance the image of the sender by overvaluing these text-based cues. In addition, in the case of asynchronous CMC the sender and the receiver of messages have enough time to edit their communication, making interactions in CMC more controllable and thoughtful in character. These edits are opportunities to review and revise their communications which can further facilitate favourable self-presentation online (Walther, 1997).

In summary, Walther (2007) offers 4 methods that users appropriate to enhance relational communication and interpersonal communication. The model specifies several concurrent dynamics in sender, receiver, channel and feedback systems that are affected by CMC attributes, which promote the development and potential exaggeration of impressions and relationships online. These are

Step 1 Sender of the message and their selective self-presentation

- Sender is able to edit breadth and depth of self-disclosure
- Emphasis on verbal only cues

Step 2 Receiver of the message and their over attribution of similarity

- Interpretive bias
- SIDE theory – social identity-deindividuation

Step 3 Channel: Communicating on your own time

- Asynchronous (non-simultaneous)

Step 4 Feedback: Self-fulfilling prophecy

- Hyper-positive image intentionally or unintentionally fed back.

When a receiver gets a selectively self presented message as in step 1 and responds as in step 2 that idealizes the sender, the feedback given or the interaction which can be done with no immediate time constraints as in step 3 will then reciprocate and reinforce the senders attributes in an exaggerated fashion as in step 4.

Walther (1996) suggests that the absence of these visual cues can make ‘more

malleable' the impression one is able to make'. The absence of a 'bad hair day', a bad choice of clothes are all absent in CMC interaction. Impersonal impressions do occur in CMC (Walther, 1993) but are channeled through the medium of language which as Ekman & Friesen (1969) point out can be subjected to control and editing rather than unconscious nonverbal behaviours. In other words, a self selected presentation can occur online of how and who you want to project your identity as being. Walther (1996) states

Another beneficiary of the lack of physical cues for the CMC sender may be in increased cognitive resources devoted to message construction. In CMC, there is no need physically to backchannel, hold in one's waist, nod, smile, remember to "look interested" and so on. We may shift our attention from our need to maintain simultaneous expressive and sensory systems and devote it instead to language selection. (p22)

The theory implies that CMC users can, through the use of selective-self presentation, present themselves in a way that they desire and that these 'presentations' are used by interlocutors to build up impressions, exaggerated or otherwise of the person they are interacting with. These impressions, created from the social context and personality cues within the message, can be both positive and negative (Walther, 1996).

Empirical support for the theory concurs with its conclusions of how CMC can build up interpersonal communication over time that surpasses that of face to face interaction, for example, as in strong or even romantic relationships (Utz, 2000) Interestingly, once the medium changes from online to offline, and the communicators meet in person, there are differences in the impressions formulated, with those created online more favourable and positive than those established after first visual contact (Ramirez & Wang, 2008).

One of the research questions this thesis wishes to address is how blog users assert / convey semantic and pragmatic meaning, create and form impressions and

develop relational interpersonal communication in a text based medium.

Further examination of these CMC theories in relation to UMC usage, impression formation and relational communication will be given further consideration in the literature review in chapter 2 and in the discussion of the findings and results.

1.5 The scripts of Japanese and English

Japanese uses both logographic *kanji* and phonographic *kana*. The logographic script represents the stems of words as seen in nouns and verbs, complimented with the syllabic script for grammatical inflexions and particles. Fouser et al. (2000) write that the inclusion of *kanji* enhances the visual nature of the language and that a purely phonographic system would complicate or slow down reading as the language has relatively few sounds and subsequently a large number of homophones. Nishimura et al. (2008) argue that this can actually make the language highly contextual as about 35% of words belong to one of the groups of homonyms, and that Japanese conversation cannot be understood without knowing the context as a result of these homophones.

The most common method of imputing Japanese on a computer is through the IME (Input Method Editor) that converts *kana* into *kanji* directly. In other words, PC users can enter words via *romaji* or the English letter keyboard and the computer converts them automatically to a Chinese character or *kanji* with an optional dropdown bar in which the user can choose the appropriate *kanji* from the characters that have the same pronunciation.

English is based on the phonographic Roman alphabet; and as Sampson (1987) suggests English writing might be described as fundamentally phonemic but with some elements of logography. He gives the example of the spelling difference of rain and reign which have nothing to do with pronunciation but relate purely to word identity. Fouser et al. (2000) state that in CMC the use of acronyms that have become logographical representations of a string of words is often seen in internet communication with examples such as IMHO (In my humble opinion) and OMG (Oh my God).

1.6 Unconventional Means of Communication (UMC) Online

When compared to conventional written discourse as seen in academic papers, novels and newspapers, the internet offers a new system of writing that utilizes innovative yet unconventional means of communication. Crystal (2006) calls it ‘Netspeak’, which is neither a spoken nor written language, but a new creative medium constructed through the computer. The language of weblogs he describes as ‘naked’ as it is without the interference of proofreaders or editors who aim to standardize its text. Matsuda (2008) suggests that the unorthodox use of orthography and language produced in Japanese blog articles is an attempt to create a form of cuteness and to solicit an interest in the blog creator’s writings. For the purposes of this paper I group these unorthodox representations as discussed in the next paragraph under the umbrella term of unconventional means of communication or UMC.




Online UMC is reflected in the attempt to convey orally or visually spoken and non-verbal language that indexes the writer’s emotional stance and is sent and remains in the written form. Baron (2009) suggests CMC users add these elements in their written discourse in an attempt to avoid misunderstanding, and to convey their true stance with the aim of intensifying their shared and common ground. Harris and Paradice (2007) suggest recipients of messages will interpret the sender’s emotional intentions using paralinguistic cues contained and sent within the message.

Paralinguistic cues refer to message characteristics in text based CMC used to convey meanings normally achieved via tone of voice, body gestures, and other non-verbal communicative behaviors in face to face communication. Paralinguistic cues used in text based CMC according to Harris and Paradice (2007) and Carey (1980) can consist of vocal spellings, spatial arrays, and the manipulation of grammatical markers. Carey (1980) suggests vocal spellings contain features that include “non-standard spellings of words which bring attention to sound qualities. The spelling may serve to mark a regional accent or an idiosyncratic manner of speech” (p.67). Such examples can be found in vocal spellings, such as Type back soon!!!! (Danet, 2001) and in Japanese 終わりましたかぁ *Owarimashita kaa* ‘Was it really

over’ (Nishimura, 2003). Harris and Paradice (2007) suggest lexical surrogates such as ‘yuk yuk’ or the logographical ‘lol’ (laugh out loud) or vocal spellings, such as ‘weeeeeell’, are intended to imitate vocal sounds or provide a tone to the communication. Japanese examples include the use of logographical representations of laughter, such as the Chinese character 笑 *warau* ‘to laugh’, at the end of messages.

The table below gives a summary of the UMCs that will be examined for usage and function within the collected corpus data. It is by no means exhaustive but is representative of the kind of UMCs found in personal weblogs and their comments. The table is followed by sections that aim to provide detailed summaries of the UMCs within the table and that will form the basis of the data that is to be examined.

Table 1.4 Japanese and English Online UMCs

UMC Type	Japanese examples	English examples
Text based emoticons	(^_^) Smile (T_T) Sadness (>ε<) Anger (/° o °) Surprise	:-) Smile :-(Sadness >: Anger :-o Surprise
Smiley emoticons		
Pictograms		
Representations of laughter	笑 (<i>warau</i>) to laugh あはは・ふふふ (<i>ahaha・fufufu</i>) 面白い <i>ww</i> (<i>omoshiroi</i>) Interesting <i>www</i> (‘ <i>w</i> ’ indicates <i>warau</i> meaning ‘to laugh’).	LOL or lol (Laugh out loud) Haha・hehe
Unconventional phonetic spelling (Long vowel sounds, geminate consonants)	行きますー <i>Ikimaasu</i> (Will go). ありがとう <i>Arigatou</i> (Thank you). with the deliberate use of the small hiragana う/ <i>u</i> sound.	Greeeeeat! Sooooo Cooooool! Awwwesome! hiya cya
Capitalization	YOROSHIKU!	ABSOLUTELY AGREE with you!
Abbreviations	あけおめ、ことよろ。 <i>Akeome, kotyoro</i> (An abbreviation of Happy new year used mainly by young people)	OMG (Oh my God) IMHO (In my humble opinion)
Multiple exclamation usage	彼女ができた!!! <i>Kanojo ga dekita!!!</i> (I got a girlfriend!!!)	That movie is cool !!!
Kigou (codes)	きっとルフィーくんにも、	

	カワイイ彼女ができるよ ～♪ <i>Kitto Rufee kun ni mo,</i> <i>kawaii kanojo ga dekiru yo</i> ～♪ ('Surely you too (Rufee) will get a cute girlfriend.')	
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Adapted from Kavanagh (2012a, 2012b)

1.6.1 Extra linguistic Signs: Text Based Emoticons

Spatial arrays are techniques often employed by CMC users to draw pictures using the features available on the keyboard that are often visual representations of emotion. Examples of this are emoticons such as :-) smile and :- (frown or the upright (^_^) which is the basic smiley of Japan. Online emoticons, a phenomenon going back over 30 years, were also explicitly created with the goal of clarifying the writers intended meaning within their messages.

The original emoticon can be traced back to 1982 and the Japanese equivalent called *kaomoji* which literally means face letter or mark followed a few years later. Scott Fahlman created the ubiquitous :-) smiley emoticon and its sad-faced counterpart :- (was created mere seconds later. They rapidly spread throughout BITNET and across university campuses worldwide to become a mainstay of the online lexicon. This original text based emoticon has now metamorphosed into the also ubiquitous yellow smiley. Rather than the yellow smiley the text based emoticon relies on keyboard strokes for their creation or are readily available to select within smart phones or some online CMC platforms such those found in blogs. They can also be downloaded or copy and pasted from online *kaomoji* dictionaries.

The emoticon is not just merely used to express laughter or happiness but a variety of emotions from positive to negative. From the simple Western emoticon created by Professor Scott Fahlman the variety of Western emoticons is now vast but the Japanese *kaomoji* which came a few years later is incredibly diverse in comparison. A reason for these differences stems from the word processing keyboard technology used in America and Japan and the one or two byte keyboard technology distinction.

In American computers, every character is represented by a byte; a string of eight zeroes and ones, which allows 256 possible signs. Japanese computers on the other hand use two bytes for every sign, which allows enough combinations to be made to represent all the *Kanji*. There are 2,136 Jōyō *kanji* (commonly used *Kanji* or Chinese characters). There are, therefore, a larger variety of emoticons in Japanese.

Table 1.4 shows an example of one and two byte letters

Table 1.5 A Comparison of 1 Byte and 2 Byte Combinations / Letters

1byte letters:	ABCDabcd,.^=123456?+ -*/[]`@.....
2bytes letters	あいうえおカキクケコ@123漢字♠♥〒 ♀♂ㄥ▽≡ΩωЯφ♪

From Japanese Smileys (n.d.)

Nishimura (2010) writes that a neglected area of CMC research includes the technology used to create online communication, namely the keyboard or word processing technology. She states that this plays a crucial role in the case of Japanese CMC. The word processor states Gottlieb (1994) had a more significant impact on writing practices among the Japanese who employ complicated writing scripts than writers of alphabet based languages. The word processor was in common use in 1995 and by the year 2000 most homes were connected to the internet via a computer in Japan. With this technology came research on how hand written Japanese was influenced for the worst (Nishimura, 2010) and continues to this day with some commentators believing that typed or computer inputted Japanese affects Japanese reading and writing literacy (O'Connor 2005). English is also no exception to this with some pouring scorn on the new forms of abbreviated language or 'lingo' that has appeared especially in texting among the younger generation (Crystal, 2008).

The Japanese keyboard or word processor technology utilizes a FEP (Front End Processor) which converts the Romanized *kana* syllabify to produce pictographic ideographs called *Kanji* or Chinese characters.

Katsuno & Yano (2002) state that this FEP technology spurred on the development and widespread use of *kaomoji*. Writing in 2002 they describe how

computer users can preprogram or tweak their computer to automatically call up the *kaomoji*, for example (^_^) when typing in *nikko* [smile]. The user therefore does not need to remember exactly how to create particular *kaomoji*, but can reproduce it easily with a kana-spelled word. This keystroke conversion system greatly facilitated the inclusion of *kaomoji* in computer messages.

Tweaking however may be a complex procedure for some CMC users with many blog users for example being non-literate computer users. This has led to many wiki how to type blog sites or bulletin boards dedicated to how emoticons can be used within blogs, mixi and other social networking platforms.

Katsuno & Yano (2002) write that as a result of the increasing popularity and the ease of usage of *kaomoji*, computer users, particularly within the *otaku* or geek community, began to develop hundreds and even thousands for their own use. These however, were part of a subculture and that non-members of that particular speech community would find it difficult to comprehend the meaning and usage of such extra-linguistic signs.

Since 1993, at least twenty *kaomoji* dictionaries have been published, both in print and electronic media (e.g., StereoMagic 2000, Nagaoka 2001 as cited in Katsuno & Yano, 2002). There are currently many more *kaomoji* dictionaries online and bulletin boards dedicated to the use and meaning of these *kaomoji*. There are also English equalivants (although not as numerous) created for the sole purpose of emoticon usage and interpretation. Within these bulletin boards users discuss how they use a particular emoticon with interpretation and usage dependent on the author. Although this interpretation is similar, there is variation on how the emoticon is used.

The typical western emoticons are written sideways as in :-) and as illustrated above the Japanese *kaomoji* or emoticons are written front facing or horizontally as in (^ _ ^). Yuki et al (2007) suggest that the Japanese express their emotions through the eyes and that westerners tend to express their emotions mainly through the expression of the mouth.

The tables below illustrate the most commonly used *kaomoji* or emoticons in English and Japanese online text based communications. This is by no means an

exhaustive list as the variety of *kaomoji* and emoticons are infinite with new ones appearing consistently.

The tables serve as an introduction to the types found in American and Japanese personal online weblogs. A more detailed explanation of the function and usage of these *kaomoji* and emoticons will be described in the literature review chapter along with the findings and the discussion of the results chapter.

Table 1.6 English Text Based Basic Emoticons

:)	The classic smiley face (happy, grin)	:l	Indifferent
:)	The simpler variation	:-e	Disappointed
:-(The frown (unhappy)	>:-<	Mad or angry
:-o	Surprise or shock	:-D	Laughing or very happy
:-@	Screaming or shouting	;-)	Smile with a wink (joking, kidding, or sarcasm).

Table 1.7 Japanese Text Basic Emoticons (*Kaomoji*)

(^_^)/	Hi!	(>_<")	Ouch!
(^^)	smile	(';')	a baby
(^O^)	Being glad!	(~o~)	a yawn
^_^;	be in a cold sweat	<^_^; -	embarrassed, scratching one's head
(/--)/	Oh no!	(/_;)/	Embarrassment
(;_;	cry and sob	(TOT) (T^T)	endure by crying
(^_-)---	Wink	m(._.)m	To bow

The above emoticons can be done in multiple ways on the keyboard of a home computer. However, with the growing mobile communications market in the last decade *kaomoji* can be inserted into your online communications even when you are away from your computer. With the advent of the smart phone what can be done on a computer can be equally achieved in these mobile devices.

Some *kaomoji* are pre-installed into Japanese *keitai*'s or mobile handsets, and users can choose from an *emoji* (絵文字) or pictogram menu, a 記号 *kigou* or symbols menu and a 顔文字 *kaomoji* or emoticons menu. (*Emoji* and *kigou* will be discussed in further detail later within this section).

This trend continued with the latest technology within the smartphone. Within some *keitai* and smart phone interfaces a *kaomoji* menu is available where the *kaomoji* or emoticons are divided into their meanings such as 泣く *naku* to cry and some are attached to expressions or words which highlight their intended meaning as in the following examples.

(^_^*)/コンチャ! **Meaning:** *konnichiwa* or hello. **Function:** Used in greetings.

m (. _ .) mアリガト **Meaning:** *Arigatou* or thank you. **Function:** To express gratitude.

(^ _ ^)/~~サヨナラ **Meaning:** *Sayonara* or goodbye. **Function:** Used in closings.

These emoticons can be inputted manually on the computer keyboard and copy and pasted from an online *kaomoji* dictionary website. Having discussed the types and forms of emoticons and *kaomoji*, the following sections will focus on the origin and history of these unorthodox visual depictions.

1.6.2 American Emoticons: History and Origins

Scott Fahlman, a computer scientist at Carnegie Mellon University, first proposed a colon, hyphen and bracket as a way of conveying emotional meaning via plain text.

Below is the original post by Fahlman (n.d. para. 1) that suggested the idea.

19-Sep-82 11:44

I propose that the following character sequence for joke markers:

: -)

Read it sideways. Actually, it is probably more economical to mark things that are NOT jokes, given current trends. For this, use :- (

Scott proposed the use of these series of markers for online bulletin boards at Carnegie Mellon University during the early 1980s. With sarcasm and humour often proving difficult to detect in text, Scott wanted to explicitly mark posts that were light

hearted, resulting in the post above which suggested :-) for humorous posts, and :-(for posts that were meant to be taken seriously.

Fahiman (n.d.para.3) himself writes

By the early 1980's, the Computer Science community at Carnegie Mellon was making heavy use of online bulletin boards. Given the nature of the community, a good many of the posts were humorous (or attempted humor). The problem was that if someone made a sarcastic remark, a few readers would fail to get the joke, and each of them would post a lengthy diatribe in response. That would stir up more people with more responses, and soon the original thread of the discussion was buried.

He continues (para.5)

This problem caused some of us to suggest (only half seriously) that maybe it would be a good idea to explicitly mark posts that were not to be taken seriously. After all, when using text-based online communication, we lack the body language or tone-of-voice cues that convey this information when we talk in person or on the phone. Various “joke markers” were suggested, and in the midst of that discussion it occurred to me that the character sequence :-) would be an elegant solution – one that could be handled by the ASCII-based computer terminals of the day. So I suggested that. In the same post, I also suggested the use of :-(to indicate that a message was meant to be taken seriously, though that symbol quickly evolved into a marker for displeasure, frustration, or anger.

Fahman suggests that the convention soon spread within Carnegie Mellon, and subsequently spread to other universities and research labs via the primitive computer networks of the day. Within a couple of years other cultures started to embrace the emoticon or re-invented it according to the native language employed and the keyboard technology available.

1.6.3 Japanese Emoticons: History and Origins

Unlike the origins of the American emoticon it is difficult to pinpoint an exact time when the Japanese emoticon was introduced but what is often said is that the most popular and basic symbol (^_^) appeared in *pasokon tsuushin* around 1986.

According to the Japanese newspaper *Yomori Shinbun* written 10 December, 1994 (cited in Katsuno & Yano, 2002), *kaomoji* were placed after the senders name acting like a signature but then soon spread to the main text of the message and the variety and number of *kaomoji* increased rapidly around 1990 with the establishment of large network service companies such as NIFTY-Serve and PC-VAN. Katsuno and Yano (2002) give a description here of how *pasokon tsuushin* can be seen to be the main influence of *kaomoji* use and cyberculture.

The relationship between the two major network communities developed around the use of the Internet. Prior to 1993, the two communities retained separate spheres. While *pasokon tsuushin* users latched onto and developed Japanese *kaomoji*, JUNET users during the same period more typically used American emoticons [e.g., smiley] (Nojima 1993, 137). Because of the transnational links between academics globally, JUNET users shared a cyberculture with Americans more than with other Japanese users of *pasokon tsuushin*. In 1993, the government approved the commercial use of the Internet. Once *pasokon tsuushin* users gradually became accustomed to connecting to the Internet, the cyberculture they developed [i.e., *kaomoji*] came to supplant that of the American cyberculture adopted by JUNET users [i.e., smileys]. The advent of Windows 95 with its preinstalled software and headline-making entry into the Japanese market in November 1995 accelerated the dominance of *pasokon tsuushin* cyberculture, including *kaomoji*, over all computer communities in Japan. Therefore, although JUNET is the predecessor of today's Internet in Japan, the cyberculture of which it is a part owes much to *pasokon tsuushin* (p.10).

The Japanese language along with phonographic kana is made up of logographic kanji or Chinese characters so it can be argued that it is easier to express and recognize something graphic rather than *romaji* or alphabetic letters for native Japanese. The literature reflects this and points to the visual nature of the language in comparison to the alphabet (Akizuki, 2009).

Japanese *manga* or comics are also very visual and have a variety of visual or graphic depictions and notations that describe the characters emotional or psychological state.

The roots of some of the more basic Japanese *kaomoji* can be found to be originating from *manga* or Japanese comics. The examples below show the similarities of the expressions made by characters within *manga* and how *kaomoji* aim to reproduce similar facial expressions albeit on a much simplistic scale.

Example source <http://mypages.iit.edu/~jfas/articles/animeemoticons.html>



Figure 1.4 Smiling emoticon

^_^ or ^__^

Eyelids raised: smiling, happy



Figure 1.5 Tearful Emoticon

T_T or ;_;

Eye streams or drops: crying

Natsume & Takekuma (1995) writes that within *manga* the psychological states of comic characters are highlighted by a *keiyu* (形喩) as illustrated in the chart below. The *kaomoji* which stems from this is often used when the writer may wish to soften the illocutionary force of the statement or when what they are saying is considered too forceful, or even to show modesty which is a characteristic of Japanese communication.



; =Keiyu ^_^;

Figure 1.6 Keiyu Sweat mark

Unlike western emoticons a lot of Japanese *kaomoji* are also culturally related. Other examples aim to mimic bowing gestures as in greetings and the expression of thanks. These are illustrated in the chapters on the findings.

1.6.4 Graphic Based Emotions or the Smiley

The smiley is usually a yellow circular face, with black dots to represent the eyes, and the mouth shows the emotional expression of the face. With the advancement of computer technology some now have hand gestures attached to them to aid in their emotional expression, and now not all smileys are yellow with some in red to represent anger or rage. These graphic based emoticons evolved, or some may say mutated from the text based emoticon of Fahlman and can be seen frequently in synchronous or real time online communication such as chat rooms and messenger.

The original “smiley face” was created by the designer Harvey Ball for the State Mutual Life Assurance Company. It has since become a ubiquitous symbol. It was adopted by acid house which was a sub-genre of house music developed around the mid-1980s and the design was widely used on buttons, badges and clothing, and has since become a lasting and recognizable international symbol. This smiley face

preceded the internet and its cousin, the computer smiley which can be described as its digital relation. The computer smiley increased in popularity with the advent of Instant Messenger and the 12 emoticons they were provided within its interface – from kissing to crying – allowed users to convey a wide range of emotions with a simple click of the mouse.

The figure below illustrates these initial online smiley's.



Figure 1.7 The Initial Online Graphic Emoticons (Smiley's)

As technology and online communication has evolved, so did the type and variety of smiley or graphic based emoticons, especially in the case of asynchronous real time communication. Some are animated but the majority still remain as pictures and below are typical examples found in mobile handsets and within the interfaces of some CMC genres such as weblogs.



Figure 1.8 Examples of Current Graphic Emoticons

Popular online communication platforms such as Skype also include these emoticons within their interface and by typing certain phrases in parenthesis, users can convey many terms and expressions, from the naughty (mooning) to the somewhat obscure (pool party) to the direct (fubar an acronym for "F***ed-up Beyond All

Recognition".) as in the examples illustrated below.

		Finger	(finger)
		Bandit	(bandit)
		Drunk	(drunk)
		Smoking	(smoking) (smoke) (ci)
		Toivo	(toivo)
		Rock	(rock)
		Headbang	(headbang) (banghead)
		Bug	(bug)
		Fubar	(fubar)
		Poolparty	(poolparty)
		Swearing	(swear)
		TMI	(tmi)
		Heidy	(heidy)
		Mooning	(mooning)

Figure 1.9 Graphic Emoticons Found on Skype

The smiley can be predominately seen in western online communications more so than in Japanese online interactions where the *emoji* or pictogram is more favored and widespread. (See the discussion on *emoji* and symbols below.) It must be noted, however, that the use of these graphic based emoticons (indeed as with all UMC's) can be influenced by the mode of communication that they occur in. Drop down graphic emoticon or smiley menus in some instant messaging clients for example may even promote their usage (Provine et al. 2007). However, I would insert that just because something is there does not mean you are compelled to use it. Other factors and considerations are surely at play here that may influence or determine both their frequency of usage and their deployment including for example the online speech

community and its demographics. Some Japanese CMC users even frown upon their usage in online interactions (Katsuno and Yano, 2002).

Instant messenger, an example of real time communication has built into its interface a menu of graphic emoticons or smiley's. In a survey among its users to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the emoticon in 2007, 82% of 40,000 respondents who use Yahoo messenger daily adopt these smileys or graphic emoticons in their daily instant messaging (IM) communications. Nearly two thirds (61%) of them said they rely on these emoticons to best express their feelings. 'Gen IM' or 'Generation Instant messengers' respondents from the ages of 19-25 were the most frequent graphic emoticon users and used them on a daily basis. However emoticon use according to this survey is not just the domain of the young with 48% of the over fifties responding that they use emoticons in their online Instant messaging communications. Interestingly, 82% of respondents thought that women are more likely to use emoticons than men. This issue will be discussed more in the literature review and within the discussion of the findings section.

Although the results of this online survey could be misleading (untruthful answers, does not detail nationality of user) they do show that the graphic emoticon is still very much widespread within the online (IM) community at least.

1.6.5 *Emoji*

Emoji (絵文字) literally meaning 'picture letter mark', is a graphic picture or pictogram. These pictograms are numerous with a substantial variety that originally emerged in mobile phones. *Emoji* is the term that describes these 'picture characters' and are built into most Japanese mobile handsets such as the original *keitai* and the latest smart phones.

The main differences between *emoji* and emoticons are that *emoji* are computer codes read and transferred by these computers and then decoded into pre-defined images that users can see and are limited in number to around 2000 (Blagdon, 2013; EmojiChat, n.d.)

Emoticons, in contrast, are user created text based images and the possible combinations are infinite. *Emoji*, as pictographs or pictograms depict images of faces, weather, activities and actions as illustrated in the table below.

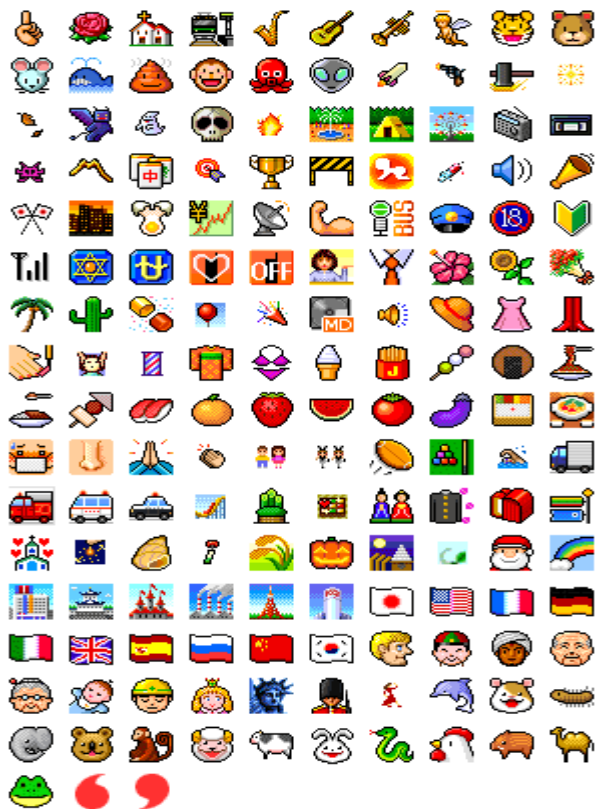


Figure 1.10 Emoji Variation

Emoji was first introduced in Japan through the mobile communications network DoCoMo's i-mode by Shigeta Kurita (Blagdon (2013)). Their origin and invention was initially inspired by the pocket bell pager which was a domestic hit in terms of sales and popularity in 1995. The usage of the heart symbol within the text that Docomo included on this device meant that millions of teenage kids clamored for this innovative new way to express cuteness and sentiment.

However, Docomo then abandoned the pocket bell for a more business like pager, which was more standardized and without the heart symbol. Their teenage customer base then abandoned them. Having realized their mistake they then began a search for the next new thing so that they could again dominate the

telecommunications sales market.

Windows 95 was launched with a more pre-installed FEP technology and according to Kurita people were finding it hard to communicate with the new technology and the shorter, more casual nature of e-mail lead to a breakdown in communication and in the words of Kurita: “If someone says *Wakarimashita* you don’t know whether it’s a kind of warm, soft ‘I understand’ or a ‘yeah, I get it’ kind of cool, negative feeling,” says Kurita. “You don’t know what’s in the writer’s head.” (Blagdon, 2013, para.4)

Emoji emerged from this in 1999. This now meant that the mobile phone user could now choose to include in their text and email messages these predefined pictograms to express additional meaning to the text. Kurita states that he drew inspiration from *manga* and *kanji* in the creation of these graphic depictions.

In Japanese comics, there are a lot of different symbols. People draw expressions like the person with the bead of sweat, you know, or like, when someone gets an idea and they have the light bulb. So there were a lot of cases where I used those as a kind of hint and rearranged things. ((Blagdon, 2013, para.7)

Within this backdrop the *emoji* soon spread with all mobile communication companies installing them in their mobile communication devices. Although this spread was initially limited to Japan other countries and telecommunications companies followed suit.

The i-Phone initially had no *emoji* pre-installed, and many Japanese companies rejected the i-Phone on this premise (Blagdon, 2013). However, the i-Phone was adopted by Softbank, Japan’s then 5th largest mobile operator, on the condition that *emoji* were pre-installed. However, outside of Japan *emoji* are also gathering popularity abroad. One of the most popular free i-phone downloads in America in 2010 was the application *emoji* free.

Although *emoji* are not pre-installed in American i-Phones and smartphones

they are readily available via apps and are easy to use once you tweak your keyboard settings. The difference therefore is that in Japanese handsets they are ready to use but the American equivalent requires the downloading of the application and / or the enabling of the *emoji* keyboard which is already pre-installed.

Like the text based emoticon a lot of these pictograms are Japanese culture specific and reflect cultural traditions such as bowing or frequently used hand gestures as in the often seen ‘peace’ sign used by Japanese when having their photograph taken.

1.6.6 *Kigou* (codes)

Codes or *kigou* (記号) like the typed letter or word are usually all black and can be described and categorized into the following 2 categories.

1. ***Hankaku kigou*** (半角記号) are the conventional punctuation marks used in written online text such as @ () / < > ? * ! and can be inputted via the computer keyboard.
2. **Word conversion symbols.** These are conventional symbols but are not found in conventional standard forms of online / offline written communication.

On the Japanese computer keyboard when you type in *onpu* (音符) meaning musical note into Microsoft Word, a search engine or with any interface online a dropdown menu gives the user the option to choose the appropriate kanji / Chinese character and also the musical note ♪. The same applies to the word ‘heart’ where users can choose from a *kigou* 記号 (code) drop down menu for the kind of heart form they wish to use as in the following examples ♥、♡.

These *kigou* or codes can be inputted via the American or western keyboard albeit in a different manner. The ♥ can be created by typing in Alt and 3, and double eight notes (♪♪) by the inputting of Alt and 14 and the singular eight note (♪) with Alt and 13.

These symbols, if used conventionally or in the sense of how they were originally

intended, cannot be deemed unconventional or unorthodox. It is when these symbols are used unconventionally online in a written text that interests linguists and the concerns of this thesis. It is when they are used unconventionally they are categorized as UMCs as outlined in chapter 3 and within the results sections in chapter 4 onwards.

1.7 Manipulation of Grammatical Markers (Multiple exclamation use)

The manipulation of grammatical markers, such as the use of capital letters and exclamation marks used in CMC, are intended to express emphasis on lexical items as well as being a representation of tone of voice. Within online communication we often see punctuation marks for emphasis (??? or !!!), the use of capital letters as in GREAT or AWESOME, bold or italicized parts of the text, the repetition of words for emphasis as in ‘*really really cool*’, and the deliberate use of different fonts within single messages.

Multiple exclamation use is deployed to emphasize excitement and emotion or used to encourage the reader. It is used to add a tone of voice to an otherwise tone or voice free statement / utterance or sentence. The deployment of multiple exclamation marks accentuates the writer’s voice and allows the reader to interpret the writers tone or emotion within the sentence. Their use can also add informality to a text making it more enjoyable to read. This, however, depends on the reader as there are many grammar purists who pour scorn on the use of poor grammar, punctuation and spelling, and are often the starting point of flaming and online bullying which can be seen in many English language bulletin boards or the infamous 2 channel site where flaming and inappropriate linguistic behavior is rife.

1.7.1 Capitalization

Capitalization is mainly a tool to place emphasis on a lexical item or to indicate the tone of voice within the online interaction. It is rarely used in Japanese when *romaji* is employed and in comparison to a language that uses the alphabet incidents of unorthodox capitalized words are infrequent. The use of capitalization

derives from its use in comics with the use of onomatopoeic words often in bold capitals (Danet et al., 1997). In Japanese the use of onomatopoeia or *giongo* / *gitaigo* is often used with *kaomoji* (Harada, 2004). The use of capitalization, although not used within the Japanese data, was used frequently within the American data and was included in the UMC analysis.

1.7.2 Representations of Laughter

Representations of laughter within Japanese online communication consist of depictions that include the logographical 笑 *warau* that means to laugh and are often found at the end of sentences (like most UMCs) replacing punctuation to indicate the mood or emotional state of the writer. Kavanagh (2012a) writes “the use of ‘w’ at the end of sentences is a recent phenomenon whereby the conventional Chinese character (笑) spelt *warau* meaning to laugh is replaced by the ‘w’ of *warau* as in 面白い *ww*, *omoshiroi ww* (funny *ww*). Multiple w usage signals a bigger reaction of laughter” (p.183).

In English representations of laughter are mainly phonetical with some logographical representations as seen in abbreviations such as LOL (laugh out loud) which are often seen in CMC especially within texting and synchronous online communication platforms.

1.7.3 Unconventional Phonetic Spellings

Unconventional phonetic spellings within online Japanese communication are very common. The unorthodox lengthening of vowel and consonant sounds are often found in online blogs and bulletin boards.

The inclusion of the smaller hiragana vowel font in Japanese as in 終わりましたかぁ *owarimashitakaa* (Was it really over?) is an example of this. The wavy dash that signifies a long drawn out vowel as in そうですよ〜 *sou desu yo nee* (that’s right) are also techniques employed to mimic vocal spellings. The small *tsu* to indicate a glottal stop is also widespread in *manga* (Akizuki, 2009). Similarly in English the

lengthening of consonants and vowel sound as in awwwwwesome and coool are often seen along with capitalization for lexical or mood emphasis.

1.8 The Origin of Japanese UMCs: Deformed Handwriting and Cute Culture

1.8.1 Language Play

The Japanese writing system comprises of four script types, a plurality which affords a rich flexibility of orthographic choice, and Japanese writers can fashion their script choices to specific contexts, as the writing system allows, for sociolinguistic and stylistic ends (Smith & Schmidt, 1996). These scripts allow for an orthographic choice that the writer can adopt to express emotional state and self representation. For instance, *hiragana* is historically associated with women, *kanji* with older writers and *katakana* with young male readers (Satake, 1989).

Gottlieb (2010) argues that language play such as UMCs is not the product of new computer technologies, but builds on the already existing orthographic creativity facilitated by the nature and flexibility of the writing system. For Gottlieb, it is old wine in new bottles, the only real difference being that it has moved into the cyberspace arena. She writes (2010: p401)

In Japan, while such language play is indeed further enabled by technology, creative manipulation of the orthography in public life such as literature and commerce has always been a distinctive feature of the written language, combined with a rich history of punning and wordplay dating back to ancient texts. In modern times it has emerged in the cute handwriting or deformed characters craze.

1.8.2 Deformed characters and sub-cultures

Kinsella (1995) describes how the cute hand writing ‘craze’ developed in 1974 with large numbers of teenagers, significantly more with females, writing in a new

Yamane (1986) argued however that rather than the commonly held view that these handwriting deformities were spawned from comics or *manga*, these teenagers created this style themselves. In his study Yamane asked young users of the new handwriting style the reasons they had for adopting it.

‘It’s got a kind of cute feel’

‘I think it’s cute and it’s my style’

‘I think it’s cute and it’s my style’

‘Cute! They are hard to read but they are so cute I use them.’

(Yamane, 1986:132. Translation mine)

The word cute is mentioned in every one of the above comments and is central to a discussion of why people used these unconventional analogue notations and how they are still used within albeit a digital format online. Akizuki, (2009) suggests the creative orthography online is the contemporary digital equivalent of *shojo moji*. This line of thought can be applied to online UMCs that are an extension of and continuation of these *hentai shojo moji*.

Miyake (2004a) writes that the analogue hand written *shojo moji* of 30 years ago have been transposed to the online communication of the digital age within *keitai* and mobile communications. These UMCs, however, are not solely used by women alone as the name *hentai shojo moji* (変体少女文字) (Japanese women’s deformed characters) may suggest with Kavanagh’s (2010) finding that men used emoticons more so than women in personal blog comments. Cute culture itself is also not solely a feminine phenomena.

1.8.3 Kawaii Bunka

Kinsella (1995) states that Japanese cute culture stemmed from practices such as *maruji* (rounded letters) that was prevalent within youth culture from the 1970’s. This Japanese consumption of ‘*kawaii*’ (pretty/cute) culture as McVeigh (2000) notes, represents a “standard aesthetic of everyday life” (p.135). This standard is not

necessarily just gender related and Bryce (2004) suggests “The Japanese obsession with cuteness has been condemned as a subculture peculiar to children and women, although the extent of the quotidian reach of its signifying use extends throughout Japanese society to include even governmental documents and signs”(p.2265).

A closer examination of UMC usage and its relation to cute culture and cute handwriting and the issues discussed under this heading will be given further consideration in relation to the data findings on UMC usage and function within the results and discussion chapters.

1.9 The origin of English UMCs

1.9.1 Language Play

Danet et al. (1997) describes the innovative forms of CMC that the keyboard produces as ‘typed jazz’. They describe Computer mediated communication as strikingly playful. She suggests that in the exploitation of the possibilities of the computer keyboard, playful digital messages have fascinating affinities with graffiti, comics, the language of advertising, jazz, and improvisational theater. The prominence of playfulness grows as we move from basic word-processing of author-absent texts to synchronous communication as in IM and chat rooms. It is in the latter genres she states that writing is most intensively experienced as “talking,” because of the time constraints within these interactions.

The origin of English based UMCs or forms of digital writing can be traced back to hacker culture from the early 1980’s (Raymond, 1991) around the same time that the first emoticon emerged. Raymond (1991) describes the culture as a “loosely networked collection of subcultures that is nevertheless conscious of some important shared experiences, shared roots, and shared values. These hackers loved wordplay and were very conscious and inventive in their use of language” (p.9).

“They often make rhymes or puns in order to convert an ordinary phrase into something more interesting,” as in “Boston Glob” for “Boston Globe” (Raymond, 1991,

p. 9), or "snail-mail" for ordinary mail services (Raymond, 1991, p.325-6). "Dry humor, irony, puns, and a mildly flippant attitude are highly valued--but an underlying seriousness and intelligence are essential" (Raymond, 1991, p.20).

This playfulness with the computer keyboard although cultivated and valued by these original pioneers of unorthodox language use has now spread down to the general computer using population. Examples used by the general CMC users are entire messages in capital letters which can be interpreted as shouting or lexical emphasis or a preference for writing all in lower-case, even for the beginning of sentences and names which has originated from time constraints. The use of abbreviations as in LOL (Laugh out loud) and OMG (Oh My God) is also often seen to punctuate the end of sentences and stemmed from this hacker culture.

1.9.2 Comics

Like the Japanese online UMC counterpart, American or western alphabet based UMCs are also influenced by comics as in capitalization. Danet (2001) writes that the use of capital letters to emphasize a word or phrase, as in "I REALLY LIKE THAT!" is familiar from comics (Abbott, 1986; Inge, 1990). It was also present in children's writing but like the Japanese *hentai shojo moji* the playfulness and expressivity that these children show tend to be suppressed by the teaching of literacy in the schools.

1.10 Organization of the thesis

After this initial chapter, chapter 2 will give a comprehensive review of the literature regarding the different types of UMC, their usage and function in both the English and Japanese language. UMC usage in relation to gender, culture, and politeness theory will also be reviewed within the chapter.

Chapter 3 includes descriptions of the data and research methods and will give a recap on the description of the data to be analyzed through a discussion of the blog

and blog directories which are integral to an understanding of how the data was collected.

Chapter 4 comprises the results of the blog entry or post findings and how UMCs were used in American and Japanese blog posts with a further discussion on how they are used by male and females within their own language and comparatively across the languages. A discussion of the results aims to explain how they are used in relation to cultural factors and the culture from which they originate from.

Chapter 5 examines the blog entry comment data which consists of the largest share of the data. These interactive comments between blog author and writer and the UMCs that are deployed are investigated in how they function both semantically and pragmatically. How UMC usage reflects and contrasts with the literature that describes face to face communication styles in the intercultural and interpersonal communication literature will conclude the chapter. A discussion of other cultural factors and their influence on UMC usage is also given consideration.

Chapter 6 focuses on politeness theory and how it is reflected in the use of emoticons. The comparative results of how these emoticons are used to highlight politeness strategies within the Japanese and American blog comments are presented.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the blog comments when they are divided into their respective genders. The results aim to show how UMCs are used by the sexes within their own language and comparatively within the Japanese and American data. The chapter concludes with the results of how emoticons are used per gender to highlight politeness strategies and again compared across languages.

Chapter 8 serves as the conclusion and attempts to provide a framework to how Japanese and Americans interact through blog comments in online personal blog communication.

Chapter 2

The literature review

The contents of this chapter are broken up into four parts based on the research enquiries this research aims to address as stipulated below. Each enquiry is then given a literature review within that discipline relating to the research questions. Each enquiry and heading of the literature review is given below.

Part 1: The function and usage of UMCs

Part 2: UMC usage and culture

Part 3: Politeness theory (Emoticons and politeness strategies)

Part 4: Gender and language use

Each enquiry of the four part literature review will introduce the literature pertinent to the research aims as outlined in chapter 1 and again outlined below in each part of the literature review. Each research aim and enquiry is then discussed in relation to the literature research and concludes with how the research within this thesis has not adequately been addressed until now.

2.1 Research Enquiry One: The function and Usage of UMCs

The section of the literature review reviews the literature in relation to the function and usage of UMCs

- a. How do non-verbal and verbal UMCs function to express or supplement, semantic meaning and pragmatic intention within American and Japanese online personal blog articles and their comments?
- b. Are there technological parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

A recap on online UMC will be followed by a review of the English and Japanese literature on the function and usage of UMCs. This section will conclude with a review of studies that discuss the notion of self presentation and impression formation online.

2.1.1 Unconventional Means of Communication (UMC) Online: A Recap

Is it possible to express non-verbal communication in Computer Mediated Communication? In speech and writing, differing strategies are used to express emotion. In face-to-face communication, emotion can be transmitted through paralinguistic tools such as facial expression, body posture, or physical proximity to our interlocutor along with the volume and intonation of our voices. However, when we write, none of these means of expressions can be used for obvious reasons. CMC can be described as an unstable or face threatening form or method of communication as it cannot sufficiently represent non-verbal information, for instance, personal background or status, the display of emotion and context through gesture, body language and tone of voice (Sugitani, 2006).

Communicative difficulties or even communication breakdown could arise if communicators are unaware of the types of messages they are sending and how the receiver is interpreting those messages. If the sender's message does not fit the receivers perception of social norms for the particular situation problems may arise. Although these difficulties occur in face-to-face human communication, non-verbal information gives cues for solving these difficulties.

Online CMC communication that is devoid of non-verbal and auditory cues has led to, many researchers suggest, the unconventional linguistic and extra-linguistic features that are widespread in today's online environment. Early research on emoticons looked at how they are used to compensate for the lack of non-verbal cues online and as the name emoticon suggests they are icons that express emotion. Subsequent studies looked at how they are used according to gender, how they are used to create impression formation, and how they are used for socio-emotional chat. Very

few studies have looked at their pragmatic function and no studies have compared the function and usage of Japanese and American emoticons. Further, still, linguistic based UMCs (phonographic spellings, etc.) have received very little attention in both Japanese and English based CMC literature. This study aims to address that gap.

The review in part 1 of the literature review looks at these issues, part 2 on how these UMCs have culture specific functions and the studies related to UMC and politeness are discussed part 3 and finally empirical findings related to gender and UMC usage are given coverage in part 4.

UMCs will be broken down into their types and the literature review will look specifically at that research that has covered that particular UMC.

What follows is a review of the non-verbal extra-linguistic signs that can be seen widespread in online discourse. This is then followed by a literature review of the verbal unconventional linguistic depictions which have also entered the realm of cyberspace discourse.

This thesis divides emoticons into the two types that they can be found in. The text based emoticon which can be created on the keyboard as ^^; and :(and the graphic based emoticon like the name suggests is a graphic representation of emotion, usually a yellow face. (See chapter 1 pp.36-39 and pp.44-47 for a full discussion). The review of the literature will include studies that have looked at both of these emoticons and will stipulate where relevant if they focused on one type of emoticon or another. As the literature is quite extensive, the initial review will focus on the English based literature of the emoticon followed by an introduction to the *kaomoji* (Japanese emoticon) literature followed by an insight into the Japanese language based literature. The initial focus will briefly discuss why and how emoticons do not necessarily convey author emotion despite the lack of non-verbal cues.

Baron (2004) writes that “despite growing research to the contrary, public perception that online language is especially prone to ambiguity (and that emoticons help clarify meaning) remains strong” (p.7). She puts forward two arguments that influence this assumption. The ‘length’ argument suggests that as CMC messages are short, it is difficult to convey the author’s meaning clearly, followed by the ‘speech’

argument which suggests that online communication resembles speech. In response to the 'length' arguments she suggests that online communication is not at one extreme or another. It is not sloppy or well edited, ambiguous or vague when emoticons are used. Instead, the focus she suggests should be on the choices individual users make when writing their messages. Length and clarity are a result of the author's decision when communicating online. The responsibility of the writer is to find ways of encoding all their intended meaning through the prose or text itself. Crystal (2006) suggests that "written language has always been ambiguous, in its omission of facial expression, and in its inability to express all the intonational and other prosodic features of speech" (p.41). In addition, Crystal (2006) writes, "addressing someone on the internet is a bit like having a telephone conversation in which the listener is giving you no reactions at all" (p.44). Wallace (2001), therefore, recommends the use of UMCs such as emoticons to improve rapport which can lead to warm and informal dialogue.

In response to the 'speech' argument Baron (2004) argues that miscommunication in speech or writing is a regular occurrence not because of linguistic sloppiness but because interlocutors come to the interactions with different levels of linguistic ability, knowledge, and judgments. However, Baron focused her argument on the synchronous communication platform of IM (Instant Messaging). In asynchronous communication such as personal blogs the length argument becomes void as blog posts and their comments can be as long as the writer wishes and the messages can be edited and crafted carefully as there are no time constraints. However UMCs are still abundant within this CMC platform. This argument ignores the other factors that emoticons may be used for indexing pragmatic intention, politeness strategies and to strengthen interpersonal relations. The speech argument and its response from Baron (2004) seems irrelevant when one considers that emoticons are not linguistic devices or representations of speech but instead act as extra-linguistic signs that compliment or punctuate author online text.

Andrews (1994) suggests that people have read written communication for centuries without the use of emoticons. He suggests that initially the use of these signs for the purpose of expressing emotion at first may have been successful but now [1994]

they have lost all meaning and are used superfluously. He states they should be banned for being childish and confusing. Andrew's however, it seems, was addressing teenage use of emoticons in online chat and his observations are based on no empirical research, linguistic theory or knowledge.

In a study of e-mail messages Walther & D'Addario (2001) sought to see how emoticons influence message interpretation. In most cases, they suggest the emoticons had little impact on message interpretation. Instead, they argue that on the whole emoticons were overwhelmed by the valence of the verbal statements they accompanied. However, this research was based on created e-mails as opposed to 'real' data and only examined three types of emoticons included in English mails. Although interesting, the study has limitations and does not reveal the wider picture.

In response to the Walther & D'Addario (2001), Derks et al (2008) adopt the paradigm used by their study and found that emoticons do have an impact on message interpretation and can act as a useful tool in influencing the intensity of the verbal text message. In addition, they suggest that emoticons act in the same way as actual non-verbal facial expressions found in face-to-face communication. These studies however are based on English based CMC and western emoticons.

Derks et al. (2007) state that reduced visibility may have consequences for the decoding of sent text in CMC and that this generally results in a reduced social presence. They state, however, that this reduced visibility can strengthen the emotional style and content within CMC, and can consequently make it easier to express emotion. If emotion is conveyed explicitly in text-based messages the difficulty of interpreting the sent text may be reduced but they continue by suggesting that mere words alone may not be able to carry all the emotional information that someone wants to convey. They discovered that in social-emotional online chat that positive emoticons were used to promote a positive context and negative ones for a less favourable context. The emoticons could therefore be context driven.

Despite their being an abundance of literature suggesting otherwise, there are still some studies that are cynical towards the idea that emoticons can comprehensively convey writer emotion. Provine et al (2007), found for example, (in a study of English

website message boards) that in a total of 1.000 text based emoticons that emoticons usually occurred before or after complete questions or utterances whereby the phrase structure of the text was not interfered with, but they are wary of the notion that these signs compensate for the lack of auditory and visual cues that are found offline. This may be overstated, they suggest, as these technological advancements were not present in letter writing of the past.

2.2 The Western Emoticon

In spite of some of the criticism as illustrated above regarding the usage and role of emoticons, their presence in online discourse has received a lot of academic attention since the first emoticons were used over 30 years ago. The overall majority of the literature states that these emoticons can act as facilitators in the promotion of author emotion and meaning.

As described in chapter 1 the cues filtered out theories describe CMC as an impersonal and emotionally void arena due to the lack of non-verbal cues both verbal as in the sound or tone of voice and visual as in facial expressions.

Short et al. (1976) social presence theory, if applied to CMC, can clearly show that the level of social presence is lower in CMC than in face to face interaction. Studies have shown that emoticons can convey the emotion of the online writer (Derks et al. 2007) Katsuno and Yano (2007) suggest that *kaomoji* enacts a kind of intimacy that relies in part on their visual play.

Readers can perceive those who use emoticons as being friendlier, more interesting and creative (Hauffaker & Calvert, 2005; Harris & Paradice, 2007; Carey, 1980). Research on internet chat rooms looks specifically at the use of the graphic based emoticon as most chat room interfaces have a drop down menu of graphic based emoticons from which the user can choose and insert in their chat interactions. Fullwood et al (2013) found that cheeky graphic emoticons were used as signals of flirtation or suggestion in nature and interestingly discovered that age had little influence on the usage and type of emoticon used.

Huang et al (2008) examined graphic based emoticon perception by students enrolled in a business course within the IM (Instant messaging) environment. They were given questionnaires that focused on their use of emoticons, information richness, personal interaction and level of enjoyment. Their findings showed that emoticons were an invaluable tool as a communication method and emoticon users felt that it led to a positive feeling of enjoyment within the personal interaction and supplemented information richness.

Garrison et al (2011) suggest that the emoticon should be looked at as a meaningful linguistic unit. In their study of instant messaging text based emoticon usage they found that emoticons appearing alone rather than next to typed text appeared to perform more rhetorical work as an utterance than the text alone. They suggest that “if researchers begin to recognize emoticons as important semiotic units within a discourse structure, researchers will approach emoticons not as compensatory to language but as contributory to the conversation itself” (p.123).

The initial wave of literature regarding emoticons suggested that they were used to compensate for the lack of non verbal cues found in face to face interaction. But that concept has been challenged in recent works (Hancock, 2004; Dresner & Herring, 2010; Walther & D’Addario, 2001). Interestingly however the English language and Japanese language based literature examines and looks at emoticons and *kaomoji* from differing angles and perspectives. The Japanese *kaomoji* / emoticon is discussed below as reflected in the English language literature and is followed with a review of the Japanese language literature.

2.3 The Japanese *kaomoji*

The Japanese *kaomoji* or emoticon as noted in chapter 1 is written front facing as opposed to a sideways depiction. As they are produced on a 2 byte keyboard, there are also a much bigger variety of them in comparison to the western emoticon. Many of them are also culturally relevant with some depicting actions as well as emotion that mimic Japanese gestures such as bowing.

Many of the Japanese *kaomoji* derive from *manga* and are often tied in with Japanese communication concepts of indirectness and modesty. The use of ; on the side of the face of the ^_^; *kaomoji*, for example, represents sweat and is used when the writer feels what they are saying is perhaps too assertive (Sugimoto & Levin 2000).

In a study of young Japanese mobile phone messages Miyake (2007) found that these writers use these signs for self expression and language play. She writes “these writers are very concerned, when writing their messages, not to hurt their interlocutor, and not to be thought badly of. This anxiety is very much a characteristic of traditional Japanese communication” (p.69). She suggests that unlike western emoticons which function primarily to accentuate emphasis, tone or meaning Japanese signs (she includes *emoji* and *kigou* within this) do not often represent a specific semantic meaning but reveal important emotional cues or act as an atmosphere building device. She cites studies such as Nakamura (2001) who suggest that these signs help conversation participants avoid friction. She concludes that no quantitative research has been done in this area and is something this thesis will address.

Miyake (2007) points out that the visual orthographic elements available to mobile phone users (including *kamoji* among other UMCs) allow them to manage communication in such a way that the users do not lose face. She suggests that in mobile phone messaging at least, it is easier for them to do than in offline face to face dialogues. Although essential a theme strongly linked to UMC usage and culture (discussed in part 2 of this literature review) Miyake concludes that “the passion for creating a comfortable atmosphere seems to parallel the Japanese tendency, in face-to-face conversation, to greatly emphasize harmonious setting and atmosphere over the content of the talk” (2007, p.70).

In a study of Japanese housewives use of text based emoticons in a chat room Katsuno & Yano (2007) suggests that through *kaomoji* these women could express shades of emotion more satisfactorily than through linguistic means, and in some instances better with *kaomoji* than with words. This would relate to Garrison et al (2011)’s finding that the emoticon should be looked upon as a useful linguistic unit that acts on its own. Katsuno & Yano (2007) conclude that the sense of play and

creativity that *kaomoji* produces keeps readers interested and entertained and this language play as we have seen is not integral to just online communication (Gottlieb, 2010).

Katsuno & Yano (2002) suggest that the rise of *kaomoji* and its widespread usage can fall into one of the broad categories as listed below. They are

1. A result of the conventions of play and aesthetics in traditional writing systems in Japan;
2. A result of the modern embracing of technology and gadgetry in part for its own sake, impart for its very newness;
3. A result of the pattern of 'boom / fad culture in Japan;
4. A result of the development of an *otaku* (geek) subculture; and
5. A result of the influence of *manga* (comics) with its highly codified visual language.

In interviews with CMC users on both the synchronous and asynchronous communication platform they found responses from, *Kaomoji* can soften the nuance of a message, and that *kaomoji* fills the gap between what the sentence means and how they want to say it. Some users commented that with formal language (*desu / masu* forms) *kaomoji* can make it more informal and fun sounding. These notions would suggest that *kaomoji* can both have a semantic and pragmatic role to play.

On the notion of how the CMC medium influences or promotes *kaomoji* use the following responses were received. "I like chat rooms rather than electronic bulletin boards, because in chat rooms conversation takes place one after another. This makes me want to use *kaomoji*, because somebody will respond immediately with another *kaomoji*" (p.224) and the speed of chat room interaction is also a contributing factor. "In chat rooms, you really need to be able to type fast, because typing is the basis of your conversation. Therefore, I type directly what I think in my mind. As a result, I cannot write whole sentences, but just some words quickly. In this case, adding *kaomoji* to my words helps express my feeling or emotion more clearly" (p.224).

Katsuno & Yano (2002) conclude that through *kaomoji* a kind of intimacy is created which they suggest “draws upon the symbolic, not as a secondary or derivative experience, but as a primary form of interaction” (p.223).

Within the Japanese language literature a number of studies have been conducted with results and differing from studies based on the English language. Tanaka (2001) in a study of university student’s *keitai* (mobile phone) e-mails found that the use of the emoticon could be used in the following ways:

1. A tendency for them to be used in mail dialogues with intimate friends
2. Used to maintain good relations with their interlocutor
3. Used to express themselves and support their emotions
4. Used for the possibility of creating fun, light hearted interactions

Natsume (1995) states that within *manga giongo* or *gitaigo* (onomatopoeia) such as バキューン *bakyun* or ガーン *gaan* are often used within the narrative of the *manga* and he calls these *onyu* (音喩) or sound symbol. Within the CMC environment these visual devices have had an influence on *kaomoji*. Harada (2004) for example found that *kaomoji* like ガ——(° 旦 °;)——ン! are often used with *giongo* or *gitaigo* (onomatopoeia) within the CMC environment as the examples in table 2.1 show. Harada (2004) suggests that emotional sentiment and tone of voice can be easily expressed with the use of an emoticon and onomatopoeia. It also replicates the fun, lighthearted interactions that Tanaka (2001) speaks of above.

Table 2.1 *Kaomoji and Onomatopoeia Use*

1. ちょっと冒険チェックやる? (^^) ワクワク <i>Chotto bouken chiekku yaru? (^^) wakuwaku</i> Shall we do an adventure check? (^^) very excited
2. それがさ、宿題思い出してん(°◇°) ガーン <i>Soregasa shukudai omoidashiten (°◇°) gaan</i> I can’ remember that homework (°◇°) <i>gaan</i>
3. それって当たり!! (^^) !ぴんぽーん <i>Sorette atari !! (^^) pinpoon</i> That’s right!! (^^) <i>pinpoon</i>

Akizuki (2009) and Miyake (2004a) suggest that creative orthography and emoticon usage is the digital version of *shojyo moji* or young girls deformed characters that were popular in the 1970's and 80's (See chapter 1 pp54-56 for a description of these creative analogue styles of writing).

Togarashi (1997) found that in informal online dialogue the use of emoticons vastly increased the intimacy levels of the interaction. Similarly Gawauchi (1990) found that the use of emoticons softened the content of the message and strengthened intimacy and rapport between conversational partners.

Some studies have looked collectively at emoticons, *emoji* and *kigou*. Mirroring other Japanese language studies Nakamura (2001) suggests that these function to add emotion, create a more lighthearted and cheerful approach to the discourse, are used in awareness of their interlocutors feelings and used to avoid online friction, in addition to simply being used to decorate the text. This latter function will be discussed again later but these functions as described above differ to how the role of the emoticon is described within the English language literature. Their use by Japanese users is tied to the cultural factors that dictate how Japanese interact with one another. This is a focus of research enquiry 2 which looks at UMC and culture.

Satake (2005) suggests, for example, that *kaomoji* can add to the text meaning and suggests that ごめんなさい *gomennasai* (I'm sorry) that has an emoticon attached enhances the writers feeling to a stronger apology, one that is heartfelt. He equates the use of *kaomoji* and *emoji* as the digital version of 新言文一致体 *shin genbun itchitai tai* which was a new form of young people's writing style in the 1980s coined by Satake (1980) which means 'a new unification of the written and spoken styles'. Satake (2005) concludes that these new extra-linguistic signs are used predominately by young people (this thesis found differing results) but he only examined mobile phone communication. As a function the signs are used to duplicate spoken interaction, allowing the writers to express themselves without the fear of being misunderstood or being hated by their interlocutor. In other words, they enable smooth harmonious communications within the online environment, which as we will see later in part two

of this review, mimics studies on Japanese face-to-face communication.

Some studies have looked at whether *kaomoji* or emoticons can stand alone and still retain meaning (Markman & Oshima, 2007), Arakawa & Kawano (2008) examined responses from 134 university student questionnaires to investigate whether a *kaomoji* or emoticon can be described as a proposition as in a language item or an image as in a facial expression. Their results suggest that the emoticon role is twofold: it can act as a proposition and as an image to reflect author emotion. The majority of the Japanese literature has focused on the *keitai* or mobile phone communications and *kaomoji* usage within e-mails. Ono & Tokuda (2005) distributed a questionnaire regarding *kaomoji* use to 208 high school students, 252 university students and 66 housewives. They found that 60% of students used *kaomoji* always or very often. When asked why they use them 35% of high school students, 33% of university students and 28% of housewives stated that they were cute. A slightly lower percentage for each group was because they are interesting. These two factors the participants suggested allowed them to express intimate emotion and maintain good relations with their conversational partner rather than just their appearance or user satisfaction. The largest percentages for all groups as to why *kaomoji* are used concern the ease that *kaomoji* provide in portraying emotion and to convey nuances that are unable to be expressed in words alone. In addition, those who used *kaomoji* as opposed to those who didn't were perceived as being friendlier. Iwamoto (2002) in a study regarding net diaries received responses from 473 net diary users. One of the 6 areas of questions concerned extra-linguistic sign usage (including *kaomoji*, *emoji* and *kigou*). She found that the majority of users used these signs and lists reasons why net diary writers use and don't use them. They use them so that they can express their feelings with ease, and that it is easy to convey the nuance of the utterance as it helps to convey meaning that words alone cannot express. In contrast, reasons for why writers do not include them in their net diaries include the desire to express themselves in words, which was the largest motivation followed by reasons such as an opposition to using them in a personal diary. Such results show that not all Japanese CMC users incorporate these signs in their online writings but interestingly what this study shows is that in monologues like a net

diary the use of extra-linguistic signs is not universally accepted.

According to Peirce (1955) signs are divisible by a trichotomy. The second trichotomy refers to the relation of the sign to its object and signs are divided into icon, index and symbols. A full discussion on Peirce is given in chapter 3. Kataoka (2003) examined the letter writing of young females and showed that emotive pictorial signs (EPSs) which can be described as an offline UMC equivalent, were used as icons are identified with the writer or their body part, are largely metaphoric in that emotive actions such as a smiling face or a waving hand are substituted with these signs. They act as propositional support in that they add meaning to the sentence but they can also stand alone and demonstrate meaning.

Kataoka (2003) describes indexes as metonymic in that they index the writers emotive stance, for example, a tear or a drop of sweat for sadness. He describes symbols as more 'symbolic' and conventionalized in that the connection between a sign and a psychological state is highly arbitrary, for example as within the use of heart signs. He suggests that these attached symbols offer little to the propositional meaning of the sentence as these symbols originally are not derived from certain emotions but correspond to them through convention of context and use.

In the online environment Miyake (2007) found similar findings to Kataoka (2003) when she examined extra-linguistic signs in mobile phone messages. Her analysis showed that *kigou* (codes) such as ♡ or ★ were culturally recognizable icons but offered vague meanings within e-mails and served a decorative function. She describes *Emoji* as having somewhat clearer meanings as they served a function when appearing in text messages. In comparison, emoticons had the clearest of meanings when used in conjunction with mobile phone messages. In a separate study which looked at young people's text messages Miyake (2005a) divided *ekigou* (絵記号) into *kaomji*, *emoji* and *kigou*. She found that the majority of these signs were used as symbols and the minority used as indexes. In her analysis she looked at who the addressee is when these signs are used and found that 80% of her sample used them when communicating with siblings, close friends, their partner and also to people that they are not really close to. From this finding she cannot say that such signs are only

used with close friends or family. But she does concede that on the contrary other studies such as Kato (2002) found the opposite in that these signs are mostly used with intimates.

Studies have suggested that emoticons can express emotion as well as facilitate the communication of socio-emotional information (Derks et al, 2007). Therefore, are people who use emoticons judged in a different light in comparison to users who do not? Katsuno & Yano (2002) for example found that the use of *kaomoji* (Japanese emoticon) is inappropriate in the following contexts:

1. When sending a message to a superior
2. When receiving messages from one's superior
3. When receiving messages from a stranger
4. When receiving messages from an intimate

They cite quotations from some of her interviewees. One suggests that *kaomoji* are not needed with close friends as they know each other so well they can assume familiar, embedded contexts and that “this parallels Edward Hall’s characterization of Japanese culture as high-context culture (Katsuno & Yano, 2002, p.220). Other interview data however suggested *kaomoji* is used to affirm intimacy. Others suggested that in diary pages like the personal online weblog which is essentially a one way monologue rather than a dialogue between two people the use of *kaomoji* does not feel right. However, as chapter 4 will indicate the use of *kaomoji* in blog posts was used in a variety of ways among Japanese blog users.

These assertions, specifically 3 and 4, however are not supported by some of the research literature (Derks et al, 2007; Katsuno and Yano, 2007). Timmers, Fischer, & Manstead (2003) suggest that non-verbal emotions in face to face interaction increase when their interlocutor is considered to be a friend.

Fullwood & Martino (2006) found that emoticon users were generally perceived as being more sociable, outgoing and friendly compared to non emoticon users. This was based on data of 32 university students who were given a series of

answers to questions both containing and not containing emotions. They were then asked to rate their impressions of them.

Luor et al. (2010) examined how graphic based emoticons influenced task orientated communication and found that within 19,855 message logs generated by 199 employees within an IM program negative emoticon use could have a negative effect in both simple and complex task orientated communication. In contrast positive emoticons created a positive effect. Luor et al (2010) suggest that “positive emoticons should always be employed in work coordination tasks, especially when there is a tendency for unpleasant emoticons to be felt in the communication between senders and receivers” (p.894). In contrast they suggest a warning should be given to users if they wish to use graphic emoticons of a flaming nature in order not to cause altercations among staff.

Interestingly, however, and in a reflection of Derks et al (2007) who suggest that emoticons are used more in socio-emotional than task orientated social contexts, Yus (2011) suggests that the use of emoticons within the task orientated context is not appropriate, and an “unnecessary distraction, whereas in socio-emotional conversation their use is not only predictable but expected as happens in most conversations among adolescents” (p.198). In a comparison of the impressions smilies (graphic based emoticons) and text based emoticons have, Ganster et al (2012) found that smiling smiles have a more influential impact on the receivers mood compared to smiling emoticons. They conclude that these nonverbal cues can influence message interpretation and the perception of the sender.

Some of the studies which have looked at the impressions that *kaomoji* give to readers have been briefly touched on in a review of the Japanese language literature, but there are some Japanese language papers that have specifically looked at the notion of impression formation and emoticon or *kaomoji* usage. Arakawa & Suzuki (2004) asked 28 university students to give their impression of received mails that contained apologies. Some of these mails included one of three *kaomoji* within them which were a happy expression (^_^), a tearful one (;_;) and a bowing gesture m(_ _)m. Results showed that compared to messages that were just text based and contained no *kaomoji*,

the mails that included *kaomji* helped to appease the receivers anger towards the situation. They, therefore, conclude that the *kaomoji* not only expresses emotion, but also affects the reader's mood. This, I would suggest, can be traced back to the idea of Japanese communication that is based on harmonious interaction.

Hanai & Oguchi (2008) examined 141 e-mails taken from 18 students over a two week period and found that emoticons appeared quickly in the early dialogue exchanges and had the effect of softening tense relationships between users. Takahara & Satou (2003) looked at how the inclusion or admittance of *kaomoji* altered reader impression among the use of polite *desu masu* forms and non polite forms (*kudaketa buntai* くだけた文体), within greetings, apologies and requests. They found that emoticons attached to non polite forms were seen as sociable, outgoing and friendly. In contrast *desu / masu* polite forms with no emoticons were seen as sincere and honest. In a similar study Takahara et al (2005) found that when emoticons were frequently attached to apologies that this was seen negatively in the eyes of the reader.

Nakamaru (2002, 2005) examined how the inclusion or non-inclusion of *kaomoji* in sentences affects degrees of trust or reliability, emotion and evaluation. He found that sentences that were positive and had a positive *kaomoji* were rated highly in the above categories but that if sentence content was negative and the *kaomoji* was positive, that is, they did not match, then they were judged as having low degrees of trust, emotion and overall evaluation.

This literature review illustrates that emoticon usage mostly has a positive effect but with some few instances where their inclusion may cause irritation. This may be related to the concept of T>P>O or Time, Place and Objective. Emoticon usage can vary deeply from person to person, but their use as a tool for impression formation still seems part of the CMC user consciousness and psyche.

2.4 Pragmatic Functions of Emoticons and *Kaomoji*

Based on the computer mediated discourse analysis model as advocated and created by Herring (2004) and Markman & Oshima (2007) looked at how emoticons

and *kaomoji* (the Japanese emoticons) are used as pragmatic devices within synchronous and asynchronous computer mediated discourse. They looked specifically at a corpus of e-mails, internet chats and a web forum. They found that both emoticons and *kaomoji* act to punctuate sentences with the purposes of marking how they are intended to be read, to compliment the text meaning and to clarify author mood. They conclude that *kaomoji* have more variations than the western emoticon which tend to be facial representations. The *kaomoji* they point out can be more similar to non-verbal communication in face-to-face communication than their emoticon counterparts. “This (their resemblance to non-verbal communication) is especially clear when examining the more complex *kaomoji* that represent distinctly embodied acts and can perform actions that extend beyond the meaning of the verbal text.” (Markman & Oshima, 2007, p.15).

Dresner & Herring (2010) point out that emoticons don’t simply act as their name suggests as icons of emotion. In their data sample of English e-mails they stipulate that these emoticons act as indicators of illocutionary force. They found that emoticons can act within the text within three basic functions which are

1. Emotion mapped directly onto facial expression (e.g, happy or sad);
2. Non-emotional meaning, mapped conventionally onto facial expression (e.g, a wink as indicating joking intent, an anxious smile); and
3. Illocutionary force indicators that do not map conventionally onto facial expression (e.g, a smile as downgrading a complaint to a simple assertion).

These assumptions indicate that emoticons convey not only emotion but also pragmatic intent, and those emoticons should be understood in linguistic rather than extra-linguistic terms. Other studies have shown how emoticons can indicate sarcasm or irony. A wink, for example, can indicate a joke (that is the content of the message is not to be taken seriously) (Riordan et al, 2010; Rezabek & Cochenour, 1998; Walther & D’Addario, 2001). The same emoticon can also be used to enhance the sarcasm of a negatively orientated message than it does when it is omitted.

Vandergriff (2014) examined a corpus of 32,000 words that was derived from text only chat from English native speaking university students and learners of English from a Swedish university. She addresses the issue of how emoticons are used to contribute meaning to the text and to enhance relationships in the language learning environment.

Results showed that emoticons are used to build rapport regardless of their function (e.g, expressing happiness or mitigating FTA's). In addition, these emoticons are highly context sensitive and are flexible in usage. For example, the same emoticon can convey happiness and mitigate face threatening acts.

Finally, in an investigation of workplace e-mails in a reflection of the above literature Skovholt, Gronning & Kankaanranta (2014) suggest that emoticons do not predominantly serve to express author emotion. They suggest that emoticons can have three purposes as follows:

1. Deployed following e-mail signatures functioning as markers of a positive attitude.
2. Deployed following utterances that are intended to be intended as humorous, joke / irony markers.
3. Act as hedges following expressive speech acts (thanks and greetings) acting as a strengthener and when following directives (requests, corrections) they function as softeners.

These studies suggest that the role of the emoticon can be a complex one and that the role of context, interpersonal communication and pragmatic intention are factors that should not be ignored when examining the role of these extra-linguistic signs.

A lot of the Japanese language literature as introduced above has been on how emoticons or *kaomoji* are used to enhance emotional expression, to create enjoyable online interaction, and to show consideration to their interlocutor's feelings which leads to the use of emoticons to highlight intended meaning to enhance smooth dialogues. The latter function can be described as being a pragmatic function and is

predominant within the Japanese literature in comparison to the studies on emoticons within the English language.

Mirroring other studies, Harada (2004) states that the Japanese *kaomoji* has three main roles which are

1. They are fun to use;
2. They can easily express ones emotions; and
3. They can change the image of the utterance to make it sound softer or kinder

The first alludes to creativity and language play, the second has already been discussed and the third can be related to the idea of not causing offense or online friction. She gives the example below.

この前貸した CD、早く返してね (^ o ^)

Kono mae kashita CD, hayaku kaeshite ne (^ o ^)

Please give me back the CD you borrowed the other day. (^ o ^)

The request is punctuated with an emoticon which allows the reader, Harada suggests, to interpret the message not as the sender as being angry, but as a soft reminder, and the request is softened by the emoticon. What permeates through the Japanese language literature is the sense of *hairyo* (配慮) or consideration for their reader. Harada (2004) writes that emoticons promote smooth communication by showing this consideration to the author.

She uses the two examples below to illustrate this.

1. ごめん、今度の日曜日は都合が悪いよ、今度またね_(._.)_

*Gomen, kondo no nichiyoubi wa tsugou ga warui yo, kondo mata ne*_(._.)_

Sorry, I can't make it on Sunday but maybe another time_(._.)_

2. もっと早く言わなくてごめん m(_ _)m

Motto hayaku iwanakute gomen m(_ _)m

Sorry I didn't tell you earlier m(_ _)m

The first example is essentially a refusal to an invitation with the promise of going another time punctuated with a bowing emoticon. The second example employs the same strategy in an apology that is followed by a similar bowing emoticon. What largely differs from the English based literature is how these *kaomoji* can be and are used to create the writers online persona, either using them for self selective presentation or as some kind of online orthographic performance.

Matsuda (2008) and Harada (2004) suggest that you can project or perform a self or how you want to be perceived by your reader through these emoticons. Harada (2004) suggests this comes from a consideration for their own image and how their character is interpreted by the reader. For example, these emoticons can index gender performance and cuteness. These concepts in relation to emoticons are not discussed within the English language and western emoticon literature.

Takaki (1993) adds that *kaomoji* are used as contextual cues, and can be used as factors to maintain the face of the writer's interlocutor. They are deployed for example, to indicate whether or not the author is joking

Harada (2004) suggests they can be used in consideration of the reader's positive or negative face. However, only a few examples are given and it is only briefly touched upon in her paper. Miyake (2006) examined FTAs (face threatening acts) within mobile phone e-mails. In her sample of 189 university students, respondents said they used extra-linguistic signs within their messages in order to not give a cold impression.

A lot of the Japanese language literature has focused on emoticon or extra-linguistic sign usage within mobile phone messages which tend to be briefly written interactions. Tanaka (2001) suggests that mobile phone mails and computer mails are similar to postcards and letters. Postcards are short and to the point whilst letters contain more lengthy information. One could also argue that the latter is more task orientated than socio-emotive as mobile phone messaging tends to be. This


argument could be applied to blogs. Comments, albeit mostly short, can be well thought out, and of any desired length. They can be classed as a hybrid of the letter and the postcard, but unlike mobile phone emoticon usage, blogs as represented in the data within this thesis are not just the domain for the young. The average age, and one can only guess, of blog users were in their thirties as opposed to university students who make up the majority of Japanese language emoticon studies. This age approximation is based on blog profiles and blog content.

None of these studies, with perhaps the exception of Miyake (2006) have specifically applied the Brown & Levinson (1987) politeness framework in their analysis. An examination of the use of these emoticons in one to many online texts such as blog posts or within blog comments where interlocutors may not know each other, or may never have never met each other has also not received adequate attention.

2.5 The Pictogram / *Emoji* and codes (*kigou*)

The use and function of pictograms or *emoji* in online interactions is very under represented, especially with regard to English based CMC. This may be due to the fact that *emoji* is a Japanese invention rather than something that originated in the west or from an alphabet based language.

Kavanagh (2010) found in a study of 80 blogs (40 American and 40 Japanese) that these pictograms or *emoji* can be used for emphatic use as illustrated in the following example where the use of the *emoji* is deployed just before a word which reflects the lexical item's meaning.

1. 単に、夕食の「白ご飯」 を控えてるだけです

Tan ni, yuusyoku no (shirogohan) wo hikaeteru dake desu ga,

I just simply abstained myself from rice.

Alternatively they can be deployed for lexical use where the use of an *emoji* replaces the lexical item as in the example below:

2. 今日も会社へ行って、仕事を片付けてきました。🏢👤🚗

Kyou mo kaisya e itte, shigoto wo katazuketekimashita.

Today too, I went to work, got my work sorted out and came home.

Within the Japanese language literature Kitamura & Sato (2009) found that pictograms or *emoji* on mobile phone messages generally facilitated favorable and friendly impressions towards the sender and the lack of these signs leads to less sincere impressions for more informal phone messages, but not in formal messages.

Satake (2005) suggests that *emoji* can create a sense of tone or atmosphere within the digital text. He states for instance that good morning *ohayou* with a sun *emoji* or pictogram can give the impression of a good day and the good mood of the writer.

However, Nakamura (2001) states that *emoji* can simply be used for decoration and Miyake (2005b) suggests that *emoji* have a diluted or weak meaning and are often used to simply punctuate sentences. Kubota & Ishizaki (2009), however, found differing results. In an examination of how *emoji* replicate spoken messages in mobile phone e-mails. They asked participants to read out mails without and with *emoji* and found through this data that the color of *emoji* used within mails can influence pitch and that the inclusion of *emoji* can imitate that of spoken speech. Miyake (2012) in a comparison of English and Japanese acts of consideration within digital media found that English was more direct, whereas Japanese was indirect and showed more examples of *omoiyari* discourse or consideration strategies. *Emoji* she states have many meanings and when *emoji* is used within sentences it softens or makes the content more indirect. She concludes that users expect the interlocutor to read their *sasshi* (intended meaning) in order to understand the text through their use of *emoji*.

Kigou are non-linguistic codes such as ♪, ♥, and ★. They have no linguistic meaning or as I would argue do not act as an extra-linguistic sign to convey semantic or pragmatic meaning. They may, however, be used to project a self representation of the author.

There is no research that looks specifically at how these are used online semantically or pragmatically. Nishimura (2003) suggests that they are used in replacement of punctuation marks and can convey a warm, hearty feeling with the use of ♥ or a joyful tone with the use of ♪. Stars are thought to serve the same purpose. In a study of mobile phone messages Miyake (2005a, 2007) classifies these symbols as having vague meanings with decorative functions. In an adaptation of the Peirce semiotic model (1955) Kataoka (2003) defined these *kigou* as used in young Japanese women's letters as symbols that may be remotely relevant to the propositional meaning. The frequent use of the heart or star symbol for example "gets pragmatically diluted because of wide circulation and overuse....which renders them nearly equivalent to ordinary illustrations on stationary products, or to relatively neutral punctuation marks" (Kataoka, 2003, p.15). Within the English language there are no studies which incorporate the use of these symbols online into their analytical data.

2.6 Verbal UMCs

2.6.1 Unconventional Notation: Unconventional Phonetic Spelling and capitalization

Online written discourse challenges the assumptions we have of what is considered proper and correct punctuation and spelling. These online new innovative forms consist of abbreviations, acronyms, phonetic spelling, word combinations, letter repetition and unconventional punctuation. With this new form of communication came criticism from some circles that such forms are detrimental to language and its use within future generations. Crystal (2008) albeit from the perspective of online texting suggests that the use of nonstandard orthography will erode children's already weak spelling and punctuation. These online habits will transfer into their everyday life with some teenagers known to incorporate terms like ROFL (Roll on the floor laughing) into their everyday conversations. Crystal continues that a new generation of children will imitate these online forms and will grow up unable to use correct spelling

and punctuation. The Japanese language received similar criticisms with the use of *marumoji* in the 1980's and the use of *gyaru-moji* by young female Japanese within their cell phone text messages (Tanabe, 2005).

The Japanese system with its four scripts of the Chinese characters called *kanji*, *hiragana*, *katakana* and roman script (*romaji*) offer an incredible ability to be flexible when making an orthographic choice (Smith & Schmidt, 1996; Gottlieb 2010). Stereotypes are associated to what script is used. Predominant *kanji* usage is associated with erudition and males middle aged or over. Hiragana use has a softness or femininity and is predominantly used by young females. Katakana, usually used for foreign words, has a contemporary feel and is mainly used by the young, especially male. *Romaji* or the Roman alphabet on the other hand is used by young females and is said to be commercial (Smith & Schmidt, 1996).

These scripts can allow a language community to lean towards a sociolinguistics of script choice state Smith & Schmidt (1996). They suggest that “Japanese writers fashion their script type choices to specific contexts, as the writing system allows, for sociolinguistic and stylistic ends’ and can be used for ‘expressions of creativity, social self-identity and cultural forms” (p.47). The four scripts argues Gottlieb (2010) offer greater ability for language play when compared to English which only uses one roman script.

The table below gives some examples of the unconventional orthography found within the blog corpus for this study.

Table 2.2 Types of Japanese Unconventional Spelling and Logographic Notation

	Japanese unconventional spelling and logographic notation	English unconventional spelling and logographic notation
Vowel lengthening	ありがとう、Thanks そうだ～ That's right よく耐えたっ！！！！ You put up with it well	Amaaaaaaaaazing!
Consonant lengthening	-	Grrrrrrreat!!
Letter repetition	うそううう！(That's a) lie!	Sooo Cooool!
acronyms	-	LOL, OMG
Phonographic Laughter representations	あはは、へへ、ふふ	Haha, hehe
Capitalization	N/A	COOL, CUTE, LOVE

A full discussion of these unconventional notations are detailed in chapter one and three.

This language play is the breaking of the rules of language, and without interfering with the intelligibility of the message allow a user to change an orthographic, phonographic, aspect of the discourse in a way that is conventionally not expected. Gottlieb (2010) disagrees with Crystal (2005) in that the common online usage of unconventional online language use is a result of the medium that it is written on and that this technology affords this. Gottlieb suggests that in Japan “the practice of playing with the script itself has long been firmly entrenched in the country’s written culture and in public spaces” (2010, p.396). She gives examples of *kyouka* which are ‘comic versions of the very old Nara period (pp710-794) 31-syllable verse form which relied on visual puns, such as the use of *kanji* or *kana* for their comical effect. Tranter (2008) notes that unconventional *kanji* use has been utilized by fiction writers and cites that the author Oka Shohei used four ways to write the word *osoreru* (the verb to fear) of which one was all in *hiragana* in his novel *Nobi* (Fires of the Plain).

In recent times the use of *marumoji* or cute handwriting as described in chapter 1 that started in the 1970’s and reached a peak a decade latter are argued to be non-analogue versions of the unconventional notations we see in online communication. The use of such unconventional orthography in *manga* that acts as paralinguistic or phonetic devices has also influenced such language play online (Akizuki, 2009; Miyake, 2004a; Katsuno & Yano, 2002, 2007, Kavanagh 2012a). In

addition Miyake (2007) states that from a study of mobile phone messages that predominately focused on emoticons suggests that the flexible orthographic choice given to the writer allows for greater emotional states and even self-presentation.

Within English, and unlike Japanese, UMC can include the use of capitalization. For example, messages in complete capital letters can be interpreted as shouting or for lexical emphasis. This usage is said to stem from comics (Abbott, 1986; Inge, 1990). Danet (2001) compares digital discourse as the exploitation of the computer keyboard to create playful digital messages that have an affinity with graffiti, comics and jazz. Her emphasis, however, was the playfulness found within synchronous online communication as found in Internet Relay chat. Similarly, Thurlow (2003) and Werry (1996) have addressed the new innovative but unconventional linguistic forms that have appeared in texting or internet relay chat, a form of synchronous communication. Few studies have looked at the asynchronous online environment.

It must be noted at this juncture however, that the use of these unconventional notations can be influenced by the mode of communication that they occur in. Real time synchronous communication, such as chat rooms or instant messaging, sees messages written at a pace similar to holding a conversation (Shea, 1994). The effect of the synchronous environment on UMC usage invariably produces a larger occurrence of these unconventional online depictions (Werry, 1996). In the asynchronous online environment as depicted through personal online blogs, the use of UMCs is not forced upon the user because of time restrictions or in order not to miss their turn within the interaction. Unconventional notation and spelling within texting is also considered to be the domain of the young and some texting expressions mirror slang. The purpose of slang is to show that you are part of the gang or language community that uses such expressions (Crystal, 2008). Verbal and non-verbal language play is however not only the domain of synchronous CMC. Asynchronous CMC may lack the speed and ephemerality of its synchronous counterpart, but it is interactive (Danet, 2001). But as Hubler & Bell (2003) suggest the lack of urgency in non-real time asynchronous communication where users have time to edit messages may foster

a more carefully created humor and language play. In addition, a long running joke or anecdote can be built on based on previous blog posts and comments. Vandergriff (2010) states that within the literature the absence of non-verbal cues in CMC can encourage this language play and that these unconventional linguistic and interactional features of computer-mediated discourse may promote non-seriousness (Herring, 1999).

The above observations on the whole, however, offer very little empirical data on the use of unconventional phonetic spelling in online discourse and its function and usage. The majority of the literature on non-standard online spelling and notation has predominately looked at it from a creative or performance aspect (Danet, 2001; Peuronen, 2011) or how the swift real time language platform creates a need to simplify, shorten or create new unconventional orthography and how these typological features can promote an author self-image (Soffer, 2010). Some have attempted to show how these vocal spellings attempt to represent vocal attributes to gauge the authors tone of voice or emotional stance (Kavanagh, 2010, 2012a) and how deliberate misspelling produces a sense of orality on the written text (Soffer, 2012).

The use of non-standard or unconventional spelling and logographic representations within the CMC context have heavily focused on their role as an expression of creativity or as a sociolinguistic variable and have largely ignored the contextual nature of these cues and the relational work they can produce within interactions (Darics, 2013). In a study of multiple letter repetition in data stemming from IM interactions from a virtual workplace Darics (2013) argues that the complexities of unconventional digital discourse is a complex one and the focus should be placed on how these notations play a role within the contextualization of the verbal message. The effect of letter repetition he argues is that these representations of orality can contribute to socio-emotional information and friendly intent into their writing. This can result in the contextualizing of the relational content of the message.

In a study of casual writing by young Japanese women Kakaoka (1997) found that script based strategies such as the use of *hiragana*, *katakana* and the use of multiple glottal stops can establish intimacy and solidarity among users as well as

establishing the author's self presentation. Matsuda (2008) suggests that the unorthodox use of orthography and language produced in Japanese blog articles is an attempt to create a form of cuteness and to solicit an interest in the blog creator's writings.

Miyake (2005b, 2007) suggests that writers are trying to reproduce spoken discourse in their text based interactions and hence the many uses of vowel extensions that are reflective of speech. Nishimura (2003) states that such phonetic spellings are used to give a sense of intimacy and that the writer is right there in the room with them.

Kavanagh (2012b) found in a sample of blog comments the following examples.

1. 昨年よりも身軽になったので、今年こそ優勝だァァァ！

Sakunen yori mo migaru ni natta no de, kotoshi koso yuusyuu daaaa

I was a bit casual last year but this year I will definitely be champion

2. 私も持ってるぜい。

Watashi mo motteiru ze

I have that too

These two examples above show how the use of the deliberate notation of the small font of katakana is deployed in place of hiragana and example 2 illustrates the small い 'i' sound to mimic vocalization.

3. 会社に行くことができず、強制的に久々の休日を楽しみま～す。

Kaisya ni iku koto ga dekizu. Kyouseiteki ni hisabisa no kyuuujitsu o tanoshima~su

Looking forward to a (forced) holiday from work after a long time

4. できれば、コメントもお願いしま～す。(^^♪

Dekireba, comento mo onegaishimaasu

If you can please leave a comment

Examples 3 and 4 show how the wavy dash is used to extend vowel sound in the Japanese hiragana script.

5. 今日はパパと寝るう～

Kyou wa papa to neruu

I will sleep with papa today

6. 元気になったら、次のお休みには、パパとバトミントンするう

Genki ni nattara, tsugi no oyasumi niha, papa to batominto suruu

When I get better, I will play badminton with Dad on my next day off

Examples 5 and 6 used infant language or baby talk to illustrate the child's 'voice' in these examples taken from blog posts.

7. お前はグルメ評論家かつつの(;'Д')

Omae wa gurume hyouka ka kattsuuno

Are you a gourmet critic?

The last example uses a series of a small *tsu* つ, followed by a regular *tsu* つ which is then followed by う or *u* to extend the vocal sound of this expression even longer. The utterance is then punctuated with an angry looking emoticon.

Kalman & Gergle (2014) found similar results from a corpus of nearly 500,000 e-mails by employees of the Enron Corporation. Their findings suggest that letter repetition as in 'Yeeeeeeeeehaaaaaw!!!!!!' are often but not necessarily always representations of spoken nonverbal cues.

The research up until now has not looked at how these unconventional phonetic spellings and logographic representations are used pragmatically or in any great depth how they convey author emotion, relational work or are used in conjunction with other UMCs. Most of the research focuses on the synchronous communication platform and its descriptive unconventional language use. The asynchronous medium whereby the motivation to use these unorthodox depictions may vary has largely been ignored. The

literature also lacks an area where these forms have been contrasted in English and Japanese and how they function across languages and the cultures from which they stem. This thesis aims to address that gap.

2.6.2 Unconventional Representations of Laughter: Logographic and Phonetic

There are very few studies that have just focused on laughter representations within online discourse. Tagliamonte & Denis (2008) found in a corpus of instant messenger data that the phonetic *haha* and its variants were more frequent than the logographic LOL (laugh out loud). They suggest that the LOL form which was used 4.500 times in their data set is in systematic decline according to age within their sample of teenagers, suggesting it has grown old among 19-20 year olds but is still used frequently with 15-16 year olds. However, in their data it was used by IM users to help the flow of conversation as a signal of interlocutor involvement. Hehe (a form of written laughter) was used the most infrequently and used to mimic giggling within their data. Representations of laughter like other UMCs can act as contextualization cues in Japanese and English digital discourse and in a sense they can play the role of a digital version of Gumperz' (1982) contextualization cues. These tones can function to express meaning above the semantic level and can be related to what Goffman (1981) calls linguistic "keying" a process where interactions can be mounted in a variety of ways. For example in a keyed interaction a piece of playful banter may be framed in a way as to not be taken seriously with UMC usage.

2.6.3 Unconventional Use of Grammatical Markers: Multiple Exclamation Use

Offline exclamation points are often considered to be used by women rather than men (Rubin & Greene, 1992; Scates, 1981; Winn & Rubin, 2001) and online this pattern seems to be repeated. Colley and Todd's (2002) research of the gendered style and content of email asked participants to compose e-mails to an imaginary friend that describes a recent vacation. They found that women used exclamation points,

especially multiple exclamation points, far more often than men did. They characterized these multiple exclamation uses as markers of excitability. Waseleski (2006) found in a study of analysis of 200 exclamations posted to two electronic discussion groups that exclamation point usage was not necessary marker of excitability but rather may function as a marker of friendly interaction and that both genders can convey friendliness through these non-excessive use of exclamation points. However, this study looked at a single or conventional use of exclamation marks and not multiple usages.

Literature on the Japanese language and exclamation usage online is at present non-existent along with comparative studies of English and Japanese and how they are used.

2.7 CMC Theories and Relational Communication

An introduction to CMC theories was given in chapter 1. Now a discussion on how some researchers have adopted or utilized the theories in their research on emoticons and other UMCs will be given consideration in relation to impression formation, relational communication, self presentation and cultural influence.

Self presentation in the form of extra-linguistic cues has already been covered within the review of the Japanese emoticons and *emoji*. Within the English language literature there exists some studies but the majority are based on text based CMC that look at language, typographic and chronemic cues. In offline settings impression formation can be achieved through verbal and nonverbal cues. However, the ‘cues filtered out theory’ states that people can become depersonalized within the online environment because the attention focuses on the written text, not the social context (Sproull & Kiesler 1986). Researchers such as Rice & Lowe (1987) however suggest that through verbal content relational communication can be achieved.

Walther (1996) suggests through his hyper-personal model that CMC message senders can depict themselves in a favorable light socially or otherwise in order to capture the attention of the person to whom the message is being relayed. This he

argues can lead to friendly conversation that may surpass face to face conversation in terms of sociality. Message receivers may consequently enhance the image of the sender by overvaluing these text-based cues. In addition, the asynchronous nature of CMC gives the sender and the receiver enough time to edit their communication, making interactions in CMC more controllable and thoughtful in character. Walther (1996) argues that the reduction of cues within the CMC environment actually enhance the interpersonal bond between online writers.

Some studies have found that online impressions are even more favorable than offline ones. Within online dating for example the inflated impressions given by their interlocutor through their online self presentation were not met when the couple finally met (Ramirez & Wang, 2008). Other studies have showed that people exaggerate or lie about their dating profile in what is essentially deceptive self-presentation (Toma et al, 2008; Hall et al, 2010). Hancock and Dunham (2001) found that in comparison to face to face interaction that CMC conversational partners' impressions were more intense albeit not as deep or detailed. These theories however were not created with the idea of emoticons or other UMCs in mind. However some studies have adopted the Walther's hyper-personal model and SIP model to show that paralinguistic devices can aid in the development of relationships and relational communication (Utz, 2000).

Some studies, however, that have made a comparison of face-to-face and CMC with respect to relational work, have found that face-to-face participants formed more positive impressions of their conversational partner than the CMC environment (Okdie et al, 2011).

These differences in CMC and face-to-face interactions are essentially perspectives that are covered within the cues filtered in and out approached as discussed in chapter 1. With relation to UMCs, and the theme of this thesis however the research on relational communication through these unorthodox representations is lacking within the literature. This research attempts to show how UMCs can act as relational markers to intensify online relationships and that this is especially apparent within the Japanese data.

2.8 Research Enquiry Two: UMC Usage and Culture

The section of the literature review documents the studies pertinent to the research aims and enquiries as outlined below in relation to the function and usage of UMCs

- a. Does UMC usage mirror the language and culture from which it stems?
- b. Are there cultural parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

This section within the literature review will examine the intercultural communication theories. These theories stem from Edward T Hall whose earliest books, *Silent Language* (1959) and *Hidden Dimensions* (1966) were often considered the early Bible for developing intercultural communication as an area of study. Although Hall is generally acknowledged to be the founder of the field (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1990; Rogers and Steinfatt, 1999) his theories have attracted criticism which will be addressed.

Hall's ideas can be considered to be too simplistic and his cultural analysis rests on simple dichotomies which may be too naive for dealing with the real world complexities of culture half a century on from his original publications. However Hall's ideas have become integral parts of intercultural communication textbooks and courses. Hall is omnipresent in nearly all of the academic literature associated with cross cultural comparisons particularly in the communication fields (Driskill, 1997; Hunsinger, 2006; Thatcher, 2001; Varner, 2000, 2001; Weiss, 1992). Cardon (2008) states that according to the web of science social sciences cited reference index of 2007 that Hall has been cited 3,300 times for his three major books: 1,552 times for *The Hidden Dimension* (1966), 1,124 times for *Silent Language* (1959), and 659 times for *Beyond Culture* (1976). Cardon (2008) further states that his works have also become integral parts of intercultural communication textbooks and courses. In particular, Hall's contexting model has been identified as the most commonly used cultural model in intercultural communication courses (Fantini & Smith, 1997).

Studies that use contexting as an explanatory framework for cross-cultural variation almost invariably accept the contexting continuum (Hall's ranking of cultures from low context to high context) and fail to critically examine exceptions. Therefore, Hall cannot be avoided completely in spite of the criticism his work has received.

Whatever intercultural theory book you look through, Hall's high and low context cultural theories will be given a number of pages along with extensions and variations of the theory as reflected in Hofstede (1980). Cardon (2008) states that Hofstede had been cited over 6,100 times for his three major works: 4,138 times for the first edition of *Culture's Consequences* (1980), 532 times for the second and highly revised edition of *Culture's Consequences* (2001), and 1,488 times for *Cultures and Organizations* (1991).

There are a number of criticisms of these cultural models and how representative or truthful they are when they describe American and Japanese communication styles with sweeping generalizations which have no empirical evidence to support them. The scope of this thesis is not large enough to incorporate all of these criticisms and studies, but the emphasis is, regardless of these issues, that these models are ever present within the literature and are mostly accepted in that their view of how different nationalities communicate (Pauwels, 2012; Ess & Sudweeks, 2005).

The review below examines the 'perceived but accepted notions' that Japanese face to face communication styles are implicit, vague, indirect and heavily reliant on non-verbal communication and that American communication styles are essentially the opposite being described as explicit, to the point and reliant on the verbal word. The review looks at the perceived communication styles of Japanese and Americans and the perceived notions of the importance of non-verbal communication in Japanese interaction. This is followed by a review of the empirical studies of Japanese language use and culture and it is these studies that are of use to this thesis when accessing how UMCs usage relates to the culture that produces them.

2.8.1 Perceived Communication Styles in Japanese and American Cultures

The review initially examines the accepted but mainly empirically untested notions within the literature of Japanese being a vague and indirect language and of having a communication style that focuses on maintaining harmonious interpersonal relations. The review concludes with the empirical evidence which has tried to test some of these assumptions.

Within the literature Japanese face to face communication styles are described as being implicit, vague, indirect and heavily reliant on non-verbal communication (Akasu & Asao, 1993; Doi, 1996; McClure 2000; Midooka, 1990; Yamada, 1997). American communication styles are essentially the opposite being described as explicit, to the point and reliant on the verbal word (Hall, 1976, Lewis, 2005, Hofstede, 1980).

Hall's (1976) high/low context distinction divides cultures according to their basic differences in cultural perspectives and communication style. High context cultures are typified as having indirect, ambiguous, understated, and reserved styles of communication that cater to and are sensitive to listeners. In contrast, low context communication styles are described as being direct, explicit and precise paralleling the interlocutor's true feelings. These patterns of communication are compatible with Hofstede's (1980, 1991) cultural dimension of individualism and collectivism respectively and were conveyed as an extension to Hall's cultural HC/LC framework. Lewis (2005) created a model that classifies cultures into three main types:

- Linear-active
- Multi-active
- Reactive

America is classified as a linear active culture, and Lewis (2005) describes their communication styles as speaker orientated and polite but direct. Reactive cultures he describes such as Japan as a listening orientated culture. They react to their partners actions, are polite indirect and conceal their feelings.

This Lewis Model of Cross-Cultural Communication was developed to set out to improve on other models in providing better treatment of Asian cultures. Whilst Lewis's writings recognize these can only be stereotypes, his model provides a practical framework for understanding and communicating with people of other cultures. His model can be seen as an extension and expansion of Hall's context and Hoefstede's cultural dimensions.

Kim (1994) writes that members of collective cultures are concerned with not hurting others or imposing on them, while their individualistic counterparts are more direct in their interactions. In Japanese culture collectivism involves a focus on the concepts of 和 *wa* (harmony) 甘え *amae* (dependency or interdependence) and 遠慮 *enryo* (reserve or restraint) and an emphasis on strong personal relationships (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1994).

Communication within high context cultures places an emphasis and expectation on the listener's ability to be able to read between the lines or to read the context to grasp the unstated meaning. Yamada (1997) supports this notion by suggesting "for the Japanese, the responsibility of communication rests with the audience, making listener interpretation not only the key but the main mode of communication" (p.38). She labels Japan as utilizing a listener based mode of communication or 'listener talk'.

In contrast she states that "For the American responsibility of communication rests with the speaker." (Yamada, 1997, p.38). This parallels low context communication descriptions that suggest direct and explicit forms are used to ensure the listener receives the message precisely as it was sent, hence placing the responsibility on the shoulders of the speaker rather than the listener as in high context cultures.

The perception that English is less vague and indirect than Japanese, is given comprehensive coverage within the literature. Examples range from the conveyance of hesitancy, to understatement and hedges as in *~to omou kedo* ('I think that ~'), the use of *kamo* (might be), *kana* (I wonder) rather than the use of the affirmative definitely (*zettai*) (Okabe, 1983; Akasu & Asao 1993).

A question that may arise from this is how hedges such as *kamo* and *kana* are used in conjunction with UMCs and what is the function of these UMCs when attached to such lexical items? English on the other hand is considered to be explicit in the sense that the speaker or writer need to be precise in what they are saying in order to be understood clearly (Hinds, 1987).

2.8.2 Perceptions of Japanese Non-verbal Communication

Birdwhistell (1970) has suggested that non-verbal communication occupies 60-65% of human communication which implies that it is near impossible to complete human communication without a non-verbal one. The role of silence or *chinmoku* for example has been described as an important and influential part of typical Japanese styles of communication (Maynard, 1997). In other low context cultures such as America, silence may be viewed as uncommunicative. Tannen (1985) argues that silence is not just the absence of talk but “the extreme manifestation of indirectness. If indirectness is a matter of saying one thing and meaning another, silence can be a matter of saying nothing and meaning something” (p.97). Ruch (1984) comments that “if given a choice, the Japanese would prefer not to use words. A Japanese proverb suggests, not to say is better than to say” (p.65) or in other words silence is golden 沈黙は金 *chinmoku wa kin*. To the Japanese, non-verbal communication is often more important than verbal communication. For them, the verbal message accompanies the non-verbal cues instead of the other way round, as in other cultures. Ruch (1984) also refers to the novelist Kawabata Yasunari who remarked that the Japanese communicate through an unspoken understanding, a type of telepathy, because for them truth is in the implicit rather than the stated. The Japanese call it ‘*ishin denshin*’ or communication by the heart. Miyoshi (1974) suggests that words can be left unspoken to the Japanese and that Americans feel the need for lengthy explanations. Doi (1973) points out that the concept and role of *amae* is an expectation that one’s interlocutor can understand the speaker without the speaker having to verbalize one’s needs and feelings. This reflects the notion of Japanese being a listener responsibility culture.

Amae can perhaps be seen then to suppress verbalization in communicative interactions in consistency with the Hall (1976), and Hofstede (1980) collective and high context theoretical combination.

Hall (1976) suggests that in a high context culture such as Japan, meanings are internalized, and there is a large emphasis on non-verbal codes whereas low context cultures people look for the meaning of others' behaviours in the messages that are plainly and explicitly coded. For Hall (1976) Low-context (LC) messages, in contrast to High-context (HC) messages, provide most of the information in the explicit code itself. Gudykunst & Matsumoto (1996) add to this by stating that members of collective cultures like Japan use higher-context messages; members of individualistic cultures such as the USA use lower context messages. Communication in HC cultures is generally perceived to be indirect with LC cultures falling into the direct, say it as it is, category.

However, the descriptive assertions noted here have largely been untested through empirical studies and remain unproven concepts that border on stereotypes of Japanese communication styles. Apart from subjective observations these perceptions about how cultures converse is based on factors other than objective, empirical evidence. There are some studies, however, that have tried to test, although partially, some of these assumptions and are outlined below.

2.8.3 Empirical Studies of Japanese Language Use and Culture

Nisugi (1974) found in a survey of 250 native Japanese speakers that when asked how they would describe the Japanese language through adjectives, 76% stated polite (*teinei*) and 73% suggested indirect and vague (*aimai*).

Other surveys have found similar results. Haugh (1998) found that in a survey of 70 Japanese that 73% of them believe spoken Japanese to be vague and indirect. A further 56% stated that Japanese is not good for expressing feelings.

In a study of 707 Japanese respondents Takai and Ota (1994) identified five factors for the achievement of Japanese interpersonal competence and communication.

They label them as perceptive ambiguity, self restraint, hierarchical relationship management, interpersonal sensitivity and tolerance for ambiguity. Perceptive ability they state is related to Japanese high context communication and the ability to communicate using implicit messages. Wada (1991) identified two dimensions of the nonverbal aspects of competence in data collected from 242 Japanese university students. One of the dimensions he labels as nonverbal sensitivity. This he suggests refers to the skills individuals have that enable them to understand others through the ability to read non-verbal behavior.

Zhang et al (2005) examined 1631 college students using a values survey from China, South Korea, and Taiwan (381 were Japanese, 420 Chinese, 422 South Korean and 408 Taiwanese) and found that these young people supported the values of interpersonal harmony the most. Interpersonal harmony consisted of maintaining harmony and solidarity with others. Although language use was not the focus of the study, it shows that the Japanese from this sample esteem harmony as a value.

Singelis and Brown (1995) created a model that attempted to link cultural collectivism (as in Japanese culture) with interdependent self-construal's (also described as important in Japanese culture) and high context communication. 364 graduate students completed questionnaires based on a 7 point Likert scale from strongly agree to disagree that examined communication style in relation to the self, as in for example items such as 'I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in', 'Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument and 'I'd rather say 'No' directly, than risk being misunderstood'. The 364 students were divided into individualist (white American) and collectivist (Chinese, Filipino, Japanese and Korean) and through their findings Singelis and Brown (1995) state that "high context communicators seem to pay less attention to the subtle meanings of words, but are influenced by the context in interpreting the meaning" (p.375) and suggest that interdependent self-construal's are related to using high context communication styles.

Gudykunst et al (1996) found similar findings with a questionnaire administered to 753 university students (consisting of 192 from America and 168 from

Japan) to access low context and high context communication, self-construal's, and values across cultures.

Mizushima & Stapleton (2006) analyzed a 4 hour recording of four different groups of Japanese speakers. They examined the function of meta-orientated critical comments in Japanese comical conversations. They define 'meta-orientated comments' as a particular subset of seemingly offensive utterances (p.2106).

They found that these meta-critical interactions can be interpreted from a cultural angle. They show how within theses interactions between the participants there is a sense of unspoken understanding among the interlocutors. They cite Hall's (1976) high context definition that people from such cultures rely on contextual and non-verbal cues such as facial expressions and body language. They argue that this form of "high context communication is critical to the success of meta-orientated critical remarks and responses. Assumed with these exchanges is a considerable degree of unstated contextual understanding" (p.2120). They found that comical exchanges follow a formulaic pattern which is initiated "by a trigger remark on the part of the person who is subsequently teased" (p.2121). They conclude that culture plays an important role in meta-orientated interactions that depend on context rather than other cultures where context plays a less significant role.

Reynolds (2000) suggests that Japanese is unique in the sense that it has various linguistic devices and structures that can be "used to acknowledge the communicative linkage between speaker and hearer" (p.2). In a study of Japanese university student's discourse she examined the role of the Japanese sentence final particles *ne* and *sa* and suggests that these particles are used to channel the intention on the part of the speaker. She states

I consider the primary function of these particles is to signal the phatic intention on the part of speaker regardless of the position they occur...It is the rule of Japanese communication that speakers channel and backchannel within conversation if they appear to be harmonious. (p.3).

Reynolds gives the example of *nee*, which is a phonetically elongated version of *ne* and suggests that it is used to create a sense of intimacy especially within female speakers.

The empirical evidence as demonstrated through these studies seems to suggest that Japanese face to face communication characteristics are rapport or harmony driven with a placed importance on non-verbal communication. These studies however were based on Japanese face to face communication styles and not on the very different online communication platform.

2.8.4 Empirical Studies on the Reader / Writer Responsibility Concept

Differences in how Americans and Japanese communicate or the styles they employ can be illustrated in who assumes the responsibility within the interaction in order for the dialogue to be successful. Hinds (1987) divides communication styles or tendencies into two camps: one that he terms speaker responsible and the other listener responsible.

A listener responsible language places the burden of responsibility on the listener, in other words the listener is expected to infer the speaker's point of view or meaning. The listener relies more on the context than the content to do this and thus becomes responsible for decoding the meaning of the interaction. Japanese is described as a listener responsible language (Hinds, 1987; Yamada, 1997).

In contrast, a speaker responsible language or culture places the responsibility of making a clear and concise message on the shoulders of the speaker. The speaker, therefore, holds responsibility for making his or her words and utterances understood whereby the listener does not have to infer or read the context of the situation.

This communication style is, therefore, less dependent on the context or what not is being said but more dependent on content and of what is actually being said. English is considered to be reader responsible (Hinds; 1987, Yamada; 1997).

Yoon (2010, 2011) found that in a survey and discourse recordings of Japanese and Korean university students that Korean speakers produced many more utterances than their Japanese counterparts to convey more information per utterance

to their interlocutor. She, therefore, concludes that Korean is a speaker responsible language unlike Japanese. This result is reflected in the findings of Takeharu (2009) who suggests that Japanese rely on less verbal information in conversation compared to English verbal interaction.

The empirical evidence as demonstrated through these studies seems to suggest that Japanese communication can be vague with an ability to communicate using implicit messages making interaction primarily a listener responsible process whereby the listener needs to understand what the speaker means even if they are not explicit in their dialogue. The nucleus of this research enquiry concerns how or if UMC usage mirrors the language and culture that creates it. To phrase it differently, how are these cultural characteristics of language and communication style reflected in online blogs through the use of UMCs and the language they are attached to? The emphasis is therefore not on perceived assumptions of the linguistic and communicative patterns of Japanese or Americans but what they actually do through the empirically tested data within this study. Below are some CMC studies that have tried to base their findings on the work of Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1980).

2.8.5 Applicability of Intercultural Theories to Online Communication

At present there are very few studies that have explored the high and low context distinction within CMC but those that have investigated the relationship between auditory and visual cues and cultural background have found that these cues have more importance for members of collectivistic, high context, relationship orientated cultures than they do for members of individualistic, low context, task orientated cultures. Kayan, Fussel & Setlock (2006) found through a series of questionnaires to Instant Messaging users that North Americans rated emoticons, and the use of audio and video chat significantly lower in importance than did Indians and East Asians. They conclude that these results are consistent with low and high context communication styles with the latter reliant on visual and oral channels for the successful transmission of information.

Other studies have suggested that greater usage of images in collectivist cultures is used to provide a context, with individualistic low context communicators more reliant on text to provide information. Würtz (2005) found that in her examination of McDonalds' websites, graphical design features and the visual effects offered by the internet are more likely to be adopted and used by high context cultures to convey their messages more effectively than their low context counterparts. Similarly, Kim & Papacharissi (2003) found in homepages of Korean and American users that the latter used far more textual representation, with the former more reliant on graphical images when conveying information. Kavanagh (2010) found that the use of non-verbal contextual cues as represented by emoticons are culturally grounded with high context cultures, such as Japan, relying heavily on these graphical accents in their blog entries. They were seen to play a part in the promotion of smooth communication across cyberspace to unknown recipients. In comparison, low context cultures as exemplified by American users, were found to use these emoticons sparingly.

Although these studies point to the importance of oral, visual and nonverbal cues in a variety of online UMC's within written texts, their function in a comparative setting of asynchronous communication within Asian and western cultures has largely been under-represented. Some of these studies however base their findings too readily on the intercultural communication models of Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1980) without questioning their validity and accuracy.

The research enquiry within this UMC and culture heading aims to see how UMCs reflect empirically tested ideas of how Japanese and Americans communicate rather than the perceived ideas of how they communicate which pervades the majority of intercultural communication theory textbooks.

2.9 Research enquiry three: Politeness Theory (Emoticons and politeness strategies)

The investigation within the thesis also aims to evaluate how Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies are realized through the use of emoticons in the interaction within American and Japanese online personal weblog comments and to see if the concept of Japanese being a negative politeness culture can be challenged within this online environment. A review of the literature regarding Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theories in relation to American and Japanese culture is followed by how their framework has been applied to CMC in a review of the studies in this field. Research enquiry three is restated below.

- a. How are expressions of solidarity and interpersonal communication realized through emoticons in this text based faceless medium?
- b. How do extra-linguistic signs supplement the verbal language content? Are extra-linguistic signs used in conjunction with particular politeness strategies?

2.9.1 Brown & Levinson's Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson (1987:61) describe 'face' as the public self-image that "every member wants to claim for himself, consisting of two related aspects:

- (a) Negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom of action and freedom from imposition
- (b) Positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants

They suggest that face "is something that is emotionally invested, and that can

be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction” (p.61). They give an account of face threatening acts (FTAs) that primarily threaten the addressee’s (H’s) negative-face want, by indicating (potentially) that the speaker (S) does not intend to avoid impeding H’s freedom of action and acts that threaten the positive face by indicating (potentially) that the speaker does not care about the addressee’s feelings, wants, etc. – that in some important respect he doesn’t want H’s wants (p.65-66). Strategies for doing FTA’s include performing the FTA directly, perform it using positive or negative politeness strategies, performing the FTA indirectly or alternatively do doing the FTA. (p.68-70).

Brown and Levinson (1987:103) state that positive politeness utterances or strategies are used as a kind of ‘metaphorical extension of intimacy’ that imply a common ground or when the speaker, in using them, indicates that he wants to ‘come closer’ to hearer as in the formation or building of rapport. This positive politeness may include an element of exaggeration with the objective of wanting the hearer’s positive face to be enhanced and satisfied.

They state that

The strategies of positive politeness involve three broad mechanisms. Those of the first type involve S claiming ‘common ground’ with ‘H’, by indicating that S and H both belong to some set of persons who share specific wants, including goals and values. Three ways of making this claim are these: S may convey that some want (goal, or desired object) of H’s is admirable or interesting to S too; or he may stress common membership in a group or category, thus emphasizing that both S and H belong to some set of persons who share some wants, finally, S can claim common perspective with H without necessarily referring to in-group membership (p.103).

The output of these 3 methods of claiming and stressing common ground they suggest are reflected in the first 8 positive politeness strategies (there are 15 in all) as stated below.

1. Noticing and attending to the hearer's interests, wants and needs.
2. Exaggerating interest, approval and sympathy with the hearer.
3. Intensifying interest to hearer.
4. Use in-group identity markers
5. Seek agreement
6. Avoid disagreement
7. Presuppose / raise / assert common ground
8. Joke

The above strategies have been adopted and applied within this thesis to the function of how sentences are used as politeness strategies and how the emoticon supplements and supports the intended politeness strategy. Within in this research the above strategies were examined in how they were used in blog comments and how the emoticons that was attached added and supported the politeness strategy. (Please see chapter 3 for a breakdown of the positive politeness strategies employed).

Negative politeness is an redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face, that is, to have their freedom of action unhindered and according to Brown and Levinson (1987:129) it is the 'heart of respect behavior' just as positive politeness emphasizes familiar and joking behavior. They state that "Where positive politeness is free-ranging, negative politeness is specific and focused, it performs the function of minimizing the particular imposition that the FTA unavoidably effects" (p.129).

Being indirect, hedging, minimizing the imposition, giving deference and apologizing are given as some of the 10 strategies that promote negative politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987). 'Negative politeness' attends to a person's negative face and its strategies are avoidance based and consist of utterances which are intended to indicate that the speaker does not wish to be perceived as being imposing on the addressee. Speech acts such as softening requests and hedging are examples of negative politeness strategies (Brown, 1998). (Please see chapter 3 for a breakdown of the negative politeness strategies used to examine how these strategies are used and supported by emoticons).

Japanese is considered to be a negative politeness culture because of the intricate system of honorifics it employs (Shigemitsu, Murata, and Otsuka, 2006; Ide, 2006). In addition, Japanese speakers do not often use positive politeness strategies within their interactions unless the interlocutors are psychologically very close.

The United States, in contrast, is described as being a positive politeness culture. Brown and Levinson (1987) state that “.impositions are thought of as small, social distance as no insuperable boundary to easy-going interaction, and relative power as never very great” (p.245). These positive politeness strategies have been suggested to play an important role in forming and maintaining good interpersonal relationships.

These theories were originally applied to face to face communication where visual and auditory cues such as paralinguistic information and facial expressions are readily available. In text based Computer Mediated Communication, these cues are not accessible which has led to creative language use and the use of extra-linguistic signs such as emoticons to convey the perceived missing semantic and pragmatic intention.

This investigation within the thesis aims to examine how Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness strategies are deployed and realized within blog comments and how through the use of emoticons these strategies are emphasized within the interaction of American and Japanese online personal weblog comments. In addition the concept of Japanese being a negative politeness culture is questioned within this online environment.

2.9.2 The Universality of Brown & Levinson, criticism and adoption of the Theory

The Brown & Levinson (1987) claim of the universality of face has been criticized by Ide (1989) and Matsumoto (1988, 1989) who consider Japanese honorifics as arising not from a consideration of face but out of ‘discernment’ (*wakimae*) the use of polite expressions by the speaker that conform to social convention. The use of *wakimae* obliges Japanese speakers to use ‘*desu masu*’ polite forms to maintain appropriate relations with seniors and strangers. Discerment, or *wakimae*, Ide (1989)

states, “is the choice of linguistic form or expression in which the distinction between the ranks or the roles of the speaker, the referent and the addressee are systematically encoded” (p230). This is because linguistic behavior is orientated towards roles and situations, rather than face wants she explains. She divides politeness into volition (*hatarakikake houshki*) and discernment (*wakimae*). Positive and negative politeness strategies can be found within volition such as the verbal strategies of seeking agreement, joking and being pessimistic. The Brown and Levinson (1987) framework disregards *wakimae* which she claims acts out an important role within the Japanese linguistic politeness system. Discernment can take the form of address terms, speech levels and formal forms such as honorifics.

In Japanese society, *wakimae* is considered more important than *hatarakikake houshki* for the maintenance of good interpersonal relations. American English in contrast, is lacking in or has the need for *wakimae* so Ide (1989) suggests the attention is therefore turned to a more positive politeness focus. Within American English the speaker can show respect and politeness by closing the distance with the listener through the use of volition or *hatarakikake houshki*. Hill et al. (1986:348) suggest that there is a “relative prominence of discernment over volition in the polite use of language by speakers of Japanese. Conversely, volition appears to predominate in the polite use of American English”.

Ide (2006) writes that within the English language ‘politeness’ and ‘friendliness’ are two inseparable concepts on the same level. In contrast, within Japanese these concepts are separated. Japanese *keigo* or honorifics is a system to express politeness and not friendliness. As positive politeness strategies have the intention of treating the addressee as someone who is liked or esteemed, expressing ‘friendliness’ through jokes, compliments and approval aims to close the distance between interlocutors and create a sense of solidarity. Usami (2002) and Pizziconi (2003), however, suggest that through honorifics Japanese are able to successfully maintain interpersonal relationships.

The Brown & Levinson (1987) is now approaching its 30th birthday and has attracted a great deal of criticism as outlined above, which may lead to concerns

regarding the benefits of employing this theory as the backdrop when examining the use of emoticons within blog comments. Locher & Watts (2005:9) suggest that the Brown & Levinson (1987) framework “has given scholars and enormous amount of research mileage” and that it “has towered above most others and has served as a guiding beacon for scholars interested in teasing out politeness phenomena from examples of human interaction”. However, they do question the model as a theory of politeness, and suggest that it is a theory of face work. They instead suggest the “Brown and Levinson’s framework can still be used, however, if we look at the strategies they have proposed to be possible realizations of what we call relational work” (p.10). They define politeness as a ‘discursive concept’ which stems from interlocutors judgments and ideas on their own and their interlocutors verbal behavior. Rather than facework they suggest the term relational work and suggest that “Depending upon the kind of verbal social behavior in which individuals engage, they will adapt their relational work to what is considered appropriate” (p29). Relational work as discussed in the literature regarding CMC theory is an important part of this section of the thesis and attempts will be made to understand how UMCs, notably emoticons, are used to emphasize, and in conjunction with comment sentences, to display this relational work or interpersonal communication with other blog writers and readers.

Similarly Chen (2001:88) offers a defense of Brown and Levinson and argues “their theory is fundamentally correct and is still the best tool we have in the investigation of politeness”. He suggests that other approaches “seem flawed in their approaches to politeness” (p.192). He addresses ‘the norm approach’ of Hill et al. (1986) who advocate a *wakimae* approach whereby to be polite is to conform to societal norms. He concedes that the approach may be attractive in the sense that it takes into account cross-cultural differences. However, he also outlines his objections to this

The cross-cultural study of politeness would become a study of social norms, a study of how cultures differ in their respective expectations of what one should say in a given situation. It is here that one sees a problem of the approach:

norm seems too large a concept to be of much use. Linguistic norms alone can be on any dimension: on the dimension of register, dimension of clarity, dimension of style. To lump all these norms together seems to make the issue more confusing, but to separate politeness from other norms is not an issue that these theories seem to be concerned about (p.95)

The insistence that Brown and Levinson framework is universal is one of the main criticisms leveled at the politeness model. These criticism stem from studies on non-English discourse data which Chen (2001:93) suggests “find that many speech acts are perceived differently on the dimension of politeness in different cultures” (p.93). He gives the example from Chen (1996), where the Chinese deem ‘polite’ imperatives which are used to make offers and adopted as a device in invitations (Mao, 1992). Chen (2001:93) suggests however that “Since B&L categorize imperatives as a Bald on record strategy, one that is the most imposing, hence most ‘impolite’, B&L’s claim of universality fails”. Chen however defends the politeness model when he states

While it is true that imperatives are considered by B&L the most imposing way of doing an FTA. B&L, however, are fully aware that they can be polite even in English speaking cultures. In their discussion of Bald on record (1987: 94-101), they list a number of factors in a speaker’s choice of imperatives, among which is “interest to H”, a use that is “actually orientated to face” (1987:99), such as offers, invitations, and sympathetic advice or warnings. Besides, the fact that a particular speech act is viewed as having different degrees of politeness in different cultures is taken care of by B&L’s formula of calculating a strategy, discussed above, which includes ‘R’, the force of imposition of a FTA perceived in a given culture” (p.93).

Another criticism of the Brown and Levinson (1987) model is that their distinction between positive and negative politeness strategies is vague and many FTAs can threaten the hearer’s positive and negative face. Chen (2001) suggests that

Americans have been labeled as positively polite by some (notably Scollon and Scollon, 1983) but negatively polite by others (Tannen, 1981) but he suggests that “As to labeling cultures according to the negative / positive dichotomy, conflicts in research findings may be avoided if the researcher confines herself to statements warranted by the data” (p.94).

Brown and Levinson’s (1987) applicability to Japanese has received support through empirical studies that have applied the framework to their data. These empirical studies are discussed below.

Fukada and Asato (2004) challenge the ideas put forth by Ide (1989) and Matsumoto (1988) that dispute the concept of the Brown and Levinson politeness framework as being universal. They give an analysis of Japanese honorifics and claim that their account based on the Brown and Levinson model is a better explanation of honorific usage than that of ‘*wakimae*’ or ‘discernment’. Through discourse examples given within their paper they state that

We hope we have made it clear that the use of honorifics is closely tied to face preservation and that an account based on the notion of face is much more promising than one based on the notion of ‘discernment’. In this paper, we hope to have made a strong case for not recognizing discernment politeness as a separate phenomenon, and to have presented sufficient evidence to treat the examples presented in support of that theory as cases of negative politeness, to be explained within the politeness framework (p.2000).

Usami (2002) examined 72 Japanese conversations between strangers, focusing particularly on age and gender, and looked at the data with regards to speech level shift and topic initiations. She claims throughout the work that the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework is applicable to modern Japanese but that the theory “accounts for discourse behavior better than sentence behavior in Japanese” (p.225). In a review of the book, Haugh (2006:4) states that “the power of Brown and Levinson’s theory to inspire researchers to glean new insights into the nature of politeness across cultures is

clear from the results of this study...and it is worth remembering that in spite flaws in Brown and Levinson's theory itself, empirical research based on it may have much to contribute to this debate".

Pizziconi (2003:1472) gives an account of how the concern by Japanese scholars Ide (1989) and Matsumoto (1988, 1989) is not a sufficient criticism of the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework and gives her interpretation of the model to "demonstrate that the principles regulating Japanese language are not inconsistent with B&L's account of other languages regarding the exploitation of pragmatic strategies to mitigate face threats, and the two basic motivating factors for such mitigation: negative and positive aspects of face."

Kato (1998) gave 10 American and Japanese adults a questionnaire that asked them to consider what the term 'polite' means within their culture and asked participants 10 hypothetical situations requiring them to judge each situation choosing one of 5 possible answers, such as, 'yes, it is always considered polite' to 'No, it is not considered polite'. The final part of the questionnaire asked the participants to rate adjectives such as 'considerate', 'friendly' and 'casual' in terms of their politeness level. The sample was very small but she suggests that the concept of politeness is similar for both Americans and Japanese and that Americans are more likely than Japanese to perceive positive politeness acts as polite and that the Japanese definition of politeness tends to be restricted to 'well mannered' and 'respectful'. She concludes that "the present research shows that Brown and Levinson's descriptions of America as a positive politeness culture and Japan as a negative politeness culture does apply at the conceptual level" (p67).

Fukushima (2009) adopts the Brown and Levinson (1987) theory in her analysis of whether the Japanese evaluate attentiveness more positively than the British and states that "Attentiveness is one of the important politeness strategies and it was included in Brown and Levinson's (1987) model" (p502). Fukushima (2002) examined politeness in British English and Japanese based on data collected from questionnaires and filled in by 121 British and 133 Japanese respondents. The questionnaires examined the choice of strategies used for making requests and

responding to off-record requests, taking into account the variables power, social distance and imposition. Both British and Japanese societies are classified as 'negative politeness cultures' by Brown and Levinson but she suggests there are significant differences in the kinds of politeness strategies used by British and Japanese to make requests and to respond to off-record requests as reflected in her findings. These results, she claims, may mean that a modification of the Brown and Levinson framework is needed to expand the negative politeness cultures to enable a greater degree of variation. She presents her work as a defense of the Brown and Levinson framework to "put [Brown and Levinson's] politeness theory on to a more secure methodological footing" (p.19). She continues by suggesting that the "politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson are valid", so therefore the "Brown and Levinson's framework is still valid for cross-cultural comparison" (p.19). Based on these results she asserts that the Brown and Levinson's power, distance and degree of imposition variables have a considerable influence on the choice of politeness strategies used by her participants within her study.

Kiyama et al (2012) conducted a questionnaire survey to native Japanese speakers to examine the applicability of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory to facework in Japanese culture. Based on the Brown and Levinson model they examined five factors. The intrinsic factor (R), contextual factor (R), power factor (P), distance factor (D), and G, the gender factor, and based on participants answers ranked them in order of the influences they have on facework. Their results are quoted below.

The results of a content based analysis empirically indicated that the two subfactors of the situational factor, which represent the R termed by Brown and Levinson (1987), had a highly substantial influence on facework behavior by our Japanese participants. The strongest predictor was the intrinsic contents of situations (ie., the R), followed by the interlocutors contradictory attitudes (ie., the R). Effects caused by interpersonal relationships of P and D and intrapersonal factor of participants' G were less substantial than those caused by subfactors of R. The findings that subfactors of R, P, and D were all

significant in Japanese participants' facework provides support for the Universality of Brown and Levinson's (1987) formula, which predicts facework behaviours on the basis of these 3 factors (p.11).

Liu & Allen (2014) examined the dialogue collected from Japanese dramas. They claim that their results show that the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework theory of face does apply to Japanese language and culture and forms the base of politeness. Some studies as illustrated above have suggested that the negative face is not applicable to Japanese culture (Matsumoto, 1988:p405-408). Through their analysis of these TV drama's they found that the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework and theory of face does apply to Japanese discourse but the facework employed and face readdress strategies in Japanese are what they term 'unique'. They state

We see the uniqueness of the Japanese as that their discernment (*wakimae*) and recognition of the social position and relationship (*tachiba*) of the participants, make speakers of Japanese always attend to and try to fulfill the other participant's face wants including both positive and negative face, and, at the same time, maintain their own positive face but rarely claim their own negative face, especially when being the one with less power and a lower social position in an interaction (p662).

This thesis will not focus strongly on the concept of *wakimae* in particular as rank etc is not visible, but the concept will be referred to in the conclusion.

Kitamura (2000:7) suggests that "Brown and Levinson's politeness theory can be a powerful tool to analyze politeness phenomena" to Japanese discourse. She examined a 45 minute long conversation of face-to-face conversations between 10 pairs of native speaking Japanese friends in their late 20s to thirties and found that the Brown and Levinson framework can be applied to goal and non-goal orientated action. She does concede however, that there is room to expand the politeness models list of

politeness strategies.

Other studies have not outright rejected the Brown and Levinson framework but have added their own modifications to it. Yabuuchi (2006) proposes, based on the ideas that the politeness model is not satisfactory from a socio-psychological perspective, a trichotomous system of fellowship, autonomy, and hierarchy politeness as described by the author below.

Fellowship politeness he suggests is the expression of sincere politeness based on the recognition of various qualities held in common. Autonomy politeness is the deference to the *alter*'s self confidence that s/he has the competence to do everything that is necessary at least to maintain his / her present status.

Hierarchy politeness refers to the deference paid to the competence that is greater than that of *ego*, plus the insincere surplus of fellowship politeness and the insincere surplus of downward autonomy politeness (p.344).

The above study has parallels with Lim & Bowers (1991) who claim that face is the public image that a person claims for themselves and it can be categorized into three categories. Autonomy face they describe as a person's desire to be independent and in control. Fellowship face is a person's desire to be accepted and loved and the competence face is the need for a person to appear intelligent and capable. These categories such as the fellowship face sound similar to the positive politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987) and where applicable these distinctions will be referred to in a discussion of the findings in chapter 6 and the conclusion.

The thesis is also not purely focused on politeness alone, and the above sections serve as an introduction to the applicability of the Brown and Levinson framework to Japanese. The debate on the universality of the politeness model would itself be a thesis and not within the scope of this research. Here the emphasis has been on the justification of the use of a model that has both its supporters and detractors, but as the review demonstrates the theory is still applied to both English and Japanese discourse in recent scholarly works.

There are however, no studies that have looked at Japanese online communication and how the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework can be applied to it either through language or UMC use. This section and its research question aims to address that gap. The applicability of the model to Japanese face-to-face discourse has been outlined above and the focus here is how this politeness framework can be applied to CMC and how the results compare to the current face-to-face literature as outlined.

The next section looks at how the Brown and Levinson framework has been applied to English online discourse.

2.9.3 Brown and Levinson Applied to the CMC Environment

The Brown and Levinson (1987) framework was originally applied to face-to-face interactions where a person's face is exposed. Within online blog communication the face is invisible and the cues, non-verbal or verbal, associated with face-to-face interaction are also absent. This absence may make it more difficult for readers to interpret writer's intent and, therefore, lead to an increased use of positive and negative politeness strategies, to mitigate face threatening acts, and reinforce relational ties and harmonious interactions.

In spite of the criticisms the point of departure for CMC researchers looking at politeness and linguistic behavior online remains to be the Brown and Levinson politeness framework (Darics, 2010). The following studies are testament to the influence of the theory and how it has been adopted in the study of online politeness. Skovholt et al. (2014) adopted the Brown and Levinson approach in their study of how emoticons can act as hedges or softeners when attached to directives such as requests. The greater the imposition of a request, the more the individual needs to compensate for the FTA and they found that hedges as defined by Brown and Levinson (1987:147) "indicate something about the speaker's commitment toward what he/she is saying, and in so doing modify the illocutionary force" and that emoticons help in aiding this modification.

Herring (1994) drew on this framework to account for gender differences in politeness suggesting a tendency for women to favour positive politeness strategies more so than men. Harrison (2000) adopted the theories to investigate politeness strategies in the text of e-mails and concludes that their work can be usefully applied to email discourse. His research findings showed that the successful negotiation of a variety of face-threatening acts such as criticism, invitations and advice is achieved through the use of a wide range of positive politeness strategies.

Brennan and Ohaeri (1999) examined how online conversations seemed less polite than their face to face counterparts with data that showed that face to face groups hedged more than electronic online groups. Vinagre's (2008) findings showed that in a data set of collaborative emails that users relied heavily on positive politeness strategies to foster closeness, solidarity and cohesion between the conversational partners.

In addition, Morand (2010) stipulates that the Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness model can be usefully applied to the study of relational ties in CMC. He gives examples of positive and negative politeness strategies found online and proposes that "Individuals who communicate in CMC environments are aware of and motivated by dramaturgical concerns (eg: if queried they would indicate that 'coming off' well and appearing a competent, interesting, and considerate person to others is important to them. They would report awareness of phrasing messages in such a way as to preserve the harmony of social relationships, either by watering down the force of messages that might seem overly harsh or intrusive (negative politeness)" (p.783).

At present, however, no studies have looked specifically at how emoticons are used with the pragmatic intention of highlighting positive and negative politeness strategies and how they are used cross culturally in a comparison of Japanese and English data. This research attempts to address that gap.

2.10 Research Enquiry Four: Gender and Language Use

The last part of the literature review aims to give an account of gender and language use offline followed by online observations connecting the studies to the research enquiry four themes as restated again below.

- a. How does UMC deployment reflect the face to face literature descriptions concerning language and gender usage?
- b. Through UMCs are female blog writers inclined to a more rapport orientated communication style than males?
- c. Do women use more UMCs and through them use more positive politeness strategies than men?

2.10.1 Gender and Language Usage Within Face to Face Communication

Gender and language use is shrouded in what Coates (2004) calls ‘folklinguistics’ which give sweeping generalizations of how women are politer than men, gossip more and how men swear more. People may believe these assumptions, but are they myths or they based on fact?

Gender and language use has an abundance of literature since the release in the mid 70’s of Lakoff’s essay *Language and Woman’s Place* (1975) which according to Coates (2004) was a symbolic moment and kick started the academic study of gender and language use even though it was initially treated as pure feminist research in the early stages.

The aim of this section is to give a very brief rundown on the general background of the literature on language and gender and the studies that are applicable and pertinent to this thesis.

There is a large of body of work that attempts to identify the differences in language usage and characteristics that define how both and men and women utilize the language. These studies mainly focus on spoken interactions and suggest that in face to

face dialogues women tend to display a socio-emotional focus and use communication to express their feelings and to develop and maintain rapport (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Holmes, 1995; Lakoff, 1973; Mulac, Bradac, & Gibbons, 2001; Tannen, 1990). Men in contrast, use communication to solve problems, debate and express opinions (Lakoff, 1990; Carli, 2001; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Zimmerman, Holm, & Haddock, 2001).

Tannen (1990) divides this seemingly different way women and men talk by using the term 'report talk' and 'rapport talk'. She states that for women the language of conversation is largely the language of rapport which promotes intimate relationships that stress common ground and comparable experiences. Men, in contrast are described as better 'public speakers' and that men's talk represents a means to uphold independence and status in a hierarchical social order through the exhibition of knowledge or the imparting of information. Even in the most private or intimate of situations she suggests that men may approach conversations in terms of public speaking that resemble report talk rather than attempt at establishing empathy through what she labels rapport talk. However, much of Tannen's (1990) evidence is not based on empirical evidence but is anecdotal. Mills (2003) points out that this research is "often focused exclusively on the language of white, middle class women, and then made generalizations about all women" (p.174). This in turn she states makes the research fall short of finding any real universal findings.

Research into gender differences examine the characteristics and functions of language use and how they vary by gender. Research conducted by Holmes (1988) Herbert (1998) and Baptise (1990), shows that women both give and receive more compliments than in men in New Zealand, America and the UK respectively. In Herbert's (1998) found a high usage of the 'I really like, love' pattern in female speech which he suggests seems to be more common in the USA rather than the UK or New Zealand. He states that for women in the company of other women giving and receiving compliments is unremarkable and an everyday occurrence. Men tend to compliment people on possessions or skill while women complement each other on appearance. For men to compliment other men on appearance might sound gay

according to a participant of the Holmes (1995) study. Coates (2004) states that compliments in some situations can function as positive politeness strategies that aim to attend to the positive face needs of the addressee. In cross sex compliments, however, men who openly compliment women on their appearance with such expressions as ‘You look sexy today’ borders on sexual harassment (Coates, 2004). Some studies have shown females use more positive politeness strategies, as in for example, Pilkington (1998) who found that women in interaction with same gender groups use a large number of positive-politeness strategies while men in analogous situations do not. Tannen (1994) states that women are more likely to apologize, express gratitude and soften criticism than men.

In further studies Holmes (1995) has found women to be more polite and use more positive politeness strategies based on the Brown and Levinson (1987) model. Holmes (1995) states that “most women enjoy talk and regard talking as an important means of keeping in touch, especially with friends and intimates. They use language to establish, nurture and develop personal relationships. Men tend to see language more as a tool for obtaining and conveying information” (p.2). Holmes further suggests that women are concerned with living together in harmony and states that women use more positive politeness strategies as “women’s utterances show evidence of concern for the feelings of the people they are talking to more often and more explicitly than men’s do” (Holmes, 1995, p.6). Holmes’s work seems to support the global view of women’s language, but, as Mills (2003) suggests, her sample was not representative as it only examined middle class men and women.

Mills (2003) states that Holmes findings “is in fact based on a stereotypical view of women’s language” (p.214). Bayles (2009) much like Mills stresses that even though society may associate a particular speech style with a particular gender, individuals have the ability to ‘perform different linguistic identities’ whenever or wherever they want. People can, therefore, select the best style of speech according to different situations to show politeness.

Mills (2003) own work analyzes gender in terms of performativity and communities of Practice. She proposes that gender is merely a performance and argues

that certain practices that are considered to be polite are in fact stereotypically gendered.

In addition to the speech of women, non verbal studies such as Hall (1984) have found that in comparison to males, females are more likely to use non-verbal cues, are better verbal encoders and decoders, and smile and laugh more in conversation. A question to be addressed is whether or not blog online communication reflects these ‘stereotypes’. In addition, will these characteristics of gender and language usage be reflected within a comparison of the American and Japanese data and then across languages for example with Japanese males and American females?

There are no studies that cover as many UMCs as those addressed in this thesis or within this genre of online communication. In addition, no cultural comparisons of how women and men use UMCs across languages exists within the literature which this research attempts to address.

The Japanese language has been characterized as being highly gendered with distinct male and female speech registers (Shibamoto, 1985). These differences manifest themselves within self reference, addressee terminology, honorifics, pitch ranges and sentence final particles. Some studies have suggested that there seems to be an emerging pattern that suggests that women, in particular young women are abandoning ‘traditional’ Japanese women’s language in favour of more masculine forms. (Okamoto & Sato 1992; Kavanagh, 2008).

Sentence final particles (SFP) have been divided and attributed to male or female usage. *Wa* is commonly attributed to women’s speech. Ide et al (1992) as in Ide and Yoshida (1999) suggests that the softening function of *wa*, an effect of the negative politeness strategy (Brown and Levinson, 1987), enables the creation of relaxation as it functions as a non-impositional particle with respect for the addressee. This leads to an atmosphere of sharing which is an effect of the positive polite strategy.

Other studies have looked at honorifics (considered by Brown & Levinson [1987] as negative politeness) and politeness expressions. Ide (1991a) found that Japanese women are politer than men and that honorific usage regardless of the addressee is used more often than males. Ogino (1986) also found that compared to

men, females used more formal expressions and honorifics towards their addressee. Such studies suggest that women use more negative politeness than men. As Japanese is considered to be a negative politeness culture, studies that have examined positive politeness and gender are hardly represented.

Japanese women's language judging by the literature is described collectively as more negatively polite than men, speaking with softer tones, more indirect and humble (Ide, 1979). Yamada (1997) suggests that the rapport talk of [American] women is similar to the talk of all Japanese regardless of gender and that the need for harmony forms the basis of Japanese interaction.

This study does not address SFPs specifically but the literature does suggest that there is a very distinct difference to how Japanese man and women speak in face to face interactions. Therefore, would we see similar distinctions in how UMCs are employed by Japanese men and women?

2.10.2 Gender and Online UMC Usage

The use of emoticons within English asynchronous and synchronous is well represented within the literature. Wolf (2000) found that through a sample of USENET support groups the stereotype of the emotional woman and the inexpressive man holds true for same sex gender newsgroups postings with findings showing the use of emoticons to express emotion were used in higher figures by female contributors. Nevertheless with mixed gender postings emoticon usage was not significantly different showing that rather than females adopting "the offline male standard of *less* emotional expression, the opposite occurs: both males and females display an increase in emoticon use" (p.831).

Pedersen & Macafee (2007) found in a study of gender differences that with the majority of both sexes within their samples blog writing was a means to air frustrations and emotion and that feedback via blog comments was unexpectedly appreciated by men who valued the emotional support. Nevertheless their survey findings found that women used blogging more so for the social aspects it brings rather

than the imparting of information or opinion that male bloggers utilized in their blogs. This could possibly echo the Tannen (1990) rapport vs. report talk distinction.

Colley & Todd (2002, 2004) and Waseleski (2006) as already mentioned previously in part one of the literature review found that females used more exclamation marks than men.

In a study of 3,000 online messages, Witmer and Katzman (1997) found that females used more graphical accents, including emoticons, to express emotion in their discourse than males, a pattern that is also reflected in adolescent males' tendency to deny their feelings, including sadness (Ruble & Martin, 1998). In an analysis using instant messaging dialogues, Lee (2003) found that males rarely used emoticons in conversations with other males, but do use them with females, while females used an equal amount of emoticons in both male and female conversations. Similarly, an examination of online newsgroups finds that women are more apt to express emotions, but males will adapt in mixed-gendered newsgroups and express more (Wolf, 2000).

Tossel (2012) found that women used more emoticons in smartphone text messaging dialogues and attributes one reason as being the notion of the stereotypical emotional female as a cause of this finding. Ledbetter & Larson (2008) examined nonverbal cues in e-mails. These cues included capitalization, multiple exclamation marks, emoticons, acronyms such as LOL (laugh out loud) and bolding. They found that women used more of these cues than men but that there was no link to the receivers of these mails 'support satisfaction' or that it resonated stronger interpersonal ties. They conclude that emotional nonverbal cues expressed online may not be as strong as those similarly found in face to face interactions. In a study of emoticons in internet chat rooms Fullwood et al (2013) found that age had no bearing on emoticon use. Women used more but there was no difference in the variety of emoticons used. Huffaker & Calvert (2005) however found no gender difference in emoticon frequency and Kavanagh (2010) found that men used more emoticon in his sample. Fullwood et al (2013) suggest however that the online communication platform may influence emoticon deployment and frequency. The latter studies examined weblogs whilst studies that have found that women use more emoticons have

looked at predominately instant messaging as in Lee's (2003) study.

Some studies have addressed UMC usage in relation to the 'stereotype' that women are more emotionally expressive than men. Within the face to face context a number of studies have showed this (Guerrero, Jones & Boburka, 2006).

Brunet & Schmidt (2010) found that women used more emoticons than men which they say supports the hypothesis that women are more emotionally expressive than men. In their study participants chatted for 10 minutes online, a group with a webcam and no webcam were studied. Interestingly, women with webcams within their online chat used more emoticons than women without a web camera and also in comparison to men with and without web cameras. This is in contrast to studies that suggest that emoticons are used to replicate missing nonverbal cues, with a web camera these cues are visible. They suggest this finding can be explained by gender differences found in smiling behavior and that they women smile more when people are being observed or participating in social interaction (LaFrance, Hecht, Levy Paluck, 2003). In a study with similar finding, Fox et al (2007) asked participants to submit a sample of six IM conversations to them. They found that women were more expressive than men and they utilized more laughter representation, emoticons and adjectives within their IM interactions. Colley et al (2004) suggest that in a comparison of style and content of e-mails and letters that female communication is more relational than male interaction and more expressive with a focus on personal and domestic topics. This expressiveness included personal inquiries to their reader along with the expression of more positive emotions. Men were also found to reproduce information whilst females discussed more social topics.

Herring (2003) found that women showed more positive orientation towards their interlocutors compared to men although this was not in relation to UMCs but to written content. Yates (2006) also found similar results and suggests that women show more support and affection than males in texting.

Within the Japanese context Kato et al. (2009) found that Japanese women used more emoticons than men in mobile phone role play interaction. Hamada (2007) found that in mail exchanges the use of *kaomoji*, *emoji* and *kigou* was significantly

more frequent in female mails. Miyake (2004b) also found that in *keitai* mails when she compared male to female users and male to male users that the frequency of *kaomoji*, *emoji* and *kigou* deployed in mails increased from 10% in the male to male group to 20% in the male to female group. Nakamura (2001) in a study of 400 e-mails from 140 university students found that extra-linguistic signs were used to replace the lost cues found within the face to face interaction environment and that girls usage of them is strongly connected to the concept of cuteness and *marumoji* of the analogue past. In addition, he suggests they are also part of a communication style particular to women as in rapport talk, for example when women often complement each other. Iwamoto (2002) found that in her study of net diary users that women used statistically more extra-linguistic signs than men.

2.10.3 Gender and Language Play

Language play in relation to unconventional orthography, the origin of UMCs and Japanese cute culture has been discussed in chapter 1. In relation to gender some studies have suggested that UMCs such as extra-linguistic signs are used to index cuteness and gender performance (Katsuno & Yano, 2007; Kataoka, 2003). Miller (2011) suggests that the use of these unconventionalities creates a generational and gendered identity marker which excludes others who may consider their script choices as a danger to good literacy.

Ochs (1992) suggests that indexing gender is not simply a process of matching linguistic forms to a speaker's sex but instead it should be realized that speakers draw from a menu of stereotypical forms to enact social identities. Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (2003) echo this and suggest that gender is performance rather than a biological condition, something we do rather than are born with. Vaisman (2011) found in 140 Hebrew language blogs that teenagers used unconventional notation to reproduce their online identity. This themes of language play and gender will be revisited again in a discussion of the results in relation to gender and UMC usage.

These 4 areas of research enquiry which encompass the cultural and linguistic

descriptions as outlined at the beginning of this chapter describe how Japanese and Americans behave culturally and linguistically different and how gender influences these behaviours within traditional face to face communication. In some cases the literature precedes the advent of the internet age and online communication. The online environment can be described as a much different and complex one in comparison to traditional spoken interaction.

Within the online communication platform this research aims to investigate how semantic and pragmatic meaning is conveyed in online communication through UMCs which aim to compensate for the perceived missing auditory and visual cues. What is the function of these UMCs? How do they act pragmatically in the conveyance of speech acts or politeness strategies? How are they used in terms of their function and frequency in American and Japanese weblogs and additionally how does this relate to intercultural communication theory or the studies that have described the face to face communication styles of these two nationalities?

Chapter 3

Data and methods

This chapter will initially give a brief introduction of the material utilized within the study and a recap of the personal blog which was described in detail in chapter 1. This is then followed by the mechanics of creating your blog, the options that are available to the blog creator and the general layout of the blog webpage and interface. A step by step guide of how the blog data was obtained and collected is followed with descriptions of the UMCs and their functions and how they were analyzed

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to look at how UMCs are deployed and used in asynchronous communication online through the personal online blog. This included the creation of a blog corpus of Japanese and American blog posts and their comments. In total a near 80,000 sentence corpus was created, around 44,000 sentences from the Japanese corpus and 36,000 sentences from the American corpus.

American communication styles are often cited as being in stark contrast to that of Japanese in face to face communication settings which was the initial motivation to choose Japanese and American blogs (irrespective of the author being from England) and to examine how this pattern of interaction would be reflected in online communication. In addition, the volume of American blogs in comparison to other English language blogs is substantially larger as referred to in chapter 1. The blog corpora consisted of 100 Japanese blogs, 50 female and 50 male authored. A total of 5 blog posts were taken from each blog along with the blog comments that were attached to them. In total 500 posts (250 per author gender) were collected. The process was repeated for the collection of 100 American personal blogs.

The sentences of the blog posts were counted along with the number of UMCs attached to sentences. They were then coded in accordance with how they functioned

semantically and pragmatically and this data was contrasted cross culturally, firstly by how Americans and Japanese use these UMCs, and secondly how gender of the blog author influences their usage.

In a separate analysis the blog posts comments were also counted, their UMCs examined for function and then compared cross culturally as with the blog posts. An additional analysis included an examination of how these UMCs, specifically emoticons, were used to highlight politeness strategies.

The comments were initially analyzed as a whole with no gender attached to them. In a separate stage of the analysis however the comments were broken down into gender where possible and the UMCs were then examined in relation to their function per gender.

The personal blog of which the data comprises is an ongoing diary or commentary by an individual and is considered to be the traditional, most common blog type. Personal bloggers can discuss their thoughts on a whole wide range of experiences, opinions and ideas. Some blogs become very popular and rise up their respective rankings while others may remain unpopular or even unread.

The popular ones have links to their fans or followers blog sites and a blog community can be formed by these personal bloggers who write on each other's blogs. These comments may display opinion, expressions of solidarity and encouragement. Comments can be posted online anonymously where no name is given, or through a handle or real name. In general these personal blogs are 'peaceful' in nature. There is little spamming or flaming primarily because the blog writer is the administrator of the blog and can delete comments of an offensive nature, therefore when blog comments were collected for analysis there were no comments of this persuasion present in the data. This genre of online writing differs to bulletin boards or online discussions where offensive comments can be deleted only by the site administrator. The Japanese internet forum 2 channel is an example of how offensive comments through anonymous postings have raised slander and legal issues. The personal weblog by contrast are blog posts written to whomever finds an interest in their content, and comments are invited to allow readers to express their feelings and thoughts regarding the content of the

blog.

3.2 The blog interface and its mechanics

This section is intended to give the reader a more detailed idea of the data that was analyzed within this thesis. There are a variety of books on both the American and Japanese market, and also online articles such as ‘how to guides’ and magazine columns dedicated to how to create blogs, to be a successful blogger and how to gain a readership for your blog.

Initially, definitions within these guides are given of blogs, and the types of blogs there are such as personal blogs, photo blogs and mobile blogs. A rundown is then given of the structure of most personal weblog pages. These include the title page that is usually accompanied by a header, which is included within the page interface along with a photo or avatar (which may be in different locations according to blog) which can be changed by the blog user. Usually found on the left hand side is the sidebar which includes a calendar which highlights blog posts in the current calendar month or archives where the user can select previous month or year entries to gain access to the blogs back catalogue of blog posts. Recent blog posts and their titles are usually highlighted by date within the calendar and beneath it the blog posts can be put into themed topics or events which make the navigation of looking for a particular topic or theme more accessible. The sidebar can be edited for content and its appearance or interface by the user.

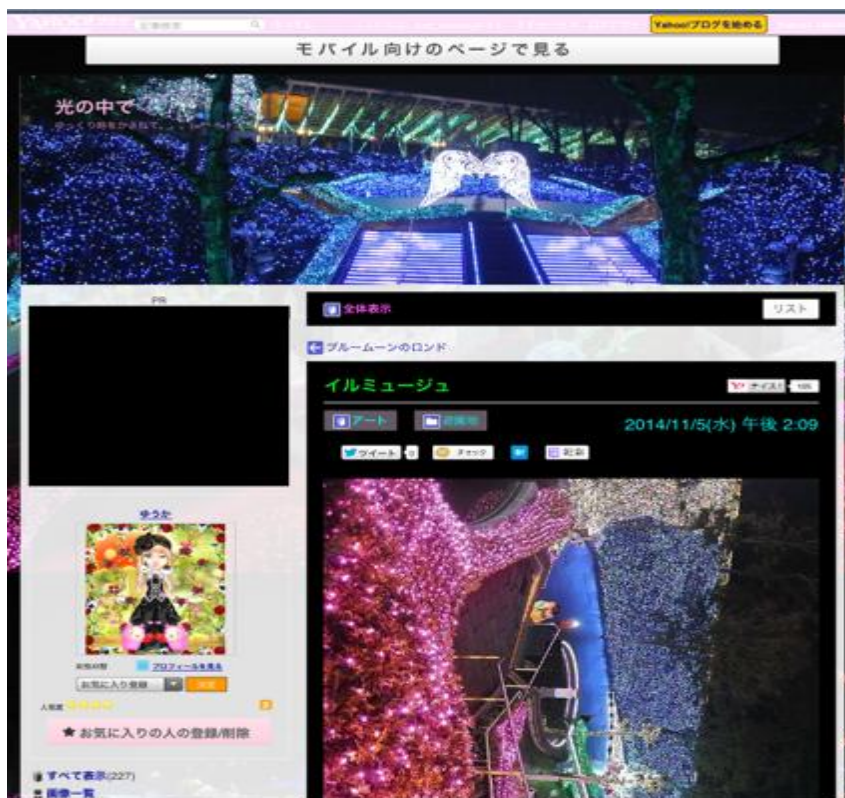


Figure 3.1 Yahoo blog Interface

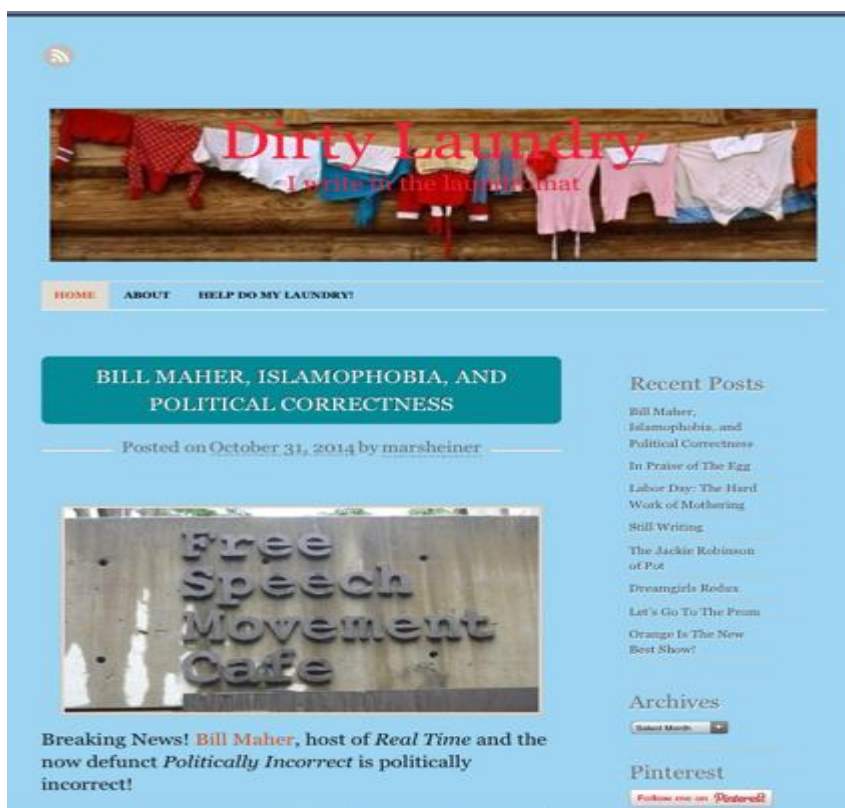


Figure 3.2 American Blog Interface

The sidebar can give other information such as if the blog is registered with a blog ranking directory and at what rank / number the blog currently stands at and in what personal weblog category it is placed in, such as pets, family life etc. As personal blogs can have multiple themes it is not uncommon for these blogs to be ranked under a variety of topics or genres such as child rearing and hobbies. (Blog directories are discussed further below). The side bar can also include the blogs followers or fans who basically read and leave comments on the blog. This community can read and write on each other's blogs and essentially become a blog online speech community. This community may never meet each other in real life and may never move past being an 'online friend' whose real name may be known or remain unknown in the case of a handle name. (Some results, however, that will be discussed in chapter 4, show that some American writers have met each other on their travels, however, this does not seem apparent within the Japanese blogging community).

A blog profile or a link to it will have information posted about the blog author and the author has the option of whether they wish to fill in the biographical information regarding themselves (such as name, age, gender, occupation and hobbies), or leave it blank. Whether they want to use a 'handle name' which is a fictitious online persona or include their real name is also an option. An avatar (an animated representation of the body and face of the blog writer), can be created by the blog user, or a true picture of the writer or a pictorial representation of the writer which may be an avatar, animal or caricature can be inserted. Blogs can be customized and edited by the user, templates, colours and fonts changed so although the basic foundation of the blog is the same the blog interface can be customized to represent the personal preferences of the user.

limitations in terms of the content that can be posted within each blog article. For example, most Japanese blog hosting sites state unlimited text can be written but with a limitation on the size of photographs or video which can be uploaded.

The next stage is to choose a theme that your blog will focus on. This theme can include the blog being dedicated to your hobbies, childrearing, cooking or even about your pets. Once the blog author has established the theme, the author has to consider a title for their blog and how they want their blog to be seen in terms of the layout, its interface and how accessible it is to navigate for the reader.

Gaining exposure to a blog is one of the best ways to get the bloggers voice heard and their blogs read and commented on. A blog directory will help them link their blog to other websites. Once registered with a directory the user can choose the blog genre /theme from the directory which best reflects their blog. Once their blog is registered they can see if and how it rises in the rankings and how many people view their blog. A blog that rises in the rankings generally attracts more readers and usually more comments will be attributed to their blog. This can give these bloggers the extra encouragement to keep their blog going and to update it with regular entries. Online relationships can be made with those who leave comments by visiting their blog (under each comment a link may be placed which takes you to the blog comment writers blog if they have one) and writing comments. These blog comment writers can become ‘fans’ and you can add their links / profile to your blog. This leads to a blogging community of people who read and write / comment on each other’s blogs.

Comments can be written anonymously, through the bloggers handle name (a nickname chosen by the blog creator) or through their real name and identity. In most blog hosting sites they can choose whether to have their comments made public, whereby anyone online can read them, or if they wish to have them sent to and read only by the blog writer. For the purposes of this research only comments made public can be analyzed for obvious reasons, and although there is no empirical evidence available the author asserts that most comments are made public. Blog writing guides urge blog creators to do so as this can lead to the successful promotion of their own blog as readers can use the link at the end of their comment to view and read the

comment writer's blog which in turn makes it more popular and consequently rise in the rankings. Most Japanese writers within the blog data used in this study often requested comments at the end of their blogs with the most popular comments accumulating over 200 comments per blog entry written.

3.3 Data and the personal blog directories

There are millions of blogs online and finding the ones you want to read or research can be a daunting task. Fortunately the blog directories which are numerous for Japanese and American blogs, organizes blogs into genre type and themes. The personal blog directory helps people locate what they are looking for but unlike a search engine that is based on keywords to aid in searches, blog are categorized into the genre subsections /themes that the blogs focus on. Examples of these themes and categories are finance, politics, media, travel, education or just the generic personal which is usually a multiple themed blog.

Each category is ranked based on its popularity which differs slightly according to blog directory but is usually calculated based on the number of hits the blog receives. With some blog directories each category is further divided into sub-categories to allow the user to narrow down their search. For example a blog on sports will be broken down into their individual sports. The categories to which the blog is placed can initially be done by the blog author when registering but with others it is placed by the blog directory based on keywords.

The majority of directories are generalized in the respect that in theory they can cover every sort of genre. The personal blog directories have blogs that can be categorized into a variety of blog subsections based on the themes they cover. For example a blog categorized in the sub-genre sport could also be included in travel if the author of the blog writes posts on their travel experiences, a blog that follows the thoughts of a writers political leanings and their views on life may be ranked in diary, political or even a lifestyle category dependent on if the blog directory has devised such a category.

Therefore, the personal online blog as defined by these blog directories, are blogs written by one author that cover a variety of themes and topics that the author has an interest in. These blogs are collectively ranked as ‘personal’ within these blog directories.

Figure 3.4 Directory Homepage

Some blog directories may primary focus on corporate blogs or multiple author filter blogs such as Technocrati while others focus on individual blog writers who have registered their blogs with them. The blog directories from which these blogs and the data were taken all have an emphasis on the (usually) single authored personal weblog as opposed to corporate blogs. Blog directories that were used for this study, such as the Japanese Yahoo and Blogmura and the American blog catalogue directory has links to and ranks only personal blogs and ranks them both as a whole and also

according to their genres from both popular and mainstream genres or themes to more specialized topics with a more narrow readership (see figure 3.4). The data collected was from the rankings that ranked all the personal blogs as a whole rather than selecting a genre.

The illustration below is taken from the Japanese yahoo and ameba blog directory and shows the collective ranking of its personal blogs.

YAHOO! JAPAN ブログ こんにちは、teppeichang0340さん [登録情報 - ログアウト]

Yahoo! ブログの人気ブログランキングです。週間、月間、年間ランキングがあります。

トップ マイページ 芸能人・有名人 ランキング カテゴリ

記事検索 話題のキーワード: 防災備え 特定秘密

[PR] 毎日の活力源に！えがおのにんにく卵黄油

ランキング表示 [ブログランキング | 人気記事ランキング]

100位までのブログランキングです。そのうち1～20件を表示しています。 [次のページ]

1-20位 21-40位 41-60位 61-80位 81-100位

週間ランキング | 月間ランキング | 全体ランキング 総合 | 訪問者数 | コメント数 | ブログリンク登録数

★アナウンサーのひとりごと★藤川奈々 奈々さん

プロフィール>元準ミスワールド日本代表。フジテレビ「おはよう！ナイスデイ」でカルビーなど生CMパーソナリティを5年間務める。宝塚歌劇団トークショー、よしもとホール生放送など、数多くのイベント、番組も。結婚式の司会は500組。「グルメ」「美容」「健康」「芸能」「お笑い」「宝塚」「介護」「家族」「被災地」「町おこし」フェイスブック、ツイッター@nanafujikawaもあります。

鉄平ちゃんの相模原ディーブサウス日記 鉄平ちゃんさん

もともと「ディーブサウス」とは、アメリカの東南部と訳される ジョージア州、アラバマ州、ミシシッピ州、ルイジアナ州などを指す言葉なのですが、「何にもない」と言われつつも、探せば探すほどディーブなお店ばかりの 相模原市南区こそまさにディーブサウスにふさわしい！ そんな相模原市南区のお店の紹介の他、私がかつて一時期住んでいたこともあり、東京都なのに神奈川県と相模原とセットで扱われることも多い...

おもしろい話 まいめろにゃんさん

旅で、観光したポイントの写真や、絵葉書などを、載せています。ネコや犬が大好きです。その他、食べ物、買いだめ、多肉植物、花、小鳥、お寺や神社、切手等も、載せていきます。

4位 バンダ村 Blue Bayさん

5位 韓国ソウルへの近道「ソウルさま」 ソウルさまさん

6位 マコの京都ブログ マコさん

7位 空襲時に見てはいけないブログ ARAPROさん

8位 四季折々の店長ブログ 店長さん

9位 渡邊 リカルド「狸狩人亭日記」Ricardo... 狸狩人さん

Figure 3.5 Yahoo Blogs Blog Directory Ranking



Figure 3.6 Ameba Blogs blog Directory Ranking

3.4 Data collection process

Data was collected over a 4 year period. A total of 200 blogs (100 from American blogs, 100 from Japanese blogs) were taken from a variety of blog directories. An equal balance of female and male authored blogs were selected, 100 per gender, 50 in English and Japanese respectively, giving an even representative balance of weblog data. Within each blog selected five of its entries were taken giving a total of 1,000 blog entries from the 200 blog corpora

As blogs may have a shelf life, with some blogs disappearing or moving onto another weblog hosting site the blogs and their comments were copied and pasted into word files. The table below illustrates the breakdown of the data within the corpora.

Table 3.1 The Corpus Data

Total blogs	Total blog entries with their comments
200	1000
Total Japanese blogs	Total Japanese blog posts with their comments
100	500
Total American blogs	Total American blog posts with their comments
100	500
Total female blogs	Total male blogs
50 American and 50 Japanese blogs	50 American and 50 Japanese blogs

Blogs are ranked from number 1 to 500 or higher in some cases within their blog directories. As I was looking at a snapshot of the most popular blogs at the time blogs ranked over 30 (in some cases this was raised in order to get male authored data) were not gathered and included within the data. As the data only includes 100 blogs per language and 200 overall it was decided to collect only the top ranked blogs which would be representative of the most popular blogs at the time of the collection of data. Some blog directories listed a lot of dead blogs or blogs which were not active in that they had not been updated for years. Therefore, blogs which were active at the time were only considered during the creation of the corpus. The collection of an even number of male and female blogs also influenced where and what blog directories blogs were taken from. For example if the most popular blogs were consistently female within a specific blog directory with very few male authored blogs another blog directory (which ranks blogs differently and may have different blogs registered with it) was used to gather an equal number of male and female blogs. Therefore, an equal number of blogs taken from each blog directory was not possible for these reasons.

Some blogs were rejected if they were picture illustrated blogs with little or no text or if the blogs had no comments. They were rejected on the basis that there would be no data to analyze. Some blogs could be popular even without comments consistently written on them, although these cases were very rare.

As the object of this thesis is to compare American and Japanese personal blogs, some English language blog directories such as *eaton* and *blog catalog* ranks personal blogs on a global scale so efforts were made to ensure that only American blogs were extracted. At the time of the gathering of the data the blogs were labeled by directories regarding their country of origin. However to confirm this, an examination of the blog profile and a reading the content of the blog was undertaken. However, the majority of blogs registered with blogger tended to be American (defined as an American born blogger writing in America) so this was not a problem. Blogs whereby the nationality of the author could not be clearly defined or confirmed were rejected. Popular Japanese blogs tended to be written by Japanese residing in Japan, although there are blogs written by Japanese language learners who use the blog as a form of

writing practice, so precautions were taken to make sure that blogs selected were in fact written by Japanese living in Japan which entailed the reading of the blog and the confirmation of content.

Interestingly what was discovered through the data collection process was that the personal online blog seems to be a more popular one with females rather than males and like the traditional paper diary may be considered a female genre.

A blog entry is when the blog user posts an entry or post on their blog. Within all the blogs gathered there is a calendar within the sidebar of the blog which highlights dates when blog articles or entries were written. A popular and regularly updated blog would have several new entries per week. The entries are written in reverse chronological order and the reader can look at entries from the current month clicking backwards to previous months.

The collection of data involved the selection of the 5 past entries, excluding the current entry. Criteria for selection meant that the blog entry had to have comments. If the blog entry did not have comments the next blog entry that had comments was chosen. In all, 1 blog had 5 entries and their comments taken for analysis.

Some blog directories were rejected for not being a good source of popular weblogs as they were overly complicated and difficult to navigate such as blog drive. Others such as open diary which ranked diaries, but had no comments after each entry, were also rejected. Globe of Blogs was old and had not been updated since 2005 and some blog directories only ranked a handful of personal blogs which were not well maintained, well read (judging by the number of hits the blog received) or only updated with a new blog entry once every few months or even years. Technorati which claims to index 112.8 million blogs was not used as the majority of their blogs are not personal ones but rather filter blogs, have multiple authors, are association affiliated or corporate blogs and so were therefore deemed as inappropriate for this study.

The blog directories listed within table 3.2 are the most popular directories with the most popular weblogs. The lifespan of blogs and general web content can be short and some websites which listed directories that were popular were no longer in operation or had closed down. The blog directories themselves were also subject to

change in how they look in terms of their interface and how they label blogs.

To get a snapshot of the current most popular personal weblog the blog directories which ranked the most popular blogs, and were active at the time of data collection were used. The table below shows how many blogs were taken from each blog directory.

Table 3.2 Data Collected from Blog Ranking Directory

The popular blog directories from which the Japanese blogs were taken	The popular blog directories from which the American blogs were taken
Blogmura (36 blogs extracted)	Blog catalog (33 blogs extracted)
Yahoo (10 blogs)	Eaton (23 blogs)
R blog ranking (22 blogs)	Blogger (15 blogs)
Ameba (12 blogs)	Blogged (10 blogs)
Blogram (10 blogs)	Bloggeries (10 blogs)
FC2 (10 blogs)	Blog area (9 blogs)

The aim during data collection was to have a broad scope of personal blogs taken from different blog directories rather than just one blog directory. The reason behind this was because blog directories rank blogs differently. If I were to look only at one directory I may only get a sample of blogs which all stem from the same blog hosting server such as Yahoo. By gathering data from as many blog directories as possible a better reflection of what blogs are popular could be obtained.

The blog directories as listed within the above table were chosen based on reviews, number of registered users and the current blog directory ranking at the time. Some blog directories such as FC2, Yahoo and Ameba which are often cited as the most popular blogs have directories which only rank their own blogs, others such as blogmura and R blog ranking, rank all blogs regardless of the blog host server with which they stem from.

The same blogs are in the most popular rankings of various blog directories (if the blog user wishes, they can register their blog for ranking with several blog

directories). As I wanted to have 100 different blogs written by 100 different people per data set of Japanese and American blogs, and not just the same ones, the use of different directories were needed. Therefore if one particular blog directory consistently had the same blogs within their top 30 blogs over the data collection period (which was the case) another blog directory was used to gather blog data. The data selection process was therefore not random but attempts were made to select the most popular blogs according to the criteria set out by blog directories.

The tables below show where the original blogs were created from, that is where they were hosted from when they were first created or the account opened by the blog author.

Table 3.3 *The Japanese Blogs Blog Hosting Sites*

FC2	37
Yahoo	33
Ameblo	20
Other (livedoor, Sesana etc)	10

The Japanese sample is representative of the most popular blog hosting sites and their blogs. Ameba fc2 and yahoo have the most registered users are often cited in bulletin boards, official surveys and discussion forums as the most popular personal weblogs.

Table 3.4 *The American Blogs Blog Hosting Sites*

Blogcatalogue 49 (no domain name or blog hosting affiliation)	Blogger 2
Blogspot* 26	Bloggeries 5
Eaton 7	Blogged 5
Blog area 2	Other 1

*The most popular blog host is blogger under the domain name of blogspot.

With the American sample the data represents the generally held consensus that blogspot is the most popular free blog hosting site. The ‘no domain’ category can be explained by the fact that blogger (whose domain name is blogspot.com) offers its customers two choices. They can purchase their own domain name for 10 US dollars a year, hence no blog hosting affiliation, and the domain name blogspot.com will not appear.

The same applies if you already own your own domain name. The free option is to get a blogspot domain name such as *yourblogname.blogspot.com*. Although it cannot be known for certain, we can work on the premise that the ‘no domain’ category was produced from the blogspot blog hosting service provider.

3.4.1 Extra-linguistic signs and the personal weblog interface

As the thesis examines how extra-linguistic signs (a UMC type) are deployed and used in American and Japanese blogs and their comments a section on how these signs can be inputted online through these blog interface platforms is needed to clarify the online tools available to the American and Japanese blog user.

Japanese blog interfaces

Example 1

The illustration below shows how FC2 blog users (FC2 is one of the most popular blog platforms to create blogs in) type in their comments on the blogs they read. They type in their username, a title, mail address (optional) and an URL (their blog URL if they have one). The URL will then be automatically placed under the comment when it appears on the blog. Above the box where the comment writer types in their message are the options available to writer and within the FC2 interface the options are:

1. 太 to bold the text
2. *Italics* to italicize the text
3. 下 to underline
4. 色 to change the colour of the font
5. Duck to choose an *emoji* from the drop down menu.

At the end of the comment the users input their password and can check a box which asks whether they want their comment to be seen just by the person (blog user) you are addressing the comment to or to be seen by the general blog reading public or community.



Figure 3.7 FC2 Blog Comment Interface

Example 2

The Yahoo blog is another popular Japanese blog and the yahoo blog interface offers different tools compared to the FC2 blog interface.

The chart below shows that if you select *emoji* (絵文字) as indicated on the right side of the bottom arrow. A list of *emoji* appears as illustrated by the top arrow. Within the *emoji* box that pops up the user is given a list of mobile phone network companies from Softbank 1 down to the very bottom with au at 4. When the user selects a

particular category the *emoji* that can be found within that company's mobile phone handset appear and can be used by clicking on the desired *emoji* which will then be automatically inserted into the user's text.



Figure 3.8 Yahoo Blog Comment Interface

In addition users can select a (顔アイコン) *kao icon* otherwise known as the graphic emoticon or smiley. Again when the user clicks this icon it will automatically be inserted into the user's text. Some yahoo users use the *kao icon* to create an avatar or signature that characterizes them. These icons are not part of the text. The three messages below in figure 3.9 show the 3 avatars of the comment writers. The first two being graphic representations of faces which can be altered in appearance and facial expressions. The third comment writer uses a four leaf clover as their avatar which was taken from the *kao icon* menu.



Figure 3.9 Comment User Icons

Example 3

This example is from Ameba blogs, a top 3 blog hosting site which is often used by *geinoujin* (芸能人) or Japanese celebrities.

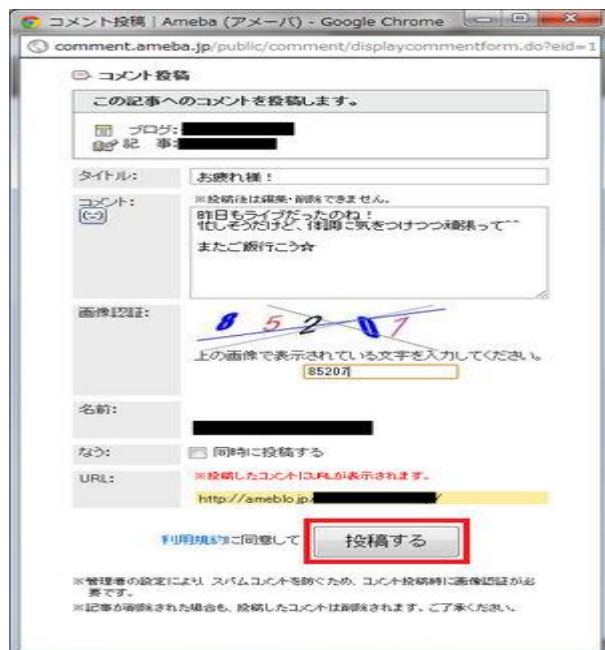


Figure 3.10 Ameba Blog Comment Interface

After filling in a title for the comment (optional and not counted as a sentence within the blog corpus) the writer can insert his / her comments in the comment box. There are no *emoji* (絵文字) or smiley options within the Ameba blog interface but to the left of the comment box under the word comment (コメント) there is a *kaomoji* in a box. If you press this button a drop down menu emerges like the one below which gives you options such as 笑う (Laughter) and 怒る (anger) and when you select an ‘emotion’ category the relevant set of *kaomoji* appear. The figure below shows the 笑う option of *kaomoji*.



笑う 1 笑う 2 怒る 泣く 汗 驚く 照れる
 ボーダー その他 1 その他 2
 ヲ(@ ° ▽ ° @) / ヲ(@ ^ (∞) ^ @) / (^ ▽ ^) (* ^ ▽ ^ *)
 (= ∩ ▽ ∩ =) (≡ ^ ▽ ^ ≡) o (" ^ ▽ ^ ") o ≥ (' ▽ `) ≤
 (- ^ ▽ ^ -) (▽ + *) (* ▽ *) (' 0 / ` *)
 (- ^ ▽ ^ -) (' 艸 `) (^ O ^) γ (▽ ') ㄣ ヲ(` ▽) ㄣ
 ヲ(@ ^ ▽ ^ @) / o (^ ▽ ^) o (° ▽ °) b o (ㄖ > ▽ <) y ☆
 丶 (° ◇ °) / ^ (° ▽ ° *) / (• ▽ •) (^ - ^) / (^ O ^) / (' - ^ *) /

Figure 3.11 Ameba Blog Interface kaomoji examples

Within the Japanese blog interfaces and within those illustrated here there is no option for symbols such as ♪、☆、♥ but as mentioned in chapter 1 these can be inputted manually via the Japanese or American keyboard albeit in different ways.

American blog interfaces



Unlike the Japanese comment interfaces, the majority have no extra-linguistic sign drop down menus. The exception to this rule can be seen in figure 3.12. It can be assumed that users who adopt text based emoticons typed them in and those who used graphic based emoticons may have copy and pasted them from another blog site or uploaded them from the blog interface.

Share / Save   





Comments

There are no comments posted yet. Be the first one!

Post a new comment

Enter text right here!

Comment as a Guest, or login:    

Name Email Website (optional)

Displayed next to your comments; not displayed publicly; If you have a website, link to it here.


Subscribe to

Comments by [intense debate](#)

[Newer Post](#) [Home](#) [Older Post](#)


Figure 3.12 American Blog Comment Interface

xxxx, Monica
[F&ML: Fashion And My Life](#)
 Fashion takes the f%\$ out of my life...
 2:26 PM


 [Regula](#) said...
 Hi Joanna

Greetings from Zürich - the city your wonderful 4pm snack originally comes from :-)
 I had no idea it comes with peanutbutter flavor, this must be a special for the US... Enjoy it - as I do enjoy your blog every day! Very inspiring!

4:46 PM

 [Journeyin' Lady...](#) said...
 Pizza and wine...can't get much better in my book!
 I really like your list of links! Nice blog as usual.
 The photo was great.

5:53 PM

 [Ceciel T](#) said...
 Fantastic article focusing on "can this marriage be saved" and women's magazines. Thanks for posting.

9:48 PM

Leave your comment

Nice comments only, please! (That means you, anonymous.)

You can use some HTML tags, such as ****, *<i>*, [<a>](#)

Comment moderation has been enabled. All comments must be approved by the blog author.

Choose an identity

Figure 3.13 American Blog Comments

The above example illustrates that only nice comments will be posted or allowed and that the administrator is the blog author themselves who can delete

comments of an offensive nature. This also applies to Japanese blogs and reflects the finding that no comments of an offensive nature were found.

3.4.2 The Counting of sentences within the corpora

As the counting of UMC's that included their type and function formed the basis of this research the number of sentences per blog article and their comment corpus (English and Japanese) was counted manually. The counting of sentences was done so that the two languages which use different scripts could be compared for the frequency of UMC use as UMCs were counted per sentence. Therefore, the counting of words which normally describe corpus size would not be applicable to the aims of this study. This counting of sentences ensured that the number of UMC's attached to sentences could be coded for type, usage and frequency and that these two data sets of English and Japanese blog articles and comments could be compared statistically in order to clarify differences in their frequency and usage.

Data was recorded in two excel files. One dedicated to blog entries data and one to blog comment data. An example and description of this process can be found in appendix A.

The blog entries data file listed all the 100 blogs from the English and Japanese blogs. The number of sentences per blog, which comprised of 5 entries, were counted and recorded in the relevant excel column. The same procedure was repeated for the blog comments data, with the 5 blog entries comments counted as a whole and recorded in the appropriate excel column.

As there is no software which can recognize and count sentences within a corpus, unlike software which can count words and divide them into grammatical categories, the sentences were counted manually by the author. Prior to the count, the definition of what constitutes a sentence was established. Sentences counted included sentences or utterances conventionally thought of as major sentences, with minor sentences such as greeting expressions, emotional and onomatopoeic utterances and one-word sentences or utterances such as the use of adjectives such as 'great' or すご

いゝ *sugoi* also counted. Things not defined as sentences included lists such as one word only nouns, song words, general lists, quoted sentences such as newspaper sources and stand-alone UMC's such as a series of emoticons with no text.

Sentences counted

- ✓ Complete sentences / utterances conventionally thought of as major sentences
- ✓ minor sentences such as greeting expressions (*Hi there!*),
- ✓ emotional expressions (*Wow!*)
- ✓ Onomatopoeic expressions
- ✓ Word sentences or sentence words such as adjectives Great! *Sugoi* すごい ! and verbs like the Japanese 'to go' *ikimasu* 行きます.

Things not counted or defined as sentences.

- ✗ One word sentences comprising of nouns only, such as lists.
- ✗ Lists as in lists of song titles, TV programmes, recipes etc.
- ✗ Titles or subheadings within the text.
- ✗ Stand alone emoticons with no accompanying words
- ✗ Just the name of the comment writer as in David, or posted by David written at the end of the message.
- ✗ Dates (found above comments and blog articles)
- ✗ Links to other various websites.
- ✗ Stand alone conjunctions that do not link clauses. Examples such as the word *and*, *because*, *or*, and *but* found beneath pictures where the picture rather than the words tell the story the blog writer wishes to create.
- ✗ Words imposed onto pictures for effect.
- ✗ Quotes from outside sources such as newspapers or song lyrics that are not the author's words.

The table below gives the sentence numbers with regard to the blogs and their entries but excluding comments.

Table 3.5 *Blog Articles Sentence Numbers*

Japanese Female authored	6,036
Japanese Male authored	4,473
Total	10,509
American female authored	5,986
American male authored	6,242
Total	12,228

Americans overall wrote slightly more sentences than the Japanese blog writers. Within the American data men wrote more sentences than females with the reverse pattern within the Japanese data.

Table 3.5 shows the number of sentences counted per language data set within the blog entries collected comments.

Table 3.6 *Blog Comment Sentence Numbers*

Overall blog comments	
Japanese data	32,674 sentences
American data	24,316 sentences

The Japanese in general wrote significantly more sentences within the comment data. The comment data here however is not divided into gender and is treated as mixed in sex. The comment data was also divided into male and female authored comments with comments that could not be ascertained by gender categorized as unknown and will be discussed in the UMC function and classification section.

3.4.3 Anonymity through a handle name

As outlined previously, blog creators can choose a handle name when creating their own blog or use their real name if they wish. Although it is impossible to be 100% sure that a handle name is in fact not a real name (handle names on the whole are not realistically ‘real’ names) or that a real name is not a fake name the author asserts that when reading through the blogs and their profiles that the information in table 3.7 below is as accurate as possible. Japanese tend to seek anonymity in these blogs whilst Americans are more open in revealing their true identity which is in parallel to studies

that suggest that Japanese or Asian CMC users prefer anonymous online communication and that westerns prefer to non-anonymous online (Morio and Buchholz, 2009).

Within the data collected here American blogs tended to be open in terms of their profile which included real information regarding their names, photographs and biography.

These issues are given further discussion and consideration in a discussion of the results and findings later within the paper.

Table 3.7 Blog Authorship: Handle name V Real name

50 Japanese female authored	All 50 authors use a handle name
50 Japanese male authored	All 50 authors use a handle name
50 American female authored	All 50 authors use their real name
50 American male authored	All 50 authors use their real name

Within the blog comments we see a similar pattern to the blogs themselves in that the Japanese blog comment writers all use handle names. Anonymous comments (that is, no name, handle or otherwise), usually mean that the author of the comment has no blog, hence no link under the comment. In other cases the user can tweak their settings so that their name is not shown when writing the blog comment and a link to their blog removed.

3.5 How the UMCs were analyzed

Chapter 1 gave an in-depth description and cultural history of the various UMCs that are to be examined. Here a brief re-cap will be given. The UMCs examined within the data are divided into three categories as based on Fouser et al (2000). They are semasiographic, logographic and phonographic and are illustrated within the table below.




UMCs were broken down into three categories of semasiographic signs, phonographic and logographic categories. There were 9 types of UMCs spread across these 3 categories. These categories are further divided into two classifications of non-verbal or extra-linguistic UMCs as represented in the top half of table 3.8 below

and unconventional linguistic based UMCs as illustrated in the bottom half of the table.

Non-verbal UMCs were examined in relation to the sentences they were attached to, in other words, how did they enhance or highlight the sentiments and feelings written within the comment? In addition, how did they index or refer to the pragmatic intention the writer wished to convey? Therefore, this category of UMC is extra-linguistic based and represents non-verbal representations of communication.

Linguistic based UMCs looked how conventional language is used unconventionally. These UMCs are language based and therefore unconventional language use is examined here in how it attempts to mimic the feeling, tone and pragmatic meaning of the author.

Table 3.8 UMC Classification and Types

Semasiographic extra-linguistic signs (non-verbal UMCs)	
<i>Category 1 Semasiographic extra-linguistic signs (4 Types)</i>	
1. Text based emoticons	
Japanese examples :	
(^_^) (Grin, smile) (T_T) (Sadness)	
English examples :	
:-) (Grin, smile) :-((Sadness)	
2. Graphic based emoticons	
Japanese examples :	
English examples :	
3. Pictograms or emoji	
Japanese examples :	
4. Symbols or kigou	
Japanese and English examples :	♥ , ♪, ☆ @@ ✿
Unconventional linguistic based UMCs (Verbal UMCs)	
<i>Category 2 Phonographic (3 types)</i>	
Unconventional phonetic spelling	
(Vowel and consonant lengthening, use of small <i>tsu</i> as a glottal stop)	
1. Japanese examples :	ありがとう、そうだ〜 よく耐えたっ！！！！
English examples :	Greeeeeat!、Sooooo Cooooo!
2. Capitalization* (English data only)	
English example :	LOVE YOUR BLOG and your kids are SO CUTE!!!!
3. Representations of laughter**	
Japanese examples :	あはは、へへへ
English examples :	haha, hehe
<i>Category 3 Logographic (2 types)</i>	
1. Representations of laughter***	
Japanese example :	(笑)
English example :	LOL

2. Multiple exclamation use****

Japanese example: ! ! ! / !!!

English example: !!!

**Capitalization along with phonetic spelling within the American data that was contrasted with the Japanese phonetic spelling.*

*** Japanese examples include the hiragana あはは(aha) or the katakana アハハ(aha,aha). Also the hiragana and katakana ヘヘヘ(he,he,he). Longer variations of these representations were also included. American examples consisted of 'aha' and 'hehe' with their longer variations also included.*

**** Japanese examples included the kanji (笑) in parenthesis meaning warau, to laugh. American English examples included the abbreviation LOL meaning Laugh Out Loud.*

***** Multiple exclamation use was defined as sentence that was punctuated by two or more exclamation marks. The Japanese keyboard has a kana / romaji conversion key to allow for the typing of romaji or the roman alphabet and the Japanese kana syllabify. Japanese kana conversion examples included the ! ! exclamation marks which are slightly spaced and the !! examples which are the same as the American counterpart. Some multiple exclamation marks within the Japanese data were written in emoji and were also counted but these instances were very infrequent.*

Each UMC category was counted per sentence. If the sentence had more than one particular category of UMC, for example, two emoticons or a whole sentence in capitalized words it was still calculated as one. This allows for accurate figures on how many sentences had particular UMC's attached to them. The exception was in the counting of exclamation marks where all instances of sentences with 2 or more exclamation marks were counted.

3.5.1 UMC formal distinctions

The descriptions below divide the UMCs into one of their 3 categories and the subsequent types or formal distinctions within them as illustrated below. The first category consists of non language based extra-linguistic signs that includes the 4 types of text based emoticon, graphic based emoticon, *emoji* or pictograms and *kigou* or codes.

Text based emoticons such as ^_^ or the graphic smiley equivalent 😊 are examples of semasiographs and as Sampson (1987) writes these semasiographic systems are independent graphic languages and therefore have no connection to any one spoken language. *Emoji* (絵文字) such as 🍷 🍆 🙌 🏠 🏥 🌸 are pictorial representations of objects such as a hotel, hospital, animals, a peace hand gesture or drops of sweat. *Kigou* (記号) or codes such as ♥ , 🎵 , ☆ @@ 🌸 which can be typed on the keyboard are like emoticons, independent of language and have no

affiliation with a specific language. *Kigou* are arbitrary codes, and the meaning, or what the codes represents need to be learned.

The other two groups consist of unconventional language use, a phonetic category consisting of 3 types and a logographic category that included 2 types.

The representations of laughter included one logographical representation from each language and two phonological ones. This was decided upon as there were no other representations of laughter that were used on a frequent basis.

Exclamation marks or the multiple usages of them are not usually used in written Japanese although in informal writing they are not completely unusual. Within the logographic category two or more exclamation marks attached to a sentence were considered unconventional and counted accordingly.

Phonological UMCs were represented along with laughter representations by unconventional phonetic spellings. These spellings in both the English and Japanese data included the unorthodox lengthening of vowel and consonant sounds as in the English sooo coooool!. The inclusion of the smaller hiragana vowel font in Japanese as in 終わりましたかぁ *owarimashitaa* (Have you finished?) or the wavy dash that signifies a long drawn out vowel as in そうですね～ *sou desu yo ne* (that's right) were also techniques employed to mimic vocal spellings. The small *tsu* つ as in よく耐えたっ！！！！ *Yoku taeta!!!!* 'You put up with it well!!!!' that indicates a final glottal stop was also included and is an example of the dialogue found in *manga* comics (Akizuki 2009).

In total across 3 categories of UMCs these 9 types which are illustrated below were counted for frequency and analyzed for function which is described in the following section on UMC functional distinctions. To compare emoticon frequency a Mann-Whitney test was conducted through SPSS software and the statistical level of significance was set at $p < .05$.

Category 1) Semasiographic extra-linguistic signs (4 Types)

1. Text based emoticons.

Japanese examples : (^_^) (a smile) (T_T) (sad) (>ε<) (anger)

English examples : :-) (a smile) :-((sad) >: (anger)

2. Graphic based emoticons

Japanese examples : 😊 😊 😊 😊

English examples : 😊 😊 😊 😊

3. Pictograms or emoji

Japanese examples: 🍱 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷 🍷

4. Codes or kigou

Japanese and English examples : ♥ , ♪ , ☆ @@ ♀

Category 2) Phonographic (3 types)

5. Unconventional phonetic spelling

Japanese examples: ありがとう、そうだ～、ものすっつつごい風！！

English examples: Greeeeeat!、Sooooo Cooooool!

6. Capitalization (English data only)

English example : LOVE YOUR BLOG and your kids are SO CUTE!!!!

Capitalization along with phonetic spelling within the American data that was contrasted with the Japanese phonetic spelling.

7. Representations of laughter

Japanese examples : あはは、へへへ

English examples : haha, hehe

Japanese examples include the hiragana あはは(aha) or the katakana アハハ(aha,aha). Also the hiragana and katakana へへへ(he,he,he). Longer variations of these representations were also included. American examples consisted of 'aha' and 'hehe' with their longer variations also included.

Category 3) Logographic (2 types)

8. Representations of laughter

Japanese example : (笑)

English example : LOL

Japanese examples included the kanji (笑) in parenthesis meaning warau, to laugh. American English examples included the abbreviation LOL meaning Laugh Out Loud.

9. Multiple exclamation use

Japanese example : ! ! ! / !!!

English example : !!!

Multiple exclamation use was defined as sentence that was punctuated by two or more exclamation marks. The Japanese keyboard has a kana / romaji conversion key to allow for the typing of romaj or the roman alphabet and the Japanese kana syllabify. Japanese kana conversion examples included the ! ! exclamation marks which are slightly spaced and the !! examples which are the same as the American counterpart. Some multiple exclamation marks within the Japanese data were written in emoji and were also counted but these instances were very infrequent.

3.5.2 Other non-comparable UMC data

These UMCs only exist within the American or Japanese data and therefore could not be compared. They were however counted and the results will be discussed in the results chapter.

The non-comparable UMCs are:

- 1. Abbreviations:** Within the American corpus abbreviations such as OMG (Oh My God) and IMHO (In my humble opinion) were used although sparingly. No such abbreviations existed within the Japanese data.
- 2. Capitalization:** The use of Capitalization within the Japanese data was not observed even though Japanese does and can use *romaji* within its orthography. However, within the American corpus the use of full capitalized words for emphasis of tone and emotion or the lexical item itself was often seen within the data. The American capitalized data along with unconventional phonetic spelling was therefore contrasted with just the Japanese unconventional phonetic spelling as well as the comparing of just the American and Japanese unconventional phonetic spelling data.
- 3. Representation of laughter:** Within the Japanese data the use of a single or multiple ‘w’ which stands for *warau* or to laugh was numerous within the Japanese data. The more the number of ‘w’ the bigger the laugh. These laughter representations do not exist within the American data.

3.5.3 The Peirce model

This section offers an introduction to Peirce's (1955) semiotic model of signs and is briefly outlined below. The following section 'UMC function and classification 1' then explains how this model was adapted to classify extra-linguistic signs.

- **The Representamen:** the form which the sign takes
- **An Interpretant:** not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign;
- **An Object:** to which the sign refers

Below is a quote from Peirce which explains the mechanics of this triadic model.

A sign... [in the form of a *representamen*] is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the *interpretant* of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its *object*. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the *ground* of the representamen (1955,p101).

According to Peirce signs are divisible by three trichotomies. The second trichotomy, and the one that concerns us here is the icon, index and symbol model which refers to the relation of the sign to its object.

Symbols

In the words of Peirce (1955) "a symbol is a sign which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually in association of general ideas, which operates to cause the symbol to be interpreted as referring to that object. It is thus itself a general type or law. As such it acts through a replica" (p102).

Chandler (2007) explains that symbols are a mode in which the signifier does not

resemble the signified but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional. Therefore the meaning, what the symbol replicates, or relationship needs to be learned as in languages, traffic lights and national flags.

Icons

Icons describe a mode where the representamen or signifier is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified or the object. This resemblance can consist of looking, sounding, and feeling, tasting or smelling like it or being similar in possessing some of its qualities such as a portrait or animation. Peirce suggested that an iconic sign represents its object 'mainly by its similarity' and a sign is an icon 'insofar as it is like that thing and used as a sign of it'. Peirce originally termed the icon as 'likeness' before deciding on icon.

Indexes

Indexes are a mode in which the signifier or representamen is not arbitrary but is directly connected in some way (physically or causally) to the signified or object. This connection can be observed or inferred as in 'natural signs' (smoke, thunder, footprints, echoes, non-synthetic odours and flavours), 'signals' (a knock on a door, a phone ringing), pointers (a pointing 'index' finger, a directional signpost), and indexical words ('that', 'this', 'here', 'there') (Chandler: 2007).

Pierce writes that:

Indices may be distinguished from other signs, or representations, by three characteristic marks: first, that they have no *significant* resemblance to their objects, second, that they refer to individuals, single units, single collections of units, or single continua, third, that they direct the attention to their objects by blind compulsion. But it would be difficult, if not impossible, to instance an absolutely pure index, or to find any sign absolutely devoid of the indexical quality. Psychologically, the action of indices depends upon association by contiguity, and not upon association by resemblance or upon intellectual

operations (1955, p.108)

Pierce talks of signs not being completely devoid of indexical qualities and psychologically, the function of indices or indexes being dependent upon their association by contiguity. Therefore, some extra-linguistic signs within the data could function both as an icon and an index dependent upon the context it was written in and is explained in more detail later in the chapter.

Even though the writings of Peirce were written over 60 years ago his work has been referenced with regards to extra-linguistic signs (Miyake, 2005a)

Kataoka (2003) looked at Japanese women's letter writing in females aged between 16-25. His examination entailed the analysis of what he has labeled EPS (emotive pictorial signs) which are unconventional practices and pictorial signs in these casual female letters. In an adaptation of Peircean semiotic tradition he divided these EPSs into the three types of semiotic categories based on the Peirce model (1955) as outlined below.

Table 3.9 *Kataoka Study Based on the Peirce Model*

Icons	
Indexes	
Symbols	

Source: Kataoka (2009)

His findings showed that EPSs used as Icons are identified with the writer or their body part, are largely metaphoric in that emotive actions such as a smiling face or a waving hand are substituted with these signs. They act as propositional support in that they add meaning to the sentence but they can also stand alone and demonstrate meaning. Indexes he describes as metonymic in that they index the writers emotive stance, for example a tear, or a drop of sweat for sadness. Kataoka (2003) writes "they

are affectively schematic of related emotions, rather than directly pointing to the physical phenomena such as perspiration” (p.22). He describes symbols as more ‘symbolic’ and conventionalized, in that the connection between a sign and a psychological state is highly arbitrary, for example as within his data, the use of heart signs. He suggests that these attached symbols offer little to the propositional meaning of the sentence as these symbols originally are not derived from certain emotions but correspond to them through convention of context and use.

3.6. UMC function and classification 1

Peirce’s (1955) work was written a long time ago and Kataoka’s (2003) work examined non-digital offline data. This research looks at online digital communication and therefore the Peirce model is adapted to classify UMCs within the blog data.

Category 1 UMCs, the semasiographic extra-linguistic signs were divided into icons, indexes, and symbols in an adaptation of the Peirce model (1955) and inspired by the work of Kataoka (1997, 2003).

The definitions of what icons, indexes and symbols are and their function and effect are illustrated in table 3.10 below. The icons, indexes and symbols have extended definitions in parenthesis to account for their role within the blog data. The definitions borrow from Peirce and Kataoka but have been modified to adapt to the online data within this thesis. Therefore definitions are based on these previous works that can be applicable to CMC but altered to adapt to UMC usage and function as presented within the corpora.

Table 3.10 Extra-linguistic Signs Based on the Peirce Model

Icons (propositional)	Extra-linguistic signs that add semantic meaning that include the tone or emotion of the writer. These signs resemble the signified as in a happy face or a pictogram or <i>emoji</i> that replaces a lexical item or is used for emphasis.
Indexes (politeness related)	<p>Signs that are politeness related or index the emotive state of the writer.</p> <p>An index is a mode in which the signifier might not resemble its signified object. It is not arbitrarily assigned and is directly connected in some way to the object. The use of the UMC takes into consideration the context in which signs are produced and interpreted.</p> <p>They can be semantic or pragmatic and are contiguous with the propositional meaning. The use of the UMC takes into consideration the context in which signs are produced and interpreted. The sign is defined by its effect on the interpreter or how the writer wishes the comment to be interpreted. These emotive signs are indexical of the writer's emotive stance and the politeness strategy they wish to convey.</p>
Symbols (Self representational and positive face related)	<p>The symbol or symbolic sign is assigned arbitrarily or is accepted as societal convention.</p> <p>To paraphrase Kataoka (2002:225) Here the connection between UMC and "a psychological state is highly arbitrary, and the relation between the propositional meaning and the attached UMC is fundamentally loose.</p> <p>The connection between these symbols and the writers' psychological state is loose and highly arbitrary when attached to sentences. In comparison to icons and indexes, symbols do not add to the meaning of the sentence to which it is attached. These symbols convey little propositional meaning. However, they can be used to convey representation of the self or the 'public self-image' and may be pragmatic in the sense that they create an atmosphere in which they are intended to be read such as joviality, and intonational qualities as in the ♪ mark.</p> <p>Some symbols however maybe for decorative purposes and their usage may be an attempt to appeal to their positive face (to be liked and praised by the reader).</p>

When dividing the UMCs into these categories the context in which they were used was analyzed. The same UMC or extra-linguistic sign was not fixed in terms of its usage. For example, the same emoticon could be used as an icon to express emotion, feeling or semantic meaning but in a different context this same UMC could be used to index a positive or negative politeness strategy or to highlight the pragmatic intention of the writer. Some emoticons however like the Japanese ^^; was usually fixed as a sign that indexed pragmatic intention or how the writer wished their comment and the context that it is within to be read and interpreted. It must be emphasized here, that the focus is on the meaning or function of the sentence first and then how the extra-linguistic sign adds to the propositional meaning. In this sense, the focus is on the function of sentences that have UMCs attached. Icon and indexes are examples of this as they are emphatic and add meaning.

The writer tries to make their stance clearer by attaching to a sentence the most appropriate sign to fit their attitude towards the propositional content.

Symbols do not lack meaning (although in some cases they may simply have a decorative effect) but may serve to represent the writer's public or self created online image and consequently appeal to their positive face. In this sense they can be linked to Goffman's (1967) 'public self-image' and to the Brown & Levinson (1987) notion of face which originates from the work of Goffman.

Brown & Levinson (1987: 61) write that the positive face is "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants". Kataoka (2002) in his study of EPSs (emotive pictorial signs) suggests that pictorial signs an analogue version of UMC, can be important factors for the writer's self-presentation. EPSs he states may be "the individuals aspiration for a particular self image, a strategy for controlled self-representation" (p227). This notion ties in to the concepts of face and public self image by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Goffman (1967) respectively.

Through the uses of UMCs writers are adding to the semantic meaning of their comments, indexing politeness strategies, and using them to project their online self

image. These definitions however are not concrete and some extra-linguistic signs may act as icons, indexes and symbols. There are also occasions within the data where there is a mixture of UMC usage, for example, the use of phonetic spelling, accompanied with *kaomoji* and *kigou* as shown in the example below.

ありがとう～(*´▽`´)♪♪

Arigatou

Thank you

Here we have 3 functions paralleling each other. The phonetic spelling is an attempt to mimic a vocal representation of the comment author, the *kaomoji* further supports the meaning of the sentence acting as an icon or index and the *kigou* as in ♪ may add a jovial tone or used as an ‘cute’ self presentation marker.

In relation to the CMC literature on relational communication and impression formation as in Walther’s (1996) Hyperpersonal model these codes (*kigou*) can be seen to be used to create a self constructed image of the self or a representation of how the writer wishes to be perceived. Goffman, although writing in 1959, his ideas can be applicable to how Walther’s (1996) hyperpersonal model works. Goffman (1959) suggests that people attempt to influence the impression that the other person will have of them by altering their own ‘setting’, ‘appearance’ and ‘manner’. This altering, it can be argued, can be done through UMCs or extra-linguistic signs. These signs can be used to project a sense of cuteness or femininity through UMCs that can act as self-representation markers. The blog writer tries to highlight their online persona as being unique, cute, and likable. This online created ‘face’ of the writer can be linked to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) positive face and to Lim and Bowers (1991) ‘fellowship face’ which they say describes a desire to be ‘accepted and loved’.

1. Icons

(Semasiographic extra-linguistic signs that resemble the signified and also add semantic meaning that includes the tone or emotion of the writer)

Text based emoticons

- a. 今度、チョコバナナ・・・やってみますわ～ ^ ^ (The emoticon indicates author feeling)

Kondo, cyoco banana...yatteremimasuwaa ^ ^

Next time I will give chocolate banana a try ^^

- b. Cheese curds are soooo yummy! And if they are freshly made, they squeak in your teeth. Love, love, love them! :) (This emoticon adds to the authors feeling towards Cheese curds)

Graphic based emoticons

- c. 赤マント?ではなく赤パンツ ふふふ～😂 (This emoticon emphasizes the laughter of the writer)

aka manto? de wa naku akapantsu fu fu fu ~😂

Red mantle? No, red pants hu hu hu

- d. And most importantly, it looks like things went smoothly for everyone with no nail polish or catastrophic pool incidents. 😊 (The emoticon shows the authors feeling towards the contents of the utterance)

Emoji / Pictograms

- e. これから移動です🚌

(Lexical use, whereby the bus indicates how the person will go and replaces the verb)

Kore kara idou desu🚌

Will head off now🚌

- f. 奥さん👩からは、「あんまり痩せると気持ち悪いから、もうやめて」と言われてます。。。🙄

(Emphatic use, whereby the word wife is juxtaposed next to an emoji of his wife)

Okusan👩kara ha 'anmari yaseru to kimochi warui kara, mou yamete' to iwaretemasu ...🙄

My wife say's 'It is unpleasant that I am loosing too much weight, its creepy, so stop'

The above examples were only found in blog posts and *emoji* that acted icons were not present within the comments data). Within the American data there were no instances of *emoji* or pictograms that functioned as icons.

***Kigou* / codes**

There were no instances of *kigou* or codes that functioned as icons in both sets of data. Although *kigou* were used at times to create a jovial tone, they did not add any strict semantic meaning or fit the definition of what constitutes a sign within the icon, index and symbol framework. *Kigou* do not resemble the signified as in a happy face and do not add emphatic meaning to the sentence it is attached in the sense that icons do.

2. Indexes

(Semasiographic extra-linguistic signs that are politeness related or index the emotive state of the writer.)

Text based emoticons

- a. 是非画像UPして下さいね ^^ (This emoticon is added to a friendly request and can act as a positive politeness marker)

Zehi eizou UP shite kudasi ne ^^

By all means please upload the video clip

- b. You are so funny:) (This emoticon punctuates and indexes a complement)

Graphic based emoticons

- c. おかえりなさい 😊 (This emoticon highlights a rapport building strategy)

Okaerinasai

Welcome back

- d. omg, I totally love this cake!!! Look at all the great colors. And the abstract writing. How very original!! 😊 (This emoticon highlights praise)

Emoji / pictograms

- e. とっても嬉しいご報告ありがとうございます🙇 (This emoji shows a pictogram of a face bowing accompanied by the word ペコリ *pekori* which means the action of quickly bowing ones head, this emoji therefore highlights gratitude).

Tottemo ureshii gohoukoku arigatougozaimasu

Thanks for the happy news

There were no instances of emoji that functioned as indexes within the American data.

Kigou / code

- f. Sending you much Reiki and love!

{{{{{{{{x Linda x}}}}}}}}

The above American example is the creative use of parenthesis to create the illusion of Linda sending out hugs to her reader.

As illustrated in the above examples emoticons can be both used as icons and indexes dependent on the context that they are in. The above examples of 1a and 2a, 1b and 2b, 1d and 2d have the same the emoticon but function differently.

3. Symbols

(Self representational and positive face markers)

Text based emoticons

There were no instances of text based emoticons in both the American and Japanese data.

Graphic based emoticons

There were no instances of graphic based emoticons in both the American and Japanese data.

Emoji and pictograms

- a. こんな感じでプルプルのジェルで、ジェルだけどサラッと伸びて顔だけじゃなく全身にも使えるんですよ💎💎💎

The gel is smooth and expansive so it can be used for the body as well as the whole face.

The above *emoji* is not emphatic and adds no meaning to the sentence that it is attached to. The pictogram could be removed without affecting the meaning of the comment. The relationship to the propositional meaning is loose. It may however function as a self representation marker where it is used to appeal to the writer's positive face to be liked and admired or thought of as being 'cute'. These ideas will be expanded on throughout the thesis.

There were no instances of *emoji* or pictograms within the American data.

Kigou or codes

- a. 大丈夫です☆
すぐ治りました♪
ありがとうございます☆
Daijyoubu desu
Sugu naorimashita
Arigatougozaimashita
I'm fine☆
Got better soon♪
Thanks☆
- b. LOL..I know..I cant figure out why they call them bad♥♥]

The above *kigou* or code examples offer no additional semantic or emphatic meaning to the preposition and are vaguely connected to the sentence of which they are attached but may serve as self representational and face work markers.

3.7 UMC function and classification 2

The emphasis within this analysis is on the language used rather than just the emoticon itself. That is, on the function of the sentence. Emoticons that were classified as indexes that were attached to politeness strategies as outlined by Brown and Levinson (1987) were counted and then divided into positive or negative politeness strategies according to the criteria and definitions set out by Brown and Levinson.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) positive politeness strategies are defined as devices that seek to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face. Some strategies of positive politeness can include the claiming of common ground, seeking agreement and the show of interest, approval and sympathy. In contrast negative politeness strategies are described as 'softening devices' such as being conventionally indirect and hedging.

In judging whether a politeness strategy was either positive or negative the context in which the comment was written was analyzed. The politeness strategies were divided into positive or negative politeness strategies as illustrated in table 3.11 based on the descriptions of Brown and Levinson (1987).

Table 3.11 Politeness Strategies Divided

Positive politeness strategies	Negative politeness strategies
Jokes	Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests**
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	Apologies
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	***Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)
1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy) with H 3. Avoid disagreement and Assert common ground through *Expressions of solidarity (<i>markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers</i>)	Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)
Notice, attend to H through compliments	

* Convey 'X' is admirable, interesting through claiming common ground and seeking agreement as in expressions of sympathy, agreement and support. These emoticons were attached to positive politeness strategies that emphasized support, approval, common ground and sympathy. Requests as solidarity markers often utilized the てくださいね+ emoticon pattern and were often used in the context of the writer showing concern for the readers health and welfare, to wish their readers luck, and the showing support which are categorized as a positive politeness strategies under the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework.

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment hedged.

The emoticons served to highlight or emphasize a politeness strategy and to clarify the pragmatic intention of the comment writer. Some emoticons were used specifically for negative politeness strategies such as the minimizing of imposition at the time of making requests as in the Japanese example 1, an emoticon that signifies bowing, and example 2, an emoticon with sweat on the side of the face indicating imposition or awkwardness of the imposition being made. Other emoticons such as the basic ^^ were predominantly used for positive politeness strategies.

However, emoticons were not rigidly used for one particular politeness strategy. There was a flexibility with their usage, for example, there were some cases of overlap as in example 3 where the bowing emoticon highlights the positive politeness strategy of Noticing and attending to H (Hearer or in this case the reader) through praise or gratitude for work accomplished.

1. ポチッと応援

↓↓お願いしまーす m(__)m

Pochi' to ouen onegaishimaasu

Pochi' and support please

2. 雄斗君、是非うちの研究所に来て欲しい(^_^;))

Yutou kun, zehi uchi no kenkyu sho ni kite hoshii

Yuuto kun , I want you to come to my research institute(^_^;))

3. お疲れ様です m(__)m

Otsukaresama desu. m(__)m (A set Japanese phrase with various meanings

dependent on context but which can be translated as to express gratitude for some work done).

The emoticon m(_ _)m from example 1 above which indicates the action of bowing and is used in the example to index the minimizing of imposition at the time of making a request is an example of a negative politeness strategy according to the Brown & Levinson's (1987) framework. Example 5 uses the same emoticon but here is used to index the positive politeness strategy of solidarity and support for the reader who has been sick and worked 12 days straight, it is punctuated with the お疲れ様ですm(__)m. Therefore indexes were classified according to the context that they were in rather than rigidly being classified according to the emoticon itself.

1. 風邪が完治したのですね。安心しました(^-^) でも12日間連続出勤されてたなんて大変でしたね(><) お疲れ様ですm(__)m

Kaze ga kanchi shita no desune. Anshin shimashita (^-^) demo 12 nichi kan renzoku syukkin saretetante taihen deshita ne (><) otsukaresama desu m(__)m

I am relieved to hear that your cold has cleared up but working 12 days straight must have been tough (><) otsukaresamadesu m(__)m

In comparison to Japanese emoticons or *kaomoji* there was very little variation in the types of emoticons used by American blog users. American emoticons within the data mostly consisted of simple and basic emoticons, such as the basic smile :) and the

wink ;). Emoticon use was again dependent on the context that the comments were written in and no one particular emoticon type was always attributed or attached to the same politeness strategy.

Within the American and Japanese data only text based emoticons had significant totals in order to justify this classification and analysis. Graphic emoticons (smiley's), *emoji* (pictograms) and codes (*kigou*) were rarely used at all as indexes to highlight politeness strategies and therefore an analysis was deemed not justified.

The politeness strategies as outlined in the above table 3.11 could be reciprocal, in that the blog author and blog comment author used these strategies directed at one another. In other cases the politeness strategies were more one way orientated as in for example the use of compliments and support towards the blog author and their blog. Some as in requests usually came from the blog author towards their blog comment contributors. None of the politeness strategies were conducted in their entirety by comment writers or blog authors although some strategies were inclined to be used by comment writers than blog writers and vice a versa. Below is an overview of the directional flow of these politeness strategies as highlighted by emoticons.

Directional flow of Positive politeness strategies

- **Jokes**

Used reciprocally in an exchange of informal 'banter' between comment writer and blog author.

- **Comment openings and closings**

Used reciprocally.

- **Expressing gratitude / thanks**

Usually found in blog author comments that expressed thanks to their comment author's for their comment contributions. There were cases however where blog comment authors thanked the blog author for their interesting, funny or informative blog posting.

- **Expressions of solidarity**

Usually found in comments directed towards the blog author that showed support for

the blog, its content, and its author. However interactions between comment writer and blog author could be reciprocal with the blog author expressing similar sentiments towards their comment writers.

- **Compliments**

Usually found in comments directed towards the blog author

Directional flow of Negative politeness strategies

- **Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests**

Usually found in comments directed towards the blog comment author by the blog author (usually for more comments / support).

- **Apologies**

Very rarely used within the data but were used reciprocally.

- **Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)**

Usually found in comments directed towards the blog author when making an awkward or potentially threatening comment, however could be reciprocal with the blog author expressing similar sentiments that sought to show a shared understanding.

- **Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)**

Usually found in comments directed towards the blog author when making opinions or suggestions that may be considered strong. Very rarely used by the blog author as these opinions / suggestions were usually the thoughts of the comment writer towards the blog author / blog content.

3.8 UMC function and classification 2b

3.8.1 Sentence Final Particle 'ne' highlighted by UMCs

In this analysis the emoticons were examined according to the politeness strategy they expressed when attached to the sentence final particle *ne*. The sentence final particle (SFP) *ne* is a confirmation seeker similar to the English tag expressions

such as right? and aren't you? and is attached to the end of a formal *desu masu* polite sentence or the less formal non-polite forms.

The fundamental function of the Japanese (SFP) *ne* is said to express shared information (Masuoka, 1991) which can include requesting confirmation and seeking or showing agreement.

The use of the SFP *ne* has often been linked with spoken interaction or with informal language, but can also be used in written communications where interaction is taking place. Maynard (1997) states that *ne*, acts in a way so that the speaker and listener may communicate with each other in an emotional and empathy creating way.

The analytical process was repeated in the same way as outlined in the previous UMC function and classification 2 outlined above. Within the data there was only minimal usage of other sentence final particles such *wa*, *ze* or *zo* that were attached to emoticons therefore were not analyzed. *Ne* + emoticon was a common pattern and therefore analyzed for how they are used in combination.

Cook (1992) using Pierce's theory of signs, which are broken down into icons, symbols and indexes suggests that *ne* acts as non-referential index which "directly indexes affective common ground between the speaker and the addressee" (p.507). Also she states that *ne* also indirectly indexes speech acts such as the marking of intimacy and showing agreement. Within the Japanese data the 'expressions of solidarity' category (in the above politeness strategies divided table under positive politeness strategies) had frequent instances where the sentence finished in *ne* and that *ne* was highlighted further with an emoticon to promote positive politeness. Cook (1992) also asserts that *ne* can be used as a positive politeness strategy and that if *ne* indicates affective common ground between a speaker and their interlocutor then it can be included as one of the ways to express linguistic means of politeness.

The pattern of *ne* plus emoticon was focused on here. Examples include 'requests as solidarity markers' which end in *kudasai ne* plus emoticon as illustrated in the examples below. Requests as solidarity markers are examples of a positive politeness strategy of exaggerating interest, approval and sympathy with the addressee. They are not requests in the traditional sense but address the reader's positive face and

are written with the aim of expressing support and solidarity. The SFP acts as a softener which is further softened by a friendly (usually a smiling emoticon) emoticon which adds a sense of intimacy and affective common ground.

Requests as solidarity markers using ne + emoticon

1. 免許取得頑張ってくださいね～ (*^_^*)
2. 体調大丈夫ですか??? ゆっくりリラックスT I M E 作ってくださいね
> <) b
3. 免許取得頑張ってくださいね～ (*^_^*) ♪ でもケガしないでくださいね～
ヽ(^o^)ノ

The use of *ne* plus emoticon was divided into politeness strategies in the same way as the above UMC function and classification 2 above as seen in the table below.

Table 3.12 *Ne + emoticon and the Politeness Strategies they highlight*

Positive politeness strategies	Negative politeness strategies
Jokes	Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests**
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	Apologies
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	***Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force / hedges encoded in particles)
1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy) with H 3. Avoid disagreement and Assert common ground through *Expressions of solidarity (<i>markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers</i>)	Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)
Notice, attend to H through compliments	

3.9 UMC function and classification 3

Logographic and phonographic UMCs were classified into their semantic and pragmatic function.

Semantic function

These UMCs function to add semantic meaning that includes the tone, emphasis and emotion of the writer at the time of writing the comment.

- a. うつつっそおおおお！！！！！！ (The use of the small unconventional *tsu* and *o* accompanied by multiple exclamation usage)

Ussssoooooooo!!!!

That's a lie!!!!

- b. Doesn't it feel FAAAABULOUS to weed out stuff? (Unconventional vowel lengthening)

- c. (^▽^)アハハハ!笑わせていただきました～！！ (Phonetic representations of laughter and vowel lengthening)

Ahahahahah waraseteitadakimashitaa!!

That made me laugh!!

- d. all books buy one get one 50% off"? I've had my eye on a few things under ten bucks LOL (This LOL stands for Laugh Out Loud)

Pragmatic function

These UMCs functioned to add pragmatic meaning / soften the illocutionary force of a statement or index politeness strategies. Pragmatic comments usually addressed a feeling or intention towards their reader.

- a. ご来店の際に参考にしてくださ～い。(Indexes a request)

Go raiten no sai ni sanko ni shite kudasaai

Please have a look at it the next time you come into the shop

- b. I TOTALLY agree with you, buddy!!!! (Emphasizes a rapport strategy)

- c. Bihanda さん すご〜〜〜い！！！！ *Bihanda san sugoiiii* (Indexes a compliment)
- d. hahahahahahahaha! I just want you to know that I HOWLED when I read that!
(Highlights rapport)

Similar to extra-linguistic signs phonographic and logographic UMCs were divided into semantic or pragmatic categories dependent on the context they were found.

However overall frequencies were not enough to justify a second analysis of dividing them into politeness strategies as outlined in UMC function and classification

2

3.10 UMC function and classification 4: Gender divided data (Comments only)

The blogs themselves were selected based on gender to get an equal balance of 100 female (50 American, 50 Japanese) and male authored blogs (50 American, 50 Japanese). The comments, however, were mixed with both men and women writing comments on these blogs. The comments therefore had to be divided into their respective gender in order to analyze UMC usage within the comments across the genders. The gender of the comment was determined through the link at the end of the comment as illustrated in the figure below. The link, usually the authors name or an icon that includes the authors name when clicked on takes you their blog, and through the blog profile gender of the author can be determined. If it was not documented a reading of the blog usually confirmed the gender of the author. If confirmation could not be attained the comment was rejected and categorized as unknown. Although there are instances of CMC users writing under the opposite sex as opposed to their own there was no evidence of that within the data here.

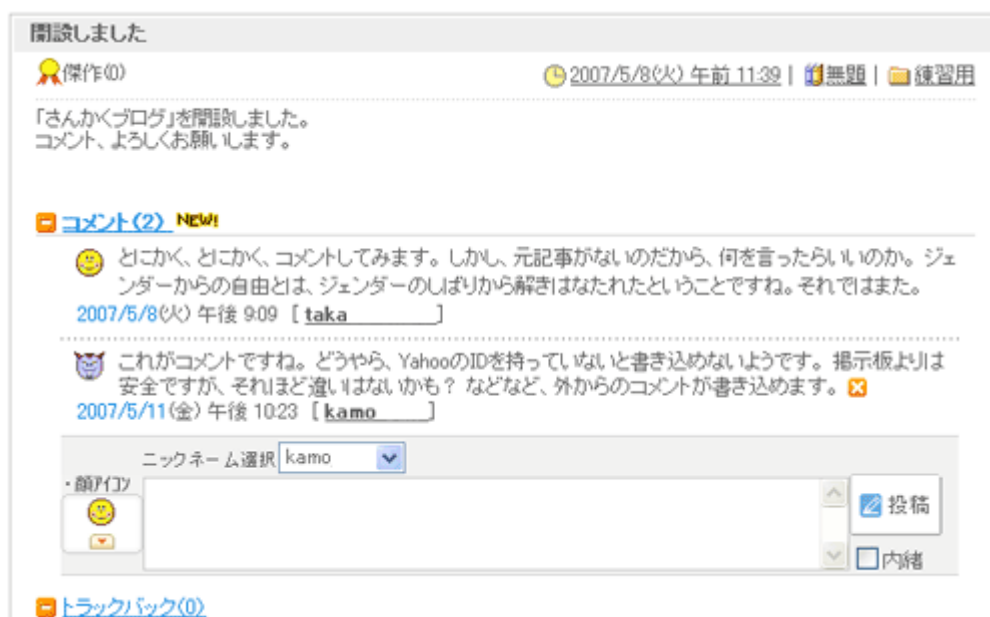


Figure 3.14 Comment Links

The tables below shows the gender make up of the comment data.

Table 3.13 Gender Divided Japanese Comment Data

Total Japanese comment sentences	32,675
Female authored sentences	20,225
Male authored sentences	5,568
Sentences categorized as unknown	6,882

Table 3.14 Gender Divided American Comment Data

Total American comment sentences	24,316
Female authored sentences	15,201
Male authored sentences	4,519
Sentences categorized as unknown	4,596

From the tables above even though there are numerous sentences classified as unknown in gender the overwhelming majority of comments were written by women which along with the fact that when compiling the personal blog corpus data the

majority of blogs were found to be female authored is evidence that the personal blog genre is predominately a female authored and read genre of online writing. UMC function and classification 1-3 was applied to the gender divided sentence data in the same way it was applied to the comments before they were divided into gender.

3.11 Demographics of blog writers, gender, age, profession

In terms of the demographics and other sociolinguistic factors of the blog and comment writers this was difficult to determine with any accuracy. Occupation of the blog writer and their age could only be guessed at although this was not an objective. It is estimated that the majority of blog writers within both sets of data were between the ages of 20-40 with many housewives and young fathers writing these blogs.

The majority of Japanese blog writer profiles were usually not fully completed. A name was usually posted (always a fictitious handle name making the blog and blog comment writer's essential anonymous) and sometimes the gender of the blog author with a very brief blog introduction. Most blog profiles only included name and gender or just the name of the blog writer.

In addition if pictures of family members or the blog writers themselves appeared their faces were disguised through the use of mosaic or black eye covering.

The American blogs on the other hand were very different. Name, occupation, place of residence, gender and hobbies were often written in these American blog profiles in what is essentially a very open disclosure of their personal information. Age, however was not given, although at an estimate most of the bloggers were within the 20-40 age bracket.

3.12 SPSS analysis and the coding of the data

Using a Mann Whitney U test, the data was pasted from the excel files into the SPSS statistical program version 19 and was analyzed for significant differences between the language sets for UMC usage. The null hypothesis was set at ($p < .05$).

The Mann Whitney U test was chosen because some of the data was not normally distributed. That is some people used some UMCs very frequently while some not as frequent. This was usually the result of some blogs having many comments (counted sentences) with subsequently frequent instances of UMCs and some blogs having the opposite pattern.

Most statistical tests that compare two samples, such as averages and the mean, rely on parametric assumptions. As the data was unevenly distributed the Mann-Whitney non-parametric test was selected to analyze the data. Within the data a histogram was performed. This is a graph plotting the values of observations on the horizontal axis, and the frequency with which each value occurs in the data set on the vertical axis. Based on this it was decided whether transforming the data was a requirement. This transformation changes a non-normal distribution into a normal distribution. Therefore a log transformation was performed on the data when deemed necessary. This corrected the data from being positively skewed to a normal distribution.

The coding of the data was created in excel files which were labeled according to the UMCs to be analyzed and numbered per blog 1-100 within each language data set. The blog articles excel file consisted of each UMC category which were filled in for every blog from 1-100 in both language data sets. Sentences numbers consisted of all 5 blog articles totaled and placed in their respective columns. The UMCs were counted for overall frequency (the overall total) and then broken down into function as in Icon, index and symbols for the semaisographic extra-linguistic signs, and semantic and pragmatic usage for the phonographic and logographic data and counted. These categories and process is illustrated in appendix A. The same process was done for the gender of the blog author which was highlighted within the file. With this data an analysis cross culturally comparing American and Japanese blog UMC usage and across genders within the same language or the comparing of the two languages could be performed. The blog comment data followed the same process and the data coding procedures are explained in more detail in appendix A.

Chapter 4

The findings: Presentation, Analyses and Discussion of the Blog Entries

This chapter examines the UMCs as used in personal blog posts which is a form of one to many communication where the entries are not addressed to anyone specifically but to a wide yet unspecific audience.

The chapter looks at how the UMCs are used based on their semantic, pragmatic and decorative function based on the Peirce (1955) semiotic model. A discussion of how they are used in relation to concepts of culture and gender are also included. This discussion aims to cover the research enquiries 1, 2 and 4. Research enquiry 3 that examines politeness strategies only applies to one to one interaction and therefore is not applicable to the findings within this chapter.

The findings of the blog entries, their function and analysis are followed by a discussion of the results. The results are broken down into their UMC categories. Category 1 consists of 4 types of extra-linguistic sign UMCs, category 2 the phonetic data of 3 types of UMC and finally the third logographic category that consists of 2 types. In all there are 9 types of UMCs spread across 3 categories. These blog entry results are compared with respect to gender author and language.

4.1 The findings: The Blog entries data

4.1.1 Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: The text based emoticons

The table below shows the results of the text based emoticons from the semasiographic extra-linguistic signs data. The total number of sentences within the American and Japanese data was not significantly different.

Table 4.1 Semiasographic extra-linguistic Data: Text based emoticons

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	10509	105.1±96	12228	122.3±82.2
Text based emoticons	949**	9.5±16.8	43	0.43±1.2
Icons	883**	8.8±16.3	41	0.41±1.2
Indexes	66**	.66±1.6	2	0.02±.14
Symbols	2	0.02±0.20	0	

** ($p < .01$)

Japanese blog writers used significantly more text based emoticons than their American equivalents ($p < .01$). The use of text based emoticons was on the whole used very infrequently within the American data with just 43 sentences having these unorthodox extra-linguistic signs attached to them. When the data is broken up into its function, these text based emoticons were predominately used as icons in that they were used to aid in the conveying of author tone, feeling and emotion. Japanese used these signs as icons significantly more than Americans ($p < .01$). Within the index data the overall count was low within the Japanese data but nevertheless more significant than the American result ($p < .01$). There were 66, (7% of the total emoticon count or 0.6% of sentences which used an emoticon to highlight a politeness strategy) instances within the Japanese data compared to a nearly non-existent result within the American data with only 2 instances. Finally, the symbols totaled 2 within the Japanese data and none within the American data which was a result that was insignificant and not insightful.

The following section breaks down the text based emoticons into icons, indexes and symbols.

Text based emoticons as icons

a. The Japanese data

Examples will only feature English translations and do not include a romanization of the Japanese because of concerns for space. The examples 1-5 below show how these text based emoticons are used to help to aid blog writer's expression. The *kaomoji* or emoticons below highlight the authors tone or feeling towards what they have typed. The use of the emoticons adds visuality to what is otherwise a text based blog post. They also function to make the actual reading of the post more fun and the emoticons are used, consciously or not by blog authors, to give a representation or impression of themselves to their readers. A blog posting with emoticons and other UMCs for example will give a differing impression to the reader than one that relies on conventional text.

1. みなさん、お盆休み、いかがお過ごしでしょうか？

今日からお仕事の方も沢山居られるんでしょうが、私達夫婦は今日もお休みです(^_^)v

How was everyone's Obon break? Bet you have a lot of work waiting for you from today but we as a couple are still off (on holiday).

2. 週末には、毎週自分の部屋を掃除し、天気がよければ、布団を干しております・・・^_^;

I clean every weekend and if the weather is good hang up the bedding outside.

The examples above help the writer with the narration of the stories and how they are to be read. They also add a visual element which can make them more interesting and enjoyable to read. These blog entries were written about everyday things such as child rearing and the inclusion of these signs are used as storytelling devices.

b. The American data

1. The hashtag #BiSC will NEVER die!! It was rainbow amazing. :)
2. I'm pretty good at imitating people, voices and accents. Hey, That's what I've been told. :-)
3. I was so **CHAWED** and **SWEATY**. ha! I'm a HUGE mess of a mom. (And don't get me started about yesterday when I was feeding Harper and she proceeded to poop all over me and her.....)There is probably nothing more humbling than being a mom. :-)

Example 1 shows the blog writer's happiness that his hashtag address is popular and that other blog comment writers have complimented it. The second example shows how the emoticon is used to express the feeling of the writer who expresses a sense of pride that people often compliment his imitating skills. The third example punctuates the sentence and is used to add the writer's feeling to the utterance and give it a relaxed tone in which the author intended it to be in.

Text based emoticons as Indexes

a. The Japanese data

The index data amounted to only 66 instances within the Japanese data with the majority used at the end of the blog entry. The text based emoticons acted as indexes to highlight and soften requests with the bulk (39 in total) of them asking readers to support the blog through reading and posting comments on it.

1. ポチッと応援
↓↓お願いしまーす<(_ _)>
Pochi' and support please.
2. 次もよろしくお願いします。ポチっ(*'▽'*)
I'm asking for your support again.

Example 1 below comes at the end of a blog article with the use of the onomatopoeia ポチッ *pochi* which represents the sound of the tapping of the keyboard. It is a word used within Yahoo blogs and represents the tapping of the *kessaku* (傑作) or masterpiece button which when pressed elevates the blog or the blog article within the rankings. Those writers concerned with their rank within the blog directory often post such a comment at the end of the article reminding people to support the blog and press this masterpiece button. The emoticon or *kaomoji* represents a person bowing next to phonetic spelling of *onegaishimasu*, meaning please in this context. The phonetic spelling elongates the vowel sound as in *onegaishimaaasu*. It is polite and the *kaomoji* acts to soften the illocutionary force of the speech act of requesting.

A comment following this blog article would in turn compliment the article and may use the onomatopoeic sound *pochi* ポチッ followed by an emoticon as in example 2 in which the comment writer asks the blog writer to write more entries followed by the *pochi* ポチッ sound and punctuated with the *kaomoji* (*'▽'*). Such interactions as in examples 1 and 2 of blog writer and comment writer can lead to rapport building and online friendships.

3. お祝いコメントたくさんありがとうございました！

コメントの返事もう少しお待ち下さい(*- -) (*_ _)ペコリ

Thank you for your congratulatory comment

Please wait a little longer for my response to your comment.

4. おはようございます ^ ^

Good morning.

5. ごちそうさまでした m(__)m

That was a feast.

Example 3 is an example of the blog writer thanking her readers for the blog comments that have been posted on her blog. The second line then expresses a request to please wait for her to answer or reply to those who have left comments with the 2

emotions coming after the request written in polite *keigo* of *omachi kudasai* (*- -) (*_ _) ぺこり The two *kaomoji* work in tandem with the eyes looking straight forward in the first *kaomoji* and down in the second *kaomoji* which represents the lowering of the head in a bow. This is emphasized with the word *pekori* ぺこり which means the action of quickly lowering and bowing one's head.

Example 4 shows the *kaomoji* simply highlighting the greeting speech act as in good morning here. Example 5 is a set phrase used after eating a meal meaning 'That was a feast' or that was a delicious meal in an expression of thanks and gratitude used toward the person or persons who cooked the meal. It is used here in a blog about a particular meal in a restaurant which the blog writer ate and the *kaomoji* depicts a person bowing with the two 'm's' on each side of the face which represent hands and the eyes lowered which mirrors the bowing of the head. In this context the *kaomoji* emphasizes the gratitude of thanks for the meal and to the chef who made the meal. It is a cultural expression of manners with the *kaomoji* reflecting the physical action of showing respect and gratitude.

All 5 of the above comments are very much related to the culture to which they stem from. The *kaomoji* or emoticon itself reflects the cultural practice of bowing which is done to express thanks or in accordance with a request. The *kaomoji* as used in examples 1-3 soften the illocutionary force of requests in that they acknowledge that they are imposing on a person to do something. The use of *keigo* or polite humble forms in conjunction with a *kaomoji* is further testament to this.

b. The American data

The American data only had two instances of an emoticon highlighting a politeness strategy like the example below. There were no instances of blog writers asking for blog support or for comments as seen within the Japanese data. This is due to how blogs differ in how they are ranked, for example there is no masterpiece button as used by Japanese blog users. The text based emoticon below indexes a joke and the winking nature of the emoticon tells the reader that the comment is not to be taken

seriously as it is written in jest.

1. Can't wait to watch some of my fave shows! And possibly pretend that I'm that reporter if I'm ever mistaken for her again. ;)

4.1.2 Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: The graphic based emoticons (Smiley's)

The table below shows the results of the text based emoticons from the semasiographic extra-linguistic signs data.

Table 4.2 Semiasographic extra-linguistic Data: The Graphic Based Emoticons

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	93	0.93±4.8	19	0.19±1.0
Icons	92	0.92±4.8	18	0.18±0.9
Indexes	1	0.01±.100	1	0.01±.01
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Although there were considerably more instances of the graphic based emoticons within the Japanese data than the American data there were no significant differences between them with the overall total of graphic emoticons and their icons, indexes and symbols. Overall the occurrences of this UMC in the Japanese data was infrequent with only 1.4% attached to Japanese sentences and 0.1% attached to American blog sentences. This data shows that the use of the graphic emoticon was not a popular form of UMC within this blog entry data. Other studies such as Provine et al (2007) suggest that this particular UMC is often associated with synchronous online communication genres. However, as described in chapter 1, the interface of Japanese

blogs allows users to choose from a drop down menu of pre-installed graphic emoticons. This option judging from the results seems not to have been exploited.

Graphic Based Emoticons as Icons

a. The Japanese data

1. この日は夜に勉強会があり

それまでの時間に晩ご飯を食べに行きました😊

A study meeting is on this day so I went to eat dinner beforehand.

2. やっぱり、人気のあるお店だったんだ～

こんなに美味しいんだもんね～😋

As I thought it was a popular restaurant and really was that delicious.

Example 1 and 2 are intended to show the delight of the blog entry writer at the prospect of eating out as in example 1 and the fact that restaurant's this popular are bound to be delicious as in example 2 with the graphic emoticon highlighting the blog writers pleasant surprise at this revelation.

b. The American data

1. When I'm doing anything online or on the computer, be it design work, art, blogging, etc. I find that I have a *really* hard time doing it without my music player going (thank the gods for iTunes). I know I'm not alone. In fact I know about three or four people with the same "handicap" 😊 So since I play my tunes so much I decided to go in and see exactly what I listen to the most ('cause I'm too lazy to find any kind of Last.fm plugin).

2. I had quit WoW a month ago so I wouldn't be losing money to it and to save up. But I got bored and didn't feel like networking so I paid it and played all day. 😞

Example 1 shows how the graphic emoticon is used to highlight the feeling of

inadequacy the blog writer has where they cannot do anything online without music playing in the background. The emoticon is used in self mockery of themselves and of the ‘three or four other people’.

Example 2 shows the blog writer expressing remorse at their lack of will power at not being able to quit WOW (World of War craft) which is an online game which costs money to play.

Indexes only consisted of one instance in both sets of the data and there were no symbol representations within the data.

4.1.3 Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: The *emoji* (pictograms data)

The table below shows the results of the *emoji* (pictogram) counts from the semasiographic extra-linguistic signs data.

Table 4.3 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The *Emoji*

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Emoji</i> (pictograms)	838**	8.4±17.5	0	-
Icons	419**	4.19±11.8	0	-
Indexes	44**	.44±1.7	0	-
Symbols	375**	3.8±7.8	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Overall the use of *emoji* was only used within the Japanese data. The reasons for this could be one or both of the following, the influence of technology and cultural reasons. These *emoji* are pre-installed into Japanese blog interfaces but are not within the American personal blog counterpart. Mobile phones also have them pre-installed although these can easily be downloaded into the American mobile phone.

This explanation may suggest that because the *emoji* are present and

consequently easy to use that this facilitates their frequent usage. However, the author would disagree with this notion on two counts.

1. It takes away the notion of freewill and that people have a choice to use these or not.
2. If this is a readily available option which allows easy emoji inclusion within the text then we would perhaps have seen similar results within the graphic emoticon data.

Like *emoji*, there is also a graphic emoticon (smiley) built into the interface of these Japanese blogs and within mobile phones but within the Japanese data as discussed above only 148 instances of this UMC was counted, the equivalent of 1.4% of sentences having these emoticons attached to them. This, it would seem, would suggest just because it is readily available for the user it does not encourage the selection and usage of the item. It could also mean, however, that the graphic emoticon smiley is not popular within this speech community or the fact that this emoticon is western in origin and nature.

The second reason for their usage therefore could be cultural. As described in chapter 1 many of these *emoji* have their roots in Japanese communication practices, a visual preference stemming from the tradition of language play and *hentai shōjo moji* or a deformed variation of girls' letters. Other reasons can include the importance for the entry to be esthetically pleasing, an enjoyment to read with an emphasis on 'cute'. The *emoji* also allow for self representation or how the author wants to be perceived and thought of. For example, as in the creation of a colorful, cute and interesting blog post.

***Emoji* (pictograms) as icons to represent author emotion**

a. The Japanese data

135 (32%) of the 419 counts of *emoji* classified as icons were used as vehicles to represent the authors tone, emotion, feeling, and functioned semantically. These icons represented *emoji* that represented human or animal faces and were used in a similar fashion as the yellow graphic based emoticon (smiley) but are different in the sense that they are not traditionally defined as an emoticon that expresses emotion.

They are always under the *emoji* menu in smart phones and personal weblog interfaces and therefore defined as *emoji* rather than text or graphic based emoticons which are also examined within the extra linguistic signs categories.

1. 今日は最近購入して以来、愛用しているスキンケアを紹介しますね🌈🌈 *this run run means euphoric or exuberant mood.*

Today I will introduce a new skin care product which I love to use.

2. 乾燥も気になるこの季節、かなりオススメです💖💖

It is a season where dryness (of the skin) is a concern so I recommend this product.

The *runrun* ルンルン spelled out in the *emoji* of example 1 means euphoric or exuberant mood and is an indicator of the mood of the author as she is excited at the prospect of introducing skin care products to her readers. The second example merely repeats the last word of the sentence おすすめ *osusume* or recommendation in *emoji* form to not only add an emphasis to what is being said but also to be playful and ‘cute’.

Examples 3-5 are *emoji* that represent typical Japanese gestures that are found within daily Japanese conversations and interactions.

3. ラッキー🍀

Lucky

4. やっぱキレイでした👍

As I thought it was very pretty.

5. 説明書にはまず Wi-Fi の設定をすれば良い👍！

First things first, best to set up the Wi Fi.

Example 3 is a typical ‘peace sign’ that many Japanese do in photographs. Here the gesture is used to represent author euphoria. Arguably this sign has lost its original meaning but within conversations amongst young people it is often used in

this way to represent a positive feeling. The OK sign in the third example indicates author tone within the comment.

Some examples used non human faces (usually animals) to represent feeling or tone as in the example below.

1. お腹痛いの～。。

おとといからお腹の調子が悪いもも姫。。🐰

My stomach hurts and has been in a bad condition since the day before yesterday.

Other examples used pictograms that are often found in *manga* to visualize the psychological state of the characters, as in sweat drops to indicate awkwardness or distress of the writer as in examples 1 and 2 below. Example 3 is typically found on the temple of *manga* character faces to represent anger as it does here.

1. 一体何処に向かうんだよ・・・💧

Where does this bit go?

2. おなかすいちゃいますー💧

I'm hungry.

3. 説明書はそれだけしかありません！ まことに不親切ですっ💢

The instructions were just that! Very unpleasant!

Emoji as Icons for lexical use (to represent animate or inanimate objects)

Of the 419 icons, 284 (68%) were defined as being used for 'lexical use' whereby the icon was used to resemble the lexical item either by

1. Either replacing the vocabulary item as in 'lexical substitution' or
2. The use of an emoticon just before a word or a phrase whose meaning the emoticon denotes as in lexical representation and emphatic use.

However it must be said that of the 100 blogs analyzed the use of *emoji*

(pictograms) to illustrate lexical items was not used by the majority of Japanese blog writers with only 14 of the 100 blogs examined using the *emoji* in this way.

Emoji Icons as Lexical substitution

1. 今日も会社へ行って、仕事を片付けてきました。🏢🚗🚶

Today too, I went to work, got my work sorted out and came home.

2. これから移動です🚌

Heading off by bus.

3. じゅわじゅわ～🔥

ジュージュュー🔥🔥

The sound of a burning fire

4. 食事はレトルト🍟や缶詰ばかりで炊き出し🍲はない・・・

Dinner included fries and canned products.

5. パパ ママ🎁ありがとう😊

Mum, Dad, Thank you.

6. 7歳になりました～🎂🍰🎁

(My daughter) turned 7.

Emoji icons as Emphatic use

The use of the *emoji* below are used to emphasize the characters of the story and are used after the characters name or in this case position within the family as in mother or older sister.

1. 奥さん👩からは、

「あんまり痩せると気持ち悪いから、もうやめて」

と言われてます・・・🙄

My wife say's that it is creepy if I loose too much weight and told me to stop.

2. 明日は、長女 🧒 と奥さん 🧑 が小学校の PTC 活動に参加する為、会社に行くことができず、強制的に久々の休日を楽しみま〜す。👑

Today, my eldest daughter and my wife went to the school PTC so I couldn't go to work and had a forced day off which I will enjoy.

The *emoji* examples below place an emphasis on the objects within the story with the *emoji* punctuating the sentence by representing the main object of the proposition.

3. ス克蘭ブルエッグとベーコンかソーセージです 🍳

They are scrambled eggs, bacon or sausage.

4. ラストのパリのホテルを紹介 🏨

Introduction to the last Paris hotel.

Examples 5 and 6 below place an emphasis on the verb of the sentence.

5. 明日、報告しますね 📝

Tomorrow I will write the report.

6. 明日も早いのに〜 🕒 早く寝よ〜 🌙

Tomorrow I have to get up early so off to bed early.

Emoji (pictograms) as indexes

There were only 44 instances (or 5% of the total *emoji* count) of *emoji* use where it was used to index a speech act and pragmatic intention of the writer.

1. ブログ`を見て頂いている皆様 !! ご連絡頂いた皆様 !!!
とっても嬉しいご報告ありがとうございます 🙏

To those who read this blog and to those who contact me. Thank you for the delightful report.

The example above indexes a thank you with the bowing *emoji* with the word
ぺこり *pekori* meaning to bow included.

Emoji (pictograms) as symbols

There were 375 instances of *emoji* used as symbols or constituting 66% of the total *emoji* count.

1. 🌈こんな感じでプルプルのジェルで、ジェルだけどサラッと伸びて顔だけじゃなく全身にも使えるんですよ💖💖

私はお風呂上りに毎日使っていて、顔と全身にたっぷり塗ってます💖💖

The gel is very smooth and elastic so can be used not just on your face but your body too. I use it everyday after the bath on my body and face.

2. ごたぶんに漏れず、P Cにウトイ私も全然できなくて、
結局パナソニックに電話して完成しました📞📞。

(パナは平日しか受け付けてないので、主人に平日休みの日にやってもらいましたが、“📞電話が混みあってます📞”

I had to Call Panasonic about my faulty computer. Panasonic are only available on the weekday so I got my husband to call up and they were busy.

The above 2 examples do not act as icons in representing an object or person, nor do they aim to aid in the visual representation of the authors feelings or emotion. Example 1 is an abstract from a blog post on a skin care product. The three *emoji* within the example are uses as lexical supplements that add emphasis to what is being said. The 📞 may indicate that the line is busy or a recorded message on the Panasonic helpline.

4.1.4 Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: *Kigou* (code data)

Table 4.4 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The *Kigou*

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Kigou</i> (code)	380**	3.8±7.2	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Icons	0	0	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Indexes	0	0	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Symbols	380**	3.8±7.2	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

There were no instances of code (*kigou*) use within the American data but 380 uses were counted in the Japanese data. As described in chapter 1, both the American and Japanese keyboard can be used to manually input these conventional codes as in the ♪, ♥ and ★. However, their use as will be discussed more in a discussion of their usage within the comments results section is unconventional. The use of a musical note was originally used to denote music, the heart has developed into a universal meaning of the expression of loving something or someone, and the star was originally the perceived shape of stars found in the sky. The definitions of symbol as opposed to icon and index as used within this thesis is that this UMC carries no semantic (as in icon) or pragmatic (as in index) meaning and are used for both decoration and self presentation purposes on the whole.

1. *kigou* as icons

a. The Japanese data

No instances

b. The American data

No instances

2. *kigou* as indexes

a. The Japanese data

Kigou have no direct iconic or indexical association with the tone / emotion of the writer or signify pragmatic intent, and, therefore, there were no *kigou* as indexes within the Japanese data. They may, however, be used to add joviality to the comment or sentence as in the example below.

1. いつもありがとう～～～♪

Thank you as always

There were no instances of *kigou* acting as indexes within the American data.

2. *Kigou* as symbols

a. The Japanese data

1. ルンルン♪帰国♪

Run run (expresses euphoria) Going back home (to Japan)

2. ね♪ トマトちゃん(^ ^)「ウンチなんて気にしない♪」Tomato *chan* ‘is not worried about his poo’



今日も みんな 元気だったね♪

Today too, everyone (cats) is full of energy.

では、また 明日 (^-^)/~~

See you tomorrow.

Example 1 has two musical notes attached to the utterance and the intention is probably to add joviality to the blog or how the author feels by trying to convey the comment in sing song sort of way.

In example 2 they may add a sense of humour or sense of fun to the narration of the story but again add no emphatic semantic or pragmatic meaning unlike the final text based emotion of the message which indexes and highlights the closing of the comment with a waving hand.

Within the blog entries there were no examples of ♥ or ★ within the *kigou* symbol data.

The American data

No instances

4.2 Phonographic data

4.2.1 Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

The table below shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional phonetic spellings.

Table 4.5 Phonographic Data: Unconventional Phonetic Spellings

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	729**	7.3±10.060	108	7.29±10.1
Semantic function	719**	7.2±10	108	1.1±1.8
Pragmatic intention	10	0.10±0.05	0	-

** (*p* < .01)

The majority of the phonetic spellings in both the Japanese and American data were used to convey semantic meaning by conveying the writer's tone of voice, emotion and feeling. Japanese blog writers used significantly more phonetic spellings to indicate semantic function than their American counterparts (*p* < .01).

Japanese phonetic spellings at times resembled the story telling found in *manga*. The spelling was used to not only convey author emotion but also, readability, and making it a more interesting read. The use of differing font and colour added to the attractiveness of the blog, the visual nature of it and to create an enjoyable experience. This is in contrast to conventional text based writing which may seem formal in the context of this genre and types of online writing in Japan. Comparatively there were few phonetic spellings within the American blog posts.

Unconventional phonetic spelling: semantic function

a. The Japanese data

1. 「こわーーーーっ！！！！」
Scary!!!
2. 「ありがとう！かっこいーーーー大好き☆」
Thank you! Cool-----Love it
3. 浮気相手なんだよーーーーっだ！！
The partner of the affair!!

The examples above all mimic the vocalization of the author's expression. They are all meant to be read in a way that reflects the fear, excitement or surprise in the voice of the writer in each example respectively.

b. The American data

1. The weather was greeeat and the girls cuuute!!!

The author here emphasized the girls cuteness.

Unconventional phonetic spelling: Pragmatic function.

a. The Japanese data

1. ポチっよろしく願ひしますッ！！！！
Potchi' please

Unconventional phonetic spellings used pragmatically mostly consisted of the blog author asking their readers for support or comments. The above uses the onomatopoeic expression *potchi'* (ポチっ) as discussed earlier.

b. The American data

There were no instances within the American data

Within the blog comments American data capitalization (words written in capitals for emphasis and tone of voice) was counted and used in the analysis of a comparison of Japanese phonetic spellings to American phonetic spellings and capitalization. Capitalization within the American blog post data was infrequent and therefore a similar analysis with the blog post data was not considered as it would not produce any interesting or significant results.

4.2.2 Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic Laughter Representations

The table below shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional laughter representations.

Table 4.6 *Phonographic Data: Unconventional Phonetic Laughter Representations*

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonetic laughter representations totals	10	.10±.64	22	.22±.78
Semantic function	10	.10±.64	22	.22±.78
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Overall the phonetic laughter representation totals were very low, with 18 and 22 counts in the Japanese and American data respectively. The results were perhaps not surprising as these blog posts are not written for a specific reader and the use of laughter in what is essentially a monologue may seem inappropriate.

Unconventional Phonetic Laughter Representations: Semantic Function

a. The Japanese data

1. 旦那が横で見えていたのですが「お前、口開けてやってたぞ！」と笑われました。。(￣▽￣;)ハッハッハ

My husband watched and he said that my mouth was open and laughed at me.

The above comment describes how the blog author's husband watched as she took motorbike lessons. The comment from the blog entry illustrates a bit of banter between the pair and the phonetic laughter representation is accompanied by an emoticon.

b. The American data

1. "Well John is a good name for him" I began. "Quite appropriate as I am sure he is probably some gay male escort you paid money for. He sure looked like it! HAHA!"

The above example quotes himself in an interaction he had with a man he refers to as looking like a gay escort which he found amusing and illustrates this with the HAHA.

Unconventional phonetic Laughter Representations: Pragmatic Function

There were no representations in the Japanese or American data.

4.3 Logographic data

4.3.1 Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations

The table below shows the results from the logographic data that includes laughter representations as in the Japanese 笑 *warau* (to laugh) and the English LOL which is an abbreviation of laugh out loud.

Table 4.7 Logographic Data: Unconventional Laughter Representations

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
LOL v 笑	88	.88±2.27	5	.05±.261
Semantic function	88	.88±2.27	5	.05±.261
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Similar to the phonographic laughter representations, logographic representations were used infrequently. Laughter representations within a blog, which is a narration or exposition of events may seem inappropriate in blog posts just as laughing alone would be offline. Emoticons were used to promote feelings of euphoria, surprise and anger in the narration of the blog posts to underline author feeling and self portrayal as well as making the reading of the blog more visually attractive.

Logographic laughter representations: Semantic function.

a. The Japanese data

1. もちろん、この案内所でその温泉の割引券はGET！（笑）

Of course, I got a hot spring discount ticket at the information desk.

This example is punctuated with the *kanji* or Chinese character (笑) to signify the writers joy at getting a discount ticket for a hot spring.

b. The American data

1. Everyone in this house (other than me of course) has a habit of just leaving things where ever they put them and then no one can find anything later, LOL.

The LOL (laugh out loud) gives a sense of the authors predicament when cleaning and indicates her feeling towards this, hinting that she always tidies up in her lighthearted blog entry.

Logographic Laughter Representations: Pragmatic Function

There were no pragmatic functions found within the American and Japanese data.

4.3.2 Manipulation of Grammatical Markers: The Use of Multiple Exclamation Markers

The table below shows the results from the logographic data that includes the unconventional use of multiple exclamation marks defined as two or more that punctuate a sentence.

Table 4.8 Multiple Exclamation Marker Data

	Japanese blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entries (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total use of multiple exclamation markers	227	2.3±8.8	25	0.25±.91
Semantic function	215	2.2±7.8	25	0.25±.91
Pragmatic function	12	0.12±1.0	0	-

There were no significant differences within the use of multiple exclamation marks. In general the use of the exclamation mark was overall low

Multiple exclamation marks: Semantic function

a. The Japanese data

1. でかい！！！！！！！！
Big!!
2. お願い！！！！！！あんた！！
Please!!!! You!!
3. 「こわーーーーっ！！！！」
Scary

The above examples as attached to adjectives were used throughout some bloggers entries as devices to create a more interesting or entertaining story and were used to punctuate the voices within the story whether they are the authors or a character within the story as in the third example which quotes a conversational participant within the anecdote.

b. The American data

1. I'm Back!!!
2. But the best news of last night - I had my first piano lesson!!!!

The first example illustrates the joy of the author being back from holiday and back into blog writing. The second is the joy the author has at taking her first piano lesson.

Multiple Exclamation Marks: Pragmatic Function

a. The Japanese data

There were only 12 instances of multiple exclamation marks used to highlight pragmatic meaning which usually entailed asking the blog reader for support for their blog.

b. The American data

There were no instances of multiple exclamation use intended for pragmatic function within the American data.

4.4 Blog Posts Gender Divided Analysis and results

This section shows the results of the blog entries compared by gender within the Japanese and American corpuses and then cross culturally across gender and language.

Category 1: The Semaisographic signs (All 4 types)

The table below summarizes the collective results of each gender and language group pairing. Full tables of results for each pairing and UMC category can be found in appendix B.

Table 4.9 Summary of Results: The Semaisographic Results

	Japanese female v Japanese male	American female v American male	Japanese female v American male	Japanese female v American female	Japanese male v American female	Japanese male v American male
Total sentences	Japanese female*	x	x	x	x	x
Text based emoticons	x	x	Japanese female**	Japanese female**	Japanese male**	Japanese male**
Icons	x	x	Japanese female**	Japanese female**	Japanese male**	Japanese male**
Indexes	x	x	Japanese female**	Japanese female*	x	x
Symbols	-	-	-	-	-	-
Graphic based emoticons	x	x	x	x	x	x
Icons	x	x	x	x	x	x
Indexes	x	x	x	x	x	x
Symbols	x	x	x	x	x	x
Emoji	x	x	N/A	x	x	N/A
Icons	x	x	N/A	x	x	N/A
Indexes	x	x	N/A	x	x	N/A
Symbols	Japanese women*	x	N/A	x	x	N/A
Kigou	x	-	N/A	x	x	N/A
Icons	x	-	N/A	x	x	N/A
Indexes	x	-	N/A	x	x	N/A
Symbols	x	-	N/A	x	x	N/A

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

X = NO significance

- No data

N/A Not applicable as there was no data within the American corpus that could be compared to.

Japanese men and women used significantly more text based emotions than American men and women in each of their gender pairings ($p < .01$). This significance was repeated in the icon data ($p < .01$). Japanese women used significantly more indexes than American men and women ($p < .01$ and $p < .05$) respectively but this was not repeated within the Japanese men American men / women pairings as overall index frequencies were too low to be significant. These indexes mainly consisted of the blog

author asking their readership for comments or support which was marked or highlighted usually with a bowing emoticon.

Japanese women used *emoji* that function as symbols significantly more than Japanese men and wrote more on their blogs ($p < .05$). These results were the only findings of significance with all other gender pairings and semasiographic sign types producing no statistically significant results. *Kigou* and *emoji* were not used within the American data and therefore a statistical analysis could not be performed.

Category 2: The phonographic data (3 types with the inclusion of the American capitalization data)

Table 4.10 Summary of Results: The Phonographic Results

	Japanese female v Japanese male	American female v American male	Japanese female v American male	Japanese female v American female	Japanese male v American female	Japanese male v American male
Unconventional phonetic spellings	Japanese female**	x	Japanese female**	Japanese female**	Japanese male**	Japanese male**
Semantic function	Japanese female*	x	Japanese female**	Japanese female**	Japanese male**	Japanese male**
Pragmatic function	x	x	x	x	x	x
Phonetic laughter representations	x	x	x	x	x	x
Semantic function	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pragmatic function	x	x	x	x	x	x

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

X = NO significance

- No data

N/A Not applicable as there was no data within the American corpus that could be compared to.

Japanese women used significantly more unconventional phonetic spellings than American men and women and this result was repeated when the Japanese male data was compared with the American male / female data ($p < .01$). These phonetic spellings were not used frequently as pragmatic markers and therefore no significances were found within all six the gender pairings. Within the Japanese male and female data only the semantic function of the phonetic spellings was significantly different.

Phonetic representations of laughter were on the whole infrequent and therefore no differences of significance were found.

Category 3: The logographic data (2 types)

Table 4.11 Summary of Results Table: The Logographic Results

	Japanese female v Japanese male	American female v American male	Japanese female v American male	Japanese female v American female	Japanese male v American female	Japanese male v American male
Multiple exclamation use	x	x	x	x	x	x
Semantic function	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pragmatic function	x	x	x	x	x	x
Logographic laughter representations	x	x	x	x	x	x
Semantic function	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pragmatic function	x	x	x	x	x	x

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

X = NO significance

The use of logographic UMCs within the blog entries or posts were overall very infrequent as documented previously and therefore no significant statistical differences were evident within the data.

4.5 Intercultural Communication and Politeness Theory

Gender and UMC usage within the blog posts has been discussed and the other two areas that this thesis addresses are how online blog communication reflects face to face communication in how it is depicted within the intercultural communication literature and within politeness theory.

The blog entries data discussed here in relation to the frequency and function of UMC usage and the fact that these blog entries are essentially intended for multiple readers rather than one to one interactions, make it difficult to make assertions of the

applicability that intercultural communication theories have on online communication as the communication is one way and not interactive with one interlocutor.

Intercultural communication theories look at and describe how people interact with others so a comparison of these blog entries and face to face interaction as described within the intercultural communication literature is deemed misplaced here.

UMC function and classification 2 which aims to place the emoticons into politeness categories based on the politeness strategies they index was not possible with the blog entry data.

The index figures for the UMCs were overall infrequent across the UMC data with the biggest totals found within the text based emoticons at 66 and 24 within the *emoji* totals. These are far from significant totals to constitute a discussion of whether face to face communication theories, such as politeness theories are reflected in online blog communication and UMC usage. These considerations will be examined within the blog comments data where UMC frequencies are higher.

However, the use of these indexes is shown below according to the strategies they highlighted. This could only be done with the Japanese data as there were only 2 indexes within the American text based emoticon data and none within the American *emoji* data. Therefore a comparison of UMC usage across the American and Japanese blog entries was not possible.

Table 4.12 Japanese Text Based Emoticons that index Politeness Strategies

Minimize the imposition at the time Requests Total 39	Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee Total 8	Apologies Total 5
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions) Total 2	Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings Total 6	Other Total 6

Based on Brown & Levinson (1987) these devices were divided into positive or negative positive politeness strategies. All of the strategies with the exception of greetings and expressions of gratitude were classified as negative politeness strategies.

Table 4.13 *Positive and Negative Politeness Strategies Divided*

Positive politeness strategies	Negative politeness strategies
14	52

4.6 A Discussion of the Overall UMC Data Findings within the Blog Entries

Without wishing to pre-empt the discussion in the next chapter on the blog comment findings, the use of UMCs within the blog entries as compared to how they are used within the blog comments themselves varied significantly in frequency used, their function and the fact that comments are essentially forms of communication directly aimed at the blog writer or comment writer which is open to the general public to read influences this.

Blog entries in contrast are written for a large readership which is unspecified in numbers, gender or demographics and therefore the use of UMCs differ to their role in online interactions.

The Semiasographic extra-linguistic data here was used differently in how it and the UMCs are used in one to one online communication as in e mails or instant messaging. These blogs are written for an unspecified readership in that anyone who has access to an internet connection can read them. Within the American data their usage within all 4 of the extra-linguistic sign categories was infrequent. The Japanese data however, with the exception of the western originated graphic based emoticon (smiley), had frequent instances of these UMCs that littered the pages of their blog entries. At times the entries resembled the offline version of pre-internet *hentai shojo moji* as discussed by Yamane (1986) or the findings of Kataoka (1997).

An example of this resemblance is in the following blog post below taken from a female authored blog entry called '*trouble from the first day and I hate Italians*'. The story recalls the story of the blog author's stay in Italy and gives an anecdote of noisy neighbours and other tribulations within her stay.

Blog post example

初日からトラブル、イタリア人嫌い！

1. もう我慢出来ない 🤦
2. またフロントに行きました
3. ずっと同じお兄さんにクレームしているので・・・
4. お兄さんも「また？」って言っています
5. とにかく静かにさせて～とお願いしたら、今度はセキュリティを呼んでくれました
6. 見た目は警察みたいな制服で、この人なら何とかしてくれそう 💕
7. 言葉は通じないけどとにかく一緒に来てもらって、うるさい部屋を1つずつノックします
8. セキュリティが生徒に「先生は？」と生徒に聞き、先生の部屋に行きました（同じ階でした）
9. 出てきた先生は・・・ポーター？
違います❗最初にポーターと思って一緒に行った男性は先生だったのです
10. ポーター先生は生徒に「ジャポネーゼが・・・」と言っている
「日本人が・・・」ではなくって、もう夜中なんだから静かにしなさいって言えないのかな 🏠
11. ニコニコも今日、日本から着いたばかりで早く寝たいの 📍
なのにお客さんからは電話がジャンジャンかかってくるし・・・ 寝
られません～!!
12. 疲れから段々起こりっぽくなっている自分に気付くけど、とにかく寝させて～
1 時頃、やっと騒ぎは収まった 🤔 とにかく集まっていた部屋の生徒は全て解散させました
13. 明日も早いのに～ 📞 早く寝よ～ 🛌
リーン、リーン えっ？もうモーニングコール 🏠
14. 違います・・・お客様からです まだ誰かから電話がかかってくるって 📞
15. 受話器を外しておいてくださいってお願いしました
16. モーニングコールは鳴らないけど、ニコニコがノックしに行きます
17. イタリア人なんて嫌いだ～と強く思った一日でした

The use of differing font colours, the use of *emoji* to add punctuation as in the exclamation and question marks as in lines 4, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 all give the post a visual presence. The *emoji* in lines 10 and 13 aim to represent the feelings of the author and the situation she finds herself in. In line 13 the use of *emoji* are used to supplement the lexical items and the *emoji* in line 6 does not add any semantic meaning

(she is not in love with the security guard). It adds emphasis to the tone of the sentence and perhaps affection for the ‘security guard’ because he may help her out.

The deployment of UMCs such as the *emoji* used in these examples add a sense of entertainment and visual eye candy. In addition the phonetic spellings emphasize the strong feelings of the author. If the blog post entry is compared to the *hentai shojo moji* that Yamane (1986) refers to we can see similarities and Japanese blog posts like the one above can be argued to be a digital form of UMCs that were written four decades ago in analogue format.

These unconventional phonetic representations of spelling were infrequent within the American data with only 108 instances (comprising of only 1% of sentences). In contrast the Japanese used significantly more ($p>.01$) with 7% of sentences using this unorthodox spelling. These spellings have the role of attempting to mimic the voice of the author and are often found in dialogues found in Japanese *manga* or comics. The role of *manga*, therefore, cannot be discarded in how it influences the type and usage of Japanese phonetic spellings.

A lot of these entries read like *manga* like scenes or depictions. Some Japanese writers included pictures with the use of *gitaigo* to represent vocal attributes or sounds which are often found within *manga*. The example below shows the phonetic spelling ヒッ! (Whew??) with a graphic representation to the cats left ear representing anger and the sweat under the right ear indicating anxiety or stress (The cat does not like the smell of the cake) and in the second picture makes a hasty exit with the words ウワァーッ!! (uwaaaa) and a graphic representing the wind as the cat retreats.



Figure 4.1 Blog photographs

In contrast the American blog posts were closer to standard written conventions (as shown in the infrequent use of UMCs). Although some capitalization of emotive words such as AWESOME (such capitalization stems from comics) were evident these cases were rare and infrequent.

American bloggers used a lot of photos of people and things pertinent to the

blog post. The blog font and its colour remained consistent (a conventional black font perhaps due to their being no other options available unlike some Japanese blog interfaces). A combination of technology (*emoji* and font colour options are available as blog writing tools) and the culture from which the blogger is from also influence the linguistic and non-linguistic behavior of the blog author. These influences such as an emphasis on cuteness, a history of language play (Gottlieb, 2010) and the widely read pop culture of *manga* cannot be discarded therefore as non-influential factors.

4.7 Gender and the Use of UMCs in Blog Entries

Japanese females and males used emoticons significantly more than their American counterparts although there were no differences between the Japanese female and male data. Although these blog posts are examples of storytelling rather than online interaction Japanese men used emoticons significantly higher than American women ($p < .01$). This lies in contrasts to the literature (although none exists concerning blog posts or one way monologue communication) that suggests that women use more emoticons than men. However, this literature does not also include a comparison of languages as well as gender. Culture and technology, it would seem, can play a large role in the influence of UMC deployment, usage and frequency along with the gender factor.

The use of *emoji* and emoticons here as used by both Japanese men and women is to not only to entertain the reader and to make the post more visually attractive but also reflect the notion of the presentation of self persona.

4.8 CMC Theories, Selective Self Presentation and the Art of Storytelling

Walther's hyperpersonal model of CMC hypothesizes that online writers exploit the technological aspects of CMC in order to enhance the messages they create, this in turn manages impressions and facilitates desired relationships. This theory was originally implied to one to one interaction but selective self presentation and

impression formation can be also applied to one way monologue blog entries as they invite comments on these entries. Jones & Pittman (1982) suggest that impression management takes place through a variety of verbal and nonverbal cues in face to face interactions.

Walther & Parks (2002) point out that in CMC the enactment or modification of impression formation in text based CMC is limited to language, typographic and chronemic information. People are concerned with the way others perceive them which motivates people to present favourable and appropriate impressions to others (Goffman, 1959, Schlenker, 1985, Snyder, 1974). This notion is especially pertinent to Japanese communication styles and will be discussed further within the comments data. Here, however, impression formation or self selective presentation through the use of UMCs in blog entries is used to enhance readability of the blog entry, create visual cuteness, interest in the blog and to enhance their own impression which in turn, within a Japanese culture that loves all things cute, can lead to a larger readership which further leads to more blog comments. Japanese blog users take advantage of these UMCs to therefore enhance (however exaggerated or misunderstood), their own self image. This is further helped by the fact that Japanese write their blogs under handle names (a created online self persona), and this UMC usage stems from the need to be seen favourably by their readers when comments are written on posts. This impression can then be transformed into relational interpersonal communication between the blog author and his or her readers.

4.9 Concluding comments

This thesis as outlined in chapter one is broken down into four research enquiries: The function and usage of UMCs, UMC and culture, emoticons and politeness, and gender and UMC usage.

The third enquiry of emoticons, politeness and language use deals mainly with the interaction of two writers within these blogs as reflected in the blogs comments. Therefore, this aspect of the research was not applicable to blog entries or posts.

However, the function and usage of UMCs within blog posts have been discussed in detail within this chapter. In addition how they relate to the culture that produced them has also been examined. The gender of the blog author and their deployment of UMCs has also been given extensive coverage.

As the blog entries are essentially snippets of storytelling which are read and not interacted with it is difficult to access UMC usage in relation to the face-to-face communication literature which focuses on two way interaction. However, the use of the UMCs in blog entries was useful in understanding how these UMCs reflect Japanese culture and the themes introduced within the opening two chapters such as selected self-presentation, *manga* and the indexing of cute femininity.

The main findings and those which produce results that have implications for the research aims derive from the blog comments.

Chapter 5

The findings: Presentation, Analyses and discussion of the blog comments

This chapter examines how UMCs were used by American and Japanese blog comment writers to express semantic and pragmatic meaning. Of the main research questions as stated in chapter 1 the data and the discussion of the findings aim to address the following question

The research focus within this chapter is divided into the first two areas of enquiry:

- e. The function and usage of UMCs
- f. UMC usage and culture

These enquiries address the following questions.

Research enquiry one: The function and usage of UMCs.

- c. How do non-verbal and verbal UMCs function to express or supplement, semantic meaning and pragmatic intention within American and Japanese online personal blog articles and their comments?
- d. Are there technological parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

Research enquiry two: UMC usage and culture

- c. Does UMC usage mirror the language and culture from which it stems?
- d. Are there cultural parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

Results are discussed with examples of UMC usage, and then the chapter concludes with an additional evaluation of how empirical studies within the intercultural communication literature are applicable to blog comment interaction.

5.1 A Comparison with the Blog Entries

When comparing the blog entry or posts data and the blog comment data itself there is a significant jump in the frequency of UMC usage, as in for example, text based emoticons which show a huge increase in both sets of data as the table below shows. This jump is explained by the fact that the nature of the online communication now changes from a blog entry written for a blog readership of unspecified numbers to comments that are written specifically for one person in mind, whether that be a comment written to the blog author, or the blog author who responds to these comments directly.

Table 5.1 *Blog Entry and Blog Comment Text Based Emoticon Summary*

Japanese blog entry text based emoticons	Overall total 949 Icons 883 Indexes 66
Japanese blog entry comments text based emoticons	Overall total 5970 Icons 4386 Indexes 1588
American blog entry text based emoticons	Overall total 43 Icons 41 Indexes 2
American blog entry comments text based emoticons	Overall total 939 Icons 418 Indexes 522

The use of UMCs like the above text based emoticons in blog comments also differs in function. As discussed in chapter 4 these emoticons were used to express the emotion or feeling of the author which in turn made the blog entry more entertaining to read. This emotion or feeling was not expressed toward any one person who may be reading the entry, instead the use of these emoticons were used as a plot device in helping with the narration of the story or anecdote which Japanese personal blog entries invariably are. The American blog entries tended to be more conventional with less reliance on computer technology to make their blogs more colourful, such as varying the font size to emphasize parts of the story or littering their entries with emoticons.

The next section will present the findings of the analysis of the frequency and

function of UMCs found within the blog comments. After a presentation of the results, examples of the specific UMCs and how they function will be discussed.

For reasons of space and to avoid reader confusion, not all comment examples are fully shown in their entirety with some edited to illustrate the UMC function. If necessary, examples are given a brief context regarding the blogs they were found in whereas other blog comments are self explanatory in nature.

In order to concentrate on specific UMCs as there were circumstances where comments had an abundance of different UMCs within the one comment entry editing or shortening was sometimes necessary.

5.2 Category 1 (type 1) Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The Text Based Emoticons

Table 5.2 shows the results of the text based emoticons from the semasiographic extra-linguistic signs data. The total number of sentences within the American and Japanese data was significantly different $p < .01$. Japanese tended to write significantly more comments than Americans, which is reflected in the literature in chapter 1 that suggests Japanese write more comments more and more often than their American personal blogger counterparts.

Table 5.2 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The Text Based Emoticons

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	32675 **	326.8±397.1	24316	243.2±535.2
Text based emoticons	5937**	59.3±105.1	939	9.3±18.3
Icons	4386**	43.8±75.3	418	4.1±8.1
Indexes	1551**	15.5±31.4	522	5.2±10.7
Symbols	0	-	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Table 5.2 shows that text based emoticons were used significantly more in the overall totals and when they are broken down into their icon and index types ($p < .01$). There were no instances in both data sets where text based emoticons acted as symbols. The text based emoticons or *kaomoji* were, therefore, used with the objective to add more meaning, semantically or pragmatically to the comments that they were a part of. These emoticons were, therefore, not used as mere decoration with no sole purpose. There were, however, very rare instances of a line of emoticons in the Japanese data that were not attached to a sentence but as these rare instances were not counted and included within the data as they did not constitute a sentence, they are not included within the analysis here.

These comment interactions are essentially public interactions between two people online for all blog readers to see. In an online text based environment where the interlocutor is unknown or in the case of the Japanese data uses a handle name (Americans use their real name) these emoticons help the writer express themselves semantically without the complication of miscommunication or misinterpretation. These findings would suggest that Japanese online comments are not devoid of feeling and emotion, and the use of these emoticons help give a more explicit ‘picture’ of how the writer feels or wishes to be perceived. Pragmatically these emoticons were used to

highlight and punctuate speech acts and used to soften the illocutionary force of the comments as in requests or negative politeness strategies. They helped to build a friendly online environment and the formation of rapport when attached to speech acts such as praise and rapport building strategies such as expressing agreement and sympathy.

The American data on the other hand had far fewer instances of emoticon use. Their function, objective and application mirrored how Japanese comment writers utilize this UMC, but Americans were more reliant on words rather than these forms of online non-verbal cues to express their tone and emotional intent. Interestingly however, of the 939 instances, over half (56%) were used as indexes to index pragmatic intention. This is in contrast to the Japanese data where 27% of text based emoticons were used as pragmatic markers. Although used sparingly compared to the Japanese comment writers this result seems to suggest that there is a difference in how the role of the emoticon is viewed by Americans and Japanese.

Text Based Emoticons as Icons

Blog comments in their entirety had an overlap of icons and indexes with comment writers using a combination of iconic and indexical uses of these emoticons to indicate semantic meaning or as markers to highlight the writer's pragmatic intention. The following examples predominately highlight how text based emoticons were used to convey writer emotional tone and feeling, and where possible and when meaning is not affected, are edited for length. The examples in both data sets illustrate the general lighthearted or highly spirited nature of the personal blog and its comments. The blog comment examples also may include other UMC examples and each UMC will be addressed in its relevant section.

a. The Japanese data

1. 材材材!!!!(°□°)/

なんて美しいパスタでせう♪

赤と緑・白が鮮やかで、細めのパスタにたらこが絡み…。

もう、たまりませ〜ん！ヾ(≧▽≦*)〃ヾ(*≧▽≦)〃

冷製パスタ味付けが難しそうで敬遠してたけど…チャレンジしたくなりました〜♥

激ぽちーーーー凸凸凸

WoW!!!!

Delicious pasta

Red, green and vibrant white this cod roe pasta looks amazing.

Seasoning it looks difficult and I want to challenge myself and give it a go.

Geki pochi' ーーーー凸凸凸

The opening of the comment starts with a 材材材!!!!(°□°)/ (oooooooooh) mimicking surprise at the beautiful looking pasta that the blog writer has presented on her blog post. The comment writer expresses delight at the idea of eating the pasta and the double emoticon / *kaomoji* ヾ(≧▽≦*)〃 ヾ(*≧▽≦)〃 following the comment もう、たまりませ〜ん！ *mou tarimaseen* (meaning I cannot bear it anymore) emphasizes the writer's euphoria.

The comment closes in *pochi'* which is an onomatopoeic representation of the sound of a key being pushed on the keyboard. The use of the Chinese character 凸 (as in 凸凹 *dekoboko* meaning unevenness) is used creatively as a representation of the forefinger pressing the key. The pressing of this 傑作 *kessaku* or 'masterpiece' button within the blog interface helps raise the blog in popularity within the blog rankings (Kavanagh 2010).

2. 私、あんかけかた焼きそば好きです〜('艸 `*)

こんなに太いのがあるんですね！知らなかった〜

細い麺は確かに時間がたつとヘナヘナ～ですからね＞＜；

どっかにないかな～探してみようっと ♪ ポチ☆

I love *ankakekata* fried noodles('艸 `*)

I didn't know there were noodles that thick.

Thin noodles get flimsy over (cooking)time hey >< ；

Wonder where I can get them. I will look for them

3. 同じメーカーかは定かではありませんが、こちらさいたまでも、同じような太いかた焼きそば売ってます。

今度私も作ってみようかしら (*^_^*)

あんかけ焼きそば、我が家もブームになった時期がありまして、名古屋出身の友達にヨコイのソースを頼んだこともありました。

ホント独特な味つけですよー(～0～)

私は味噌カツも好き、「世界の山ちゃん」も大好きで一す (*^_^*)

ぽち☆

We have a shop here in Saitama that sells thick noodles. Next time I will try and make them(*^_^*)

Ankake fried noodles have become a bit of a boom in our household, and I got my friend from Nagoya to send me *yokoi* sauce.

The sauce adds a particular taste to it ー(～0～)

I like deep fried pork *miso* and also the restaurant *sekai no yama chan* (*^_^*)

ぽち☆

The first line of the above example 2 uses a *kaomoji* that reflects the happiness of the writer in her statement that she really likes *ankake* fried noodles and continues that she did not realize that there is a thicker soba available (introduced on the blog post). She mentions that the thin noodle has a tendency to become weak and flimsy over time and punctuates this with an emoticon that represents sadness. The comment writer concludes that she will look for this new thicker noodle in the shops.

In example 3, a comment found on the same blog the comment writer suggests that they will attempt to cook the thicker fried noodle punctuated with an emoticon that

she found at a shop. She explains in the comment that there was a boom for ankake fried noodles in her household and that her friends from Nagoya were asked to send the *Yokoi* sauce ヨコイのソース that is poured on the soba and comments on its unique taste punctuated with an emoticon. The comment finishes with the writer saying they like *miso katsu* 味噌カツ deep fried pork *miso* and like the blog author that they also like the Japanese restaurant *sekai no yamachan* (世界の山ちゃん) that is punctuated with an emoticon which emphasizes the joy that they have a commonality in that they both like the same place.

4. ふわふわ感わ、嬉しい 0(≧▽≦)o ですね ♪ ♪

イイものと出会えるとイイですねえ ♪ ♪ ♪

It is fluffy, very happy 0(≧▽≦)o

It is good to come across good things.

The above comment expresses the thought of the comment writer regarding a blog post on a softener product. She comments that it seems (judgment is based on the blog writer's thoughts within the blog post) very airy and fluffy and finds joy in that, concluding the comment that it was good that the blog author came across such a good product.

5. 楽しい散歩、

ヤギさん達も幸せそうな顔して草食べてますね (*^_^*)

軽トラはヤギさんの為にある様なものですね (^-^)

A fun walk

The goats look happy munching on the grass hey (*^_^*)

The small truck looks like it was made for them (^-^)

Example 5 is a comment posted on a blog post about the writers 'day out' to the nearby costal area along Kagoshima in their small truck with two goats. The blog writer is a farmer. Like most Japanese blogs photographs are included within the blog

post. The comment writer comments on how happy the goats look at eating the grass and how their small truck looks catered for and modified for their goats. The *kaomoji* adds to a sense of intimacy and interest that the writer wishes to share with the reader and the tone and feeling that she wishes to project is emphasized by the *kaomoji* which creates a friendly and warm online interaction.

6. うわっwかわいい～～♪
私もやりたい (● ^ ω ^ ●)
いないない～～ば～～～！
Wow, cute
I want to do it too (● ^ ω ^ ●)
Peek a boo

Example 6 is a comment on a blog post regarding the blog writer's grandchild playing a peek a boo game with the words *inaina ba* meaning peek a boo. The comment writer comments that the child looks cute and that she too would like to play the game. In what is a very simple comment the use of the emoticon emphasizes the feeling of the author in its simple but playful nature.

7. ブラマヨ見れませんでしたー(T__T)
再放送しないかなー！
I didn't see Black mayo
8. ブラマヨの番組、見ました(´艸｀)
I saw Black mayo

Examples 7 and 8 show the contrasting fortunes of the comment writers with comment 8 disappointed (indicated by the emoticon) at not seeing the Black mayo TV program and comment 9 expressing happiness (emphasized by the emoticon) at seeing the TV program ブラマヨ black mayo.

9. 教習スタートしたんですね(≧▽≦)ノ

バイク操作難しそう^_^;

You have started bike lessons hey (≧▽≦)ノ

Operating a bike looks difficult ^_^;

The emoticon used in the first line emphasizes the glee that the blog poster has started motorbike lessons but the next line concedes that using a motorbike can be difficult with the feeling of the writer accentuated by the ^_^; emoticon.

10. う〜〜〜ん！

モモちゃんも凜ちゃんも

可愛かぁ〜ッ！o(≧▽≦)o

Yep

Momo chan too Rin chan too

Vey cute

This very simple comment refers to the pictures of the blog writer's cats that were uploaded onto the blog post. The comment writer thinks the cats face is cute and the emoticon underlines her feelings towards it.

11. ホット一息ケーキタイム♪いいですね (^ ^)

旦那様の分まで食べちゃえ食べちゃえ〜〜＼(^o^)/

スイーツは女の特権です (^ ^) !

(^o^) って・・・その猫様のお顔〜〜笑えるんですけど (=^▽^=)

クリーム好きなんですね♪メタボ注意ですよ(ー_ー)!!

Hot cake time is good (^ ^)

Eat your husband's portion＼(^o^)/

Sweets are a women's privilege (^ ^) !

(^o^)That cats face makes me laugh (=^▽^=)

The cat like cream hey but be careful of metabolic syndrome(ー_ー)!!

Comment 11 was found on a blog post titles こどもの日』はケーキを食べま

したか？？ (Ate cake on children's day). The blog post described how she (the blog author) bought some cake at the local store on the bank holiday *kodomo no hi*. Her husband said he would eat his cake later, but when he didn't she decided to eat it for herself. In addition the blog writer shows how she gave some of the cake to her cat.

The opening comment that is punctuated with a emoticon suggests that 'cake time' is fun and the second line joyfully encourages the blog writer to eat her husband's cake with the emoticon \ (^o^) / adding to the sense of fun. The next line jokingly emphasizes that cake is a woman's special privilege or right. This adds to a sense of camaraderie between the blog writer and comment writer who are both female. The following line comments on the cats smiling 'facial expression' that is sandwiched between emoticons. The last line gives a comical warning to be careful about the dangers of eating too much cream that can lead to metabolic syndrome

Blog Writer and Blog Comment Writer Interaction Icon Example

Comment writer

私この洗剤、すごく気になっていました！

今度こそ買ってみようと思います (*^▽^*)

I'm really interested in that detergent.

Think I will buy it next time (*^▽^*)

Blog author's reply to the comment writer

そうなんですか～ (´艸 `)

すごいよかったですよ (- ^ ▽ ^ -)

Really (´艸 `)

I'm very glad (´艸 `)

The above comment interaction example is a simple exchange of dialogue

whereby the comment writer writes of their interest in the blog posts introduction of a clothes softener product and that they will go and buy it. The author replies that she is glad and punctuates her comments with two emoticons. The interaction seems trivial but the use of emoticons here help to make it more meaningful and perhaps more friendly, the blog authors response (exaggerated or otherwise) shows an interest in their partners feelings and intentions and the emoticon aims to emphasize that. This in turn can create a warm friendly interaction that although may not be deep in content allows for a smooth communication process to a reader they will probably never meet in real life. This could lead us to the assumption that because you may never meet the person does it matter what impressions they have of you. Even with the acknowledgement that the readers and comment writers are unknown there was a need to 'get along' and show an interest in one another (feigned or intended). This was also evident within the American blogs but done more so with the conventional written word rather than to also emphasis their feeling with emoticons and words.

b. The American data

Under half of the emoticons used within the American data were used as icons or as indicators of writer tone, emotion or feeling compared to nearly three quarters of the Japanese emoticons.

1. First of all, I love your blog! You are such an inspiration to me. Second of all, Harper is adorable and growin' like a weed!!! Third of all, I LOVE Army Wives. I was engaged to an Army man (he called it off...we won't go there) so it sucked me in from the beginning! This season is a real tear jerker! I think I've cried at some point during every episode this season! :)

The above comment is about a TV drama and the writer is expressing her feelings towards the drama and how she cried during every episode and the emoticon represents a positive emotion she has towards the TV programme. Like Japanese comment examples this particular example has a variety of UMCs within it to aid in the

writer's expression of feeling.

2. We both bawled at the General Holden/Emalynn scene. :)

Here in example 2, there is again another expression of feeling towards a scene from a TV drama.

3. i LOVE army wives. i've become obsessed this summer. it is such a fun show. harper is such a cutie! i love reading about her :) im a huge fan of sonic too...maybe i'll ask them to create something new for me too :)

The first emoticon in example 3 highlights the positive feeling the writer has towards the blog and about the blog writer's daughter specifically. The second emoticon again highlights the author's fondness of something and punctuates a sentence that suggests she will go to Sonic (a slush soft drinks store) to ask them to conjure them something up for her.

4. I miss Sonic :(

Example 4 illustrates a statement of how Sonic was a store that was in the comment writer's neighbourhood but has since closed down and the writer is lamenting this fact.

5. I totally know what you mean about comparing our babies to others! It's hard not to! I'm so anxious and excited for Lucas to sit on his own.. he is 5 months and not there yet but I know he will be on his own time! :)

The emoticon within example 5 emphasizes the comment writer's pride at the development of her child and his ability to nearly sit on his own

6. She's such a cutie...yep everyone was napping here today too...it was a rainy lazy day in New England :) That cake looked yummy. Next on my SAHM list of things to learn is Fondant. Got any recipes?

The above emoticon adds to the tone of the comment that the author was content with the fact that her children too were napping giving the day a much needed lazy feel.

7. Kelly, it was great seeing you last night as usual! ;) We enjoyed spending time with everyone for Melissa's BDAY!

The above emoticon highlights positive feelings towards meeting Kelly last night. There were a few comments like this that indicated that some of the American blog writing community has actually met each other face to face. This was further given emphasis by the fact that that these comment writer's tended to write on each other's blogs that emphasized an intimate group identity and community.

8. Those pictures are priceless... I am so glad you got them back! :)

The emoticon draws attention to the fact that the blog author got some pictures (posted on the blog) back from an ex-partner.

9. That cracked me up :)

A simple emoticon in example 9 emphasizes the writer's 'cracking up' or state of laughing towards the content of the blog post.

10. Happy birthday, same as my darn anniversary. So I'll never forget it :)

Example 10 illustrates a simple emoticon that exemplifies the tone that the comment writer wishes to convey.

Blog Writer and Blog Comment Writer Interaction Icon Example

There were no examples within the American data.

Text Based Emoticons as Indexes

Indexes will be discussed in further detail respect with to their relationship to politeness strategies in chapter 6 but will be discussed here in how they highlight pragmatic intent. Indexes are defined as signs that add pragmatic meaning. An index is a mode in which the signifier might not resemble its signified object. It is not arbitrarily assigned and is directly connected in some way to the object. The use of the UMC takes into consideration the context in which signs are produced and interpreted. The sign is defined by its effect on the interpreter or how the writer wishes the comment to be interpreted. Japanese emoticons were varied and offered depictions that try to mimic and index bowing, sweating and the use of arms as in a *banzai* emoticon. American emoticons however were limited to basic emoticons such as a smile or a wink. The context in which they were written was, therefore, important (perhaps more so than the Japanese comments) in the deciphering of what the emoticons represented as the same emoticon could pragmatically be attached to various pragmatic meanings. The Japanese data also had emoticons that served multi pragmatic purposes but some emoticons were more suited to for example a request, as in *m()m* than others. The examples below show how blog comment writer used emoticons to index pragmatic intention through the use of emoticons.

a. The Japanese data

1. こちらこそ、いつもありがとうございます。

m()m

Thanks as always.

2. コメントの難しい記事へのコメント感謝します。 *m()m*

Thank you for the comment for such a difficult blog post.

3. ポチありがとうございます ^ ^

Thanks for the *pochi*.

4. ありがとうございます (* ^ ▽ ^ *)

Thank you very much.

The four examples above are typical of examples where the blog writer expresses thanks to those who leave comments on his or her blog. The first two examples are related to Japanese face to face communication in the sense that the emoticon is attempting to mimic the gesture of bowing, a gesture used for respect, in greetings and for showing gratitude. The m shapes on either side of the parenthesis indicate hands, and within the parenthesis which acts as the face, the two lines reflect the bowing gesture of the head and the lowering of the eyes. This emoticon indexes the comment pragmatically as a marker of gratitude and the emoticon serves to highlight visually the intention of the comment author.

Examples 3 and 4 are emoticons that reflect a happy face that reflects gratitude to the reader for something they have given them, in this case a compliment regarding their blog or a fan that often makes comments and expresses an interest in the blog writer's post. The emoticon acts as markers that index the writer's pragmatic stance towards the interaction and in turn adds warmth to the comment which in turn indexes a desire to close the distance between the interlocutors and act as a marker of rapport.

5. 期待にこたえられる記事にするようがんばりますね^^;

I will try to write a blog post that exceeds your expectation^^;

6. アメリカも修学旅行があるんですね！それさえ初めて知りました(^_^;))

America too has school excursions, first time to hear that (^_^;))

7. 確かにたらこの冷製パスタって食べた事ないかも ^^ ;

でも間違いなく美味しそうですね☆

I haven't eaten cold cod roe pasta ^^ ;

But make no mistake it looks delicious.

The emoticon or *kaomoji* of (^_^;) or (^^;) as used in the above examples has the symbol of cold sweat on the side of its face which reflects a form of Japanese

communication that emphasizes a hedging device or to indicate embarrassment. It was used predominantly if the writer felt that what was being written was too negative in tone, has the potential to upset the reader, and to soften an utterance that may be considered too assertive or strong. It was also used to index author embarrassment or as an expression of the Japanese cultural value of modesty. (This is discussed further in chapter 6)

Example 5 hedges the blog writer's own ability to write another blog post that could exceed the expectations of the reader but promises to give it their best. Example 6 indicates a feeling of awkwardness or embarrassment of knowing a piece of information for the first time and example 7 declares that they may never have eaten cold *tarako* pasta before and hedges the comment with an emoticon. The following sentence then declares 'but make no mistake it looks delicious' to further soften the comment.

8. おいしそう〜〜〜(*ノωノ)

たらこスパ大好きなので、すごく魅力的です(💰'v`*∞p)q.+

Looks good (*ノωノ)

I like cod roe spaghetti, looks really tempting (💰'v`*∞p)q.+

9. 作ってみたいヾ(@ ~▽~@)ノ

Will try to cook it ヾ(@ ~▽~@)ノ

10. おしゃれですね〜〜^^

Fashionable hey ^^

Examples 8-10 are used to index compliments or act as markers of rapport and are attached to a compliments, admiration and encouragement aimed towards the reader. Example 8 compliments the blog author's pasta receipt, example 9 is a declaration by the writer to try the recipe that the blog writer posted which in turn creates a sense of solidarity towards the reader. Example 10 is a simple compliment of the blog poster's fashion sense.

Blog Writer and Blog Comment Writer Interaction Index Examples

Blog comment writer

こんにちは☆

JR 高島屋、たまに行きますが浪越軒、気付きませんでした(^-^;) (Indicating awkwardness, Softening device)

和菓子も大好物なので、今度行ってみます☆

Hi

I sometimes go to *takashimaya* but I haven't noticed *Namikoshiken* (^-^;)

I love confectionary shops and will try to go there.

Blog writer

こすさんは名古屋の方なんですね♪

浪越軒、デパ地下の中でもとっても小さな売り場なので、私もこれまで気付きませんでした^^ (Indicating that she also did not notice the shop, showing empathy, goodwill and understanding with the comment writer)

Kosu san, you are from Nagoya hey.

Namikoshiken is in the department underground and is so small even I didn't notice it ^^

The above interaction relates to a discussion on the blog writer's post about a confectionary shop in Nagoya. Within the interaction the blog writer realizes she is talking to another person from Nagoya. The comment writer indicates that she has never seen the confectionary shop and indicates her awkwardness and uneasiness with this by softening the statement with a ^^; emoticon. The blog writer's response is to suggest that the shop is so small that she herself did not notice it and she emphasizes this sense of goodwill, understanding and empathy with an emoticon. This use of reciprocal emoticon usage, where a comment writer uses an emoticon and the blog writer replies in kind with an emoticon was often seen within the blog data.

b. The American data

1. Thanks Tim, Tim's Elves, and Blog Community! :)
2. It was great to meet you, Justin, and... congratulations! Great idea and great execution. On behalf of fashion-challenged men worldwide, I thank you :)
3. NICE! I love this, Camila. Thank you for being a positive force in the world :)

The three examples above all show and express gratitude to their readers and the emoticons emphasize this. All of the comments here underline a sense of solidarity between the communicators and the emoticons add to this sense of intimacy.

4. Harpers outfit is soooo cute. Glad to hear she is doing well. :)
5. Wow! Beautiful couple!
My husband and I have been married ten years also. :)
6. I am so bummed I didn't find out about the Kimono opening nor the scholarship til just now. :(So inspiring to see success stories!! Awesome as usual Tim! :D

Examples 4 and 5 use the same emoticon as the first 3 examples but the emphasis is on the noticing of admirable qualities or showing an interest in the blog author's family whether it be showing concern as in example 4 or as in example 5 the comment writer compliments the picture within the blog of the married happy couple and in a sense of shared commonality mentions her own happy marriage.

Example 6 uses an emoticon that indicates laughing or a big grin. The emoticon punctuates a sentence that compliments and indicates praise for Tim, the blog writer and the content of his blog.

7. I like the remodeling! Great job on it. There should have been a line out of the condo building! :) Perhaps during summer when it is warm and they can line up for a conga line too?

The comment above addresses a blog post where the blog writer decided ‘to pull their condo off the market and give it a little facelift’.

The comment illustrates a joking nature that is imbedded within a compliment.

Example 7 compliments the home improvements made by the blog writer to their house but then the comment writer makes a joke on what work should have been done. It is indexed as a joke with the use of the emoticon to punctuate the sentence.

8. Welcome Bonnie! Thanks so much for the lovely comment! It's nice to know that other people have similar anxieties in such situations. Definitely visiting your blog! Keep visiting... =)

Example 8 is an example of what could be described as ‘if you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours’ in the sense that the writer promises to visit their blog but then asks the reader to keep visiting theirs and is softened by the emoticon that punctuates the request.

9. You know, if you had some of those little hard marshmallows from cereal that you reviewed a while back, you could have at least had some fruit flavor. ;))

10. WOW! We were watching Meleah very First virgin bowl! LOL! I thought it was pretty good for the first time. You'll surely get better if you want to. :))

In examples 9 and 10 the emoticon is intended to soften the illocutionary force of the statement. The examples end with a winking emoticon that is placed to indicate that the suggestion is not intended to be taken seriously but is a light hearted suggestion. Example 10 is also a comment that is joking in nature, indicated by the LOL! (laugh out loud) insertion and the compliment that they thought they were good (at bowling). The comment is rounded off with the suggestion that they will get better with practice, it is an encouraging comment hedged with an emoticon.

11. Blogger crashed because everyone was stinkin' wishing you happy birthday. Glad you got the cake of your dreams you spoiled brat :))

The final example above could be construed as an insult, but the emoticon

helps the reader understand that the comment is meant to be a joke and not a deliberate insult. The example could be construed as an example of positive politeness whereby the writer is able to be blunt without causing offense.

As described in chapter 1, the blog administrator is the blog author and therefore, has the ability to delete comments of an offensive nature and, therefore, no such comments were found in this data.

Blog Writer and Blog Comment Writer Interaction Index Example

Blog comment writer

Hey Johnny! Thank you very much for the award! I have already posted it somedays ago and, as a very distracted one, i forgot to thank you here! please forgive my failure... ^^ So... thanks for remembering me! Take care...

Blog writer

Hahaha! Don't worry about it Bela, you've already thanked me in your awesome blog post. Have a great week! ;-)

In the above example of a blog author and blog comment writer interaction the blog comment writer apologizes for not thanking the blog author and interestingly uses a Japanese style emoticon (this seems to be a characteristic of this writer) to punctuate this apology. In a response to this the blog writer laughs it off and reassures the comment writer and closes the comment with a friendly farewell punctuated by an emoticon. These emoticons added to the intimacy of the comments and were used to clarify and emphasize the pragmatic intention of the writers.

This technique of instances whereby a writer used an emoticon and the readers reply also included one was very much a characteristic of the Japanese data (examples like the above were infrequent within the American data). This UMC pattern could be

attributed to a type of collectivist group like behavior whereby the speech community dictates UMC usage. For example in blog comments that registered high emoticon frequencies (as well as other UMCs) almost all comment writers used them. In blogs that registered few emoticons as in some male blogs the norm for that particular blogging community was to use emoticons sparingly. In short, the linguistic and non-linguistic practices of the majority of the blogging community may influence newcomers who may see many of these emoticons deployed in comments and behave likewise. This is an argument which may be difficult to prove but the pattern of emoticon and UMC usage in blogs seems to reflect this.

Text Based Emotions as Symbols

There were no instances of *kaomoji* or emoticons that served as symbols which are defined as having no semantic and pragmatic meaning.

5.3 Category 1 (type 2) Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The Graphic Based Emoticons (Smiley's)

The table below shows the results of the text based emoticons from the semasiographic extra-linguistic signs data.

Table 5.3 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The Graphic Based Emoticons

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	297	3.0±6.6	265	2.7±12.7
Icons	273	2.7±6.3	184	1.84±9.062
Indexes	24	0.24±0.79	75	0.8±3.7
Symbols	-0	-	0	-

When comparing their use to the blog entries there was a bigger jump in frequency from 19 to 265 in the American data compared to the Japanese data up from 93 to 297. Like the blog entries the use of this particular UMC was not popular with only 1% of Japanese sentences having them attached along with 1.1% of American sentences. Although these UMCs are within the Japanese blog interface of some blog hosting sites like Yahoo, the option to use them was not undertaken by Japanese users. The use of the graphic emoticon or smiley within the blog data, both within the blog entries and their comments was not a popular option to convey semantic or pragmatic meaning. The low frequency of instances within the Japanese data can be explained by the fact that these signs are western in origin and that the text based Japanese equivalent was the preferred option for Japanese blog comment writers. However, even though these graphic emoticons or smiley's are western in nature, Japanese technology (as found in blog interfaces or mobile handsets whereby these UMCs are installed and available to use) has Japanized these graphic emoticons leaving an emoticon that is not always identical to the western equivalent as will be seen in the data examples below.

Graphic Text Based Emoticons (Smiley's) as Icons

a. The Japanese data

1. 私も、飲み会の後でも散歩に行きますよ 😊
土手で寝てしまったことも 🤔
凍死しなくて良かったです 😊
朝、2時半くらいにガルに起こされました 😊
Even after going for a drink I go for a walk.
I once slept on the embankment
Glad I didn't freeze to death.
I woke up by gal at 2:30 in the morning.

The use of graphic emoticons illustrated all serve the purpose of indicating the writer's psychological state. Line 3 which states 凍死しなくて良かったです 😊 'glad I did not freeze to death' is a sentence that could be viewed as a joke to represent the writer's emotion and relief that they didn't die in the cold. The following sentence jokingly says that they woke up at 2:30 in the morning.

2. 絶好調さん。。。油断は禁物です来週半ばには次の寒波があ〜〜〜〜 🤖
Be on your guard a cold snap is coming.

The above comment addresses the cold snap that is coming and ends in unconventional phonetic spelling with a blue faced worried and cold looking graphic emoticon that adds emphasis to the mood of the comment.

3. 「鯉のぼりのおいなりさん」 最高 😊
孫ができたなら作ってみよう 🌟
Carp streamer sushi, good idea

When I have grandkids will try and make it myself.

4. 姐さん！！ちょっとちょっとおー、かわいいじゃないのお 🍷

Wow! Your wife is cute.

The above two comments are written in relation to a blog post about the blog writer's 22nd wedding anniversary which includes a picture of the couple in wedding attire. To celebrate the wife has made 鯉のぼりのおいなりさん (Carp streamer sushi). The first comment suggests the idea of making this sushi as marvelous and is punctuated with a graphic emoticon. The second comment suggests that the bride (a judgment made based on the posted picture) is very cute and this is emphasized in light hearted fashion with an emoticon with heart shaped eyes. The tone appears friendly through the phonetic spelling with the elongated vowel sound through the use of an unconventional small お 'o' sound, along with the visual emoticon aim to capture the feeling of the author or the spirit it was intended to be sent in.

5. 体調は徐々にですが、回復してきたのですが、この土日出勤で、新たに疲れ気味です・・・ 🤒

My condition is gradually getting better, but I have to go to work at the weekend so I can feel a new fatigue coming on.

The final example above is the blog writer's reply to a blog comment that enquiries about his welfare as he (the blog writer) has been working very hard. His response states that although he is feeling better, he has to go back to work on Saturday and he is already beginning to feel tired at this prospect illustrated by the fatigued looking graphic emoticon.

b. The American data

1. All I can say is 🤔🤔🤔🤔 and :_(—> That last one is 😭 with a single tear drop.

Example 1 is self explanatory in that the graphic emoticons are used with explicit intention of expressing the author's emotional state.

2. Wow...I personally wasn't sure I wanted to know what was gonna happen next but now...AWESOME! 😄

This graphic emoticon that follows the capitalized AWESOME is used at the revelation that they know what is going to happen next in a TV drama.

3. Thank you for all this, it felt like I was watching another episode of stargate which I will sorely miss! I can't believe how wrestling and drama series beat stargate 😞. It's really sad and pathetic!

This comment also discusses TV dramas and the dismay that he writer feels that wrestling and a drama series beat his favourite TV series stargate in the TV ratings is highlighted by the graphic emoticon.

4. I burst out laughing when I saw the cake. Oh my. It looks like it tasted good though 😄
5. I love it – I agree with the first comment – you could write a bitchin' bad-date movie if you put your mind to it, no problem, too funny! 😄xxx

Examples 4 and 5 have graphic emoticons that simply represent the author's laughing emotional state.

Graphic Text Based Emoticons (Smiley's) as Indexes

a. The Japanese data

1. おはようございます 🍷
これからますます頑張ってください 🍷
応援しています 🍷
Good morning
Keep up the good work.
I'm supporting you.
2. こちらこそいつもありがとうございます 🍷
末永く宜しくお願いいたします 🍷
Thanks from this end.
Please follow me (my blog) forever.
3. みむママさんもお気をつけ下さいね。 🍷
応援ありがとうございます 🍷
Take care of yourself.
Thanks for the support.

There are 7 instances of graphic emoticons within the 3 examples above. The emoticons in example 1 index comment openings or greetings as in the first line, a *ganbatte kudasai* or good luck that shows support for the blog writer in the second line and the last line ends in an open declaration for the blog writer indexed by the last emoticon.

The emoticons in example 2 index gratitude and a request to Please follow me (my blog) forever or always 'do me the favour' (末永く宜しくお願いいたします) of receiving your (blog comment writer's support). Example 3 illustrates an emoticon that highlights a show of support to take care in the first line (it is reciprocal as the writer to whom this comment is addressed said the same thing) and gratitude in the second line for showing continued support for their blog.

b. The American data

1. Thanks very much for all of these ‘what if...’ story-lines, greatly appreciated. 😊
2. omg, I totally love this cake!!! Look at all the great colors. And the abstract writing. How very original!! 😊
3. In all seriousness: I’m sorry to hear about all the complications you’ve been having and hope that things work out for you soon. I hate to hear you this stressed 😞
HUGS

Example 1 indexes gratitude and the emoticon in example 2 indexes a speech act of complimenting which can lead to deeper interpersonal relationships online. In a similar strategy that can build online relationships example 3 offers sympathy and support for the reader’s current predicament.

4. That would be the only good thing about going back to college to me, running off with a student into the sunset. 😊
5. Hey, ease up.. winter is my 4th favorite season, right after the other three! 😊

Examples 4 and 5 are jokes, example 4 uses the emoticon to suggest that the comment should not be taken seriously and is only a bit of fun. Example 5 is a joke, or an attempt at one and the emoticon aims to clarify and index this.

Graphic Text Based Emotions (Smiley’s) as Symbols

There were no instances of graphic based emoticons that served as symbols which are defined as having no semantic and pragmatic meaning.

Blog Writer and Blog Comment Writer Interaction Examples using Graphic Based Emoticons

a. American example

Comment writer

I shower daily, I dress well, I always smell good 😊 I'm your everyday Y&R soap star.

Reply to comment

Aw Brian, you sound totally date-worthy. Wanna go out? Oh, wait, I'm not looking. Damn. 😊

The above American data example is a lighthearted, almost flirtatious interaction between the two online interlocutors and the emoticons aid in projecting writer tone to downplay the potential of taking the comments seriously.

5.4 Category 1 (type 3) Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data:

The *Emoji* (Pictograms)

Table 5.4 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The *Emoji* (Pictograms)

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Emoji</i> (pictograms)	393**	3.9±9.0	0	-
Icons	46*	.5±2.6	0	-
Indexes	103**	1.0±5.5	0	-
Symbols	244**	2.4 ± 4.4	0	-

* (*p* < .05) ** (*p* < .01)

American bloggers did not use *emoji*, while Japanese bloggers used them sparingly when compared to the other semiasographic extra-linguistic signs. Overall Japanese instances of *emoji* were fairly low in frequency with only 1.2% of sentences having *emoji* attached to them. The trend of UMCs substantially increasing in numbers from the blog entry to the blog entry comments was not seen here within the Japanese data. The blog data had *emoji* attached to 8% of sentences. Again, the notion that just because the some blog interfaces have *emoji* built into them and are accessible for the writer to use, does not mean that the user is likely or more prone to use them. The use of *emoji* within the blog entries and blog comments were used differently in terms of functions, objectives and intentions. As discussed within the blog entry results *emoji* acted as icons that represented author (or character within the story) tone and emotion but the majority (68%) were used lexically to give emphasis to the lexical item or replace it entirely. However, there were no instances of this kind of usage within the Japanese comment data. The majority of the *emoji* at 62% were used as symbols in that they gave no strict semantic or pragmatic additional meaning to the comment but were used as tools for a public self online image or at times for decoration adding a ‘cuteness’ to the comment. Within the blog entries data 45% of *emoji* were used as symbols. 26% of the *emoji* were deployed as indexes (this is in contrast to the 5.2% used as indexes within the blog entries).

Emoji (Pictograms) as Icons

1. 姐さん！！ちよつとちよつとおー、かわいいじゃないのお 🍷
 姐さんてば、チュー💋してる、キャーーーーーっ！
 ニヤニヤしちゃったよお～~~~~~
 Young lady you look very cute.
 Kissing you
 Grinning a broad grin

Example 1 is embedded in an example of a comment with a variety of UMCs

which most Japanese comments tended to have. The first UMC is a graphic emoticon that expresses the feelings of the author (it acts as an icon). The lips are iconic in the sense that they represent the lips that are ‘kissing’ the blog author in a witty comment that is meant to be interpreted as being light hearted in nature.

2. 今日も多治見は雪❄️こそ降っていないものの
かなり冷え込みました
…っここで本題に入る前に日記途中ですがランキング応援のお願いです🍷
応援のあと。。。日記の続きをどうぞご覧下さいませ🍷

Today although it wasn’t snowing it was very cold.

To cut to the chase please support my blog (press a blog button) in the rankings. I will then continue with my blog so please take a look.

Example 2 has three *emoji* examples with the first used lexically to represent snow or to emphasize it within the comment. The next two examples are used as indexes. They both index requests. The first is attached to a request with the words *pekori* ペコリ meaning to bow that emphasizes the request being made with the aim of softening its illocutionary force. The third *emoji* acts in a similar way and asks the reader to continue in their support of the blog with a friendly looking red cheeked *emoji*.

3. 神戸は未明から雨🌧️です

It has been raining since early dawn here in Kobe.

4. 春休みに入る前に御誕生日になりますね🎁

Before we enter the spring holiday it will be your birthday.

Examples 3 and 4 are examples of *emoji* acting as lexical items. The *emoji* is used as a lexical replacement that adds additional meaning to the comment putting the commonly held assumption that people get presents for their birthday.

5. 初めて聞きました👀!?

It’s the first time I have heard that.

6. ポチ君かっくい～

でもご主人さんに奪われたのねっ💧

Potchi kun (a dog) is cool.

But he was taken away by my husband.

Examples 5 and 6 are representations of the author's psychological state. Example 6 emphasizes the shock of the comment writer of hearing something for the first time and the second represents a tear to indicate the sadness the blog writer feels (in jest) by the fact that her husband took her dog away (draped in soccer team colours) to watch a football match.

Emoji (Pictograms) as Indexes

1. 素晴らしい👏

Wonderful.

2. 50周年まで仲良くねー👏

50th anniversary, you must get on well.

3. 成長ホルモン開始おめでとう🎉

Congrats on your growth hormone start.


4. コメントどうもありがとうございます🙇

Thanks for the comment.

5. こんにちは🐸

Good evening.

Example 1 and 2 are comments that both refer to an auspicious occasion and are both found within a blog post that talked about the blog poster's wedding anniversary. They represent the author clapping which is itself an action that indexes the speech act of congratulating someone. Example 3 is a party popper that is used to refer to the congratulations that the comment addresses. Example 4 is of a girl bowing in gratitude to index the speech act of thanking someone. Example 5 is used like an emoticon to represent the writer's face and to index a greeting, but in this case the emoticon is a frog not a human form.

6. こらこらあ~~~~


Expression of anger.

7. まだ上手に打てないから 痛いし血が出るんだよね〜

Because I cannot do it (injection) well it hurts and sometimes it bleeds.


The *emoji* in examples 6 and 7 are often found in *manga* comics to index the psychological state of the comic character. Example 6 indexes anger, it does not look like what is traditionally viewed as anger (an angry looking emoticon could be used here) but is something that most Japanese (those that are *manga* readers) would recognize as a sign to represent anger. Example 7 shows sweat which is often used in *manga* to represent characters in an awkward psychologically state and the comment here expresses how the writer still has not mastered growth hormone injections.

***Emoji* (Pictograms) as Symbols**


1. 孫ができたなら作ってみよう

作ってみよ〜と


Will try to make it when I get a grandchild.

2. いのぼりのおいなりさん 可愛いですね

A carp fish cake is very cute hey.

3. ホント素晴らしいです


Really wonderful.

4. さわやかに、がんばってください

Invigorated, do your best.

5. 嬉しいです

I'm Happy.

6. せめてレギンスくらいは履いておこうね

At least wear leggings.

Comment example 1 expresses the desire of the writer to do something and examples 2 -5 are attached to adjectives that describe the author's feelings. The *emoji*

attached to them, however, offer no additional semantic or pragmatic meaning, again in the strictest sense as they have no connection to what is being said by the author but instead may add tone or decoration to the comment. In addition it can be argued that it is a presentation of the writers ‘public self image’, an appeal to be liked and well thought of. The four leaf clover in example 4 uses the association of ‘good luck’ with a four leafed clover. Comment 6 has no relationship with a penguin. The comment addresses how high school girls are bare legged in winter. They could at least wear leggings suggests the author who attaches an *emoji* penguin to her utterance. The penguin has no connection to what is being said and is very loosely connected to the cold weather (which this comment addresses) that we associate penguins to live in.

Blog Writer and Blog Comment Writer Interaction Japanese Example

Comment writer

春休みに入る前に御誕生日になりますね🎁🍷

Your birthday is just before the spring holiday hey.

Reply to comment

わあ〜い😊

お誕生日覚えていて下さったんですね💕

Wow.

You remembered my birthday.

This example shows how a blog comment writer remembered the blog writer’s birthday (indicated in previously posted entries). The blog writer responds by saying it was nice of you to remember and attaches hearts to the comments. This could be construed by an outsider as the flirting of a courting couple who know each other intimately. However, they are both married women and the heart marks on display are

far removed from their original learned meaning of the expression of love. Therefore, such instances may add tone to comments but add no insightful meaning.

5.5 Category 1 Type 4. Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: ♪、♥、★ { }

Kigou (codes) Data

Table 5.5 *Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The kigou (codes)*

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Kigou</i> (code)	3151**	32±73.4	29	0.3±1.4
<i>Kigou</i> as Icons	0	-	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Indexes	0	-	22	0.2±1.3
<i>Kigou</i> as Symbols	3151**	32±73.4	7	0.07±0.7

** (*p*<.01)

As explained in chapter 1 there are ways that American users can input these *kigou* manually via the keyboard just as Japanese users can albeit differently. However the fact that there were no instances within the American data would suggest that their usage within this context, in online blog comments, is not necessary in the minds of these users or perhaps it is not fashionable and to use them and may be considered ‘weird’ or ‘childish’.

These *kigou* or codes are also seen in the writings of personal letters of young girls in the studies of Kataoka (1997) and in the *hentai shojo moji* and it seems their use has continued within the digital world of online writing. Similar to their usage in the cute handwriting of the 1970’s and early 1980’s these *kigou* have no real semantic or pragmatic meaning and are far removed from their original meaning of being a heart, a star, or a musical note. There were no instances of *kigou* that functioned as icons in both the American and Japanese data.

***kigou* as Indexes**

a. The Japanese data

There were no examples of *kigou* that acted as indexes within the Japanese data.

b. The American data

1. try to visit my blog too.
much love♥
2. Sending you much Reiki and love!
{ { { { { { { { x Linda x } } } } } } }
3. Je vous aime (I love you) Joseph ♥
Bisous (Kiss)

Example 1 is a comment that closes with the heart emphasizing the ‘love’. The second example is the creative use of parenthesis to create the illusion of Linda sending out hugs to her reader. Within the Japanese and American data this was the only one instance of the parenthesis being used. Example 3 is a deliberate attempt at writing in French (the writer is American) to create a romantic atmosphere (playing on the stereotype of the French being romantic) and is indexed with a heart mark which is universally associated with the concept of love.

***kigou* as Symbols**

a. The Japanese data

Symbols are classified as having no strict emphatic semantic or pragmatic meaning. The symbol or symbolic sign as defined by Peirce (1955) is assigned arbitrarily or is accepted as societal convention. The connection between these symbols and the writers’ psychological state is loose and highly arbitrary when attached to sentences. The UMCs that are classified as symbols offer no semantic or

pragmatic meaning in the strict sense and are used mainly for decoration, self representation or to add a sense of intimacy / friendliness or fun to the tone of the comment.

The following examples show how these UMCs were used in identifiable patterns, these examples, however, all have one thing in common in that, although they may add a jovial tone to the comments they do not act as icons in showing the writer's 'facial expression' or emotional feeling. These signs do not resemble the signified as in icons such as a happy face or a pictogram (*emoji*) that replaces a lexical item or is used for emphasis.

An index is a mode in which the signifier might not resemble its signified object. It is not arbitrarily assigned and is directly connected in some way to the object. This can be seen in the above American index examples where the ♥ is connected with and indexes affection, fondness and love. The Japanese examples below, however, do not have this association. Musical symbols represent music and is accepted social convention and stars are the representation of what is found in the sky. They both have no semantic or pragmatic meaning within the sentences below but they are used to convey a sing song voice through ♪ and the star may be used to indicate nighttime.

Used in comment openings and closings

1. お帰りなさ〜ィ ♪

Welcome back.

2. こんばんはあ☆

Good evening.

3. 次もよろしくお願いします。ポチッ☆

Thanks in advance.

4. (*'▽'*)わあ ♪

たこ焼き、おいしそう！ポチッ☆

Octopus balls, look good.

5. 頑張って(・へ・)

応援してるよ☆～～

Good luck

I'm supporting you.

The above examples were used in comment openings and closings and in conjunction with other UMCs as well and the symbols could be removed from the comments without altering semantic or pragmatic content.

Used after or within the addressee's name

1. トンタンクさん ♪

Tontanku san

2. ゆきさん ♪

Yuki san

3. りい子☆さん

Riiko san

Used after or within addressee names may add a friendly tone but without a sense of semantic or pragmatic meaning in the strictest sense.

Used after adjectives (with examples used in conjunction with phonetic spelling and kaomoji)

1. きゃ～可愛い～♥

Kya cute.

2. 旦那さかも、本気なところが素敵☆です！！

Your husband too, his honesty is great.

3. そしてひょうちゃん可愛い(*U ω U 艸)☆

Hyou chan is also cute.

4. ワクワクしますなあ～ ♪ ♪

I'm very excited.

5. 今年の夏は、楽しそうだね～♪
免許が取れるのが楽しみです～♪

Looking forward to this summer.

Looking forward to you getting your license.

6. 教習に付合ってくれるなんて、優しい～(〃 ∇ 〃)ホッ♥

Its nice that your husband goes with you to lessons.

7. ご主人さん、一緒に付いていてくれて優しいですね～♥

The fact that your husband goes with you is sweet.

Used in conjunction with *kaomoji* and unconventional spelling a sense of added cuteness or friendliness can be achieved, the phonetic spelling and *kaomoji* can help in the expression of writer tone and these symbols can add or be a signature of the writer.

Speech acts of gratitude

- いつもどうもありがとうございます♪
またよろしく願いいたします♪

Thanks as always for your comments.

Please continue to support me.

There were examples at the end of comments written by blog writer's who thanked their comment writer for his or her support. Most of these cases were indexed with a bowing emoticon to index the speech act of thanking someone. Here, however, the example uses musical symbols which may add a tone to the utterance but does not necessarily represent an extension of the writer in face or body.

Used consistently throughout or random in position within the comment

うん ♪

実家にいた時、タコ焼きにご飯だった。

あっ！今もそうかも ♪

おかず足りないとき、冷凍たこ焼きチン ♪ してます。

ルフィーくんのタコ ♪ にぼちん☆...:*

Yep

In my parents house we had octopus balls Today too, maybe.

If there aren't enough side dishes I will heat up some cod roe pasta.

Potchi to rufee kun's octopus.

The above example shows the musical symbols used in what appears to be random throughout the comment and there is a ♪ inserted in the middle of the last sentence for what appears to be no logical reason., although on closer consideration it could indicate the chiming of the microwave oven. *Taco yaki* (タコ焼き) or octopus balls has no connection with the symbol ♪ and the stars which follow the *pochin* ぽちん sound that mimics the pressing of the *kessaku* 傑作 button add no additional information on the psychological or emotional state of the writer.

b. The American data

1. LOL..I know..I cant figure out why they call them bad♥♥

2. Chris..

Nice to meet you..I will follow your travels too.♥♥

All of the seven *kigou* that were classified as symbols within the American data were taken from the same blog written by an elderly lady. The first example ends in hearts which has no relation to the sentence it is attached to and if removed would not alter the sentence meaning. The universal meaning of the ♥ mark that is a learned

symbol that represents love for something or someone is not used in this way in this example. The true or original meaning of the symbol is, therefore, watered down or diluted or what Kataoka (1997) would call semantic bleaching in the sense that it is used without the intention of adding semantic or pragmatic meaning but perhaps as a writer's habit, trademark where there is little meaning behind its usage.

The second example is similar in that there is no declaration of love that is usually associated with a heart symbol. The heart symbol may add a sense of tone to the comment but does not express the author's true tone or pragmatic intention in the same role as an emoticon does, as they do not act as an extension to or a representation of the author's face or body. It can be argued that these symbols are there for the author's projected self image in order to give an impression of how they want to be perceived. Can we say for instance, as in the second example that the writer 'loves' or has genuinely strong feels for the addressee when they are sharing their first online encounter? The interlocutors are both female and the writer may have intended the use of these heart marks as symbols of female bonding online or as a warm welcome. Therefore these symbols do have meanings but not under the definitions of what constitutes an icon and index as illustrated in chapter 3.

5.6 Category 2: The Phonographic Data

Category 2 phonographic data is broken down into two types:

1. Unconventional phonetic spelling.
2. Phonetic representations of laughter.

5.6.1 Phonographic data: Unconventional Phonetic Spellings

Table 5.6 shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional phonetic spellings. It shows the unconventional spellings and table 5.7 adds the inclusion of capitals or words written in capitalization for author tone and emphasize and for pragmatic intention when attached to speech acts. Although this

may seem like comparing apples and pears as the Japanese language does not use the roman alphabet as its main script Japanese can employ it along with *kanji* (Chinese characters), *hiragana* and *katakana* giving it a total of four scripts with endless possibilities to manipulate them to create unconventional phonetic spelling. It was therefore regarded as acceptable to compare the Japanese data with both the American unconventional spellings and capitalization to see if there would be a shift in statistical significance.

Table 5.6 Phonographic Data: The Unconventional Phonetic Spellings

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	4569 **	45.7±74.2	670	6.7±14.8
Semantic function	4058**	40.6±64.3	586	5.9±11.5
Pragmatic intention	511	5.1±11.0	84	0.84±3.553

** ($p < .01$)

The results in table 5.6 clearly show that there is a strongly significant difference between the frequency of unconventional phonetic spellings within the American and Japanese data ($p < .01$). The numbers of instances that index pragmatic intention drop significantly in both sets of data, and when compared to indexes within text based emoticon semiasographic signs data the overall totals are significantly lower.

Table 5.7 The Unconventional Phonetic Spellings with the Inclusion of Capitals

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling and capitalization	4569**	45.7±74.2	2097	20.97±52.6
(American data only)				
Semantic function	4058**	40.6±64.3	1843	18.4±43.1
Pragmatic intention	511	5.1±11.0	254	2.5±10.5

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

32% or 670 of the 2097 of unconventional phonetic spelling used within the American data were spelling based. The remaining 1427 or 68% were capitalized words which functioned in the same way as their spelling based counterparts. This shows that when American blog writer's vocalized their tone of voice within their writings the use of capitalized words seemed to be more satisfactorily way to do it. Unlike Japanese phonetic spelling where the elongation of vowel sounds seems to be relatively easy the use of extended vowel sounds or the tweaking consonant sounds in English may render the word incomprehensible. There is also the notion of the English language having a strong tradition of accurate grammar and spelling (Cook, 2004) Interestingly, however, not taking into account language variation including accent and dialect, there are only five vowels and 17 consonant phonemes in Japanese compared to the English language total of 20 vowels and 24 consonants. This could suggest that there is a possibility of a greater variation in this kind of language play within the English language. However, this can be countered by the fact that all *native* Japanese words must end in a vowel although there are words that end in *n* or *ん* and these are primarily words borrowed from Chinese.

Semantic Function: Japanese Data

1. うにちゃん、可愛いですね～('^-*)/

Uni chan, you are very cute.

2. 目がクリクリで可愛 い～♪

Eyes are big, round and cute.

3. これは笑うでしょう～～～（笑）

Will laugh at this hey.

4. あー行きたいなあ。

店長とこざるさんにお会いしたいなあ！

I wanna go.

Want to meet the shop manager and you.

5. かっこいいーい！かっこいいーい！

まじかっこいいじゃありませんか??

楽しそうに乗ってる～～～！

教官、やさしいいいい！！

Cool! Cool!

Really cool??

Looks like you are having fun riding the bike.

The teacher is kind too

6. 優しい教官だよお～($\geq \omega \leq$) b

You have a kind teacher

7. キャハh～～～～！

ポチくん、なんて可愛いんでしょ！！ギュウーっ！！

Pochi was very cute.

8. カワイイ・カワイイ！！

何しても、カワイシーですわ～～ん。

So cute, so cute, cuter than anything.

All of the above Japanese examples of unconventional phonetic spelling all

have the aim of attempting to mimic the vocal sounds of the speaker. The use of elongated vowel sounds aim to capture the emotion or feeling of the author. The majority of the examples use the dash ~ to represent the elongation of the vowel sound and this type of unconventional phonetic spelling was the most frequently used by Japanese blog writers. The other examples as in 4 and 6 show the deliberate deployment of the small use of the hiragana あ or お (which does not exist in conventional writing) to mimic the lengthening of their vowel sounds. Example 5 uses the small ぃ or ‘i’ sound multiple times to replicate the sound of the writer’s excitable voice that the teaching instructor is very kind. Example 7 is the vocal spelling of the English word cute written initially in katakana with three — dashes to represent the lengthened vowel sound and ending in two small *tsu* っ sounds. These small *tsu* っ in this example indicates a final glottal stop and is often found in the dialogue of *manga* comics (Akizuki 2009). In fact, the use of all these unconventional phonetic depictions of spelling are reflected in the spoken interactions found in the Japanese comic or *manga*.

Semantic Function: American Data

1. Yesss I just got back from a meeting and have a bajillion more tasks to embark on, and as I sat down to my computer I thought, "Jebus,
2. And, yeah, my son, who is about Leta's age, is freaking me out with his vocabulary. The other night, as I was putting him to bed, he asked if we could "resume" our game of Wii "Donkey Kong" the next morning.
 "Sure, buddy!" I said. "We'll tackle that *crazy* level we just unlocked!"
 "It's not *that* crazy, Dad. In fact, it's actually quite reasonable."
 Well, excuuuuuuse me, Little Einstein.
3. First of all, Heather, the thing to be truly terrified of is the math homework that she'll be bringing home in third grade that you struggled with in your second year of college. OhMyGawd!
4. oh yeh, I was gonna ask

5. Is that chair for Marlo's time outs? I loooove the room.
6. Aghhhh!!! The tile is killing my eyes! I'm going to have a seizure!! P91 blog 52
7. Niiiiiice accent colours. I have those small Ikea vases too - I adore the textures.
8. Condom pic, my super fav...
9. Do whatever you need to do to keep on a regular posting schedule- steal computers, use the computers at Best Buy...whatever.
Love BYTES! Love bleeeeds!
10. I will not rest until I find a Mr. T baby mask for my baby!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Boo to viruses too...we just got rid of a naaaaaaaaaaasty one!
11. Seriously you two KIIIIIIIIILL me!!! HAHAHAHAH!!
12. This is too flippin' funny!
13. HI-larious!

The American examples above were all used with expressions that express the feeling or mood of the speaker. The examples here are varied but the majority consists of the manipulation of vowel sounds as in examples 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12. These examples are deliberately spelt unconventionally so as to be read with an understanding of the writer's emotional intent. Example 11 is an example of a capitalized unconventional spelling representation. This was counted as both a capitalized and an unconventional phonetic spelling UMC. These instances however were few within the data. Other examples like this include the capitalization of representations of laughter which again were very rare within the American blog data. Examples 1 extends the 's' sound in yes and the use of the capitalized HI followed by a dash in example thirteen's HI-larious is intended to indicate to the reader how the emphasis of intonation should be on HI with an extended 'I' sound. Examples 4, 8 and 12 are perhaps not as 'unconventional' as the other examples but are informal in tone and aim to mimic the 'voice' of the writer as being informal which this communication platform provides. The use of 'pic' as in the abbreviation of picture, and 'fav' as in the abbreviation of favourite are by no means conventional. These kinds of examples although not widespread within the data are included here to show the variation of unconventional spelling within the American data.

Unconventional Phonetic Capitalization Examples

1. I LOVE ARMY WIVES! I've watched it since season 1, i agree this season has a great story line. And yes i cried like a baby when Emmalynn and General Holden! LOVE IT!
2. I'm not a hypochondriac and HATE going to the doctor. I never tried to go any extra times as a kid either.
3. Oh and by the way "HURRAY...MOM GOT POOPED ON...IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GOT IT!" Just wait till you are holding her and she throws up in your hair...I have been there an experienced it. It's comes with the territory.
4. It's been a while since I stopped by your blog and WOW! has Harper grown.
5. First, I am glad your grandfather is ok. Second, I thought what your mom thought and THIRD, your father is HILARIOUS!!!
6. I ADORE your handsome Dad, Grand Dad, and the humor in this situation
7. I know I've shared this with you before, but I have to share it again....I LOVE YOUR FAMILY!
8. Yes, I make all my own video's and I do all the editing, it can be taxing, but always FUN!
9. Now THAT would be AWESOME!
10. It really WAS fun. I had no idea bowling could BE so much fun!

The use of capitalization as used by American blog writers and as shown in the semantic examples above tended to capitalize adjectives that described tone, feelings and emotions of the writer themselves or towards something or someone. The use of capitalization added to the 'loudness' in volume or emphasis of the capitalized word. In other words, the capitalized word aims to indicate to the reader that these words are emphasized in intonation for clarity and sense of tone.

Pragmatic function: Japanese data

1. K さん、笑ってないで助けてあげて～！

K san, don't laugh, please help me.

2. ポチ君、またパパさんの邪魔かなあ～。 (^ - ^) b

Is *Pochi* kun getting in the way of Papa again?

3. ご主人さんは何てパワフルなんでしょう～

その元気を私にも分けてくださ～い !!

Your husband is powerful.

Give me some of that power.

Example one playfully asks the reader not to laugh or help them. Example 2 uses *kana* or I wonder to hedge the statement of the blog authors getting in the way of *pochi kun*, a dog (an observation based on the blog authors entry). The comment is punctuated with an emoticon to indicate that the comment is intended as a joke.

Example 3 is a playful joke suggesting that the author's husband is so powerful that he should share that with the writer too. The extended vowel sounds give the reader an indication of how it is meant to be read and subsequently interpreted.

Comment openings and closings

1. お疲れ様です～☆

Otsukaresama desu.

2. こんばんはあ ♪

Good evening.

3. おかえりなさ～い ^^ ♪

Welcome back.

4. にゃあもさん、こんばんは～ ^^

Good evening nyaamo san.

5. ご無沙汰でしたあ～～～～ ^^ ；

Comment opening and closings that were written phonetically were often accompanied by other UMCs such as *kaomoji* and *kigou*.

A show of solidarity

1. 7 歳のお誕生日おめでとう！！

この一年も健康で楽しいこといっぱいありますように～～☆

今日はいっぱいお祝いしてもらったかな♪

Happy 7th birthday.

Hope you have a healthy and fun year.

Will you get lots of presents today.

2. お疲れ様でした～

ゆっくりしてくだされ～

Well done

Take it easy

3. 来週も楽しみでーす♪

Looking forward to next week.

4. 22 周年、おめでとうございま～す！！

Congratulations on your 22nd anniversary.

The examples above are used in comments that express interest, support and empathy with the reader. Example 1 offers their blessing to their reader for the forthcoming year and example 2 offers some sympathy with their ‘family issues’ and asks them not to overdo it. Example 3 is a comment that expresses an eagerness to read the blog writer’s next blog entry and the final example congratulates the reader on their wedding anniversary. The use of unconventional spelling here (vowel sounds are lengthened with the use of the dash ~) heightens the pragmatic intention of the writer and gives the comment a more intimate feel. The use of *kigou* or codes adds to the friendly nature of the interaction.

Used in requests as solidarity markers

1. またわからない事があったら教えて下さいね～。ところでブログゆるりと再開しました。よかったらまた遊びにきてくださいね～＾＾

If there are more things I don't understand please tell me. By the way I restarted my blog so come and visit if you can.

2. 是非 グアムからのリポートを発信してくださいね～！！

By all means send a report about Guam.

3. 私に思いっきりのぶった切りをよろしくお願いしますッ！！！！

Please continue to show your support.

These comments all ask the reader to do something but the phonetic spellings 'take the edge off' the imposition of the comment giving it a more fun and friendly feel. The comments also show an interest in the blog author and can create a sense of solidarity with them.

Pragmatic function: American data

Expressing thanks

1. thank yooooooooou !

A show of solidarity and expressing compliments

2. Great to hear your cleaning and cleaning project is going so well!

Doesn't it feel FAAAABULOUS to weed out stuff? You're right...it DOES make you feel lighter!!!

3. I LOVE when you do these!!!! You are sooo funny! Blog 69

4. Your cake is total awesome-ness! Happy Birthday. Blog 69

5. Hi **Deb**!

OMG...that's toooooo funny!!

Comment openings and closings

6. Helloooo Lady Sorrow!

OMG...I was JUST think about you today and wondering how you were...and here you are!!!

YAAAAAY!

SOOOOO glad to see you back, dear lady!

7. You're the BEST!

Have a grrrrreat weekend!

I love ya mucho too!

XXXXXXXXXX

The use of unconventional phonetic spelling that marked pragmatic intention or highlighting totaled 84 compared to the Japanese data of 511. Of those 84 instances the majority fell into the above 3 categories of expressing thanks, showing support and giving compliments and within comment openings and closings which helped create a sense of solidarity with their reader.

Unconventional use of Capitalization: Pragmatic Function

A show of solidarity and expressing compliments

1. Harper is such a DOLL!!

2. Please tell!!!! Where is her outfit from?!?!?!?!? PRECIOUS!

3. PS....Harper is ALWAYS precious!

4. I wish you could HEAR my BIG GRIN over here!!! What a GREAT video! Hey, you need to eat a hamburger or something... OK, I'm just jealous at how FABULOUS you look!

5. You da...BOMB.

6. Hiya Chrissy!

First of all, I LOVE your new avatar!!!

It's SOOOO cool!

And secondly, I'm SOOO glad you started blogging, girl!

You're an incredibly talented writer, who I'm SOOO happy to have met!

All of the comments above show an interest in the blog comment writer or with the topic or themes within their blogs. The first three comments compliment the blog writer's child, a baby girl named Harper. Examples 4, 5 and 6 compliment the reader in some way, either with what they have done or with their appearance.

Comment closings

7. Thanks for stopping by, FG!

Hope you had a COOL day!

8. Hello again Cher!

You are SO bad!

*but in a GOOD way!

9. LOVE your newsletter...LOVE your blog...LOVE your kids...I would say I LOVE your handy husband, too...but that just seems WRONG!!!

The comments above are examples of humorous comments and exchanges where the capitalization places an emphasis on the humour or banter intended within the statement.

Expressing gratitude

10. THANK YOU. My inner monologue voice feels much better about it now, actually.

And you're right, part of it has to do with the fact that it's incredibly useful--a simple monosyllable, where all other options are cumbersome and unnatural sounding. (And y'all is natural sounding? Man, I'm confused.) Anyway, thanks for your stamp of approval!

The final example above is self explanatory in that the capitalization emphasizes the ‘thank you’.

5.7 Category 2 Phonographic Data:

Type 2: Unconventional Laughter Phonetic Representations

The results in table 5.8 below show that overall there were very few unconventional laughter phonetic representations when compared to the other UMC types. Only 0.3% of Japanese sentences had this UMC attached to it, compared to 1.1% of American sentences. There was no statistical difference between the two data sets. A reason that can be given for this low frequency usage can be explained in how the use of the emoticon was preferred in the representation of laughter. Within the Japanese data the use of the logographic 笑 meaning *warau* to laugh was used ten times more than the phonographic counterpart and is discussed in the logographic results section.

Table 5.8 *Phonetic Representations of Laughter*

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonetic				
representations of	120	1.2±2.7	267	2.6±6.7
laughter total				
Semantic function	120	1.2±2.7	267	2.6±6.6
Pragmatic intention	-	-	-	-

Semantic Function: Japanese data

1. ありがとうございます。

決めてくれたらカッコいいですねえ。

ご主人さんと特訓だあ。あはは。

Thank you.

If you decide it is cool.

Training with your husband.

2. なんとなく、目がウルウルしちゃって

本当に恥ずかしそうに見えました。あはは。

My eyes watered and I looked really embarrassed.

3. (^▽^)アハハハ!笑わせていただきました～！！

That made me laugh.

The examples above are self explanatory and include phonetic representations of laughter to indicate the laughter of the writer when expressing or writing the comment.

Semantic Function: American data

1. hahahahahahahahaha! I just want you to know that I HOWLED when I read that!

2. Oh, my goodness GRACIOUS!! You are hilarious! I cannot quit laughing. These PICTURES! Haaaaaaa!!! I really, really, really love the baby Mr. T. That is awesome.

3. I LOVE YOUR CAKE! ahahahaha, so funny!! ya, everyone freakin' out over blogger was quite hilarious, and by hilarious i mean pitiful...hahahah!

4. Funniest thing I've read in a long time! Hahahahaha

5. Hahaha, no way!! I've totally seen that billboard and wondered what that store was like!

The examples above all show variations in length of the laughter representation

‘haha’ with the longer versions meant to represent a sustained amount of laughter.

Pragmatic Function: Japanese Examples

There were no examples of pragmatic function within the Japanese blog data.

Pragmatic Function: American Examples

There were no examples of pragmatic function within the American data

5.8 Category 3 Logographic Data

5.8.1 Logographic Data: Unconventional Laughter Representations

Table 5.9 below shows the results from the logographic data that includes laughter representations as in the Japanese 笑 *warau* (to laugh) and the English LOL (laugh out loud). The use of *warau* 笑 at 1246 was over ten times more than the 120 found within the Japanese phonographic representations of laughter. The American data of 158 is just over 100 less than the phonographic laughter above. This could be the result of LOL being a phrase used mainly by the young or that it is used more in synchronous computer mediated communication platforms where there are time constraints in the creation of messages. The use of 笑 being the preferred choice over あはは *ahaha* and its variations may be related to the speech norms of the speech community.

The overall Japanese frequency of these UMCs that depicted laughter representation was significantly larger than the American data ($p < .01$.) When divided into semantic function there was still a significant difference ($p < .05$.) Within the pragmatic marker category there not enough instances for there to be a statistical difference between the two data sets.

Table 5.9 Logographic Data: Unconventional Laughter Representations

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total logographic				
laughter	1246**	12.7±25.7	158	1.6±3.9
representations				
Semantic function	1229**	12.3±25.5	158	1.6±3.9
Pragmatic function	17	0.17±.49	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Logographic Laughter Representations: Semantic Function

a. The Japanese data

1. 腕・お腹がパンパンでっせえ～～（笑）

My arm and belly seem to be getting fat.

2. Comment writer

はじめまして。いつも読み逃げしてました・・・

22 年おめでとうございます！！

我が家も結婚して13 年。出会って15 年。

それぞれ+15 キロ増（笑）

Nice to meet you.

Congrats on your 22nd anniversary.

We've been married 13 years, met 15 years ago.

Since then we have both put on 15 kilos.

3. Comment reply

こんばんは

旦那様、15 k オーバーですか～～幸せ太りなんですよ～～

うっ・・・私もオーバー更新中・・・（笑）

Good evening

Your husband put on 15kg, happy fat?

I too am in the middle of putting on weight.

The use of the (笑) in the above examples can lead to a fun atmosphere and one that is not threatening but welcoming. They are all attached to conversations which are light in nature and the use of laughter can indicate the enjoyment they get with such interactions. Both uses of this laughter representation are used to show the embarrassment they feel towards putting on weight.

b. The American data

1. "all books buy one get one 50% off"? I've had my eye on a few things under ten bucks LOL.
2. You as the inspiration for Sandra Bullock-- LOL - perfect!
3. Oh my goodness, you can't be serious! This is hilarious! Glad they at least thought of adding the "size chart", lol. That's funny!

The American examples are self explanatory in that the LOL (laugh out loud) represents the laughter of the writer. In contrast, Americans tended to use laughter as an expression of enjoyment whereas Japanese writers used it to laugh at themselves or to express embarrassment.

Logographic Laughter Representations: Pragmatic Function

a. The Japanese data

1. 22 周年、おめでとうございます

我が家の22 周年…あと12 年ほど…
うーん、想像つかないです！（笑）

Congrats on your anniversary.

12 years until we reach 22 years.

I really can't imagine it.

The example punctuates a joke that the comments are intended to be read as. It is fun, lighthearted and brings a sense of intimacy to the interaction.

b. The American data

There were no instances within the American data.

5.9 Manipulation of Grammatical Markers: The Use of Multiple Exclamation Markers

The table below shows the results from the logographic data that includes the unconventional use of multiple exclamation marks defined as two or more that punctuate a sentence.

Japanese blog comment writers used significantly more multiple exclamation marks than their American counterparts ($p < .05$). Within the semantic category there was a stronger significance ($p < .01$). The pragmatic marker category did not show any statistical significant difference. Although the exclamation mark is not used officially as punctuation in formal Japanese writing it is used in some informal writings. In English, however, its use as punctuation is standard written convention. This result was then considered a surprise.

Table 5.10 Multiple Exclamation Marks

	Japanese blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American blog entry comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Multiple exclamation mark total	1131 *	11.3±25.7	585	5.9±15.2
Semantic function	1013**	10.1±22.9	464	4.6±12.8
Pragmatic function	118	1.2±3.3	121	1.2±3.8

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Multiple Exclamation Marks: Semantic Function.

a. The Japanese data

1. いやいや、相当大変だった！！

No, no, it was quite tough!!

2. 「ヘアーコロンシャンプー」懐かし～！！

私も使ってたあ～！！！！

That shampoo brings back memories.

I also used it.

3. たらこにえび～～豪華！！

Cod roe on shrimp, very gorgeous!!

4. ふりふりの海老とシャキッとしたセリがたまりません！！

今すぐ食べたいです♪

Tender shrimp and crispy celery, so good!!!

Want to eat it now.

5. いいなあ。。食べたい！！

Great. Want to eat it up!!

6. かわいい～～！！

Cute!!

7. 美味しそう！！

Looks good!!

8. 小さくて可愛い！！

Small and cute!!

Most of the examples above centre around food and the author's feelings towards it. The food is not the blog author's and, therefore, the comment writer's feelings are directed not towards the blog author but towards a third party object. Other examples such as 1, 2 and 8 are attached to emotive adjectives that double the impact of the emotional force of the comment, especially those examples that are written phonetically.

9. おはようございます 🍀 }

奇遇です！！ @@

私、金曜の夜に頂き物のカニ缶開けました！！

Morning.

What a coincidence!!

I also had canned crab on Friday night.

The above example illustrates the comment writer's surprise that they both ate canned crab on Friday night and attempts to claim some sort of common ground.

b. The American data

1. I would love to read these!!

2. Oh my goodness. The green eggs look fun. I would LOVE a art smock for my toddler!!! We SO need that smock! Thanks for the opportunity.

3. Love these!!! That flower garden child apron is the one I would pick!!!

4. My husband works every Sat. It stinks! So I will be doing what I do all the time...mom stuff while reading the first edition of "The Family Room". I'm so excited!!!

5. I love it that your first two items were in northern Arizona -- my old stompin' grounds! So glad you had a good time!! If you like red velvet then you have to go to The Cheesecake Factory (if you have one), and try their new red velvet cheesecake! It is SOOOOO yummy!!!

These exclamation marks above are attached to comments that were all female authored. They all illustrate the excitability of the author and include the adjective love in 3 of the above examples.

Multiple Exclamation Marks: Pragmatic Function

a. The Japanese data

1. ペコちゃん、いつも、勇気をありがとう！！
Thank you always for your courage!!
2. ペコさん♪記録更新続けてくださいね！！
Please continue to renew your record!!
3. 「おめでとうございます！！」
Congrats!!
4. 本当にペコさんの精神力には驚きます。感動します。すごいで す！！！！
I am surprised by your emotional strength. I'm moved. Fantastic!!!
5. がんばって免許取得！！
Good luck with getting your bike license!!
6. おめでとう！！！！♡♡
Congratulations!!!
7. がんばれ！！
Good luck!!
8. 就活頑張ってください！！
Good luck with the job hunt!!
9. sk さんの幸せな結婚を応援するぞぉー(*￣0￣*)ノオォー!!

I'm supporting your happy marriage.

10. クリーム好きなんですね ♪ メタボ注意ですよ (ー_ー)!!

Your (cat) likes cream hey, but be careful of metabolic syndrome!!

11. わぁ～！

ミニサイズっていいですねえ～！！！！

おいしそう～～ ♪ ♪ ^^ ブランデーが入ってなおおいしそう！！

Wow

Mini size is good hey!!

Looks delicious. Brandy is in it, so looks good.

The use of exclamation marks highlight pragmatic intention (consciously or not by the writer) and emphasize feelings towards the blog author or comment writer. These 'feelings' highlight pragmatic strategies that highlight positive politeness strategies such as showing encouragement and support (examples 1,2,7,8,9).

b. The American data

1. Thank you, Lilly!!

Your comment is an invaluable gift, it is not easy to make other people days better, and you made my day better stating you always find interesting stuff in my blog!

2. Thank you Aunt Patty! You were what got me started back on it. Remember the time you were telling me I needed to update more? Well since then I started getting back into it! Thanks for that!!

Love ya!!!

3. How cool are you? Congratulations!!!

4. Thanks so much!

Have a good night!!

5. Nice blog Tim! I never get bored listening to that bit on your audio book!!!!

6. Congratulations on the book!! So awesome!

7. No matter what we are doing, we need to make memories. What an awesome one you have made for your kids!!! (and you!!!)

8. Such cute smiley pictures!!

9. I love your cake. It looks so beautiful!!!

Similar to the Japanese examples the American examples of multiple exclamation use that indicated pragmatic intention highlighted politeness strategies intended to bring the writers together and make the interactions more personable in this limited text based environment. Examples 1 and 2 express thanks, 2 and 4 are used in comment closings in a fond friendly farewell. Examples 3 and 6 offer the writer's congratulations and examples 5, 7 ,8 and 9 are attached to compliments.

5.10 Un-comparable Data Categories

The use of acronyms in logographic representations, such as OMG (Oh my God), which are not found in Japanese, totaled (141) excluding LOL frequencies which were tallied in the representations of laughter category. They were used to add emphasis or tone to their messages but were rarely used as the result suggests.

Within the Japanese data, the use of 'w' at the end of sentences is a recent phenomenon whereby the conventional Chinese character (笑) spelt *warau* meaning to laugh is replaced by the 'w' of *warau* as in 面白\ ww, *omoshiroi ww* (funny ww). Multiple w usage signals a bigger reaction of laughter and (301) of sentences had one w or more attached to them. As the use of *warau* (笑) can be time consuming to input, this easier one key push representation of laughter seems to be gaining popularity as a more convenient and easier method to express laughter.

Results from the data sample here show that the use of these UMC's are implemented in greater numbers by Japanese blog users.

5.11 A Discussion of the Findings: The Role of Japanese and American UMCs

This section discusses the findings in relation to the function and role of these UMCs and the relationship of UMCs to the culture from which they stem. Following this discussion other influential factors are given as to why these personal blog users

deploy these UMCs, or in the case of Japanese users, why are they deployed on a frequent basis?

A summary of the results is given which is then followed by table 5.11 which details the function and role of Japanese and American UMCs in user blog posts and their comments. These findings are in response to the first research enquiry which is restated below.

Research enquiry one: The function and usage of UMCs.

- a. How do non-verbal and verbal UMCs function to express or supplement semantic meaning and pragmatic intention within American and Japanese online personal blog articles and their comments?
- b. Are there technological parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

Summary of results in relation to research enquiry one

- Results show that Japanese use these UMCs significantly more than Americans.
- They are used to express semantic and pragmatic meaning.
- They aid in marking intimacy, creating rapport and a positive online interactive environment. (More significant in the Japanese data).
- This aspect of creating rapport and ‘harmony’ through UMCs is reflected in some studies that suggest that these characteristics are important in face to face interpersonal communication.
- UMCs are used to create smooth interactions (more significant in the Japanese data).
- The types of UMCs used reflect the culture they came from (*manga*, *hentai shojo moji*, etc).
- Technology allows more variety and type of UMC in the Japanese data and reflect Japanese communication and cultural practices (ie. bowing *kaomoji*, etc).

Table 5.11 A Summary of Japanese and American UMC Function and Roles

American and Japanese UMC function and role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help to make explicit the feeling / emotion / tone of the author / comment ● Help the reader to interpret the message / comment by being specific ● Help to convey pragmatic meaning when attached to the politeness strategies that they highlight ● Help to maintain rapport with their readers ● Help to enhance friendly intimate online interaction ● Help (Category 1 <i>emoji</i> and <i>kigou</i>) to add decoration to the comment and help project writer self presentation* ● Help (category 1 <i>emoji</i>) as lexical replacement, emphasis**

*Only seen in the Japanese data.

** Only seen in the Japanese blog post data

Americans and Japanese used these UMCs to act and function in the same way as illustrated in table 5.11. However, results (as shown in chapter 5 and 6) show that these UMC functions were found to be more prominent than in the American data. For example, Japanese comment writers were found to use UMCs more than Americans to indicate semantic and pragmatic meaning ($p < .01$). Japanese also employed more emoticons than Americans to highlight positive politeness strategies ($p < .05$) (See chapter 6). These results helped Japanese to maintain rapport with their readers with an emphasis on friendly and intimate online interaction. It has been argued that this need for rapport or harmony driven interaction is a reflection of Japanese face-to-face communication styles where studies have shown that a need for harmonious communication permeates through Japanese face to face dialogue and interaction.

The results may also indicate that Japanese comment writers were reliant on extra-linguistic signs (category 1) to supplement and add semantic and pragmatic meaning to the comments. This was again reflected in the significantly higher frequency of unconventional linguistic UMCs to help convey vocal qualities to help display feeling and tone of the writer. The American blog comment writers in contrast used statistically fewer UMCs and were more reliant on conventional written

communication in comparison to Japanese writers.

In addition Japanese used UMCs (specifically category 1 *emoji* and *kigou*) as symbols which did not have any semantic or pragmatic meaning but were used to add decoration, cuteness and to help project online writer self persona in an appeal to be liked, an appeal to their positive face if you like. This UMC role and function was not present within the American data.

5.11.1 The Cultural Parameters that Affect UMC Distribution and Usage

The research question pertinent to this heading and the subsequent discussion of the findings is restated below.

Research enquiry two: UMC usage and culture

- e. Does UMC usage mirror the language and culture from which it stems?
- f. Are there cultural parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

Studies have found the Japanese language to be perceived as vague and indirect (Nisugi, 1974, Haugh,1998) and the importance of perceiving harmony (*wa*) is often attributed to Japanese communication styles where the traditional value of vagueness and indirectness is often linked although very few studies have examined this.

The Japanese usage of UMCs was found to make explicit the feeling of the author and the feeling of the author towards their reader both semantically and pragmatically. In turn the use of UMCs help blog authors to maintain rapport and interpersonal relations with their readers. This is reflected in studies which suggest that the need for smooth rapport driven communication in face to face communication is a characteristic of effective communication (Takai and Ota,1994; Tominaga et al (2003).

Takai and Ota (1994) devised a Japanese interpersonal competence scale to examine how Japanese culture influences interpersonal competence. The purpose of the study was to examine how communication skills or styles that have been accepted

within the intercultural literature are actually used. The study asked 707 participants (ranging from people in their teens to sixties) to complete a series of questionnaires and from the responses given it created an interpersonal competence scale that was divided into five factors that influence Japanese interpersonal competence. The five factors, the most important being the first, were categorized as perceptive ability, self-restraint, hierarchical relationship management, interpersonal sensitivity and tolerance for ambiguity.

The first factor, perceptive ability, relates to items where the listener can understand what is meant without it being stated explicitly.

Japanese is considered a high context culture and Hall (1976) states that “most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit part of the message” (p.79). In other words the context (non-verbal cues) rather than the explicit spoken word is given precedence.

Takai and Ota (1994) therefore suggest that their perceptive ability that “an interpersonally competent person would be required to sense the cues in the interaction context through empathizing with the other person, without having the other directly transmit a message in the verbal code” (p.232). They suggest that being able to know when a person is being indirect in their feelings in order to be polite requires skill in empathy. In short, perceptive ability is related to high context communication, and is the ability to communicate using implicit messages.

The second factor of self restraint is related to not revealing your true feeling. One of the questionnaire items using a Likert scale asked for example ‘In interacting with someone I do not like, I am able to conceal my negative feelings toward him / her’. The self restraint factor they claim relates to the often used *wa* or harmony concept to describe Japanese communication styles and that answers given from respondents illustrates the need to conceal feelings to maintain harmony.

In a similar study to Takai and Ota (1994), Wada (1991) created a scale of non-verbal and social skills as sub-concepts of interpersonal competence. Data was collected from university students through questionnaires and through the results he isolated two dimensions of the non-verbal aspects of competence, non-verbal

expressionlessness and control, and non-verbal sensitivity. The latter refers to skills that allow Japanese to understand others through observation and inference.

These studies relate to the concept of Japanese having a listener responsible orientated communicative nature (Yamada,1997) where the receiver of the message must interpret it correctly. In addition, they suggest that these findings are related to *honne* and *tatamae* that are used to maintain interpersonal harmony.

However, the use of the abundant deployment of UMCs to convey semantic and pragmatic meaning within comments would suggest that the reader or the receiver of the message is not expected to, or has the burden, to decipher or interpret the message to the extent that it happens in face to face communication.

The Japanese usage of UMCs was found to make explicit the feeling of the author and the feeling of the author towards their reader both semantically and pragmatically. Therefore, rather than the recipient of the message the creator of the message takes the responsibility (consciously or not) to write clear precise messages that are easy to decipher and where the reader can understand the feelings or pragmatic intention of the writer.

It can then be suggested that the function of UMCs is to make explicit the comment meaning and intention and that this is the responsibility of the comment writer. The responsibility of deciphering the message is then less of a burden on the reader. The shift moves from face-to-face communication where the listener can ‘sense the cues in the interaction context’ and, therefore, there is a lesser need to be explicit verbally, to a communication platform where the interlocutor is not visibly present and where these ‘cues’ are not available. This shift leads Japanese users to use more UMCs in their comments so that their feelings are interpreted correctly so that a sense of harmony and rapport can be maintained.

Tominaga et al (2003) examined perceptions of Japanese and American ideas of effective communication. In the American sample seven themes were isolated. In the Japanese sample nine themes were classified which are the following:

1. Compatibility (21.17% of responses)
2. Appropriateness (18.02%)
3. Relations between communicators (17.57%)
4. Positive outcomes (14.41%)
5. Smoothness of communication (7.66%)
6. Displaying of positive behavior (6.67%)
7. Understanding (6.31%)
8. Positive non-verbal communication (5.41%)
9. Clear messages (2.70%)

‘Compatibility’ consisted of the themes of positive atmosphere, openness to communicate and getting along with each other. “Being able to converse joyfully with the person” and “When you, as well as the other person, feel the conversation is enjoyable and when you can sympathize with what the other says to the other” were some of the responses given in relation to compatibility by 111 Japanese college students to a series of questionnaires regarding the characteristics needed for effective (Japanese) communication.

Tominaga et al (2003) state that “In order to cooperate and collaborate, Japanese communicators create a positive atmosphere in their interactions and try to get along with others (e.g., maintain harmony)” (p.16). They say this corresponds to the literature such as Maynard (1997) and Lebra (1976).

Although the sample of the aforementioned study was small, the use of UMCs within the Japanese blog comments mirrored these assertions and findings. Japanese comment writers created a fun, friendly and intimate atmosphere online through the use of these UMCs which led to harmonious and positive online relationships. The second ranked ‘Appropriateness’ included finding a common topic for the communicators to discuss, the use of appropriate language and manners. “Talking about a topic that makes the atmosphere friendly” an emphasis on *keigo* where appropriate.

The blog topics written on these blogs attracted readers and consequently comment writers who were also interested in these topics which in turn created a community talking about an issue or theme that they all have a shared experience or commonality with.

The third ranked ‘Relations between communicators’ consisted of responses that included categories of ‘getting to know the other person in a way that does not make them feel uncomfortable’, adapting to others by agreeing with the other person even if you really don’t in order to maintain health relations and maintain harmony by avoiding hurting people’s feelings and being considerate. The latter is often cited as being a characteristic of Japanese communication (Okabe, 1983).

This characteristic was evident in the Japanese data through Japanese use of emoticons that highlighted positive politeness strategies (see chapter 6), and the use of linguistic UMCs that displayed vocal representations of positive comments and laughter that represented the enjoyment the blog comment writer feels towards the blog and its writer. These findings are related to Darics (2013) study who found that unconventional online spelling can “contribute to the inscription of affective information or friendly intent into writing, thus contextualizing the relational content of the messages” (p.146).

The last ranked ‘Clear messages’ only consisted of 2% of responses. This was in contrast to the data found in this study which suggests that sending a clear message through UMCs is given a priority to achieve smooth online communication.

Interestingly, the main difference between the American and Japanese data was that the Japanese ranked understanding 7th compared to Americans who ranked it as first. They write that 96% of Americans considered this theme to incorporate the idea of understanding the interlocutor’s message. This was in comparison to 15% of Japanese responses. In addition, 4% of Americans considered that understanding consisted of having empathy with or understanding the feelings of your conversational partner. This was in comparison to 85% who were concerned with understanding individual’s feelings. Tominaga et al. (2003) suggest “These differences suggest that

understanding for U.S Americans tends to be cognitive and message focused and Japanese understanding tends to involve affective elements” (p.22).

The use of UMCs in relation to Cultural parameters can be summarized and are illustrated in table 5.12 below. The characteristics of Japanese face to face communication such as the need of compatibility and rapport for effective communication were also reflected in the function of UMCs (to express themselves clearly) and the effect of UMCs (leading to a fun positive and harmonious / rapport driven environment).

The table below aims to illustrate how the function and effect of UMCs reflect characteristics of Japanese face to face communication.

Table 5.12 Japanese UMC Usage and Cultural Parameters

Face to face interaction characteristics	Comments and the function and effect of UMCs
Compatibility and rapport / harmony driven to maintain harmony by avoiding hurting people’s feelings and being considerate.	Compatibility and rapport / harmony driven. UMCs enhance a positive intimate online environment. Linguistic and non-verbal UMCs clarify author feeling and pragmatic intention which can lead to intimacy and rapport. Communication in these comments is friendly and the UMCs add to this.
*Interactions are listener responsible. Message receiver responsible. Expect listener to know understand what the speaker wants to say through cues and context.	*Interactions are comment writer responsible. Message creator responsible. The writer tries to be explicit in what they want to say through the use of linguistic and non-verbal UMCs.
Non-verbal orientated communication	Reliant on extra-linguistic signs (category 1 non-verbal UMCs) to supplement and add semantic meaning to the comment (Emoticons were the most used UMC in the Japanese data)

*Within the literature it has been found that Japanese are sensitive to their interlocutor and can read what they mean even if they do not explicitly say it. This can be done through cues or the context of the situation. Therefore it is the responsibility of the listener to understand the interaction even if it is implicit. In blog interaction, which is faceless, a different pattern emerges. As these cues / contexts are essentially invisible the use of UMCs to act as cues to enhance semantic / pragmatic meaning is used by Japanese writers to avoid possible misunderstanding and to allow users to express how they feel toward the interaction. It is therefore the responsibility of the comment author to convey accurate and explicit comments that the reader can understand. Therefore comments are writer responsible in comparison to face to face dialogues whereby the listener assumes responsibility for smooth understanding.

The function of UMCs within the Japanese comments attempt to emulate characteristics that are considered important for interpersonal relations in face-to-face

Japanese communication as seen in the studies of Tominaga et al. (2003) and Takai and Ota (1994.)

These include the need to strive for positive, rapport or harmony driven interaction that are factors of successful interpersonal competence. Interpersonal competence varies from culture but is generally defined as the ability to interact effectively with other people and acting appropriately which is defined culturally by social norms and rules.

The literature and studies (Tominaga et al, 2003; Takai and Ota,1994; Wada, 1991) suggest that the need for non-verbal cues allows for the interpersonally competent person to understand what the other is feeling. As a result of these non-verbal cues being absent in blog comment interaction the ability to understand what their interlocutor is trying to say is greatly diminished. To compensate for this the use of non-verbal UMCs such as emoticons were used to let their readers know how they feel and this stems from a desire for online compatibility, rapport and harmony. Therefore, they do not expect their readers to understand what they want to say through the context or non-verbal cues as there are none in blog comment interactions. Non-verbal UMCs, therefore, are used to create the non-verbal cues that are representations of the authors feeling and stance on the comment. The use of non-verbal UMCs were used in conjunction with lexical or SFP items such as *kana* and *ne* which helped in the building of affective common ground between blog users. The non-verbal UMC or emoticon was seen to compliment or highlight these language items.

Americans used UMCs infrequently compared to Japanese and they were more reliant on the conventional use of language to convey semantic and pragmatic meaning. In relation to culture and language use it is difficult to evaluate. American communication is said to rely on clear direct messages for successful communication (Tominaga et al, 2003). Within the data here Americans relied on conventional language use as opposed to verbal or non-verbal UMCs. Their blogs and comments were conventional in the sense that they used correct grammar and spelling in comparison to the Japanese data. It can be argued that the lack of UMCs within the

American data can lead to American communication being less explicit emotionally or pragmatically but this does not mean that American blog interaction was cold and impersonal. It was equally positive in that the blog author and comment writers got on very well but the medium they chose to do it in was within the conventional written word in comparison to the Japanese blog writers.

5.11.2 The effect of the Absence of Cues and Other Factors

The literature describes face to face interaction where the interlocutor is usually known, (asking for directions to a stranger would exclude this) is visibly present and the relationship and status between the speakers is known (a student interacting with a teacher, a boss with an employee), and gender is also made available based on the visual clues. Non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, demeanor, posture, eye contact and tone of voice are also visible which are all indicators of tone of voice and attitude.

Blog users have none of the above to use when communicating to unknown interlocutors (although this can only be said for sure in regards to the Japanese data as some comments within the American data indicated that the comment had met each other in person). As the people you are interacting with are invisible, their status and role is also missing from the interaction (Japanese authors revealed little about their status, although some blogs were obviously housewives or businessmen blogs). People are, therefore, 'released' from playing a social role. Japan is a higher stratified society where everyone plays a role and linguistically and socially is governed to adhere to rules that society expects of them. However, these socioemotive cues are absent and within Japanese blog communication, handle names are used essentially making them anonymous (however I would argue that the handle name reflects their online identity and the person they are 'playing' online). Kiesler et al (1984) and Kiesler (1986) state that there are advantages to this inability to present socioemotive cues that they term the liberation effect. It can democratize relationships as hierarchy found in face-to-face interaction is absent in CMC, especially of anonymous interactions, and

this can, therefore, lead to less inhibited communication as it can liberate users from the constraints that social hierarchy imposes in relationships. Social position, gender and age can all be concealed within CMC, and Sproull & Kiesler (1991) state that the absence of these perceived social barriers allows people to express themselves more openly.

Although these socioemotive cues were blurred, all Japanese users used polite or *keigo* forms when interacting with one another which differs from face-to-face communication where age, status and rank can dictate what forms (polite or non polite) are to be used in the interaction. The emphasis therefore was always on interacting formally.

Within Japanese blog communication, the creation of an online identity may help foster the development of new social identities which is afforded because of this anonymity allowed by the lack of social cues. Sproull & Kiesler's (1991) concept of the liberation effect, due to the absence of social barriers, may, therefore, make people or Japanese blog users express themselves more openly than they would in face to face communication. In essence some users, who with time to concentrate on and edit their comments, are performing a self, an online self. This would be no different to famous people who have blogs or twitter accounts who may be guided by their management to be wary on how they present themselves online. To present yourself online as approachable and friendly will help you gain more readers and fans than a blog author who is antagonistic.

The absence of social barriers or cues within the Japanese blogging community did not lead to flaming and abuse (which can happen in 100% anonymity online communication platforms).

5.11.3 Technology, Language Play and the Phenomena of Cute *kawaii* Culture

One of the stated questions in research enquiry one asks are there technological parameters that affect UMC distribution and usage? It can be suggested that the technology allows for a greater variety of UMC usage. There were no *emoji* in

the American data but they were abundant in the Japanese data. The *kaomoji* variety in the Japanese data stems from the 2byte technology used in Japanese keyboards whereas within the American data the emoticon variety was limited due to the 1byte technology within American keyboards. The fact that Japanese employs four scripts as in *katakana*, *hiragana*, *kanji* and the Roman alphabet which can facilitate the ease of language play and manipulation in comparison to the English alphabet although not technological is also influential on the flexibility of the script and how it can be creatively altered, a phenomena done prior to the online age and which is rich within Japanese writing tradition. Japanese UMC stem from *manga* and traditional offline language play such as *hentai shojo moji* and as Gottlieb (2010) states that “The language and script play we are seeing today in Japanese chat rooms, bulletin boards and e-mails is thus not a novel by-product or revolutionary outcome of a new technology but is merely the continuation in a different medium of a venerable and prized cultural practice enabled by the nature of the writing system” (p.405).

This language play that Gottlieb (2010) speaks of can include the UMCs analyzed here. *Emoji* were created and influenced by popular culture and *manga*. Some *kaomoji* are created to reflect or represent typical Japanese communication / cultural styles as in bowing *kaomoji* and *kaomoji* which act to represent the perceived notions of Japanese communication being indirect and modest as reflected in this *kaomoji* ^^; a sign which depicts sweat on the side of the face (Sugimoto & Levin, 2000). In addition unconventional phonetic spellings can be found in *Manga*.

5.11.4 Cute Culture

Within the Japanese data the use of non-verbal UMCs, (extra-linguistic signs) mainly those that were used as symbols, were used to add decoration, index cuteness and help the author in their own self presentation which they want to express to their readers.

The same factors can be said to influence American UMCs but to a far lesser degree. Language play offline is not as predominant or ingrained into the culture and is

limited with a singular alphabet script. *Emoji* were not used in American comments which may indicate their unavailability or that they are a Japanese UMC exclusive to Japanese pop culture. Comics are popular in America and the use of capitalization is often seen in them which was reflected in American blog comments. Cute culture is a Japanese born phenomena and not one that pervades American society as it does in Japan.

The use of self selective presentation and impression formation was discussed in the previous chapter in relation to the blog post findings but also has some relevance and bearing on UMC usage within the comments. This theme along with *kawaii* culture is discussed more in the discussions of the gender and UMC findings.

5.11.5 Anonymity and its Influence on UMC Usage

The table below illustrates the characteristics of the blogs that were within the blog data.

These characteristics are believed to influence and affect UMC frequency and usage.

Table 5.13 Blog Characteristics

Japanese blog profile characteristics	American blog profile characteristics
Anonymity level: Dislocation or real and online identity Allows Japanese users to assume a new online identity that is separate from their own	Anonymity level: Visual anonymity and blog users use their ‘real’ names
Personal information disclosure (Minimal) Visual anonymity and blog users use handle names Uploaded photos are censored Blog profile usually limited to handle name and author gender	Personal information disclosure (Detailed) Uploaded photos are not censored Blog profile usually has ‘real’ name, place of birth / residence, hobbies, gender etc is all disclosed

The definitions of anonymity vary depending on the conditions that they describe. Within the conditions of CMC, when visual aids such as a web camera are not present, or within the context of the cues filtered out approach anonymity is considered a visual one (Lea et al. 2001). Unlike online communication platforms such as Skype or face time this kind of online visual anonymity only exists when the physically appearance of the interlocutor is not present.

Morio and Buchholz (2009) point out that communication on the internet is often described as ‘anonymous’ but that the term is confusing and they describe three definitions of anonymity as depicted in online communication. The first is defined as ‘visual anonymity’ and is the ‘weakest’ form of anonymity on the internet.

The blogs within the American and Japanese data both conformed to this definition as the blog writers physical presence was absent during the blog comment interaction. Photos of the blog author were usually posted on the blog profile or blog interface of American blogs and included pictures of people, family members and so forth, pertinent to the topic of the blog post. Japanese blogs had no identifiable photograph of the blog author, a caricature or avatar was sometimes used and pictures of family members (who were often the theme of blog posts) were censored. The eyes were either blacked out, or pixelization of the face was used to blur it.

The second level of anonymity they describe is the dislocation of real and online identity. This level of anonymity with regard to these blogs is the withholding of one’s real name and the creation of a handle name, essentially the creation of a new online identity that blog users create for themselves. Morio and Buchholz (2009) argue that “by creating this new identity an individual can virtually become a different person, with different personalities and values. With dissociation or real and online identities, someone’s online behaviors are not directly tied to that person’s physical self. Because of this dissociation, we argue that there is less accountability for online behaviors when compared to behaviours in real life” (p.229).

This level of anonymity could not be applied to American blogs or their comments as authors were identifiable by their real name (the presumption is that they are not lying about their real name). Japanese blog authors and comment writers,

however, were only identifiable by the handle names they chose when creating the blog. No blog author used their real name (usually handle names were not realistic ‘real’ names).

The third and strongest level of anonymity Morio & Buchholoz (2009) describe as the closest to true anonymity. This level termed as ‘lack of identification’ is where there is no source that identifies the writer of the message. Within the blog data there were some, albeit fairly rare, cases where the comment had the word anonymous where the authors name would be in the blog comment.

The issue of anonymity is related to CMC theory and the culture from which the blogs stem, and the notions discussed within the intercultural communication literature are also connected to the concept of communicating online ‘anonymously’.

Studies have suggested that there are higher levels of anonymity in Japanese CMC when compared to English language based western CMC (Morio and Buchholz, 2009, Bovee and Cvitkovic, 2010). The data presented within this thesis also reflects this notion.

Morio and Buchholz (2009) suggest two key motivational factors that influence social behavior online are the concepts of affiliation and autonomy. This dichotomy is analogous to many others such as independent v interdependent and individualism v collectivism. Hofstede (1980) suggests that countries such as Japan score high on collectivism and low on individualism. America, he suggests is an example of an individualist country.

The goal of affiliation is met when group norms are adhered to and consequently when interacting with others you behave like others. Therefore, as reflected in Japanese communication characteristics, the group is given preference over individual needs. Within individualist societies the emphasis is on personal goals over those of the group. Morio and Buchholz (2009) state that “As a result of these different interpersonal orientations, individuals in Eastern and Western cultures emphasize differing social motivations (ie., affiliation and autonomy). Individuals in Eastern cultures are orientated towards interdependence, value the harmony of the group, and are therefore, more motivated by affiliation than by autonomy” (p.303).

These assertions, it has already been argued, are reflected in how Japanese blog users deploy UMCs in their comments. On this premise, therefore, Morio and Buchholz (2009) further suggest that when interacting within groups, individuals may strive to conform to and mimic other individual's behavior in order to conform to group norms. Within the Japanese data blog and their comments the blog data that registered many comments (counted sentences) usually registered the most UMCs and there was a consistent balance or pattern between the number of sentences and UMCs used. There were numerous examples where the comment writer used a UMC and when the blog author replied they also incorporated a UMC in their response, usually an emoticon. This was predominant and a characteristic of the Japanese blog comment data. This would seem to suggest that within the blog comments, which is essentially a group of people communicating with the blog author and the blog author's responses, mimic each other's UMC usage or because the majority of the group use them that they themselves used them to conform to the non-linguistic / linguistic behaviour of the blogging community.

The blog posts, however, which are monologues and are written to no-one, in particular were more 'individualistic'. These posts used UMCs to highlight unique self selective presentation or impression formation, to make the reading of the blog posts enjoyable and fun and, therefore, the use of UMCs were a reflection of user online personality rather than an attempt to adhere to group norms.

5.12 Closing Comments

This chapter aimed to address the findings in relation to the research questions as stated in research enquiry 1 in relation to the function of UMCs and the relationship of UMCs and culture as stipulated in research enquiry 2.

Results within this data here have shown a larger reliance on UMC's by Japanese blog comment writers than their American equivalents. American blog comments can perhaps be described as being more formal and conventional in tone than their Japanese counterparts relying more on the written word to express meaning

and emotion. The inclusion of these UMCs was found to be used in the same pragmatic sense of creating solidarity and harmony between the comment writers in addition to representing emotion, tone and attitude among the comment contributors. This was far more pronounced in the Japanese data which reflects the empirical data of descriptions of a communication style that is harmonious in nature. In addition these UMC's were used in an effort to bridge the gap between users and to create a human presence online as if talking to their reader face to face.

It can be suggested that Japanese blog comment writers may feel it is their own responsibility as the writer to index their messages with the appropriate tones rather than giving such responsibility to the listener/reader to decipher their messages. This challenges the face to face communication research which suggests that Japanese is a listener and reader responsible language.

Chapter 6

The use of emoticons to highlight Politeness strategies

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework defines politeness as the use of verbal strategies that show a concern for the addressees' feelings by showing deference to their face. This notion of face involves the desire or need to be liked as in positive politeness or the desire or need not to be imposed on as reflected in negative politeness.

Brown and Levinson (1987) devised strategies that address these two faces. Positive politeness strategies are defined as strategies that seek to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face. They are used to make the hearer feel good about themselves. Some strategies of positive politeness can include expressions of solidarity, compliments, and agreement. In contrast, negative politeness strategies are described as 'softening devices' such as when expressing opinion through hedges or requests. A review of the literature is given in chapter 2

These theories were originally applied to face-to-face communication where visual and auditory cues such as paralinguistic information and facial expressions are readily available. In text based Computer Mediated Communication, these cues are not accessible which has led to creative language use and the use of extra-linguistic signs such as emoticons to convey the perceived missing semantic and pragmatic intention.

This chapter aims to examine how Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies are deployed and realized through the use of emoticons that are attached to comments in American and Japanese online personal weblog comments. The emphasis is on how the emoticon supplements and supports the intended meaning of the written sentence within the comments.

6.1 Methods and Politeness Classification

The emphasis within this analysis is on the language used rather than just the emoticon itself and how the emoticon supports and compliments the intended

pragmatic meaning of the sentence. Emoticons that were classified as indexes were attached to politeness strategies as outlined by Brown and Levinson (1987). They were counted and then divided into positive or negative politeness strategies according to the criteria and definitions set out by Brown and Levinson.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) positive politeness strategies are defined as devices that seek to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face. Some strategies of positive politeness can include the claiming of common ground, seeking agreement and the show of interest, approval and sympathy. In contrast negative politeness strategies are described as 'softening devices' such as being conventionally indirect and hedging.

In judging whether a politeness strategy was either positive or negative the context in which the comment was written was analyzed. The politeness strategies were divided into positive or negative politeness strategies as illustrated in table 6.1 based on the descriptions of Brown and Levinson (1987).

Table 6.1 Politeness Strategies Divided

Positive politeness strategies	Negative politeness strategies
Jokes	**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	Apologies
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	***Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)
1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy) with H 3. Avoid disagreement and Assert common ground These 3 strategies are done through *Expressions of solidarity (<i>markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers</i>)	Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)
Notice, attend to H through compliments	

* Convey 'X' is admirable, interesting through claiming common ground and seeking agreement as in expressions of sympathy, agreement and support. These emoticons were attached to positive politeness strategies that emphasized support, approval, common ground and sympathy. Requests as solidarity markers often utilized the てくださいね+ emoticon pattern and were often used in the context of the writer showing concern for the readers health and welfare, to wish their readers luck and to show support which are categorized as positive politeness strategies under the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework.

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the

comment is hedged.

Emoticon use was again dependent on the context that the comments were written in and no one particular emoticon type was always attributed or attached to the same politeness strategy. To compare emoticon frequency a Mann-Whitney test was conducted through SPSS software and the statistical level of significance was set at $p < .05$.

It will be argued that these emoticons as attached to politeness strategies act as contextualization cues. According to Gumperz (1982) a contextualization cue is “any feature of linguistic form that contributes to the signaling of contextual presuppositions” (p.131). He was of course writing before the advent of emoticons but this notion can be applied to the use of emoticons and the role they play as a cue for creating the context for which the utterance should be interpreted in. Gumperz (1982) suggests that when participants within an interaction understand each other’s contextual cues, then conversations can run smoothly. In cases where these contextual cues are misunderstood, interaction may have an unwelcome edge to it which may lead to flaming, rude behavior and a sense of awkwardness among conversation partners or members. This concept has connotations for Japanese offline communication which according to the studies previously mentioned is based on and strives for harmonious interaction. However, with these contextualization cues missing (verbal and visual) the use of other devices such as emoticons becomes more important for a sense of smooth interaction.

6.2 Results

The table below shows the findings of the overall data. The Japanese used significantly more emoticons to highlight politeness strategies and pragmatic intention than their American counterparts $p < .01$. In both sets of data emoticons that highlighted positive politeness strategies (PPS) far outweighed those that emphasized negative politeness strategies (NPS). Although there was no statistically significant difference within the NPS data Japanese blog users used emoticons to mark PPS significantly

more than Americans $p < .01$.

These results showed that in contrast to the literature which suggests that Japanese is a negative politeness orientated culture, the data presented here shows that Japanese blog users deploy statistically more frequent usages of emoticons that highlighted positive politeness strategies than American comment writers.

Table 6.2 Overall Findings

	Japanese comments ($n=100$)	Mean	SD	American comments ($n=100$)	Mean	SD
Emoticons index total	1551**	15.5	31.4	522	5.2	10.7
Emoticons that index PPS	1149**	11.49	25.0	432	4.3	8.6
Emoticons that index NPS	402	4.0	9.0	90	0.90	2.3

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Emoticons that highlighted PPS are listed in the table below. The ‘expressing gratitude/thanks’ and ‘expressions of solidarity’ category as expressed through 3 positive politeness strategies were the only PPS categories that were statistically significant $p > .05$.

Table 6.3 Positive Politeness Strategies

	Japanese comments (n=100)			American comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons PPS index total	1149**	11.49	25.0	432	4.3	8.6
Jokes	20	0.2	0.7	64	0.6	2.0
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	154	1.5	3.5	31	0.31	0.9
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	294*	2.9	13.0	43	0.4	1.1
1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (interest, Approval sympathy) with H 3. Avoid disagreement and assert common ground These 3 strategies are done through *Expressions of solidarity (markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	608*	6.1	12.5	215	2.2	5.6
Notice, attend to H through compliments	46	0.4	1.1	68	0.6	1.7
Other	27	0.3	1.1	11	0.1	0.4

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

* Convey 'X' is admirable, interesting through claiming common ground and seeking agreement as in expressions of sympathy, agreement and support. These emoticons were attached to positive politeness strategies that emphasized support, approval, common ground and sympathy. Requests as solidarity markers often utilized the てくださいね (te kudasai)+ emoticon pattern and were often used in the context of the writer showing concern for the readers health and welfare, to wish their readers luck and to show support which are categorized as positive politeness strategies under the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework.

NPS as outlined in the table 6.4 show that there were more instances of emoticons that highlight NPS within the Japanese blog comments than the American data but none of the NPS categories were statistically significant.

Table 6.4 Negative Politeness Strategies

	Japanese comments (<i>n</i> =100)			American comments (<i>n</i> =100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons NPS index total	402	4.0	9.0	90	0.90	2.3
**Minimize the imposition at the time of requests	34	1.2	2.0	90	0.9	2.3
Apologies	41	0.4	1.0	3	0.03	0.2
*** Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)	266	2.7	6.7	29	0.3	1.0
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	57	.57	1.9	37	0.4	1.1
Other	4	.02	.19	4	.04	.31

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment is hedged.

6.3 Positive Politeness Strategies: Emoticon Examples

6.3.1 Comment Openings / Closings

Comment openings and closings which are essentially greetings and farewells embedded within the comment were often highlighted with emoticons. When such sentences or utterances were punctuated with these extra-linguistic signs they added an extra layer of intimacy with the blog writer to whom the comment is addressed. For reasons of space only the English translations are given of the Japanese data examples.

a. Japanese comment examples

1. こんばんは(^^)

おっ疲れちゃん♪

いよいよ、バイクの教習が始まったんだ！！

やっほ～＼(^o^)/

Hello (^ ^)

Otsukare chan

Bike lessons started!!

Yahoo \ (^o^) /

2. ≫ ≫ o(≧ε≦o)スゥ・・・(o≧□≦)o ≪ ≪ ≪ コンニチワァァァァァァァァ

ヒロシオさま・・・たいへんお疲れ様でした。

≫ ≫ o(≧ε≦o)スゥ・・・(o≧□≦)o ≪ ≪ ≪

Heloooooooooooo

Hiroshi sama well done for all your efforts.

Example 1 is a straight forward basic emoticon attached to a simple *konbanwa* or ‘good evening’ but establishes the tone and the mood of the comment as being friendly and openly trying to establish or maintain good relations with the reader. Comment 2 is more playful in nature. The first emoticon depicts a face inhaling with the verb to inhale written unconventionally in katakana スゥ or *suu* next to it. The following emoticon bursting out the word *konnichiwaaaaa* with the ア (a) sound deliberately elongated to mimic the vocal representation of someone saying *konnichiwaaaaa* or *helllooooo* to use an English equivalent. This vocal spelling written in unconventional katakana (it is usually written in hiragana) adds visual emphasis and along with the emoticon adds to the sense of playfulness and familiarity that the writer wishes to express with the reader.

b. American comment examples

- 1 Thanks for stopping by and leaving a comment on my Monday post over at The Motivation Station this week. Have a great weekend :-)
- 2 Love your new look.
Have a nice day :)

Interestingly all of the 31 instances of emoticons that were attached to and highlighted American comment openings / closings were only used to close the comment. This was in contrast to the Japanese data that used these emoticons on the whole to highlight comment openings and greetings.

Of the American examples, examples 1 and 2 were a typical comment ending, a friendly send off that is both polite and intimate. These emoticons that illustrated a smiling face highlight conversation endings that you could find in a typical conversation across America. Here the emoticon adds an additional blanket of an affectionate tone to the comment.

6.3.2 Expressing Gratitude / Thanks

The use of adding an emoticon to an expression of thanks and gratitude creates a sense of community among blog users. It shows that comment writers appreciate reader's thoughts and input and in turn can lead to a blogging community whereby personal blog writers leave comments on each other's blogs.

a. Japanese comment examples

1. るんさんへ

初めまして♪

コメント、ありがとうございます！(≧ω≦)b

Comento, arigatou gozaimasu

Run san

Nice to meet you ♪

Thanks very much for your comment (≧ω≦)b

The Japanese comment example is a first online encounter between a blog writer and comment contributor and the emoticon used with the attached b used as a 'thumbs up' highlights the politeness strategy of enhancing the positive face of the

addressee when expressing gratitude towards them.

b. American comment examples

Comment writer :

You made me to think a lot about everything of life with this touching post :)

Blog writer's response :

thanks :) having been blogging for a while... Internet is too slow here :(

The American comment below shows the interaction between comment writer and the blog writer's response. The comment writer punctuates a compliment about the blog's post or article with an emoticon and in turn the blogger's response of thanks is emphasized in turn with an emoticon.

6.3.3 Expressions of Solidarity

Of all the positive politeness strategies that these emoticons highlighted the most frequent fell within the expressions of solidarity category that totaled 215 instances within the American data to a significantly higher total of 608 within the Japanese data ($p < .05$). The expressions of solidarity encompass three positive politeness strategies as put forward by Brown & Levinson (1987) which are, 1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (interest, approval sympathy) with H and 3. Avoid disagreement and assert common ground. To paraphrase the words of Brown & Levinson these emoticons highlighted an attention to the readers interests, wants or needs by showing interest, approval and sympathy with the comment reader that may emphasize a commonality or common ground between them.

a. Japanese comment examples

1. また 北海道の素敵な場所の記事、楽しみにしていますp(^^)q

Looking forward to your next blog article on fantastic places in Hokkaido
p(^^)q

2. 読んでて胸がつかえました><

とても大変な時期でしたね

でも、今はすてきな家族です^^

I read (Your blog entry) and I really felt for you ><, it was a very difficult
time for you. You have a wonderful family now ^^

3. 風邪が完治したのですね。安心しました(^-^)

でも12日間連続出勤されてたなんて大変でしたね

(><)

お疲様ですm(__)m

I am relieved to hear that your cold has completely healed up(^-^)

Working 12 days straight must have been tough hey (><)

Otsukaresamadesu

m(__)m

Within the Japanese comment examples above example 1 is an expression of support for the blog writer's blog content and expresses an eagerness to read the next blog post. On both sides of the emoticon the 'p' and 'q' represent clinched fists connected to arms raised in excitement (of the prospect of the next blog post).

Example 2 shows an example of a full comment that is punctuated on three occasions by emoticons. The comment is in response to a blog post about some personal problems the writer has endured. The comment expresses sympathy with the reader in an intimate way and the emoticons give a visual expressiveness to the comment that words alone cannot perhaps communicate. Example 3 shows a concern for the blog writer's well being that expresses sympathy for the reader who has had a particularly hard working schedule in spite of having a cold. The first emoticon is a

typical smiling face attached to this sympathetic sentence that expresses relief that their cold has healed up, followed by a second emoticon that illustrates an expression of empathy and the final emoticon represents two hands next to lowered eyes to depict a bowing figure that is accompanied by the words *otsukaresama desu* or in this context a job well done.

b. American comment examples

1. This is such a wonderful post Gabbie! If there's a "like" or "add to your favorites" button, I'd click it right away. :)
2. What a beautiful post and reminder. Thank you. It feels like you said just what I needed to hear :)
3. Following you from the Tuesday blog hop :)
4. This is so true :)

Example 1 is typical of the examples that were used to show support and appreciation and approval for the blog post punctuated with emoticons. Example 2 shows the happiness the writer feels because of the connection they have with the post and writer, and the comment and subsequent emoticon expresses a strong support for the blogger. Example 3 is a simple declaration of support for the blogger and a little bit of self PR in the mentioning their own blog. Example 4 expresses the comment writer's agreement with the blog writer's rant on why Farmville (an application on Facebook) is a real irritation to Facebook users.

6.3.4 'Requests' as solidarity markers

Found only within the Japanese examples there were numerous instances of 'request' like comments that ended in the て 'te' form of the verb followed by ください *kudasai* meaning please do something (for me) which is dependent on what verb is being used. These examples, however, were written with the intention of expressing a

concern for the blog writer's welfare or to emphasize encouragement and support and were therefore categorized under expressions of solidarity within the positive politeness strategies.

Japanese comment examples

1. 体調大丈夫ですか？？？ゆっくりリラックスT I M E作ってくださいね >
<) b

How are you feeling? Please make sure you give yourself a bit of relaxing time
><) b

2. 免許取得頑張ってくださいね～ (*^_^*) ♪でもケガしないで下さいね～、(^o^)
J

Do your best in getting your bike license (*^_^*)

But make sure you don't get injured 〵(^o^)^

Examples 1 and 2 have the particle *ne* attached to the request that functions to soften the illocutionary force of the comments. Both comments promote a sense of togetherness that the comment writer shares with the blogger. Example 1 shows interest and concern in the blog writer's well being and asks them to take a bit 'time out' for themselves even though they have a hectic schedule. Example 2 shows a sense of camaraderie with the reader in encouraging the blog writer in their attainment of a motorcycle license. The asterisks used within the emoticons indicate blushes (of happiness) within a smiling face which show the coyness of the comment. The comment concludes with the remark 'but make sure you don't get injured' that is softened with the particle *ne* with a slash that indicates the lengthening of the vowel sound to mimic vocal representation. The emoticon with raised arms and a happy face emphasizes that the intention of the comment is fun and supportive in nature.

These comments underline the writer's intention to highlight the fact that the comments are not to be taken as formal requests or orders but as friendly comments of support and solidarity that show a genuine interest in the welfare of the blog writer. They are friendly, encouraging and build an online intimacy with interlocutors they

have never met or perhaps never will.

6.3.5 Compliments

a. Japanese comment examples

1. 美しいもも姫さんは、料理もお上手(♡'∀`♡)/_スキ♡

To the beautiful Ms Peach princess (user handle name), even your cooking is wonderful (♡'∀`♡)/_love♡

2. 本当に上手～(^O^)/

たん君の字は素晴らしいね～～(^O^)/

You are so good (about cooking / child rearing) (^O^)/ Tan Kun (son) writing is fantastic (^O^)/

Examples 1 and 2 both compliment the blog writer's skills of cooking and child rearing respectively. Example 1 has creative heart marks within the parenthesis of the emoticon with an additional スキ♡ meaning *suki* or like with an attached heart that punctuates the comment. Example 2 is highlighted with emoticons depicting happiness and joy.

b. American examples

1. The tea cup is absolutely darling! I love the cute butterfly like wings on the side :) And wow, I just heart your jewellery :)
May find myself purchasing some. it's too cute !
2. You could be a travel agent. You whisk me away and make me want to pull out my credit card and fly to distant lands immediately :)
Lovely post :)

Example 1 emphasizes the writers admiration of the blog writer's artistic ability, example 2 the content and writing style of the blog post with both examples being punctuated with a simple basic smiling emoticon.

6.3.6 Jokes

a. Japanese examples

1. お土産待ってま〜〜〜っす(^_-)☆
I'm expecting a souvenir (^_-)☆

The Japanese example illustrates how the comment writer is expecting a souvenir from the blog writer's impending trip. The unconventional vocal spelling that elongates the vowel sounds of the verb to wait is punctuated with a winking emoticon that is used to suggest that the comment writer is in fact joking and is not to be taken seriously.

b. American examples

1. The dirty 30 is fab...you're in good company! ;)

The American example also ends in a winking emoticon as the comment writer banters with the blog writer about the prospect of turning 30 years of age.

6.4 Negative Politeness Strategies

Within the American data there were overall very few instances of emoticons highlighting NPS, a total of 90 compared to the Japanese 402. This was however statistically insignificant and the majority of NPS that emoticons emphasized were attached to requests and hedges which both acted to minimizing the imposition or

soften the illocutionary force of the comment.

6.4.1 Requests

a. Japanese examples

The majority of Japanese requests were for the reader to support their blog with some exceptions like the example below.

1. ゆきさん、ジャガイモだとイタリアではローズマリーとローストしたものが結構出てきますね。それも美味しいですよ ^^ もう少し旅は続きますのでお待ちくださいね ^^

Yuki san, in the case of Italian potatoes rosemary is used often, its very good. I will let you know more when I get back from my trip. Please wait until then.

In this example the writer tells the reader that he still on his travels but will get back to writing up his blog posts soon. He asks her to wait until then with the honorific お待ちくださいね ^^ *omachi kudasai* which is softened by the sentence final particle *ne* which is supported by the emoticon which removes the illocutionary force from the comment leaving a friendly closing to the comment.

American examples

1. However, I really do miss your lovely blog posts, although I know you are busy! Try to come back soon :)
2. nice blog! :) i am here for the first time and i will be here often! i really like it. ;) so come to me too and follow if you want. :)

Example 1 is asking the blog writer to write more blog posts even though she is aware that the writer has little to no time to do so (a point made in the blog writers

previous post). The request therefore acknowledges this and adds an emoticon to make the request one that is friendly and not too demanding. Example 2 is an example of requesting someone to follow their blog (it helps the blog rise in their rankings). The request is further softened by the compliments that precede it making the request sound like a friendly invitation.

6.4.2 Hedging

Emoticons were attached to hedges that aimed to soften the assertion or illocutionary force of the sentence.

a. Japanese examples

1. Yossy さんもかなりイケル口ですね (^ ^ ;)

Mr Yossy you are quite the drinker

2. Honey さん、名古屋グルメは独自の食文化です(^^;

Ms Honey Nagoya gourmet is an original food culture (^^;

The first Japanese example could have the implication or nuance that the blog writer to whom the comment is addressed to is ‘a drunk’ or should curtail his drinking. The added emoticon that has sweat (as in ;) pouring down the side of the emoticons face can be interpreted that the writer intends the statement not to be perceived as criticism or disrespectful but almost complimentary. The emoticon suggests that the writer is showing a sense of awkwardness with the comment and that he or she does not wish to offend.

The second example employs the same emoticon and acts a softening device to tone down its ‘grand’ assertion that the food from Nagoya prefecture is original in comparison to the rest of Japan and consequently downplays what could be interpreted as bragging.

Interestingly the majority of the Japanese hedges tended to use the ^^;

emoticon and its variations. The emoticon was frequently used with the hedges *かも* *kamo* or might and *かな* *kana* or I wonder as section 6.5 will highlight.

b. American example

1. Awesome post - I am sure he (Simon) was envious of you too.

I am guessing Ken might not be as witty. :-)

The American example attempts to soften the assertive force of the comment and in turn aim not to upset the blog writer who is a friend of Kens. The emoticon softens the tone of the comment which implicates Ken as not being very humorous and the emoticon helps eliminate the uneasiness that the comment could produce if read as a criticism.

6.4.3 Modesty and embarrassment

Hedging plus emoticon usage within the Japanese data could be found to be used in relation to the Japanese concept of 「遠慮」 *enryo* or reserve or to supplement the writer's feelings of embarrassment.

Japanese writers were shown to express modesty in downplaying their ability and compliments received as in the following examples.

1. ま～～贅沢はいえません(-_-;)

I can hardly complain (-_-;)

2. 私もバイクの免許が欲しいなとは思ってたけど 私にはムズカシソ ^ ^ ;

I want to get a bike license but I think it would be too difficult to me ^ ^ ;

3. 鶏肉が苦手だから、ハトはハードル高いかも(^^;)

Not really good with chicken so it might be too high a hurdle for me(^^;)

Example 1 plays down a comment to the blog writer about their luxurious

apartment embarrassingly saying that they can't complain. Example 2 queries whether they have the ability to get a bike license, and it can be interpreted as a display of modesty or even embarrassment. Example 3 uses the emoticon to display embarrassment when discussing their culinary skills. These expressions reflect the culture from which they came and the expression of *enryo* or modesty as shown in example 2 can be related to Leech's (1983) politeness maxim of modesty that aims to minimize the expression of praise of self and maximize the expression of dispraise of self.

6.5 The Use of *kamo* and *kana* with an Emoticon

The use of *kamo* meaning might as in to hedge something was used 53 times in conjunction with an emoticon. 25 of these occasions were when *kamo* acted as hedge. The use of *kana* which is a sentence final particle meaning to wonder and that can also index indirectness or uncertainty was used on 50 occasions with an emoticon. 25 of which were used for hedging.

Matsugu (2005) suggests that *kana*, which is commonly defined as a doubt marker, frequently functions as a mitigation marker. *Kamo* or the full version *kamo shirenai* is a part of the Japanese language modal system of suffixes. *Kamo shirenai* expresses weak possibility (Kabata & Ono, 2014). It can be described as an epistemic modal that indicates that the 100% possibility of the proposition has yet to be confirmed and therefore the possibility of it being true or otherwise is left open to interpretation.

The following are some examples of how *kana* and *kamo* were used in combination with an emoticon.

1. 可愛い 猫のクッキーですね

試してみよかな できるかな ^ ^ ;

Cute cat cookies hey, think I will give them a try,

wonder if I can make them ^^ ;

2. 鶏肉が苦手だから、ハトはハードル高いかも(^;))

Not really good with chicken so it might be too high a hurdle for me (^^;)

3. 辛い時期を乗り越えたからかな ^^

Guess you have gotten over the worst of it ^^

Example 1 of the kana plus emoticon double aims to emphasize the writers hedging of their own ability to make ‘cat cookies’. Example 2 likewise hedges the writer’s feelings they have as to whether they can cook a chicken recipe that is punctuated with *kamo* and an emoticon. The final example is on a more serious note and comes from a comment that addresses the reader’s emotional turmoil that she outlined in her blog post. The comment writer guesses that they have gotten over that tricky period but hedges it with a kana and emoticon combination to soften the assertion that the author has.

6.6 Sentence Final Particle ‘ne’ Highlighted by Emoticons

The fundamental function of the Japanese sentence final particle (SFP) *ne* ね is said to express shared information (Ohio 1986; Masuoka; 1991; Mazurka & Taube 1992) which can include requesting confirmation and seeking or showing agreement.

The use of the SFP *ne* has often been linked with spoken interaction or with informal language, but can also be used in written communications where interaction is taking place. Maynard (1987) states that *ne* acts in a way so that the speaker and listener may communicate with each other in an emotional and empathic creating way. Uyeno (1971) suggests the SFP softens the illocutionary force of an utterance and similarly Brown and Levinson (1987) state that *ne* can act to hedge a statement.

Cook’s (1992) theory of direct and indirect indexicality states that *ne* is a non-referential index which directly indexes affective common ground between the speaker and the addressee and that it can play a role in both the mitigating of a face threatening act and the marking of intimacy.

Most studies have looked at how emoticons are used to convey writer emotion

(Derks et al 2007, 2008; Provine et al, 2007) with few looking at their pragmatic function (Dresner & Herring, 2010) and none have examined how they are used in conjunction with the Japanese sentence final particle *ne*.

In this analysis the emoticons were examined according to the politeness strategy they expressed when attached to the sentence final particle *ne*. The analytical process was repeated in the same way as outlined in the above discussion and findings on the use of emoticons to highlight politeness strategies. The use of *ne* plus emoticon was divided into politeness strategies adhering to the same analytical method.

The table below shows the results of what politeness strategies were punctuated with the *ne* plus emoticon sentence ending.

Table 6.5 *Ne + Emoticon and the Politeness Strategies they highlight*

Ne + emoticon Positive politeness strategies	Number of instances	Ne + emoticon Negative politeness strategies	Number of instances
Jokes	3	Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests	8
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	4	Apologies	2
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	1	Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force / hedges encoded in particles)	19
1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (interest, Approval sympathy) with H 3. Avoid disagreement and assert common ground These 3 strategies are done through Expressions of solidarity(markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	357 (99 of which were used specifically as requests as solidarity markers).	Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	4
Notice, attend to H through compliments	20		

The majority of the *ne* plus emoticon patterns were used to highlight positive politeness strategies and interestingly out of the total expressions of solidarity totaling 564 and 357 of these included the *ne* + emoticon pattern. In addition 99 of these 357 instances were used specifically as requests as solidarity markers.

These results show that these emoticons acted as visual aids as to how the comments were to be read pragmatically and the *ne* plus emoticon combination acted as a ‘double highlighting marker’ of intimacy and rapport towards their addressee. This use of *ne* punctuated with emoticons helped to emphasize support, empathy and approval for the blog author through positive politeness strategies. The *ne* acted as a linguistic device to show the attitude of the speaker towards the utterance and this was reinforced or doubled by the extra-linguistic sign. The *ne* plus emoticon that added a sense of intimacy in positive politeness strategies and concern for the feelings and impression that may be made when implemented with negative politeness strategies.

1. 子供って不思議だよね><

Children can be very confusing hey><

The above example comes from a blog post about child rearing and the problems that are associated with it. The example ends with the sentence final particle *ne* in addition to the emoticon. Cook (1992) states that the particle *ne* does not function to only highlight agreement but also functions to express a common grounding with their listener and acts as a marker of solidarity. The above example shows the pragmatic intent of the writer to express agreement with the blog writer’s ideas and opinions within the post through the use of *ne*. This is further strengthened with the emoticon that expresses empathy and a common ground or ‘togetherness’ between the two online interlocutors.

2. カモさん可愛いですね ^^

Kamo san is cute ^^

3. 大変ですね ^^ : こうちゃんさん・・・。

That’s tough hey ^^ kouchan san

Example 2 combination of *ne* plus emoticon reinforces the compliment that the comment expresses. In the third example the *ne* plus emoticon emphasizes the feelings of empathy towards the reader with regards to a tough schedule that the blog author has undergone.

4. 茄子とホタテはなかなか思い付かなかったから新鮮な感じです 🍆 🍤
息子に作ってもらおうかな? 🍳
目指せ!! こうちゃんみたいに料理の出来る男 🍳 🍷
Can't come up with Eggplant and scallop ideas but their fresh 🍆 🍤
Will get my son to make it. Aim!! I wanna be a man who can cook like kouchan 🍳
🍷
5. すみけんさん、素敵な息子さんですね ^ ^
頑張っしてほしいですね ^ ^
You have a smashing son ^ ^ I want you to try your best ^ ^

Examples 4 and 5 come from a blog which has cooking as its focus. In example 4 the writer suggests that she will get her son to make her the recipe and her aim is to get him to be as good a cook as kou chan, the blog author. In example 5, kou chan responds to example 4 and compliments the writer's son and wants him to do well. Both of which are double marked with the SFP *ne* and an emoticon which helps makes this interaction a friendly and affectionate one.

6. おかえりなさ〜い、(^o^)
イタリアの美味しいものの話も楽しみに待ってますねえ ^ ^
体調、崩れていませんか? 無理しない程度に頑張ってくださいね 🎵
Welcome back (^o^)
Waiting for you hear all about your Italian travels ^ ^
Take it easy and don't overdo it.

Example 6 has two instances of the *ne* plus emoticon combination, one in line 3 and the other in the following line. The third line expresses the anticipation that the

writer has in hearing about the blog author's Italian travels but the fourth line shows concern for the author's physical well being and tells them not to overdo it. Both of these examples show support and concern for the blog author and the *ne* plus emoticon pattern here can be described as markers of solidarity.

7. 日頃のお疲れを癒してきてくださいね～ (*^_^*)

Take some time off to relieve your fatigue (*^_^*)

This above final example acts as a request as a solidarity marker and asks the reader to rest as they are very fatigued. This 'request' is punctuated with a dash accompanying the *ne* along with an encouraging smiling emoticon.

In online interactions the interlocutor is essentially invisible and the visual and audio cues that give us better understanding of the speaker's pragmatic intentions are absent. It is argued that the pragmatic function of *ne* juxtaposed with an emoticon creates a positive and harmonious online environment which in turn fosters the development of intimate and friendly interactions. This, it is argued, is a reflection of Japanese culture and face to face communication styles which are said to place a high emphasis on harmonious dialogue.

6.7 Discussion

In Japanese culture a focus on the concepts of 和 *wa* (harmony), 遠慮 *enryo* (reserve or restraint) and an emphasis on strong personal relationships (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1994) help to shape face to face communication styles. The use of emoticons to emphasize harmony among blog users, to display reserve, restraint or modesty, and to maintain strong interpersonal relationships was evident within the Japanese deployment of emoticons.

The use of *wakimae* or discernment was apparent within the Japanese comment data with all users adhering to social convention by using polite *desu masu* polite forms but at the same time using emoticons as markers of politeness strategies that highlighted intimacy and solidarity among its users. The use of honorific forms is

given as evidence that Japanese is largely a negative politeness driven language and culture. However, Japanese society places a great emphasis on group harmony which can parallel what Brown and Levinson (1987) define as positive politeness, specifically, the sharing of common ground and camaraderie. This sharing of common ground and camaraderie was reflected in the emoticons that highlighted PPS such of expressions of solidarity that were significantly used more by Japanese users $p < .05$. These emoticons helped to create a social presence on an otherwise word based environment and the use of emoticons within the Japanese data that highlighted both positive and negative politeness strategies could both be seen to aid in the development and maintenance of harmonious relations with one another. Japanese relied more on these visual extra-linguistic signs to achieve this. The Japanese writers were seen to display concerns for their readers' feelings, to avoid miscommunication or the incorrect pragmatic reading of the comment. This parallels the Japanese tendency as reflected in face-to-face conversation to maintain harmonious dialogues and good interpersonal relations.

Within the American data the variety of emoticon was limited, an emoticon with a mere happy or sad expression could be attached to PPS to indicate solidarity, requests and jokes and their use and interpretation was dependent on the context that the emoticon and comments were in. The Japanese *kaomoji* or emoticons were much more varied thanks in part to 2 byte keyboard technology that cannot be reproduced in alphabetic languages or Roman alphabet based keyboards. Many emoticons such as ^^; originate from pop culture such as Japanese *manga* or comics (Kavanagh, 2012b) and some were used to mirror a range of non-verbal behavior such as bowing and concepts that are inherent within Japanese cultural knowledge such as modesty, indirectness and the softening of assertion.

The frequent use of emoticons by Japanese writers may indicate a current trend that aims to replicate the missing visual and audio semantic and pragmatic cues found in face to face communication and their popularity seems to suggest the necessity of their existence for the successful transmission of online communication. American users in contrast, relied less on these visual extra linguistic signs in preference for the

written word.

A question this data may prompt is “why do Japanese use more negative politeness strategies in face to face interactions but online through emoticons use more politeness strategies?” Firstly the communication platform is different. There are no visual or auditory cues which the listener or reader can use to understand the interlocutors message. The literature suggests that these non-verbal cues are necessary for the listener in enable for them to understand the subtle cues and understand the true intended meaning of their conversation partner. The literature suggests that this is what makes Japanese communication listener responsible. Therefore, the use of extra-linguistic signs such as emoticons allows users to compensate for this lack of non-verbal communication and in turn enhance their intended meaning to avoid misinterpretation that could lead to awkwardness and as a form of maintaining harmony and intimate and enjoyable online interaction. Other factors also include the issue of anonymity. As reported in chapter 5 all of the Japanese blog user’s use handle names. The hierarchal system that dictates how Japanese interact with each other linguistically is blurred. There is less awareness of it. In this respect you could argue that the online platform where Japanese users adhere to the *desu / masu* polite forms is perhaps more democratic and less constrained by face to face conversation mechanisms which dictate linguistic behavior. The use of polite forms was punctuated with emoticons which made them less *katai* or formal. As an online communication platform, the personal blog tends to be a good natured CMC medium void of flaming and other forms of online bullying. This, however, is hard to quantify as comments of an insulting nature can be simply deleted by the blog author as there are the sole administrator of the blog.

These emoticons were used as contextualization cues and aided the reader in how the comment was intended to be interpreted. To cite Gumperez (1982), “When participants understand each others’ contextual cues, then conversations go smoothly. However, when contextual cues are misunderstood, conversation does not run smoothly, and participants often label each other as rude, socially awkward, foreign and strange” (p.132).

As discussed in chapter 5 and also within this chapter there is a motivation for Japanese blog comment writers to use UMCs to create a harmonious environment and a setting where people can get along. The responsibility of this smooth interaction lies with the writer who includes UMCs for varying emotional, semantic and pragmatic effect. Therefore in a text based environment devoid of contextualization cues the Japanese writers themselves can create these cues when they deploy these UMCs. This runs in contrast to face to face communication whereby the responsibility of the interaction remains with the listener who must decode subtle visual or audio cues (non-verbal communication) to decipher the speakers intended message (Takai & Ota, 1994; Wada, 1991)

Technology plays a part in the variation of emoticons but users play the significant role of when, if and how they are used either semantically and pragmatically. This chapter has aimed to show how emoticons can act as highlighters of politeness strategies and user pragmatic intention and how the assertion that Japanese language and culture is orientated towards negative politeness strategies is not necessarily applicable to the online environment with the data presented here. Results show that the use of emoticons within both data sets were used to convey the pragmatic intention of the writer through politeness acts that were used in the promotion of polite and negative politeness strategies.

Japanese comment writers used significantly more emoticons to highlight pragmatic meaning than their American counterparts ($p < .01$) and when broken down into politeness strategies Japanese comment writers used significantly more to emphasize positive politeness ($p < .01$.) These results can be traced to Japanese face-to-face communication styles that place an emphasis on harmony and good interpersonal relations. With the advancement of technology and other platforms of CMC developing it would be interesting to see if Japanese online extra-linguistic sign usage can continue to challenge or differ from established scholarly descriptions of face to face interaction and how communication conducted through computers anonymously or otherwise can add a new dimension to what we already know.

Chapter 7

Gender and UMC usage

Chapter 7 is broken into research areas that address the questions within research enquiry four as re-stated below. The first part of the chapter examines the Japanese gender divided comment data. A discussion of the American gender divided comment data follows. The focus of these two sections is to investigate how UMCs are used and function by both women and men. The following section then examines the use of these UMCs by comparing them across the English and Japanese data in addition to gender. The next section then attempts to address the questions (b) and (c) within the research enquiry 4. The final section of the chapter then gives a discussion of the overall gender data findings that were given in the proceeding chapters and concludes the data presentation and analysis.

Research enquiries four: Gender, language and UMC usage

- d. How does UMC deployment reflect the face to face literature descriptions concerning language and gender usage?
- e. Through UMCs are female blog writers inclined to a more rapport orientated communication style than males?
- f. Do women use more UMCs and through them use more positive politeness strategies than men?

This initial section examines the results of the Japanese blog comments that were divided into gender. The results are broken down into their UMC categories. Category 1 consists of 4 types of extra-linguistic sign UMCs, category 2 and 3 the verbal linguistic based UMCs that are phonetic and logographic. In all there are 9 types of UMCs spread across these three categories. These blog comment results are compared with respect to gender author and language.

7.1 Japanese Female v Japanese Male Comment Data.

Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data:

The Text Based Emoticons

Of the 32,675 sentences that were counted within the Japanese comment corpus 6,852 were classified as unknown in gender. These sentences could not be determined for gender for reasons which are fully explained within chapter 3 in the data and methods section.

Within the data in table 7.1 female Japanese comment writer's wrote significantly more comments than their male counterparts ($p < .01$). This is evidence for the premise that this genre of online writing and communication is female dominant. They wrote on blogs more and more often and a larger number of female writers commented on these blogs. Male authored blogs on cooking for example gained a large female following with the only male blog comment contributor being the blog author himself when he replied to the blog comments posted on his blog. Other blogs written on political themes, on electronic gadgets, work and so forth were written by men and gained mainly male comment contributions and the use of UMCs tended to be infrequent. On blogs which focused on TV drama, cooking and pets the comments tended to be slightly female dominant. Therefore it cannot be suggested that theme of the blog bears no influence on UMC usage.

Table 7.1 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic data: The Text based emoticons

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		Japanese male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	20225**	202.3±346.2	5568	55.7±108.7
Text based emoticons	4322**	43.2±93.0	984	9.8±35.0
Icons	3226**	32.3±66.6	708	7.1±22.9
Indexes	1096**	11.0±28.0	276	2.8±12.7
Symbols	0	-	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Japanese women used significantly more text based emoticons than Japanese male writer's ($p < .01$). This collaborates with the literature that suggests that females use more emoticons than males in both the Japanese and American literature. (Witmer & Katzman, 1997, Tossel et al 2012, Miyake, 2004)

When broken down into their functions of icons and indexes, Japanese women again used significantly more text based emoticons than men ($p < .01$). 21% of Japanese female sentences had emoticons attached to them compared to 18% of male sentences. The text based emoticon was the most frequently used semiasographic extra-linguistic sign. Like the overall gender undivided data there were no instances in both data sets where text based emoticons acted as symbols. The text based emoticons or *kaomoji* were therefore used with the objective to add more meaning semantically or pragmatically to the comments that they were a part of. These emoticons were, therefore, not used as mere decoration and were used with a sole purpose intentionally or otherwise to add meaning.

Text Based Emoticons as Icons

The following examples show how these emoticons were used to express semantic content, or tone and feeling of the author.

a. Female data

1. カンフー・パンダ面白いですよね(*´ω`*)

The film Kung fu Panda is funny hey (*´ω`*)

2. 最後の写真、サイコォー(≧▽≦)/ㄟ バンバン!

犬好きにはたまりません! ^^

The last photo was amazing(≧▽≦)/ㄟ

Can't help but love the dog ^^

3. そうなの? 恐竜がいる頃からなの?

Σ(0_0;)ビックリい~

Really? It was a time when there were dinosaurs?

Σ(0_0;)Surprising

4. シェ~って何だろ?

イヤミとかチビ太とか

同じ顔が6人いたりするとか

全然わかんないや~(≧▽≦)/

What is Shay?

Sarcasm? A small dog?

Six people with all the same faces.

I completely don't understand (≧▽≦)/

5. たいが一さんへ。

イングリッシュガーデンくらい本物を見たいと思ったことないです♪

(￣▽￣)ノ"

なんせハワイ、グアム、バリしか行ったことありません<(__ __ ;)>

憧れますね。

To Taiga san

I didn't think I wanted to see an English garden. ♪(¯▽¯)ノ"

I have only ever been to Hawaii, Guam and Paris <(_ _ ;)>

Longing to go (to England).

6. いいなあ～～o(^ワ^)o

私も夢見る夢子ですので・・ (^ ^ ;) 。

That's good o(^ワ^)o

I also dream of Yumeko (^ ^ ;) 。

7. いいですね～～豆乳(#^.^#)

このごろ牛乳よりも飲んでますよ ^ ^

Soy milk is good hey(#^.^#)

I'm drinking it more so than mild these days ^ ^

8. 野菜ごろごろ大きいのが大好きですw(^-^)w

Love a lot of vegetables these days w(^-^)w

9. またたびの食いつきっぷりのいい顔も

最後の満足 ♪満足 ♪の顔もいいね～ (- ^ ▽ ^ -) o(〃 ^ ▽ ^ 〃) o

昼からの仕事、頑張れます p(^-^)q

The last photo of a satisfied face was good hey (- ^ ▽ ^ -) o(〃 ^ ▽ ^ 〃) o

Off to work from the afternoon, will do my best p(^-^)q

10. (≡^▽^≡)(≡^▽^≡)ほんとにかわいい

うちにも3匹います。

個性があってみんなカワユ(¯▽+¯*)

(≡^▽^≡)(≡^▽^≡)So cute

I too have 3 cats.

They all have their own individuality and are so cute (¯▽+¯*)

11. ブランデーのパスタ食べた事が無いです。

凄い (● ^ o ^ ●)

美味しそうです！！

I have never eaten brandy pasta.

Smashing (● ^ o ^ ●)

Looks delicious!!

12.どれも美味しそうなメニューばかりですゝ(>▽<)o

ヒモの佃煮は食感も良さそうですね♪

一度食べてみたいです+。∴°ヽ(*´ω`)ノ°∴。

ポチ☆+

All the menus look delicious ゝ(>▽<)o

Your dish looks good on the tongue

Wanna try it:∴°ヽ(*´ω`)ノ°∴。

13.おいしそう〜〜〜(*ノωノ)

たらこスパ大好きなので、すっごく魅力的です(💰'v`*∞p)q.+

イカとエビ付きっていうのがとっても嬉しいです♪ぽちん凸

Looks good (*ノωノ)

As I love Cod roe pasta, it's very attractive (💰'v`*∞p)q.+

Love that it comes with shrimp and squid ♪ぽちん凸 (presses the masterpiece button)

14.ちょうど今日！（日付的には昨日ですね💧）会社の同僚が、このニャンコのキャラクターが好き〜〜💖という話しをしていたので、ビックリしちゃいました＼^o^／かわいい〜〜〜っ！（^-^*）

猫好きにはたまらないですv

ブルーの目やカラフルなお鼻が綺麗ですね♪

ポチっと☆

It's today! (Was yesterday by date)My co-workers said they liked cat character. I was surprised ＼^o^／ so cute (^-^*)

15.凄く可愛い〜♡♡（*´艸`）ムフッ♪

So cute 〜♡♡（*´艸`）ムフッ♪

All of the comments above include emoticons that express the feeling and psychological state of the writer. Of the 15 examples above, there are 22 *kaomoji* or emoticons used. 13 of them are attached to adjectives, predominately the adjectives いい (good),すごい (great) and かわいい (cute). The others are punctuated with sentences ending verbs which is not surprising considering conventional Japanese

sentences conclude in verbs. 7 of the emoticons were used in conjunction with unconventional phonetic spelling. Example 10 is a good instance of creativity with the emoticon trying to mimic a cat that the comment discusses. The sample of examples above is a good representation of what the females comments were like. They tended to have emotive adjectives such as cute punctuated with emoticons and their comments used a variety of UMCs rather than just one type.

b. Male data

1. こんにちは(^ ^ ヽ

メニューの一番下書いてある生ビール 300 円やグラスワイン 300 円が
気になります(^_-)-☆

Evening (^ ^ ヽ

I am particularly interested in the 300 yen beer and wine at the bottom of the menu
(^_-)-☆

The opening of the comment has an emoticon which indicates a friendly greeting and the following comment indicates the feeling of happiness the author has towards the cheap beer and wine written on the bottom of a menu. The menu is posted on the blog entry and the post includes a discussion and review of a restaurant.

2. ロンドンまでは成田から 1 2 時間半のフライトですが、すでに福岡→成田で 2 時間のフライトなのです・・疲れますよね)^o^(

It takes 12 and a half hours to get to London from Tokyo, I have already done
fukushima to Tokyo and I am exhausted)^o^(

Example 2 illustrates a simple emoticon expressing the author's fatigue.

3. 追加の焼豚はバラ肉なんですね！

ざる中華ってつけ麺でしたっけ？

麺が美味しいのでそちらも興味あります(^q^)

The additional roast pork is ribs.

Are noodles with it?

Looks delicious and you have got me hooked on it (^q^)

The author uses an emoticon here to express a fondness of the culinary dish.

4. すごく美味しそうで、ヨダレがでます (^u^)

Looks good. I'm salivating (^u^)

The above emoticon usage is self explanatory. The writer's feelings for the food that was presented in the blog post are highlighted by the emoticon.

5. 大変です！！新亜製麺が10月いっぱいまで閉店です。

今日麺を購入したらA4の紙にひっそり書いてありました。

諸般の事情により・・・寂しいです(TT)

Terrible!! My favourite noodle shop is closing at the end of October.

I saw it written on the shop pamphlet.

Will miss the shop(TT)

The above emoticon of a face with tears rolling down their face expresses the sadness of the author by the fact that their favourite noodle shop is closing.

6. ハーレムww(*´▽`*

オスは幸せでしょうね！！

僕もハーレムを(自重)

Harlem (funny) ww(*´▽`*

Males are fortunate

I too (want) a harlem (showing restraint)

The comment expresses laughter (also indicated by the ww which mean warau)

7. 書くうちにボーっとして豆腐になっちゃった(><)

While writing and daydreaming it tuned into toufu

8. この頃の子って

ホントに いないいないばー！が好きですよね^^

してもされても大喜びです！

Recent children really love peek a boo^^ Doing it or having it done to them.

9. 冬はやっぱりこたつにみかん、ですよ（^^）

In winter eating oranges under a *kotatsu* (heated table) is good hey （^^）

10. 朝から温かいお話ですよ（^^）

地方の方言って、意味が分からない言葉も多いですが、温かみがあって良いですよ。

Nice warm hearted conversation （^^）

I can't understand a lot of the dialect but it has a lot of warmth hey.

11. ミスチルの終わりのなき旅、大好きな曲です（^^）

Music I like for the end of the trip （^^）

12. ヤクルト、たしかに大量に飲むとお腹がゆるくなりそうですね（^^）

When you drink a lot of this yogurt it seems very easy on the stomach hey （^^）

Examples 7-12 all express the feelings of the blog comment writers about something, abstract or a physical entity with simple emoticons indicating their smile or happiness.

In comparison to the female use of emotions Japanese males tended to use simple emoticons as in the basic ^^ . These emoticons tended to aid in the description of their own feelings and within the majority of male comments the use of the emoticon functioned as the sole UMC within the entire comment. The male comments were conservative in emoticon use in comparison to how females inserted them into their text.

Within the female comments as illustrated above the emoticon was usually accompanied by unconventional phonetic spelling, other emoticons, multiple use of exclamation marks and *kigou* or codes. There were of course exceptions to this rule but the general pattern saw Japanese women utilizing significantly more UMCs within

their comments than Japanese men (as the results and discussion will continue to show) to express semantic content specifically in regard to the authors emotional psychological state. In short, they expressed their feelings more with the aid of more UMCs and a larger variety of emoticons than their male counterparts.

Text Based Emoticons as Indexes

This section was discussed in depth in chapter 6 in relation to these examples being used to indicate positive and negative politeness strategies and, therefore, examples are only followed with a brief discussion.

a. Female data

1. こんばんは(^o^)/
ペタありがとうございます(^o^)
プリクラ楽しい雰囲気ですね(^o^)/
きのこ～に一票をお願いします(^o^)
明日も元気に行きましょう(*^ー')ノ
それではまた(^o^)/
Evening(^o^)/
Thank you for the peta(^o^)
Print club is fun (^o^)/
Will go again tomorrow(*^ー')ノ
See ya(^o^)/

This comment example has 6 sentences within it all of which have comments attached to them. This would be counted as 6 emoticons. Lines 1 and 6 are attached to comment openings and closings, Line 2 to an expression of thanks and line 4 a joking request.

2. こんにちは！(。・▽・)ノ

今日もo(*^ー^*)oお疲れ様！！

Evening(。・▽・)ノ

Otsukaresama for today as well o(*^ー^*)o

3. きぽぽ。

お疲れ様です(￣▽￣*)ゞ

温かくして、ゆっくり楽しんでねえ(ゝω・´★)

Kipopo

Otsukaresamadesu(￣▽￣*)ゞ

Keep warm and have fun (ゝω・´★)

Examples 2 and 3 include examples of comment openings and closings with the second line of example 3 offering intimacy with the reader by asking them to take it easy (they have a cold) and wrap up warm and watch a DVD (the author mentions this plan in her blog posting).

b. Male data

Comment openings and closings

1. 楽しい休日を、また明日(^o^)/。

Have a good day off, see ya (^o^)/。

2. おはようございます(^ ^)

Good Morning (^ ^)

3. (*・エ・*)ノ☆コンパソ♪

Evening(*・エ・*)ノ☆

4. のりこさん、おはようございます。そしてお久しぶりです^^ イベント残念でしたがまた機会があったらぜひ！体調は大丈夫ですか？しっかり治してくださいね

Morning Noriko san, its been a while ^^ Sorry about the event, if there is a next time I'd be up for it. How are you doing? Get well soon.

5. たらこさん はじめまして<(_ _)>

町内会ですか (^ ^

いろんなお店があるものですよ・これからもよろしくお願いします(^ ^)/

Nice to meet you Tarko san<(_ _)>

Is it a town association?

There are a lot of shops hey, *yoroshiku onegaishimasu* (^ ^) /

The examples above are attached to comment openings and closings which create a sense of intimacy and friendship with the reader.

Common to both the female and male examples emoticons attached to comment openings / closings reflect Japanese forms of polite everyday spoken discourse in face to face everyday interactions. Some of the emoticons used are more informal than others, example 3 above is an instance of this. This is in contrast to example 5 where the bowing emoticon is a reflection or visualization of how this encounter would happen in a real life first encounter.

Compliment

1. はじめまして！！！！ペタありがとうございます。

可愛いですね(^ _ ^)v

コーデも可愛いです(≧▽≦)

Nice to meet you!!! Thanks peta.

It's cute (^ _ ^)v

Your (clothes) coordination is cute too

The comment above is from a blog post of a young attractive 20 something girl who writes about cosmetics and fashion and posts pictures of herself and in this case along with her friend modeling clothes and make up. The comment above is from a male admirer who thanks *peta* ペタ (blog writer) for the post and compliments her and her clothes coordination as being cute. This blog only had 13 male comment sentences out of a total of 412. The 412 sentences had 178 (43%) emoticons attached to them

suggesting that this blog community uses these emoticons often and may have encouraged the few male contributors to use them as well to feel part of this speech community.

Solidarity and support

仕事お互い頑張りましょうね ^ ^

Let's do our best at work ^ ^

1. お帰りなさいませ～～♪

イタリアのお話も楽しみにしています (^ ^)

イタリアって美味しい物が多そうなイメージです (笑)

美味しそう～～イカちゃん コロコロ～私のお腹は ポニョ～ポニョ～ 食欲の夏しちゃいますう～～。

Welcome back

Looking forward to your news about Italy (^ ^)

I think Italy has a lot of culinary delights

Looks so good my belly is rumbling

Example 1 ends in a comment of bonding (both are businessmen) to do their best at work. Example 2 opens with a warm welcome back and expresses an eagerness to know more about their travels in Italy where the blog author has just returned from and the emoticon acts as an indicator of friendship and support.

Text Based Emoticons as Symbols

As the overall comments data had no symbols there were also no instances of text based emoticons that acted as symbols within this gender divided data as well.

7.2 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The Graphic Based Emoticons (Smiley's)

The table below shows the results of the graphic based emoticons from the gender divided comment data.

Table 7.2 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The Graphic Based Emoticons

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		Japanese male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	191	1.9±4.6	73	0.73±4.5
Icons	177	1.8±4.4	70	0.70±4.5
Indexes	14	0.14±0.51	3	0.03±0.17
Symbols	0	-	0	-

There were no significant differences within the graphic based emoticons data and overall the use of this particular type of UMC in the Japanese data was infrequently. Only 1.3% of male sentences and 0.9% of female sentences had these emoticons attached to them. Reasons for this include the fact that this emoticon is originally western in origin and is also an UMC that is used a lot in synchronous communication platforms such as instant messenger and chat rooms.

Graphic Based Emoticons as Icons

The following examples show how these emoticons were used to express semantic content, or tone and feeling of the author.

a. Female data

1. こんにちは！

ポチ君、素敵な・・・

赤マント？ではなく赤パンツ

ふふふ～😂

ポチ君、何でも着こなし上手さん✨

Evening.

Potchi kun is great.

Not Red mantle nut red pants.

He he he 😂

Whatever Potch kun wears is good ✨

2. 昨日、何か足らんような、忘れてるような

気してたら、ポチ君に会いに来てなかったあ～😓

ひょえ～💧

今日しっかり昨日のお手伝いぶり見せてもらったよお😊

ポチ君、えらいなあ～✨

Yesterday I felt a bit weird but was glad to meet pochi kun.

Potch kun tried to help me out

The above two comments are from the same blog which focuses on the blog author's pet dog called ポチ pochi and the red pants he was wearing in the blog post photograph. Example 1 indicates the laughter of the author, and the two graphic emoticons 😂 found in the second example indicate the feelings of the author with regards to the situation it expresses. The comment is littered with other UMCs which was typical of female authored blog comments.

3. 今日やっとカレー食べたよ+。(＊' ▽ `)。+° 食 べたいのに食べれないのは辛いね😓アボカド食べたい。

I ate curry at last today (*'▽`). Even though I wanted to eat it I couldn't eat it all which was painful 🤢, want to eat avacardo now.

4. トナカイが可愛い～ 🤢

私なら絶対買ってますね。というか、買わなかったら帰りの道中からずっと後悔すると思うんで(^_^;)

Tonakai is cute ～ 🤢

I would definitely have bought it, if I didn't I would regret it all the way home.

The above two examples are attached to adjectives which express the feelings of the author. This echoed how text based emoticons were used. There were therefore no differences in use in the female deployment of graphic and text based emoticons except for their vast difference in overall frequency.

b. Male data

44 of the 70 graphic emoticons used were by one male blog writer. His blog posts and comments were littered with them. Like most blog users who had unique UMC habits particular to them, this particular blog user included many graphic based emoticons within his blog writings. Here are some of his examples.

1. 挨拶は大事です 🤢

多少ちゃらんぽらんだったり、やんちゃしていても、挨拶の出来る子は僕は大好きですね 🤢

Greetings are important 🤢

Because (your kids) can greet people properly I like that 🤢

This particular male blog writer used the same graphic based emoticon consistently throughout his writings with no clear distinction or variety. The above examples are intended to add a tone and feeling to his comments. The use of the same graphic based emoticons and emoji was quite high in his blog postings and comments, perhaps an indication that he writes his blogs via a mobile device such as an i-phone.

However, this cannot be determined or proved, but in comparison to the other blogs, this blog and a handful of other male authored blogs, saw a pattern of regularly using the same graphic emoticon or *emoji*.

The two comments below are taken from the same male author. There are a number of different UMCs used within these two comments which is a rarity for a male authored comment. The writer also utilizes a comment closing where he uses an emoticon as his signature sending off. The use of graphic emoticons here in example 2 expresses the feelings of the author. The graphic emoticon in example 3 represents author feelings about a blog post about calligraphy and poetry.

2. たん君さん

🍊の思い出 高校の頃 友達三人で 一箱の🍊 食べてしまい お母さんが びっくり! 🖐️は黄色 凄い事に 😊大好きです 🖐️
(^^ゞサリーパパ 🍀

Tan kun san

Thinking about oranges, when I was a high school student ne and 3 friends ate a whole box of oranges, my mum was surprised and my hands went yellow. 😊

(^^ゞ Sari papa

3. たん君さん

字の綺麗な人 羨ましいです 🖐️後々見て 思い出す 言葉 良いですね 😊
(^^ゞサリーパパ 🍀

Tan kun san

You writing is nice and I am envious 🖐️ The language used is good too 😊

Graphic Based Emoticons as Indexes

a. Female data

1. こちらこそいつもありがとうございます 🍷

Thanks for always giving me your support 🍷

2. 末永く宜しくお願いいたします 🍷

Please support my blog forever 😊

The above emoticon examples are added to emphasize thanks as in example 1 and a request in example 2 which asks the reader to continue to support their blog.

b. Male data

1. おならの消音アプリも出来ればいいのに…。 🤔

If only there was an app to cover up the sound of breaking wind 🤔

The above graphic emoticon indexes a joke in a comment about the new apps on an ipad. He jokes that he wishes there was one for covering up the sound when someone breaks wind.

Text Based Emoticons as Symbols

There were no instances of graphic based emoticons that acted as symbols.

7.3 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The *Emoji* (Pictograms)

Table 7.3 below shows the results of the graphic based emoticons from the gender divided comment data. *Emoji* in general were not used frequently by Japanese blog comment writers. The overall totals and their subcategories of icons, indexes and symbols showed no statistical differences. Similar to graphic emoticons, *emoji* were used very infrequently by both sexes and, therefore, no concrete observations or patterns of use can be described here. In comparison to *emoji* deployment and behavior within the blog posts themselves their frequency was substantially lower in all categories. Even though on some blog comment interfaces (FC2 and Yahoo) *emoji* can be easily selected from a drop down menu comment writers on the whole and regardless of gender decided not to use them based on the findings here.

Table 7.3 Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: The Emoji (Pictograms)

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		Japanese male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Emoji (pictograms)	266	2.7±6.4	88	1.0±6.6
Icons	42	.42±2.5	0	-
Indexes	41	.41±1.6	53	0.53±5.3
Symbols	183	1.8±4.12	35	.35±1.6

Emoji as Icons

Only two blogs used emoji as icons which would suggest that this is a personal habit particular to these two women and is not widespread within my data sample here.

a. Female data

1. 22 周年かあすごいですよ☆

我が家はあと 10 年後 . . .

想像つかない^_^;

その頃は娘っ子も 🏠 出てる頃

なんと！！2 人きり？無理だー (@_@;)

こいのぼりのおいなりさん 可愛いですね 🌸

食べるのもったいないくらい可愛い💖

これからも末永く幸せになって下さいね(´▽`*)

22nd anniversary, that's great.

We have another 10 years to go.

Can't imagine it ^_^;

The children will be leaving the house soon

Will be just the 2 of us, tough (@_@;)

The carp banner is cute

Hope you will be happy forever (´▽`*)

The above example shows how the *emoji* is used as a lexical replacement. This was a frequent occurrence within the blog posts but a rarity within comment interactions where the focus is on an online conversation with the blog author rather than writing a blog post to be read by unspecified blog browsers.

2. フレンチトーストって、たまに作りますが、このアイデアはグーですね。



I occasionally make French toast and this idea is cool.

This *emoji*, acts in a similar way to a graphic emoticon in the way it highlights the authors feelings. This usage however was rare.

b. Male data

There were no instances.

Emoji as Indexes

a. Female data

These indexes, like the proceeding icons, were used sparingly by female writers and this data was only found within 10 of the 100 blogs. The example below was used in the context of the blog writer offering advice to their comment reader regarding some personal problems they are having. The writer here says they have their full support and indexes it with a muscular arm that indexes this strong support.

1. 応援していますよ💪

I'm supporting you 💪

b. Male data

All 53 representations of *emoji* acting as indexes were all found in the same blog. This UMC behavior was not widespread within the data and is unique and particular to this one user who may deploy these *emoji* on a habitual basis. In fact 65 of the total 88 *emoji* were used by this one user.

1. コメントどうもありがとうございます 🙇
Thank you for the comments

All of the 53 *emoji* that acted as indexes were attached to expressions of gratitude for comments and all of them used the same *emoji* as shown in the example above. This pattern of UMC behavior was unique to this user. Female users tended to use a wide variety of UMCs and even within specific UMCs such as emoticon usage a larger variety was deployed by the same author.

Emoji as Symbols

a. Female data

1. すごいカッコイイ 🌟
教習スタートしたんですね(≧▽≦)ノ
バイク操作難しそう^_^;
いいなあ車もバイクも乗れて♪
私50cc起こせないから無理かなあ(*_*;
Really cute 🌟
You started practice hey(≧▽≦)ノ
Operating the bike looks difficult^_^;
It is good that you can drive a bike and a car
2. 蒼夏さん 連絡ありがとう 🍀
しっかり録画します 🌟

Thanks for contacting me

I will make sure I record it.

3. みうさん コメントありがと～🍀

お嬢さん 夜更かしできるとはしっかり体力も回復しているんだね～👍
今週も学校頑張れたんだね～^^

1週間お疲れ様🌟

Thanks for the comment Sou san

If you can stay up late it is good to get your strength back

You did well at school this week *ostukaresama*.

4. ぷんちちさん お久しぶりです お元気でしたか??

勿論 忘れてなんか無いですよ!

嬉しいですよ🍀

娘さん 大学生になられたんですね👍

ホント素晴らしいです★

こういううれしい知らせはホント前向き そして目標になりますね🌟

また時々娘さんの頑張りを教えてくださいね💕

It has been a while punchichi san. How have you been?

Of course I have forgotten nothing.

I'm happy.

Your daughter has become a university student.

That is wonderful.

With that kind of news we can look forward with goals to aim for.

Let me know about how you daughter goes.

b. Male data

1. こんばんは^^

シマリスさん、和みますね～。

ほほ袋いっぱい頬張っているのもまた可愛い(^。^)

ポチ★

Evening.

The chipmunk has calmed down hey.

It is cute how the chipmunk stuffs his cheeks.

Pochi (sound of the keyboard pressing the masterpiece button).

In general, the use of *emoji* was very infrequent with both sexes and considering that they were attached to 1.3% of female sentences and 1.5% of male sentences shows that their importance of use as a semasiographic sign was not a high priority for most of these Japanese blog users. The use of symbols within the female data especially were randomly deployed in comments as shown in the use of the four leafed clovers, stars and musical symbols above. There was no pattern to determine or predict how they were used due to the arbitrary nature of their insertion into comments. Heart marks were less random and sometimes attached to requests or compliments as shown in example 4 above. This usage however may add a sense of cuteness or tone to the dialogue and may indicate a new loose interpretation of what heart marks are perceived to represent but offers no meaningful insight into how the comment should be interpreted especially when compared with icons and indexes.

7.4 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data:

The kigou (code) data

The table below shows the results of the *kigou* or symbols data.

Table 7.4 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The kigou (codes)

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		Japanese male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Kigou</i> (code)	2305**	23.1±60.1	425	4.3±16.0
<i>Kigou</i> as Icons	0	-	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Indexes	0	-	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Symbols	2305**	23.1±60.1	425	4.3±16.0

** ($p < .01$)

After the use of text based emoticons *kigou* registered the second largest frequency within the semiasographic extra-linguistic data. The *kigou* were all used as symbols by both sexes but Japanese women utilized them within their comments significantly more ($p < .01$). These symbols carried no semantic or pragmatic meaning and their connection to the comment or sentence that they were attached to was very loose. They, therefore, acted as decoration or in a loose sense added tone to the comment. They may also help the writer create an online self identity that is punctuated with these symbols. Through this identity or image the writer may wish to be seen as being friendly, personable, approachable and depending on how they are used as gender performance or markers of cuteness.

Kigou as Symbols

a. Female data

1. おはようございます♪

豪華なパスタですね^^

かにカマはよく使いますが、かにさんにはしばらくお目にかかってないなあ（笑）

ブランデーの風味も良さそう^^

食べてみたいです☆☆

お洒落なランチにポチ★

Good morning

It is gorgeous pasta

I use crab sticks but have not laid my eyes on real crab for a while

Brandy style looks good

Wanna give it a try

Cheers to a fashionable brunch

2. sachipan さん そうです(^ m ^*)フッ シメイブルーは、コクがあって味わいがあって美味しいですよね～(*´艸`)

たまにいただくと、ホント美味しいなあ♪ ～♪とつくづく感じます^^

That's right Sachipan san, Chimay beer has a deep colour and tastes good

When I occasionally drink it, I thoroughly feel how delicious it is

3. おはようございます☀

わあ、さすがY o s s y さん。。。。

秋物を先取りですね☆☆☆

夏のカラフルなお色もそろそろ。。。。

秋のシックなお色がとても新鮮。。。 ☆☆☆

楽しみにしています*~.* ♪♪

ポチ☆

Morning.

Great Yossy san.

Time to get out the autumn clothes hey.

Time to bid farewell to summer colours.

Autumn chic colours are fresh.

Looking forward to it.

4. 材材材!!!!(°ロ°)/

なんて美しいパスタでせう♪

赤と緑・白が鮮やかで、細めのパスタにたらこが絡み…。

もう、たまりませ〜ん！ゞ(≧▽≦*)〃ゞ(*≧▽≦)〃

冷製パスタ味付けが難しそうで敬遠してたけど…チャレンジしたくなりました
た〜♥ 激ぽちーーーー凸凸凸

WoW!!!!

Delicious pasta

Red, green and vibrant white this cod roe pasta looks amazing.

It looks difficult but I want to challenge myself and give it a go.

Pochi'

5. 初めまして★

葛餅…以前作ったけど失敗して（涙）

でも、また挑戦してみたくまりました！

うちの旦那の好物なのでこちらのレシピ参考にがんばってつくってみます♪

Nice to meet you

Kudzu starch cake ... made it before but failed

but would like to try to make it again.

My husband loves it so I will consult a recipe book and try to make it.

6. FOXEY のおもてなし…いつみても素敵です〜><///

憧れます♡♡

パーカーとニット…どんなのかとっても気になる感じです★

素敵なおもてなしにポチ★

Foxy's hospitality is always amazing.

I long for it ♡♡

I am particularly interested in the knit and parker ★

Cheers to wonderful hospitality★

7. おいしそー♥さわやかな感じ☆ポチ★

紅茶も美味しそう(^ ^)

もう秋物ですよね(^ ^)お買い物ものいいなー♪

私も欲しくなっちゃいました(^0^)

Looks delicious.

The green tea looks good too.

Autumn soon, good to go shopping.

There are some things I want.

The use of heart marks, musical codes and stars bear no resemblance to an emotional psychological state semantically or pragmatically. Here they decorate the comments or perhaps give the comments a musical tone, but the connection between the symbol and actual ‘real’ meaning is very loose. However, these *kigou* were often used in conjunction with other UMCs within the Japanese female data rather than standing alone within comments.

In the examples above which are typical of the data, nearly every sentence within the comments had a UMC attached to it. This was never found within the Japanese male authored comments. The Japanese female use of *kigou* tended to be used in conjunction with other UMCs. Sometimes a ♪ was attached to an emoticon or used after a phonetic spelling. Visually the use of these symbols (and in conjunction with other UMCs) may make the comment interesting or intimate. The use of these *kigou*, may project a cute image that the writer wants to be seen in. Examples 2 and 3 for example are very jovial visual looking comments and the writer may use these UMCs to present themselves as young, cheerful, feminine and friendly. In this respect a unique online identity can be created which may mirror their offline persona or may be a new creation where they can create an alternative personality that lives anonymously online.

b. Male data

1. こんにちは！

いつもどうもありがとうございます ♪

Evening

Thanks as always for the comments

2. DEN さん ☆ ども ども ！

お褒めの言葉も

ありがとうございます ♪

Den, Thanks for the kind words

The use of *kigou* within the male data tended to be a lot more conservative than the female usage. Firstly, they were used significantly less and usually used alone and not in conjunction with other UMCs. In contrast, the deployment of these *kigou* were used predominantly by female writers to help create a tone and an atmosphere of online intimacy. They also help in the creation of an online self identity (users use a handle name and not their own) and this self presentation can project the writer to be seen in a favourable light (Walther, 1996). The insertion of these symbols with other semasiographic signs and phonetic spelling can convey vocal, visual cues about the writer's personality as well as representing gender marking.

7.5 The Phonographic Data: Unconventional phonetic spelling

Category 2 phonographic data is broken down into two types:

3. Unconventional phonetic spelling.
4. Phonetic representations of laughter.

The table below shows the results of the unconventional phonetic spelling data.

Table 7.5 Phonographic Data: Unconventional Phonetic Spellings

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		Japanese male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	3221**	32.2±65.9	630	6.3±14.8
Semantic function	2831**	28.3±57.4	564	5.6±13.2
Pragmatic intention	390*	3.90±9.70	66	.66±2.81

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Japanese females used significantly more overall unconventional phonetic spelling than their male counterparts and also within the semantic function of these UMCs ($p < .01$). The level of significant difference dropped when comparing the pragmatic function of this UMC ($p < .05$).

Semantic Function

a. Female data

1. 今日はお休みなんですw ㄍ(*^。^*)ノいええ～い
だんな様も休みなんですちょっと出かけてこようかなw
(o´ω`o) うふふ

Today is my day off great

My husband is off too so I wonder if we will go out

2. カニとトマト最高のカップルですね～♪
見ているだけで、よだれが～～～。
コストコでゲットされたビールが合ってるう～。
Crab and tomato is a wonderful combination
I'm salivating by just looking at it
Goes well with beer

3. こんばんは ^^

蟹のパスタ、大好きです ♪

凄く美味しそうです ♪

いつもは旦那様が作ってくださるパスタなのですね ^^ ^^

いいなあ ~ ~ ~ ♪

Evening.

I love crab pasta.

Looks so good.

Your husband always cooks it for you.

That's wonderful.

4. わあ ~ 、かわいいい ~ ♪

ちっちゃいねえ ~ 。

普通サイズのと比べると、赤ちゃんみたい (笑)

ちっちゃいと、いろんな種類が食べられそうだねえ ~ 。

Wow, cute

Small

When you compare it to a normal size its like a baby.

5. かわいいよおお !

Cute!

The examples above all aid in how the comment should be read and through these unconventional depictions or clues, such as the vowel lengthening, the deliberate use of small *hiragana* where conventionally it does not belong, and the use of the ~ to indicate elongated vowel sounds that are present in the examples above. They add a 'voice' to what is otherwise black text on a webpage.

b. Male data

1. ハンナさん、今年は日照不足ですね。野菜も高くなってしまい日ごろの料理の食材選びも大変ですね。仕事頑張って食材買わなきゃなあ ~ 。

Hana san, sunshine has been lacking this year hey, vegetables have gone up in price and choosing food ingredients is tough.

The use of this UMC played the same role as within the female data in that they mimic the vocal sounds of speech. However, the use of this UMC was often used in isolation of other UMCs in comparison to the female data. The female data had instances of unconventional phonetic spellings with emoticons or other UMCs attached giving a greater emphasis on the face and voice of the author. Male comments tended to use fewer UMCs on the whole and when they did, they did not use this ‘doubling’ technique where multiple UMCs are used within one comment.

Pragmatic Function

a. Female data

1. うにまむさん、写真お上手ですよ～
すごくいいショットばかりです o(^-^)
Unimamu san, you are good at photography.
All your pictures are really good.
2. ぎゃあちゃん素敵ですよ～
トップモデルの貫禄たっぷりです。
You (look) great
Just like a model.
3. 本当に上手～(^0^)
素敵な字ですね～～～
何だか自分の字が恥ずかしくなってきました p p
字は性格が出るんですよ～(*^_^*)
たん君の字は素晴らしいね～～(^0^)/
Wonderful writing.
My handwriting is so embarrassing.
Your character comes out in your writing hey
Your son’s writing is wonderful.

The two above examples are used with the writer expressing compliments

towards the reader. The first compliments the reader's (blog writer's) photography. The second compliments the blog author's appearance, and example 3 compliments the blog writer's child on their written Japanese in line 1, 2 and the last sentence of the comment.

4. お疲れ様でした～

ゆっくりしてくだされ～

Otsukaresamadeshita.

Take it easy.

5. 来週も楽しみで一す♪

Looking forward to next week too (blog author will write a new blog post)

6. マーチャン 7 歳お誕生日おめでとう ♪

これから

また 1 年楽しく幸せいっぱい過ごせますように ♪

おめでとうマーチャン(^-^)/

Congrats to Maya chan on her 7th birthday.

Hope you have a fun filled happy year

Happy birthday Maya chan

7. おかえりなさ～い ^^ ♪

Welcome back.

8. にゃあもさん、こんばんは～ ^^

Good evening Nyamo san.

9. こんにちは～

みんな可愛いですねえ～

お二人だけでも寂しくないですね。

Evening.

Everyone is so cute hey.

With just you two you won't be lonely hey.

10. yossy さん+. (ノ*・ω・)ノ*. オハヨオオ☆°・: *☆

Good morning Yossy san

In example 4 the reader is asked to take it easy and to not overdo it at work. Example 7 welcomes the author back. The use of the unconventional phonetic spelling used in all these examples above add a sense of intimacy to the interactions and bonding online. Example 6 is a remark stating congratulations, the others consist of warm greetings with the instance in example 10 using katakana and the small オ ‘o’ sound to create the gooooo morning equalivant. The use of an emoticon and stars give it a visual attractiveness and character, perhaps one the writer is endeavoring to create.

b. Male data

There were only 66 examples within the male comment data which was very infrequent. Most of the examples were used in comment openings and closings and in expressions of support and solidarity.

1. お帰りなさいませ～～♪

Welcome home

2. 発売おめでとうございます！

欲しい欲しいと思っているんですが、なかなか本屋さんに行く時間が無くて買えていません。。。 (T_T)

これからも頑張ってくださいね～

Congratulations on the sale (of their book)

I want to buy it but have no time to go to the book shop.

Keep up the good work.

3. ラリマーさん あけましておめでとうございます。

こちらこそ宜しく願いしま～す^^。

Happy new year Rarima-san.

Hoping for your kind regards this year too.

Example 1 is used in a warm hearted welcome back (the blog writer took a brief break from blog writing) Example 2 is another warm hearted expression of

encouragement wishing the blog writer the best and the third example is a standard happy new year expression with a lengthened vowel sound to mimic vocalization.

Similar to the text based emoticon use women used more creative and varied phonetic spellings. They were used more often with other UMCs and used with more emotive adjectives such as *kawaii* (かわいい) or cute more so than male authored comments. Japanese women used phonetic spellings more often, with more variation and in conjunction with other UMCs were used creatively. This usage not only aided in the representation of female displays of emotion but also as indicators of cuteness and gender performance. The use of feminine typical particles such as *wa* and the common use of *ne* spelt phonetically with an elongated vowel sound (and often accompanied by an emoticon) were frequent in the female data.

7.6 Phonographic data:

Unconventional Laughter Phonetic Representations

There were no statistical differences found within this data and the overall frequency of this UMC was exceptionally low. The use of the logographic (笑) *warau* or the use of emoticon being the preferred choice by Japanese blog writers to mimic online laughter.

Table 7.6 Phonetic Representations of Laughter

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		Japanese male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonetic representations of laughter	36	0.36±2.0	0	-
Semantic function	36	0.36±2.0	0	-
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Only 3 of the 100 blogs utilized phonetic spelling to illustrate laughter representations. It was a UMC that was not as popular as the potential alternatives such as emoticons, and the logographic 笑.

a. Female data

1. あはは・・・あのCMね♪

That TV commercial is so funny.

2. 息子の反応は大して喜びは・・・(T▽T)アハハ!

男の子の生地って感じですよね～

これでランチョンマット作ろうと思ってたのにエプロンに変身してしまいました～(￣m￣〃)ぷぷっ!

インパクトUPでポケットもっとつければよかったかしら^^;

(ノ▽≡、)ノ彡☆ キャハハ!!バンバンッ!!

My son's reaction was a joy

The material is boyish.

With this going to make lunch mat but made a apron.

Wonder if I should add more pockets for a bigger impact.

Example 1 is a simple expression of laughter regarding a television commercial. Example 2 (lines 1, 4, and 6) all show a variety of 3 different spellings to illustrate the laughter of the author. Again this is an example of a female comment where the author uses a variety and multiple UMCs to express themselves in an online text environment.

b. Male data

There were no instances within the male data.

Pragmatic Function

There were no instances in both the male and female data.

7.7 Logographic Data: Unconventional Laughter Representations

Japanese women used significantly more logographical representations of laughter than males in both the overall totals and the semantic totals ($p < .01$). With only 11 instances within the female data the pragmatic data had no statistical significance.

Table 7.7 Logographic Representations of Laughter

	Japanese female blog comment data ($n=100$)		Japanese male blog comment data ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean \pm S.D.	Total	mean \pm S.D.
Logographic representations of laughter	928**	9.3 \pm 25	178	1.8 \pm 4.1
Semantic function	917**	9.2 \pm 25	178	1.8 \pm 4.1
Pragmatic function	11	.11 \pm .42	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Semantic function

a. Female data

1. こんにちは(^0^)/

まあ～、なんて初々しい花嫁さんなんでしょ～～～♪

私は晩婚なんで、初々しいって言葉には縁がなかったわ～(^o^)
でも、いいの、ラブラブだから(^_^)v ←もういいっちゅうの！！（笑）

Evening

What an innocent looking bride

I married late so innocence isn't a word that can be associated with me.

But it is okay because we are in love (there you go I said it).

2. 大阪では、常識なんですけど、ほかの地方の人が、驚くことにかえって、こちらが、ビックリですよ～。（笑）

お誕生会に、お友達を呼んでたこ焼きパーティーなんていうこともしますよ。
(^_^)v

It is common sense in Osaka and it is surprising to me that other people from other places are surprised by it, for birthday parties we call over friends and cook fried octopus.

b. Male data

1. こんにちは！

いつもどうもありがとうございます♪

富士山は今か、もう少し前くらいが雪がいい感じに残っていて
良かったかもしれないです♪

朝の目覚めで富士山見たらかなりテンションあがりそうです（笑）

Evening.

Thank you as always.

There is some snow left on Mount Fuji

When I open my eyes in the morning and see Mount Fuji it lifts my mood.

2. 親子はよく似ますよね～

ウチも気性が父にそっくりになってしまいました（笑）

You look alike (parent and child).

As for us, my temperament is becoming more like my father.

These logographic depictions gave reference to how the tone of the comment should be read in letting the reader know their reaction to them or the blog post they created.

Pragmatic Function

a. Female data

1. ケンカの後だったら、わたしも黙って旦那の分食べちゃいます！！(笑)

After we fight, we don't speak to each other and I will eat my husband's cake.

2. そうそう！旦那の物は私の物！！(笑)

That's right! Husband's things are my (wife's) things.

The above examples show the blog comment author and blog author interacting with a joke about eating their husband's share of the cake. The blog post focused on how to 'punish' their husband after they had a disagreement.

b. Male data

There were no pragmatic instances within the male data

7.8 Logographic Data: The Use of Multiple Exclamation Markers

Japanese women overall used significantly more multiple exclamation marks and also within the semantic function of this UMC ($p < .01$). This reflects the literature that women use more than men (Waseleski, 2006). The use of this UMC to indicate pragmatic intention however was infrequent.

Table 7.8 Multiple exclamation mark usage

	Japanese female comments (<i>n</i> =100)		Japanese male comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Multiple exclamation mark usage	850**	8.50±24.4	101	1.0±2.31
Semantic function	760**	7.60±21.9	90	0.90±1.9
Pragmatic function	90	0.90±2.9	11	0.11±.549

** ($p < .01$)

Semantic Function

a. Female data

1. 実は毎日拝見してます～！だいすきですっ！！

I actually watch it (TV program) everyday! I love it!!

2. うにちゃん！とんでもなく可愛い！

少し開いたお口から見えるピンクの唇！！！！

たまりません！！！！

Uni chan So cute.

From a slightly opened mouth the pink lips I can see are adorable!!!

3. レシピ本はもう 7 ですね、すごい～～！！

You have 7 recipe books (published) now hey. Amazing!!

The use of multiple exclamation marks (often used in conjunction with other UMCs in the female data), helped to emphasize the emotional state of the author and were often attached to adjectives that supported this. The male exclamation marks as illustrated below were overall infrequent and could be described as overall less ‘excitable’ than their female counterparts.

b. Male data

1. うらやましいぜ！！

オレもケーキだれかをつくってみたいぜ！！

メリークリスマス！

So envious!!

I want o make a cake with someone!!

Merry Christmas!

2. ストレス解消するも何も A K B 48 でしょ～

唄えて踊れてハッピーになるなら

これ以外ない！

思いつかない！！

To get rid of stress there is nothing like AKB48 (a girl band)

Sing, dance and become happy.

Nothing better!

Can't think of anything better!!

Pragmatic Function

a. Female data

1. おめでとうございます～！！(*°▽°ノ) ☆パチパチ

Congratulations!!

2. はちゅんさんこんばんは♪

お疲れさまでした～(^-^)

バイク転ばないように気をつけてね！！

ゆっくりおやすみなさい♪

Evening Haryu san.

Otsukaresama desu.

Take care to not fall off your bike!!

Good night.

3. マーちゃん、お誕生日おめでとう ♪ ♪

今日はお祝いするのかな??

写真UP楽しみにしていますね!

これからも健康で過ごせますように!!

Happy birthday Maya chan

Will you give her a present today?

Please upload the (party) photos.

Take care of your health!!

4. いつもいろいろ教えてくれて本当にありがとうございます!!!!

Thank you so much for telling me so much stuff!!!!

The exclamation markers used in example 1 are used with a congratulations, example 2 with a concern for the author not to have a motorcycle accident (the blog author is taking lessons). Example 3 expresses similar sentiments and example 4 is attached to an expression of gratitude.

b. Male data

1. バイク教習始まりましたね～。

はちゅん姐さんものすごい楽しそうですね～。

がんばって免許取得!!

You have started bike practice hey.

Your husband looks like he is enjoying it.

Good luck with getting your license!!

2. まあ!!お互いテスト頑張ろうぜ!!

Together, Let's do our best on the test!!

Comment 1 offers support for the blog author in the attainment of their bike license, comment 2 (who is doing a similar work related test) offers a sense of

camaraderie with their reader with the expression 頑張ろうぜ！！ *ganbarou ze* (Let's do our best) ending in the masculine sentence final particle ぜ *ze*.

This part of the chapter has shown how Japanese men and women use UMCs. Women use more, a larger variety, and use multiple UMCs that are attached to sentence endings to achieve a doubling effect to generate semantic or pragmatic meaning. Men used less, and when they used them they deployed them sparingly, with one UMC attached to sentence endings and with few cases of multiple UMCs to mark sentence endings. Japanese women also used these UMCs more to highlight emotive adjectives such as *kawaii* (cute) and *sugoi* (great). In addition, Japanese results concurred with previous studies that show that women use more UMCs than men (Witmer & Katzman (1997; Colley & Todd, 2002). The next section analyzes the American gender divided comment data results.

7.9 American Female v American Male Comment Data.

Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data:

The Text Based Emoticons

Of the 24,316 sentences that were counted within the American comment corpus 19,720 could be assigned gender with 4,596 being categorized as unknown. This can be compared to 6,852 of unknown sentences within the Japanese data. These unknown comments were written anonymously with no links to their blog so gender could not be determined. Methods used for determining comment gender are discussed fully in chapter 3.

Within the data here female American comment writer's wrote significantly more comments than their male counterparts ($p < .01$). This result parallels the Japanese result and again shows that online personal blogs and their comments are predominantly written by females.

Table 7.9 Text Based Emoticons

	American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	15201**	152±335.6	4519	45.2±109.9
Text based emoticons	717	7.1±15.8	169	1.7±5.8
Icons	340	3.4±7.5	54	0.5±1.5
Indexes	377	3.8±8.7	115	1.2±5.2
Symbols	0	-	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Although American women used more text based emoticons than American men there were no statistically significant differences in the overall totals and in the icon and index functions. This is in contrast to the bulk of the literature which suggests that women use more emoticons than men. This result seems to parallel some studies, which are in the minority (Tidwell and Walther 2002) which have found that there are no significant differences in the frequency and usage of male and female emoticons.

Text Based Emoticons as Icons

a. Female data

52 of the 86 blog post comments (86 of the 100 blogs contained female comments) had emoticons, but of those 86 blogs only 20 of them had 15 or under counted sentences within the female data corpus.

1. Wink.

That cracked me up :)

2. I love Phase 10! The first time I played, I beat everyone. :)

3. Yay, on the sitting! All three of mine set at different ages, they all do things on their own time, that's what makes it so fun!! :)
4. Cheese curds are soooo yummy! And if they are freshly made, they squeak in your teeth. Love, love, love them! :) What I really can't wait for is the state fair, where I will happily enjoy some fried cheese curds!
5. cheese curds are AMAZING. Especially when they are so fresh they are squeaky!! :) you can also deep fry them -- oh, boy, are those delicious. :) and yes, we from MN do call casseroles "hotdishes" :)
6. I am soooo jealous!! I love all of those wedding shows!! how did you get invited, lucky ducky :) xxxooo
7. Looks like an amazing party! I would have freaked if I saw all of these people in one place! I love majority of the TLC shows! Jealous! :-)
8. Wow ! Now who is that groooovy dude up there? Geez it's Ronnie ! Heeeeeeee !! What a blast :)
9. This post caused mixed emotions of laughter and terror. It's a bit disconcerting. ;)
10. Laughing so hard that I can hardly type... ;-)

The emoticons used above by female comment writer's all help in the conveyance of author emotion, from laughter in example 1, 8 and 10, to positive emotions towards something or someone in examples 4 and 5 to 'negative' feelings as in the expression of jealousy in examples 6 and 7.

b. Male data

1. I miss those days with my boys :-) Now, I throw my back out trying to lift up my 55 lb 7 year old, and if I do manage it he usually kicks or punches me for my trouble! LOL
2. It's odd that, having read your post, all I can think of are the BAD moments, like when our car broke down in the middle of the French countryside and we had to get it fixed (then towed) at a garage in a village where NOBODY spoke anything but very-local French. Or the time my brother broke his arm in the middle of nowhere.

All the happy memories mainly involved relaxing, so they all tend to blur in to one!! :)

3. yes it is unhealthy, we all gonna be fat and bla bla bla. But I looove it so much, and I eat at McDonald's once a month :D
4. Oh i'm in tears with that song. It's so so so...well just me :)
5. I also shaved my hair to a number 3 this week and wasn't sure if I liked it at first....it's grown on me pretty quick though! Feels much better sleeping and exercising!:))

Similar to female emoticon usage men used these emoticons to make explicit their feeling on a matter or on someone. Similar to the Japanese data, more American women used a variety of UMCs in their comments where on the whole American men comments tended to be more conservative in their UMC usage.

Text Based Emoticons as Indexes

a. Female data

Markers of solidarity and compliments

1. :-) This was wonderfully put.
2. awesome cake. :)
3. Your blog always give me a much needed boost of humor, love it :)
4. I am so sorry to hear about your great uncle, but I know that Jesus' peace really is great comfort, especially in difficult times. However, I really do miss your lovely blog posts, although I know you are busy! Try to come back soon :)
5. The tea cup is absolutely darling! I love the cute butterfly like wings on the side :) And wow, I just heart your jewellery :) May find myself purchasing some.. it's too cute !
6. That was a lovely post! :) Thank you so much for the encouragement.... =)
7. What a beautiful post and reminder. Thank you. It feels like you said just what I needed to hear :)

8. Your projects are soooo cute, but I have to say ~ your little model is cuter! ;)
9. Definitely glad things worked out for the best. And I think you have a nice smile!
It's genuine. :)

Example one is a rarity in a sense that the emoticon proceeded the comment. All of the above comments to use the Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework notice and attend an interest to the reader, show interest and approval of them and their possessions. These strategies aim to bring writers together and collectively all of the examples above are all techniques found within the list of positive politeness strategies as drawn up by Brown & Levinson.

Joking (a hint of sarcasm)

10. Blogger crashed because everyone was stinkin' wishing you happy birthday. Glad you got the cake of your dreams you spoiled brat.:)
11. Your cat sounded awesome. I have a cat like that too and her name is Abby. She simply tolerates us. I think its because we feed her :) I'll continue to love her even though she acts like I'm not alive 99% of the time.

These jokes can act as a form of positive politeness strategy and allow for a form of online banter between writers that brings a sense of enjoyment to the interactions.

Expression of gratitude

12. Thanks for your sweet comments on my post! :)
13. Thank you very VERY much Johnnyyyyy!!!! :-))))
Now I'll have to copy and paste... hehehe :-p
U have a great dat too btw!! Enjoying this sunny and warm weather these days? ;-p :-D
14. Got an award go to a web address to get it
Wow! i really like this song! Grew up listening to songs like that.... It brings a lot

of good feelings to me.

Wish you a happy sunday johnny! =)

These comments emphasized by an emoticon all enhance the positive face of the addressee when expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee.

b. Male data

115 of the 169 text based emoticons used by American males were used as indexes to highlight pragmatic intention, but only 16 of the 100 blogs had comments written by males that utilized this UMC. This is evidence for the fact that they were not used widespread throughout the data. The examples below mirror how they were used by female writers in that they were attached to the same politeness strategies that the female writers used.

Expressing thanks

1. Excellent! Thank you! :D
2. A very good read! Thank you for sharing. :)

Blog 85

Closings

3. Have fun in China,
Benedict ;-)
4. It's one of the all time classics of the 80's hahaha! Yes, you are so right. People always want the big things but sometimes it's the little things that do it for me.
Enjoy your Sunday! :)

Expressing agreement

5. I totally agree with you, Sanjaya. :)

Solidarity markers and compliments

6. Tim, you've changed my life for the better. If I don't get the chance to repay you someday, I'll keep passing it forward.

You're the man. :)

Best,

Charles

7. Nice post Tim :-) Straightforward and to the point.
8. Beautifully written and read post and podcast. I am loving it, and am becoming slightly addicted. What have you started... ;-)
9. Nice podcast, nice voice =)
10. Dude! Thanks to Amiel for those words that I'm very much agreed with- :))
- And, again you give a wonderful feelings to read you!

The PPS as outlined above all cater towards the positive face of the reader by claiming common ground through agreement and compliments.

Text Based Emoticons as Symbols

There were no instances of emoticons acting as symbols within the data. This parallels the Japanese data.

7.10 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data: The Graphic Based Emoticons (Smiley's)

The table below shows the results of the text based emoticons from the gender divided comment data. In both the Japanese and American data there were very few instances of graphic emoticons being used. American and female blog comment writers also used them infrequently and there was no statistical difference between the two data sets.

Table 7.10 The Graphic Based Emoticons

	American female blog comments (n=100)		American male blog comments (n=100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	129	1.3±4.0	50	0.50±2.1
Icons	95	0.95±2.9	36	0.36±1.7
Indexes	34	0.34±1.5	14	0.14±.056
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Graphic Based Emoticons as Icons

a. Female data

1. Hmmmm.... that's very deep.... to think of time and even the weather in terms of perspective.... I always changed my perspective of bad incidents as being learning opportunities. It never occurred to me to test even my daily assumptions from another's perspective 😊 Yeah, even what we take for granted as IS, can be viewed by others differently....

You have another hungry reader Alina. Keep those posts flowing

The example above indicates the writer's emotional state in a reflection of their feelings and the inspiration that the blog writer gave them.

b. Male data

1. Intimacy with children in the house, well now that is a whole other issue... 😬
2. Great tips man. A quiet house isn't a good idea with babies. CDs worked with our first, but not our next two--they slept through the night at around a month in a half. 😊 The gas drops are a good one too that goes overlooked sometimes.

Both comments came from male blogs that focused on 'Being a Daddy'. The emoticons highlight the feelings of the author in regard to the dilemmas of child rearing and the commonalities between the blog writer and comment writer can create a kind of 'male bonding' online.

Graphic Based Emoticons as Indexes

a. Female data

1. We like the  around here very much 😊
2. I really like this photo. I love how you can see all the colors she started with on her fingers. In other news, I totally dig your blog. 😊
3. One thing Alina about your posts that I always notice, they just flow out of a place in your heart, totally unedited, and it is received the same way... I keep looking forward to them and look forward to feedback on your trip (a bit jealous from all the people there who will be listening 😊)

Example 1 is a joke that is punctuated with an emoticon. The let's make sexy time insertion is a joke based on the punch line by a character played by the comedian

Sacha Baron. Example 2 and 3 are comments of encouragement and compliments for the reader's blog (blog author).

b. Male data

1. I kinda have to agree with Kristina P up there ! 😊
2. Too bad you are already married 😊

Example 1 shows the comment writer agreeing with another comment writer ('up there' referring to Kristina's comment up above his own one). The theme of the comment regards American TV show characters. A few comment writers agreed with each other on the next potential stage of this TV character and the emoticon perhaps helps in the common grounding they share in their fondness of the drama.

Example 2 is a result of online 'flirting' between a male comment writer and a female blog writer and ends in the male writer conceding defeat in a joking manner as she is married.

Graphic Based Emoticons as Symbols

There were no instances of this kind within the data.

7.11 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data:

The Emoji (Pictograms)

There were no *emoji* within the American data.

7.12 Semiasographic Extra-linguistic Data:

The *kigou* (Codes)

Kigou (codes) were used very infrequently within the American data overall and within the gender divided comment data below.

Table 7.11 *The Kigou (Codes) data*

	American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Kigou</i> (code)	29	0.3±1.4	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Icons	0	-	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Indexes	22	0.2±1.3	0	-
<i>Kigou</i> as Symbols	7	0.07±0.7	0	-

There were no instances of *kigou* or codes found within the American male comment data. There were very few instances of this UMC used in the American female comment data and totaled a mere 29. They were only used as indexes or symbols.

Kigou as an Index

1. Wow! you got a nice blog here. but it's better if we quit both. no to smoking and no to drinking!!:))
try to visit my blog too.
much love♥

The example is used as a farewell in the comment closing although the sincerity or the 'love' is in doubt. This comment closing is used to help bond with the

reader and is used to index intimacy. The heart mark is used in relation to the commonly held or ‘learned’ belief that the heart mark is a representation of love for someone and is used accordingly in this example.

Kigou as a Symbol

1. LOL..I know..I cant figure out why they call them bad♥♥

The heart marks deployed here bears no association to the comment expressed and their omission would not affect the comment meaning.

7.13 Phonographic Data: Unconventional phonetic spelling

Category 2 phonographic data was broken down into three types:

1. Unconventional phonetic spelling.
2. Capitalization (This category only applied to the American data).
3. Phonetic representations of laughter.

Table 7.12 *Phonographic Data: Unconventional Phonetic Spellings*

	American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	450*	4.5±10.7	151	1.5±6.7
Semantic function	396*	3.9±8.7	140	1.4±6.6
Pragmatic intention	54	0.54±2.4	11	0.11±0.9

* (*p*<.05)

American women used unconventional phonetic spelling significantly more than American men in the overall frequency count and in their semantic function (*p*

<.05) .

Semantic Function

a. Female data

1. HI-larious! You always impress me with how you get the celebrities to open up to you unabashed. ;)
2. I'm so proud of you — congrats! This is awesome. I just started to take up running (very sloooooowly) and my dream is to one day do a half marathon.
3. awwwww. that just made me all warm and fuzzy inside. the job will come love. might take a while, but it'll come. hang in there xox
4. No way, Shannon!! We're in St. Louis on our way back from CA!! We were in San Diego from Wed-Sat (SD Zoo, Wild Animal Park, Sea World) and LA on Sunday! (LA Zoo) We probably drove right by you!! ;)
It's a loooooong drive from Ohio. :)
5. Love the pictures...Harper is a cutie! Glad her doctor's appt. went well!! And a Miami Vice sounds goooood!!

b. Male data

1. Is that chair for Marlo's time outs? I loooove the room. I want to grab The Help off the shelf and curl up in that chair and not leave for hours. Tyrant can bring me a fresh drink every hour or so.

The examples above all utilize the lengthening of vowel sounds to promote the mimicking of vocal sounds and the intonation of the author. The majority of phonetically spelled words used are adjectives.

Pragmatic Function

a. Female data

1. Amen Sista!! Everyone makes mistakes. Sometimes the Mormons forget that.....

2. Ca-UUUTE!

Can Charlie be anymore adorable?

Love those pics, and that outfit is so stinkin' cute! :)

3. Doesn't it feel FAAAABULOUS to weed out stuff?

You're right... it DOES make you feel lighter!!!

‘Thank you soooooooooo much for sharing this post!’

The above examples are used in support of the blog writer and are intended to create interpersonal communication online. The first example is used in an expression of agreement, the second an emphasis on the word cute as used in a compliment and the third example used in the stressing of a speech act of gratitude.

b. Male data

1. Hellooooo Linda!!!!

I'm SOOOOOO happy you decided not to leave and to post again!!! I LOVE what you offer to your readers. You're a very special lady, my friend...who has much to give to this world.

Now about this photo, my GAWD is right!! And you couldn't have said it any better...an ape! I look like a furball caveman. I never knew my hair was curly until I moved to NYC and had a stylist tell me to let my hair grow longer. A few months later.....POOF....I had a fuzzy hair helmet!

HAHAHAHHAHAHAHA!

Thanks for stopping by today, Linda!

Hope you had sweet dreams!

Have a great week. And I'll see ya next Monday!

XOXOXOXOXOXO

The above semantic and pragmatic examples were not common within the male data. The pragmatic function example above was written by an openly gay writer who used significantly more unconventional spellings than any other male comment writers. In general men tended to use phonetic spellings that were used in to create a sense of informality in their writings with instances of the relaxed pronunciation of *gonna* for going to, *yeah*, *ya* or *yep* for yes and *nah* for no. In comparison women used these unconventionally spellings predominately with emotive adjectives as in *loooove*, and *cuuute*.

7.13.1 Capitalization

The data was also broken up into capitalization to indicate vocalization such as loudness of voice, intonation of voice or emphasis. Although the frequency of this UMC was much higher than the use of unconventional phonetic spelling there were no significant differences between male and female frequencies as shown in the table below.

Table 7.13 Phonographic Data: Capitalization

	American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Capitalization	1001	10±26.1	365	3.7±21.6
Semantic function	884	8.8±21.7	314	3.14±17.0
Pragmatic intention	117	1.2±5.4	51	.51±4.7

Semantic Function

a. Female data

1. ABOSOLUTELY AWESOME!!!! LOVE your blog!!!!
2. My boys LOVE the idea of underpants for squirrels! I think this has raised the bar for family vacations. How old are your boys and how do they do in the car? What do you do to keep them behaving?
3. Love, love, love, love, LOOOOOOVE Army Wives! I have so thoroughly enjoyed it this season and I've really appreciated how they're not afraid to dive into the messy stuff of marriages. So good!

b. Male data

1. In three years or more, visual effects could progress to the point where entirely virtual Destiny would be cheap enough, so I think the scrapped set is not REALLY an issue.

All of the comments above have capitalization. These capitals were used to emphasize the tone or excitement of the writers voice as in examples 1 and 3 of the female data and for lexical emphasis in example 2 of the female data and the above male example.

164 of the 365 instances of sentences that included one or more items of capitalization came from the same blog. This is the same blog that has been mentioned before and is written by an openly gay blog writer. This may have skewed the data which was addressed accordingly with the SPSS software. He wrote in a very camp 'fun style' and his comments and blog had the most UMCs out of all the male authored blogs and comments.

Pragmatic Function

a. Female data

1. LOVE the Toddler Waterproof Apron in Blue Fizz. So stinkin' cute! ...After looking again, I think I actually may like all of them! :)
2. Harper is such a DOLL!!
3. Have a WONDERFUL week! That Harper is so cute... love the first picture her eyes are beautiful!

The majority of capitalized words within the female data were mainly emotive adjectives such as adorable, love and wonderful. This was not duplicated within the male data. The emotive adjective is considered to be most likely uttered and used by females (Lakoff, 1973).

b. Male data

1. I TOTALLY agree with you, buddy!!!!

The above example places an emphasis on the word totally to underline a sense of agreement with the reader, the use of the word buddy heightens this further.

7.14 Phonographic Data: Unconventional Laughter Phonetic Representations

Phonetic representations of laughter were used infrequently within the American data and there were no statistical differences between the genders.

Table 7.14 *Phonetic Representations of Laughter*

	American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonetic representations of laughter	165	1.6±3.6	102	1.0±5.0
Semantic function	165	9.1±24.6	102	9.1±24.6
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Semantic Function

a. Female data

1. Also, I like to break dance in my kitchen to "Bust a Move". Completely sober.
Perhaps I'll have to do it in a vlog sometime soon, hahaha!
2. haha oh your children are hilarious! The logic of a two year old!
3. Underpants for Squirrels!!!! Hahahahahahahahaha!!!!

b. Male data

1. bwhahahahahahahahaha!
I just want to know that I HOWLED when I read that!
OMG...that was brilliant!

The above examples illustrate the phonetic spelling of human laughter.

7.15 Logographic Data: Unconventional Laughter Representations

The vast majority of logographic representations of laughter were represented with LOL (laugh out loud). However, there were very few instances of this UMC within the data and no significant differences between the genders.

Table 7.15 Logographic Representations of Laughter

	American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Logographic representations of laughter	148	1.5±3.7	10	.1±.5
Semantic function	148	1.5±3.7	10	.1±.5
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Semantic Function

a. Female data

1. LMAO!!!!

Really LOL!!!! :-DDDD

LMAO is an abbreviation for Laughing My As* Off

2. LOL the hair and the sideburns are OK for the 70's Ron but what happened with the eyebrows????

Have a good week off, hope you get everything done you want to do. x

3. LOL I loved this video. Fury is so cute! I loved the confirmed/busted confusion. Haha

b. Male data

1. That photo.... wow. Just wow. Lol.

This logographic representation of laughter was used in the same way that its counterpart of phonographic laughter was used. It seems a matter of ‘taste’ as to which the user elects to deploy in their comments. Judging by the overall frequency within this data it could be suggested that this UMC is and its phonetic counterpart were not common among American blog users.

7.16 Logographic Data: The Use of Multiple Exclamation Markers

There were no significant differences between the frequency of multiple exclamation mark usage between the genders. In general multiple exclamation mark usage was infrequent throughout the American data. 2.5% of female sentences had this UMC attached compared to 4.1% of male sentences. This UMC was therefore only used sparingly at best.

Table 7.16 Multiple Exclamation Mark Usage

	American female comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Multiple exclamation mark usage	380	3.8±8.8	187	1.9±10.5
Semantic function	276	2.8±5.6	175	1.8±10.4
Pragmatic function	104	1.04±3.6	12	1.04±3.6

Semantic function

a. Female data

46 of the 88 blogs (12 blogs contained no female comments) used multiple exclamation marks. The statistical analysis only examined those blogs that used this UMC and compared it wise like with the male data. As only just over half of the blogs that contained female comments had this UMC within them, the deployment of multiple exclamation use within the female comments was not used by all blog comment writers.

1. LOVED the picture of Miley Cyrus at the top and only wished it was a muzzle on her. She is annoying.
I hope you guys have twins!! Go Adam!!!
2. I feel your pain! Hopefully that nasty bug is OFF your computer for good now!!!
3. Oh, my goodness GRACIOUS!! You are hilarious! I cannot quit laughing.
These PICTURES! Haaaaaaa!!! I really, really, really love the baby Mr. T.
That is awesome. Do whatever you need to do to keep on a regular posting schedule- steal computers, use the computers at Best Buy...whatever.
blog 69
4. I love it that your first two items were in northern Arizona -- my old stompin' grounds! So glad you had a good time!!

The above examples highlight author feeling and give an emphasis to their tone of voice.

b. Male data

103 (none of which were pragmatic) of the 187 instances of multiple exclamation mark use came from the same blog, the majority of which came from that

blogs writer. This skewed the data somewhat. Nevertheless, even with this blog data removed and the female and male multiple exclamation use compared there still was not a statistical difference between the frequency of use of this UMC between the genders. The examples below are from that blog that contained the most sentences (873) within the male comment data and ranked 5th highest in sentence frequency when the American female comment data is included.

1. Hiya !

HAHAHAHAHAHA!

Too funny!!!

And you can't see them in the photo, but I also was wearing PLATFORM shoes!!!

(they were burgundy!!!)

Hot damn!

HA!

Thanks for dropping by, Val!

Enjoy your week!

2. Hiya!

Brooke Sheilds!!!!

That's HYSTERICAL!!!

Yes, I kinda do look like her, don't I?

HA!

The examples above come from the same comment writer who overall wrote many comments and used UMCs frequently and in variation. Of the 100 blogs he along with another blog writer who is openly gay wrote in a very 'camp' style in comparison to other male writers. The majority of comment contributors on his blog were female. He also contributed comments on other blogs found within the 100 blog data sample. The two examples above are littered with phonetic spelling and capitalizations. The exclamation marks aid in the emphasis on what he is saying and the 'fun' mood of the comment.

Pragmatic Function

a. Female data

1. My husband works every Sat. It stinks! So I will be doing what I do all the time...mom stuff while reading the first edition of "The Family Room". I'm so excited!!! And congrats on being featured on Today's Creative blog. I'm headed over to see. Have a great weekend...enjoy your sweet tea!!!
2. Congratulations on the book!! So awesome!
3. If you come back though Colorado Springs, I live about 7 minutes from Compassion...and would love to see you!!
4. Thanks for sharing!!!! It was BEAUTIFUL!!!
5. Beautiful pictures! Thanks for sharing your vacation with us!!

Example 1 is used in the comment closing. Example 2 offers congratulations on the blog author's book being published. Example 3 offers friendship and acts as an invitation to its reader. Example 4 and 5 are expressions of gratitude. These examples are all punctuated with double exclamation marks which heightens the pragmatic intention behind the comments.

b. Male data

1. Thank you and welcome, Hendri!!
I agree flowers and women are beautiful!!
2. Thank you, Lilly!!
Your comment is an invaluable gift, it is not easy to make other people days better, and you made my day better stating you always find interesting stuff in my blog!
I am happy for you feeling great!
Thanks again for all your kindness!!

The first comment above has multiple exclamation marks that emphasize a

friendly comment opening in the first line and agreement in the second. The second example has multiple exclamation marks attached to expressions of gratitude in the first and last lines.

Unlike the Japanese data, American women did not use significantly more emoticons or multiple emoticon use in comparison to American men, which is in contrast to other online studies (Witmer & Katzman, 1997; Colley & Todd, 2002). Women did however use significantly more phonetic spelling and capitalization than men. These unconventional linguistic depictions were used to highlight emotive adjectives such as love and cute which is lexical behavior predominately used by women (Lakoff, 1973). This pattern and finding is also reflected in the Japanese female data.

7.17 Complete Gender and Language Pairing Results

7.17.1 The Semaisographic extra-linguistic signs data

This section is intended to give a summary of all the gender pairings of men and women within the same language group and across the Japanese and American data. Unlike the previous part of the chapter full tables will not be given (these can be found in appendix C).

This section looks at how gender across languages (Japanese and English) affects and influences UMC usage and is compared to the previous sections discussion and findings on same language (all Japanese or all English) results.

The table below gives the pairings of Japanese men / women to American men / women along with a recap of the Japanese female v Japanese male and American female v American male groups.

Table 7.17 Summary of Results: The Semaisographic Results

	Japanese female v Japanese male	American female v American male	Japanese female v American male	Japanese female v American female	Japanese male v American female	Japanese male v American male
Total sentences	Japanese female**	American female **	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	x	x
Text based emoticons	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	x	Japanese male**
Icons	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	x	Japanese male**
Indexes	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	Japanese male*	Japanese male*
Symbols	-	-	-		-	-
Graphic based emoticons	x	x	x	American female **	x	x
Icons	x	x	x	American female **	x	x
Indexes	x	x	x	x	x	x
Symbols	-	-	x	-	-	-
Emoji	Japanese female **	-	-	-	-	-
Icons	x	-	-	-	-	-
Indexes	x	-	-	-	-	-
Symbols	Japanese female **	-	-	-	-	-
Kigou	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	Japanese male**	Japanese male**
Icons	-	x	x	x	x	x

Indexes	-	x	x	x	x	x
Symbols	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	Japanese male**	Japanese male**

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

X = NO significance

- = No data

Within the Japanese female v Japanese male data Japanese women used significantly more UMCs within 3 of the 4 semasiographic sign types. When the data was broken up into icons, indexes and symbols with the exception of text based emoticons, there were no significant differences in the data (All graphic based emoticons and *emoji* icons and indexes) where overall frequency was low. It is therefore difficult to make assumptions or observations based on this data where UMCs were used infrequently. *Emoji* were used mainly as symbols and the graphic based emoticon acted much in the same way as text based emoticons. Text based emoticons were the preferred choice when writers wished to highlight emotion and pragmatic intention.

Within all the gender groupings Japanese comment writers regardless of gender used text based emoticons significantly more than Americans. The only exception was there being no significant difference within the Japanese male and American female gender grouping for overall totals but Japanese men did use significantly more emoticons as indexes to indicate pragmatic intention ($p < .05$).

Within the graphic based emoticons which were used very infrequently in both sets of data and with both genders there were no significant differences. This result can be explained by the fact that this graphic based emoticon is western in origin and although a drop down menu of graphic based emoticons is available within the blog interface for Japanese blog users (this option was not found in the interface of American blogs) they elected not to use them.

Within the *emoji* data Japanese women used *emoji* as symbols significantly more than Japanese men ($p < .01$) but within the American data there were no instances of *emoji* making a comparison invalid. *Emoji*, although available in mobile communications such as i-phone (at the time of data collection a tweaking of settings

and an application software may have been necessary), were not used at all by American writers which may suggest that that the technology is not widespread or available among American blog users.

Japanese female comment writers were more reliant than men to use text based emoticons to highlight and mark semantic and pragmatic meaning. With *emoji* and *kigou* Japanese women used these significantly more as symbols than any other gender in both the Japanese and American data. These symbols added no semantic or pragmatic meaning to the interaction but were used as form of decoration, self presentation or the projection of self image and gender marking.

The use of *emoji* or *kigou* as symbols can be a digital representation of *hentai shoujo moji* or creative language play. These symbols have no obvious meaning and serve to create a mood or writer image.

The emoticons, although having semantic or pragmatic meaning were often used in conjunction with other semaisographic signs as well as unconventional phonetic spelling and multiple exclamation use. This combined usage not only adds to the feeling or tone of the author but also can add cuteness, act as a gender marker and an indicator of selective self presentation where some writers used these UMCs on a constant basis as an identity marker. This pattern was predominately seen within the Japanese female data.

The American women v American men gender pairing produced no statistical difference within any of the semaisographic signs and their functions. This does not reflect the literature that suggests that women use more emoticons than men (Tossel et al. 2012). The use of emoticons within the American data unlike the Japanese corpus, were used in the majority by both American men and women for pragmatic (indexes) purposes rather than to indicate author emotion or feeling.

There are no studies as yet regarding gender use of *kigou* (codes) and *emoji* within the Japanese or American literature and within the American data there were only 29 instances of *kigou* and no *emoji* so no concrete observations can be made from this.

7.17.2 The Phonographic Data

This data includes the 3 types of phonographic data with the inclusion of the American capitalization data as illustrated in table 7.18.

Table 7.18 Summary of Results Table: The Phonographic Results

	Japanese female v Japanese male	American female v American male	Japanese female v American male	Japanese female v American female	Japanese male v American female	Japanese male v American male
Unconventional phonetic spellings	Japanese female **	American female *	Japanese female **	Japanese female**	Japanese male*	Japanese male**
Semantic function	Japanese female **	American female *	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	Japanese male*	Japanese male**
Pragmatic function	Japanese female *	x	Japanese female **	x	x	Japanese male**
Japanese UPS v American capitalization +UPS	-	American female *	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	x	Japanese male**
Semantic function	-	American female *	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	x	Japanese male*
Pragmatic function	-	x	Japanese female **	x	x	x
Phonetic laughter representations	x	x	x	x	x	x
Semantic function	x	x	x	x	x	x

Pragmatic function	x	x	x	x	x	x
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* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

X NO significance

- No data

UPS = Unconventional phonetic spelling

Japanese women used significantly more unconventional phonetic spellings than Japanese men ($p < .01$). There were however no differences within the phonetic laughter representations. The same results were seen within the American data (with the exception of the pragmatic function not being significantly different). Japanese men and women used more phonetic spellings than their American counterparts.

The phonetic representations of laughter were generally not used within both the American and Japanese data regardless of gender. With Japanese users the alternative option of 笑 was used far more frequently. There was also the option of emoticons and the use of ‘w’ meaning *warau* or to laugh which was used overall more frequently than the phonetic representations of laughter here.

When the capitalization data was included (American blog comment writers, regardless of gender, used capitalization significantly more than unconventional phonetic spelling) and compared with the Japanese phonetic spelling data there were some changes in results. Japanese women paired with American women and men remained the same. The Japanese male v American female pairing changed from there being a ($p < .01$) significance within the unconventional phonetic spelling category to their being no significance. This can be accounted for by the count of 450 unconventional phonetic spellings that rose to 1451 when capitalization was included. A similar result was seen within the Japanese male v American male pairing where the semantic function category dropped from ($p < .01$) to ($p < .05$) significance. These changes can be accounted for because American writers preferred capitalization over unconventional spellings when placing emphasis on words to suggest to the reader how the comments are to be read. However overall, even with the inclusion of capitalization the Japanese used significantly more unconventional phonetic representations.

7.17.3 The logographic data

Table 7.19 gives a summary of the logographic data results.

Table 7.19 Summary of Results Table: The Logographic Results

	Japanese female v Japanese male	American female v American male	Japanese female v American male	Japanese female v American female	Japanese male v American female	Japanese male v American male
Multiple exclamation use	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female**	x	x
Semantic function	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female**	x	x
Pragmatic function	x	x	Japanese female *	Japanese female*	x	x
Logographic laughter representations	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese women**	Japanese male**	Japanese male**
Semantic function	Japanese female **	x	Japanese female **	Japanese female **	Japanese male**	Japanese male**
Pragmatic function	-	-	-	-	-	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

X NO significance

- No data

Japanese women used significantly more multiple exclamation marks than American women ($p < .01$) except for the pragmatic function. There were however no significant differences within the American female v American male pairing. Japanese women used multiple exclamation marks significantly more in every pairing they are in.

There were no significant differences with the Japanese male v American male and female pairings.

Japanese used significantly more logographic representations of laughter compared to their phonographic representations. Japanese women used more of these UMCs than Japanese men ($p < .01$). They also used significantly more than American women and men ($p < .01$). Japanese men used them significantly more than American women and men.

Judging from the three categories and their results above it can be said that Japanese females and males used on the whole more UMCs than their American female and male counterparts to display semantic and pragmatic meaning.

A discussion at the end of the chapter will attempt to give reasons for these findings.

The next stage within the analysis of these comments is to examine how they were deployed as politeness markers across gender and language.

7.18 Complete Gender Pairings and Politeness Strategy Results

From the gender divided data the text based emoticons that acted as indexes were broken down into positive and negative politeness strategies. These two categories based on Brown and Levinson (1987) were then broken down into their respective politeness strategies as presented in the table below. The procedures for defining strategies, data classification and methods were identical to those used in chapter 6 and outlined in chapter 3 and so will not be readdressed here.

Table 7.20 Politeness Strategies Divided

Positive politeness strategies	Negative politeness strategies
Jokes	**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	Apologies
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	***Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)
1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy) with H 3. Avoid disagreement and Assert common ground through *Expressions of solidarity (<i>markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers</i>)	Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)
Notice, attend to H through compliments	

* Convey 'X' is admirable, interesting through claiming common ground and seeking agreement as in expressions of sympathy, agreement and support. These emoticons were attached to positive politeness strategies that emphasized support, approval, common ground and sympathy. Requests as solidarity markers often utilized the てくださいね+ emoticon pattern and were often used in the context of the writer showing concern for the readers health and welfare, to wish their readers luck, and to show support which are categorized as positive politeness strategies under the Brown and Levinson (1987) framework.

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment is hedged.

The research enquiry 4 is restated below and the main focus of the discussion and results here is on (b) and (c) to examine if women as reflected in the literature use more politeness strategies than men through the deployment of emoticons and can rapport talk adequately describe female online interaction through these extra-linguistic signs.

Research enquiries four: Gender, language and UMC usage

- a. How does UMC deployment reflect the face to face literature descriptions concerning language and gender usage?
- b. Through UMCs are female blog writers inclined to a more rapport orientated communication style than males?
- c. Do women use more UMCs and through them use more positive politeness strategies than men?

Expressions of solidarity as listed in table 7.20 is the umbrella term the author uses to encompass the three positive politeness strategies of 1. Notice, attend to H, 2. Exaggerate (Interest, approval, sympathy) with H and 3. Avoid disagreement and Assert common ground. Tannen (1990) terms the way women talk by using the term *rapport talk* and states that for women the language of conversation is largely the language of rapport which promotes intimate relationships that stress common ground and comparable experiences. These three strategies therefore can be considered as strategies that promote a sense of rapport within female interaction and through their use of emoticons.

A comparison will be made of how males and females use emoticons for this establishment of rapport and examines if results show a significant difference between the sexes and again across languages by comparing the same and different sex. These 3 collective politeness strategies are referred to as expressions of solidarity and are used to test the theory that women are inclined to ‘rapport talk’ more so than men through comments punctuated by emoticons.

Below is a summary of the findings of each gender pairing that compares just the Japanese and American data and then compares the data across languages in addition to gender. Full tables of results are included in Appendix D.

Table 7.21 A Summary of Japanese v American Emoticons as Politeness Markers

	Japanese female v Japanese male	American female v American male	Japanese female v American male	Japanese female v American female	Japanese male v American female	Japanese male v American male
Emoticons index total	Japanese female**	X	Japanese female**	Japanese female**	X	Japanese male*
Emoticons that index PPS	X	X	Japanese female*	Japanese female*	X	X
Jokes	X	X	X	X	X	X
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	X	X	X	X	X	X
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	X	X	Japanese female*	Japanese female**	X	X
1.Notice, attend to H, 2.Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy) with H 3.Avoid disagreement and Assert common ground Through expressions of solidarity (markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	X	X	Japanese female*	Japanese female*	X	X
Notice, attend to H through compliments	X	X	X	X	X	X
Emoticons that index NPS	X	X	X	X	X	X
Minimize the imposition at	X	X	X	X	X	X

the time of Requests						
Apologies	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	X	X	X	X	X	X

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

X NO significance

PPS = positive politeness strategies

NPS= negative politeness strategies

1. Japanese female v Japanese male

There was no significant difference in the overall index data total. When divided into their positive and negative politeness strategies there was no significant differences between the genders. There were also no differences when the positive politeness total was broken down into their strategies. Finally in addition, there were no differences in the negative politeness data and their respective strategies.

2. American female v American male

Within the emoticons index total there were no significant differences within this data and this was also reflected in the total positive and negative politeness results and their subsequent strategies.

Looking at these two results the literature which suggests that women use more positive politeness strategies was not duplicated within the American and Japanese data. In addition, within these strategies emoticons that index rapport (as in the expressions of solidarity as reflected in 3 positive politeness strategies) were not significantly different in both data sets. This does not reflect the literature that suggests that women focus on 'rapport talk' within their interactions in comparison to men. However when we compare the gender divided Japanese to American data there are significant differences as discussed and shown below.

3. Japanese female v American male

Japanese women's overall index total that highlighted politeness strategies was significantly higher than American men ($p < .01$). When broken up into positive and negative politeness strategies Japanese women used positive politeness strategies more ($p < .05$) and within this data positive politeness strategies that indexed expressions of solidarity were significantly higher within the Japanese female data ($p < .05$) along with expressing gratitude ($p < .05$). There were no differences within the negative politeness data.

4. Japanese female v American female

Japanese women used significantly more emoticons than American women overall ($p < .01$). In addition, Japanese women used positive politeness strategies significantly more than American women ($p < .05$). When these strategies were broken up into their respective strategies of the expression of gratitude / thanks and expressions of solidarity ($p < .01$ and ($p < .05$) respectively were significantly higher within the Japanese female data. There were no significant differences within the overall frequencies within the negative politeness strategy data and their subsequent strategies.

5. Japanese male v American female

There was no significant difference within the overall emoticons index total or the overall positive and negative positive totals along with their politeness strategies.

6. Japanese male v American male

There was a significant difference within the Japanese men v American men gender pairing for the overall emoticons index total ($p < .05$) but not within the total positive and negative positive politeness strategies. The same result was also found when the positive and negative politeness totals were broken up into their strategies.

A pattern that emerges when language and gender is compared shows that

Japanese women used more positive politeness strategies than both American men and women. Within the Japanese women v Japanese men pairing however this pattern was not repeated and Japanese women did not however use more politeness strategies than Japanese men. This was also mirrored in the American women v American men gender pairing. Interestingly, American women did not use more positive politeness strategies or expressions of solidarity than Japanese males. This is also shown in the American female v American male pairing as well.

This begs the question as to why Japanese women used more positive strategies than American women but not more than Japanese men. It is argued that within the Japanese communication that takes place within these blogs, the need for rapport between reader and writer is a driving force that dictates Japanese UMC usage. This expression for rapport through emoticon usage was overwhelmingly used by Japanese females. The factors and causes of this are multifaceted and complex. Yes, Japanese women used more to indicate rapport which has its roots in common Japanese communication styles but the influence of cute culture, gender marking and online self presentation are also factors that cannot be dismissed in this analysis.

This perspective can also be applied to Japanese men's use of positive politeness strategies as this need for a harmonious online blog environment influenced the use of these emoticons. American women did not use significantly more emoticons than Japanese men in any category. There was, however, a significant difference between Japanese men and American men in overall emoticon total ($p < .05$). The Japanese male deployment of emoticons and UMC usage did not suggest that males adhere to report talk. Women did also not use more compliments as men as suggested in the literature.

However, within the Japanese men's comments, the use of text based emoticons was usually limited to the basic ^^ emoticon and was often used as the sole UMC within a comment. The Japanese female comments in contrast used multiple UMCs within their comments. The influence of gender performance, online language play and persona as well as the need to mark semantic and pragmatic content are the motivations behind the use of Japanese female blog user UMC placement within their

comments and blog posts.

The blog comment data, however, was lopsided in favour of females in that the majority of comments were written by females in both language data sets and that the online personal blog platform like its offline cousin the diary is predominately a female genre of writing and therefore the discussion on the findings of this chapter that follow reflect this.

7.19 A Discussion of the Overall Gender Data Findings

This section is divided according to the questions within the research enquiry four which addresses gender, language and UMC usage. The research enquiry is restated below and each question is then addressed in subsequent sections and then other factors that influence UMC usage are given further consideration in the remainder of the chapter.

Research enquiries four: Gender, language and UMC usage

- a. How does UMC deployment reflect the face to face literature descriptions concerning language and gender usage?
- b. Through UMCs are female blog writers inclined to a more rapport orientated communication style than males?
- c. Do women use more UMCs and through them use more positive politeness strategies than men?

7.19.1 How does American and Japanese UMC Deployment Reflect the Face to Face Literature Descriptions Concerning Language and Gender Usage?

The Japanese data results concurred with the bulk of the CMC English language and Japanese language literature that states that women use more UMCs than men, specifically the use of emoticons and multiple exclamation marks (Colley & Todd, 2002; Tossel, 2012). The other UMCs have not received much attention so that a

comparison cannot be made.

In contrast however, the American data produced opposing results and there was no evidence that women use more emoticons or multiple exclamation marks with the data and results presented within this thesis.

Although there is no literature at present on unconventional phonetic spelling and capitalization (American data only), both language data sets showed that women use more. Within their respective languages, however, when gender and language was compared Japanese men used overall more unconventional phonetic spelling than American women ($p < .05$) and also in their role as semantic enhancers ($p < .05$).

Let's look at the former finding first. Both American and Japanese data sets had a shared commonality in that unconventional phonetic spelling and capitalization were often used to add vocalization to emotive adjectives such as cute, gorgeous, adorable, and love in the English literature and *suteki* (wonderful), *sugoi* (great) or *kawaii* (cute) in the Japanese data. These concurs with some of the literature that women are more emotionally expressive and use more lexical items of an emotional expressive nature (Lakoff, 1973).

However, this pattern is not repeated in the Japanese male v American female pairing where Japanese men used more unconventional phonetic spellings. Reasons for this can be reflected in the fact that these unorthodox depictions are abundant in manga and pop culture (Katsuno and Yano, 2002) and are part of the visual culture that Akizuki (2009) describes.

Therefore, in this sense it is not gender that predominately influences UMC usage when we look at data from a cross culturally perspective but the culture from which these UMCs come from is a strong influence. Japanese men were not more emotionally expressive than American women in terms of lexical choice but did emphasize in their writings vocal tone which is also reflected in the narration of *manga* or the Japanese comic.

Another area where culture permeates within the use of UMCs is the idea of selective self presentation and performance and the concept of cute or *kawaii* culture within Japan. This selective self presentation and performance of cute was

predominately seen within the Japanese female data, although there were many cases where men adopted these UMCs for similar self presentations.

Katsuno and Yano (2007) suggest that Japanese female cyber-sociality replicates a virtual intimacy that stems from the use and visual play of emoticons or *kaomoji*. These *kaomoji* aim to establish a sense of familiarity. Within the blog data where the blog comments were predominately female (often the case as the personal blog seems to be female dominant) women discuss issues that reflect their shared commonality such as child rearing, TV drama or cooking. Interestingly, cooking blogs written by males attracted predominately female comments which could suggest blog topic or genre can influence who reads the blogs and comments on them.

The *kaomoji* along with other UMCs help the writer portray or perform their online identity (an exaggerated version of themselves perhaps) as young mothers, single women or *salarymen*. The Japanese blog comment writers ascribe to a certain online identity as a member of the online blogging speech community or community of practice that she belongs to.

Through the use of UMCs women perform their online self identity and that this performance as Bauman (1992) states is “an aesthetically marked and heightened mode of communication, famed in a special way and put on display for an audience” (p.41). Katsuno & Yano (2007:285) point out that “the relationship between performer (*kaomoji* users) and audience (readers) is critical. The work of *kaomoji* binds user and reader and their successive exchange of roles in a fluid process of interpretation and meaning. That bond, like the tie between image and sound, is multiple, flexible, and dynamic” (p.285).

As seen in the results Japanese women used significantly more expressions of gratitude than their American counterparts. In their study of Japanese housewives who used chatrooms Katsuno & Yano (2007) found that the most extensive use of their *kaomoji* use was within closing and openings as in greetings and farewells. They state that “entrances and exits spawn sociality, establishing the tone for what is to follow and affirming what has gone before” (p.292). This was reflected in both the Japanese and American data but far more significantly within the Japanese female data. Some

female comments were creative in their openings employing not just the use of emoticons but also the use of unconventional spelling and *kigou* and the comment closings used similar methods.

Comments opened in an intimate fashion, usually addressing the reader by their (handle) name and set the tone for the remainder of the comment. The UMCs not only act semantically to convey emotion or pragmatically to mark as politeness strategy but also as a representation of how the writer wishes to be perceived and interacted with. Comments which had multiple UMCs within them were often to in kind, with their interlocutor also incorporating UMC's into their comments.

タピオカの入った紅茶なんですねw w あのぷちぷち感が(・ω・*)イイネ!!(*・ω・)
イイネ!!ヽ(*・ω・*)ノイ——ネ!!!! 私も自分で作れるならやってみようかなw ワク
((o(ΦωΦ*o)(o*ΦωΦ)o))ワク~(=^..^)_。傑作ﾌﾞｯﾁ

Tapioca no haitta koucya nan desu ne

Ano puchipuchi kan ga ii ne ii ne ii-----ne!!!!

Watashi mo jibun de tsukureru nara yattemiyo kana

Kessaku buchitsu

(It's tea that you put tapioca into hey!

A kind of squeegee feeling. Cool! Cool! Coool!

If I can make it myself, I wanna give it a go!

Feeling excited!) (Presses the masterpiece button).

The above example shows how a combination of language play of deliberately using *katakana* instead of *hiragana* can be used for effect and visual attraction.

The use of the combination of the three scripts of *katakana*, *hiragana* and *kanji* allow for this form of visual language theatrics. If the above comment were written conventionally with no UMCs the reader would have a different impression of the writer of the comment. From the comment as it stands the person reading this may assume that this was written by a female (it was), and that its unconventionality is used to not only indicate her emotional and psychological state but also to be playful, creative and to index her femininity. The emoticon plus the unconventional vowel

lengthening as in ヽ(*・ω・*)ノイイ——ㄣ!!!! (iii---ne!!!!) may give the reader an impression of it being read in a high pitched female tone that is prevalent within Japanese entertainment media such as TV commercials. The use of onomatopoeia here also makes it playful and more interesting, as in *waku waku* (exciting). This creative language use may hold the interest of readers and can add to the enjoyment of reading blog comments. Of course, this may vary according to who is reading the comment.

Katsuno & Yano (2007) suggest that UMC such as *kaomoji* “not only place bodies on the computer screen but invest those bodies with the performed subjectivities of users. Cuteness frames those subjectivities within benign cultural codes of femininity” (p.295). This role of cute culture has been mentioned in the literature and within this thesis as a factor that influences the type of UMC used and how it is used. Katsuno & Yano (2007) suggest that “part of the playfulness of *kaomoji* lies in their link to *kawaii* or cute culture” (p.286). Kinsella (1995) suggests that since the seventies young females have been coated in a ‘cult of cuteness’, McVeigh (1996) suggests *kawaii* is an omnipresent symbol of Japan that describes a wide range of meaning from inanimate objects to living things such as people and animals, to actions and behaviour that includes the speech of people. The influence of cute therefore should not be underestimated and it not only the domain of female discourse or image.

Kawaii is one of the first words a foreigner learns upon his arrival in Japan and its concept along with the sub-cultures such as cute animation, cosplay and manga are now globally popular. Take for instance this newspaper extract written in March 2011. Japan's *kawaii* pop culture it seems is making an impact on Britain's youth and influencing the wider society.

Over the last 10 years, the country's youngsters have started to embrace the whole spectrum of *kawaii* — from the extremes of "cosplay" (costume play) down to the purchasing of accessories adorned with cute "anime" and manga characters.

Kawaii has also crept into mainstream art and fashion, even though members of the public may not actually be aware of the fact, according to

analysts who recently attended a panel discussion in London on the kawaii craze.

But observers are divided on the extent to which kawaii has taken hold and argue that Britain's cute culture is more superficial than Japan's.

.....

"The idea of cuteness as a philosophy of living — that softness, openness and childlike attitude — really hasn't made waves in Britain at all.

"We (British) are still quite a masculine and patriarchal culture, and we have never embraced the cute, soft side like France and Japan. We are not ready to go full-on cute yet and whether we ever will be is a moot point.

Source <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2011/03/02/national/kawaii-culture-taking-hold-in-u-k/>

Cute is part of life within Japan (and not really a description that could be attributed to American culture in the same way) that is not just purely focused on young women and children. Official government agencies and banks have cute animated characters advertising their services, each of the 47 prefectures of Japan has a mascot that is available to buy as a cuddly toy to a bento box. The word *kawaii* and what it embodies is widespread in Japan and it is the desire of most girls to be and act cute, with some men attracted to this cuteness. Yano (2004) goes as far as saying that this notion of cuteness is welcomed and that everyone in Japan embraces public displays of cuteness wholeheartedly, and that cuteness meets with little critique. This may be a sweeping statement, and although Japanese tend to act collectively there are exceptions to this.

This notion of cuteness and performance was reflected in how *kigou* (codes) and *emoji* were often used within comments which had no strict semantic or pragmatic meaning. They did, however, make the comment visually more interesting, and at best add a joyful tone to it. They may have made the stiff or formal *desu / masu* polite forms seem more intimate, and as Matsuda (2008) suggest these UMCs do not just indicate meaning but perform a role of making the text cute, interesting and a reflection of the writer, or the projection of the public self (Goffman, 1957). Japanese

used multiple UMCs that marked sentence endings. Vocal spellings were attached to emoticons which then had *kigou* or *emoji* attached

Hall (1984) found that in comparison to males, females are more likely to use non-verbal cues, and are better verbal encoders and decoders. Hall & Matsumoto (2004) found that women smile and laugh more in conversation. CMC based studies have found similar conclusions in that women use more emoticons (a means of non-verbal communication) (Tossel, 2012). However, in this study this was only replicated within the Japanese data. Japanese women used significantly more emoticons than men ($p < .01$).

The table below highlights the basis differences found in male and female usage of UMCs

Table 7.22 Summary of Overall Characteristics of UMC Usage in Blog Comments

Females	Males
More likely to use multiple UMCs in sentence endings*	More likely to use just one UMC in sentence endings
More expressive emotionally through UMCs	Less expressive emotionally
UMCs punctuated more emotive adjectives	UMCs rarely punctuated emotive adjectives
Used UMCs for selective self presentation***	Less concerned with selective self presentation
Used more non verbal UMCs (extra-linguistic signs) than men**	Used fewer more non verbal UMCs (extra-linguistic signs) than men

*Especially strong within the Japanese female data

** Found only within the Japanese data and predominately within the female blog comments

*** Found only within the Japanese data

7.19.2 Through UMCs Are Female Blog Writers Inclined to a More Rapport Orientated Communication Style than Males?

This section will initially compare UMC and gender use within each language corpus and will discuss the American and Japanese data separately.

There was no evidence that women used UMCs or as this analysis suggests

emoticons to highlight rapport talk more than men. Women did use more emoticons within the Japanese data but within the strategies under the umbrella term of ‘expressions of solidarity’ and the similar politeness strategy of paying compliments there were no statistical differences. Although the data here looks at online communication and how the use of emoticons can highlight politeness strategies the results do not compliment studies that suggest that women pay more compliments (Holmes,1995) and are inclined to rapport talk (Tannen,1994).

Table 7.23 Summary of Results of Emoticons as Markers of Politeness Strategies within the Japanese and American Data Sets

Gender and language offline (according to literature)	Gender and language online (blog comments)
Female ‘talk’ is more rapport orientated than males	Female comments were not found to be more rapport orientated than males through emoticon usage
Female pay more compliments than males	Female comments were not found to utilize more compliments through emoticon usage

The following will now compare UMC and gender use across each language corpus. When a comparison is made of emoticon usage as markers of politeness strategies across the Japanese and American data sets we find that Japanese women used more expressions of solidarity or rapport talk as punctuated by emoticons significantly more than American males and females ($p < .05$). This was not mirrored in the Japanese female v Japanese male pairing.

Yamada (1997) suggests that scholars have observed that there is a similarity between Japanese listener’s talk and American women’s style of communication termed ‘rapport talk’. Yamada states that “the styles are alike in two ways: Both prefer interaction based on group rapport over individual competition, and both can be characterized as women’s styles” (p.125). This rapport talk as reflected in expressions of solidarity punctuated by emoticons was not statistically different across the Japanese male v American male and female pairing. It was however as already stated

statistically different for the in the Japanese female data in comparison to the American data.

The table below summarizes the use of emoticons per gender across gender in a comparison of the American and Japanese data.

Table 7.24 Summary of Results of Emoticons as Markers of Politeness Strategies across Each Language

Gender and language offline (according to literature)	Gender and language online (blog comments)
Female ‘talk’ is more rapport orientated than males	Japanese female comments were found to be more rapport orientated than American males and females through emoticon usage when comparing languages.
Female pay more compliments than males	Female blog users did not use more compliments through emoticon usage than males in both the Japanese and American data. In addition, Japanese comments of both genders were not found to utilize more compliments through emoticon usage when compared to the American data.
In comparison men women are more likely to use non-verbal cues	Japanese women used more non-verbal extra-linguistic signs than any other gender pairing in both the American and Japanese data.

7.19.3 Do Women use more UMCs and through them use more Positive Politeness Strategies than men?

The suggestion that women use more politeness strategies within the English language was not reproduced here in either the American or Japanese data when comparing the male and female data from the same language. The notion that women use more negative politeness than Japanese men was also not reproduced through the data where emoticons punctuated politeness strategies.

Table 7.25 Emoticons as Markers of Politeness Strategies in the Japanese and American Data

Gender and language offline (according to literature)	Gender and language online (blog comments)
Women use more politeness strategies than men	Women did not use more positive politeness strategies than men through emoticon use

Japanese females used more politeness strategies that were punctuated with emoticons more than American males and females.

This result does not necessarily mean that Japanese women are more positively polite than their American counterparts but the deployment of these emoticons is used in a reflection of offline face-to-face communication styles which have been described as harmony and compatibility driven, along with a concern with how their messages are interpreted (Tominaga et al, 2003).

Table 7.26 *Summary of Results of Emoticons as Markers of Politeness Strategies across Each Language Set*

Gender and language offline (according to literature)	Gender and language online (blog comments)
Women use more politeness strategies than men	Japanese women used more positive politeness strategies than American men and women through emoticon use

The next chapter will examine the findings of the whole thesis and examine what the findings mean for how Japanese and Americans communicate online and in addition how this compares to offline interactions.

Chapter 8: The Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This final chapter of the thesis aims to bring together the themes addressed in the research and to give an overview of the key findings from each chapter. The research questions introduced in chapter 1 relate to four areas of academic research, notably CMC studies, intercultural and interpersonal communication theories, research within the gender and language and finally politeness theories. The main aim of this research was to compare and contrast American and Japanese use of UMCs within blog posts and their comments and how they relate to these four areas. Additionally, I compared my findings to the literature and data findings that describe face-to-face communication. The following sections give an outline summary of the thesis chapters.

8.2 A summary of chapters 1-3

Chapter 1 served as a background to the communication platform of CMC that is being investigated and the linguistic and non-linguistic forms within this communication genre. An introduction is given with regard to the differences that CMC has with face to face communication, notably the absence of human presence and non-verbal cues. CMC is given a definition, along with its history and the types of CMC that are available to users as in synchronous and asynchronous genres. A history and definition of the online computer genre is presented along with a comparison of blogs in Japan and America. CMC theory is given consideration and the cues filtered in and out approaches are described and are subsequently referred to throughout the thesis and in the findings. The chapter ends with a description of the UMCs, both the linguistic and non-linguistic forms that form the basis of what was examined within these personal blogs. The forms that these UMCs take are described along with a brief description of their function and their history. This is followed by a history of UMC and its cultural and technological affiliations that encompass language play, *manga*, *kawaii* culture and keyboard technology. This chapter therefore serves the purpose of

addressing the background of the study. The research questions are given which all have the commonality of assessing how the literature within the research concerning Japanese and American face to face communication is applicable to this new form of CMC (which is still in its infancy when compared to the vast research that has concentrated on how we speak to each other in verbal face to face interactions).

Chapter 2 served as the literature review and is broken down into four parts which reflect the four research enquiries. Part one of the chapter initially gives an account of how UMCs function to play a role as semantic and pragmatic markers and show how some researchers have aimed to demonstrate how UMCs function to express emotion in online text. The literature is still in its infancy but what is still missing is how these UMCs address pragmatic intention in online texts (very few studies have addressed this) and how politeness strategies are deployed through these UMCs. This section of the chapter concludes with a review of the studies that discuss the notion of self presentation and impression formation online within the realms of Japanese and American culture. These themes are again referred to in a discussion of the findings.

Part two within the literature review examined a variety of intercultural communication theories and the empirical studies that have attempted to clarify this largely untested research. A section on how these theories are reflected within CMC was also given consideration.

Part three of the literature review focuses on the literature that has examined how politeness strategies are deployed in this text based faceless medium. One of the objectives within the thesis aims to evaluate how Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies are realized through the use of emoticons within online personal weblog comments and to examine if the concept of Japan being a negative politeness culture can be challenged within this online environment. A review of the literature regarding Brown and Levinson politeness theories in relation to American and Japanese culture is followed by how the Brown and Levinson framework has been applied to CMC in a review of the studies in this field.

Part four of this literature review chapter concludes with an introduction to the studies on gender and language within Japanese and American face-to-face

interaction. This is followed with a review of how research regarding how men and women communicate is reflected in online UMC usage.

Chapter 3 focuses on the data and research methods employed in the research. An account of how to set up a blog and the mechanics of how blogs work is described followed by a comparison of Japanese and American personal blogs. Finally how the blogs were collected, coded and analyzed is given with descriptions of UMC formal and functional distinctions.

8.3 Chapter 4: The Blog Entries

The results of the blog entries data are presented within this chapter. As perhaps expected in comparison to the blog comment data, the number of UMCs deployed by these blog authors, both American and Japanese, was significantly lower than the number of UMCs used within the blog comments. The blog entries are essential stories of these blog author's lives and are written for unspecified readers and usually for a broad and large audience. The UMCs, therefore, function differently in comparison to their blog comments. As a result of this infrequency and the nature of the blog entry which is read rather than being interactive, it was not possible to make comparisons to how UMC usage within these entries reflects face-to-face interactive communication styles as reflected within the literature.

It was also not possible to examine politeness strategies as punctuated by emoticons as these were essentially only used within the blog comments where interaction is limited to two people.

However, the use of the UMCs in blog entries was given extensive examination as to how they function within this 'one to many' communication medium and how technology may influence this usage. In addition, the analysis was useful in understanding how these UMCs are a cultural representation of the writers who use them. The themes introduced within the opening two chapters such as anonymity, selected self-presentation, *manga* and the indexing of cute femininity were presented. In addition to this, how gender influences the deployment of UMCs was also analyzed

and the results discussed.

Table 8.1 below summarizes how these UMCs are used in Japanese blog entries.

Table 8.1 *The Role of UMCs in Japanese Blog Entries*

One way monologue storytelling to unspecified readers. UMCs are on the whole not meant to be interactive.
UMCs are mostly utilized in storytelling and display writer / character emotion within the stories.
UMC usage reflects cultural themes such as language play, cute culture, and the technology from which it stems from.
The objective of writers is to make the blog posts interesting and readable. They are a reflection of the user's online persona. They act as representations of how the author wishes to be perceived (eg, as funny or interesting). In addition they help display the writer's "public image" or positive face wants.
Japanese females and males used emoticons significantly more than their American counterparts within these blog entries

American UMCs were overall very infrequent, and Japanese blog authors used them significantly more in their blog postings than Americans. Text based emoticons, *emoji*, *kigou* and unconventional phonetic spelling were the most frequent UMCs used by these Japanese blog users.

UMCs used as icons or indicators of semantic function were used to convey author's sentiment or feeling. *Emoji* classified as icons were used as lexical substitutions where they replaced words with visual pictographs. They were also used for emphatic use where the word was juxtaposed with an *emoji* with the same meaning. *Emoji*, however, was only present within the Japanese data, and this may be a consequence of *emoji* being a Japanese invention in addition to the fact that they are installed within the mobile handsets and the interfaces of Japanese blogs. Interestingly, however, the use of *emoji* dropped in frequency within the blog comments, unlike all the other UMCs. This may indicate that *emoji* usage is preferred for use in storytelling

or as a narrator's tool.

135 (32%) of the 419 counts of *emoji* classified as icons were used as vehicles to represent the authors tone, emotion and feeling, the remainder acted as lexical substitutions or functioned for lexical emphasis. Of the 838 *emoji* found within the blogs, 375 were classified as symbols which were used to add decoration to comments and to create a selective online self that reflects the ideas of Goffman (1967) and within CMC theory Walther's hyperpersonal model (1996).

The text based emoticon data and the unconventional phonetic spellings were predominantly used to display the author's voice or feeling within the posts. Sometimes this was the result of a predicament, an unlucky day or just letting off steam about something or someone. The *kigou* (symbols) were all used as symbols that did not necessarily add or supplement additional meaning or emphasis to the comment, but the use of musical symbols it has been suggested added a jovial tone to their blog postings and an appeal on the part of the writer to be friendly and intimate.

These results suggest that in addition to the development of storytelling they were used as decoration or tone setting (reflected in UMC use as symbols) which in turn may make for a more interesting blog post that projects a selected self presentation of the author and how he or she wishes the reader to perceive him or her. This selected self presentation could be the indexing of their femininity with a cute UMC. A playfulness in digital form that reflects the old analogue forms of *hentai shoujo moji*. In addition, it may simply be a tool to make the blog post more interesting and funny. Japanese women used significantly more of these UMCs than Americans, but not more than Japanese men, which suggests that the use of these UMCs is tied into the notion of visual storytelling and creativity. This stems from *manga* and a tradition of language play that is supported by the Japanese computer technology that allows it.

Within the American blog entries the blog posts resembled stories and anecdotes found in diaries, newspapers or books. The language was conventional, the font black and the size always the same. The overall UMC count was low and the reading of these blogs was similar to the reading of a magazine with photos. Photos on the blog could be humorous and interesting but the text itself was conventional. It

could be argued, however, that these photos are used for a selected presented self, an image they choose to present themselves as to the blog reading community.

There were few significant differences between the Japanese male and female authored blogs and their UMC usage. Only within the Japanese *emoji* (symbols) and unconventional spellings (semantic function) were there significant differences ($p < .05$). Cross culturally Japanese men used significantly more emoticons and phonetic spellings than American men and women, and this was repeated in a comparison of Japanese women with American men and women.

These findings were in contrast to the literature that suggests that women use more emoticons than men (although the literature focuses on two way communications) but these findings can point to more cultural reasons for their use.

8.4 Chapter 5: The Blog Comments

8.4.1 Japanese Blog Comments

The literature that describes Japanese and American spoken face-to-face communication suggests that Japanese communication styles are more dependent on non-verbal aspects of communication than Americans (Kunihiro, 1976; Tsujimura, 1987). In contrast, Americans focus more so on explicit verbal forms for the successful transmission of communication (Gudykunst and Nishida, 1986).

However, a lot of intercultural communication theories and their descriptions of American and Japanese face-to-face communication styles are not based on empirical evidence and have come under criticism as a result. These are described as perceived communication styles in Japanese and American cultures within the literature review and a separate section looks at empirical studies that has tested some of these notions.

A review of the empirical literature underlines the emphasis that Japanese communications styles can be non-verbal orientated where the interlocutor must demonstrate good *sasshi* to be able to read the speakers true intentions (Tsujimura,

1987; Takai & Ota, 1994; Wada, 1991; Zhang et al, 2005; Yoon, 2010, 2011).

Although the ability to understand Japanese spoken interaction is multifaceted and not one factor can determine all its variations the emphasis for the need for smooth communication through harmonious means (Singelis & Brown, 1995; Takai & Ota, 1994) is included in the empirical studies and the model below is an attempt to summarize this literature.

Table 8.2 A Model for Understanding Japanese Face to Face Communication based on Empirical Studies

Japanese face to face interaction characteristics
Compatibility and rapport driven to maintain harmony by avoiding hurting people's feelings and being considerate
Interactions are listener or message receiver responsible Expectation on the listener to understand what the speaker wants to say through cues and context
An emphasis on non-verbal orientated communication. There is a reliance on this approach to grasp full intention or meaning of the interaction

The literature on face-to-face based communication describes an environment where the interlocutor is physically present, non-verbal cues such as, facial expression and tone of voice, the interlocutor's gender, age and social ranking all visible. These sociolinguistic factors can play an influential role in the process of a conversation. Studies have indicated that people are able to perceive their interlocutors emotional states and socio-economical traits from these non-verbal cues and these perceptions are more accurate than just chance (Hall & Bernieri, 2001; Knapp & Hall, 1997).

These sociolinguistics factors are less visible online. Relationships such as *kohai* and *sempai* (Junior & senior), subordinate and superior are blurred. Social status, age and a person's role in society, all of which are indicators of how to address people (highly emphasized in a hierarchal Japanese society), are absent. These blurred boundaries led to the majority of Japanese blog comment writers using polite *desu* /

masu forms on most but not all occasions (the use of non-polite forms is usually conducted with close intimates and people who have known each other for a long time but polite *desu / masu* forms are used with strangers and social superiors). These *desu / masu* forms were used in conjunction with UMCs that added intimacy and warmth to their interactions rather than just the polite form which may sound cold and too formal within this speech community

Common to both Japanese face-to-face communication and online blog communication is the need for harmonious smooth communication, but the root to achieve this is different. Unlike face-to-face communication styles where verbal and non-verbal cues exist, the lack of them within the CMC environment gives rise to the use of UMCs that make online blog comments explicit in semantic meaning and pragmatic intention. Blog writers were brought closer together through politeness strategies such as the showing of rapport and support. Without the use of these UMCs there is a possibility of reader misinterpretation, of comments sounding *tsumetai* or cold especially as comments were written in the *desu / masu* formal forms. The personal blog is a ‘personal’ anecdote of the author who writes under a handle name, this handle name is their online identity and this identity can be given further emphasis through UMCs in a selective self presentation process.

As these comments took place in a world void of human presence and these UMCs aided in the creation of this human presence online which gave the interactions a more intimate feel. The desire for rapport, intimacy and harmony within blog comment interaction put the responsibility on the interpretation and deciphering of the message not on the shoulders of the reader but this responsibility is given to the writer. The writer in using these UMCs has three objectives as stated below, the first two are related to a fear of being misunderstood and hence the disruption of harmony and the hurting of their readers feelings. The third is related to playfulness and the creation of an eye catching effect which can represent the authors self selected persona. This, however, was mainly utilized by female blog comment writers.

UMC user objectives

1. To present their emotion and feeling within the online interaction.
2. To present correctly their intended pragmatic meaning within the comment.
3. To present or perform themselves through UMC play, which is a representation of their online identity created by an handle name.

Anonymity (all Japanese wrote under handle names) allowed Japanese users to express themselves more within this online environment but not in the sense that it allowed users to be derogatory or offensive to others. Writer self expression was adopted more as an representation of their ‘voice’, to communicate with people of similar interests and to develop online friendships, intimacy and perhaps as an escape from their offline identity. Morio and Buchholz (2009) suggest that this level of handle name anonymity results in the dislocation of real and online identity. They argue that this dissociation of real and online identities can result in less accountability for the user’s online behavior, linguistically or otherwise. Flaming and trolling are examples of such behavior that may result from this dissociation. However within this blog speech community users used a handle name but adhered to linguistic and cultural norms within their interactions and used UMCs as a way to maintain rapport and harmony with their readers and fans. It has been argued within this thesis that this mirrors offline Japanese communication traits. It can also be a reflection of users wanting to be perceived in favourable light, which in turn may attract more readers and fans and make their blog more popular.

The literature also suggests that Japanese are reliant on non verbal cues for the successful transmission of face-to-face communication. Perceptive ability is the skill to communicate using implicit non verbal messages and is an integral part of Japanese communication style (Takai & Ota, 1994). In other words, the ability to read non-verbal behavior or what Wada (1991) calls nonverbal sensitivity is a requirement in face to face dialogues. This, however, is absent in the text based online environment and Japanese users used non verbal extra-linguistic signs more than any other UMC in an attempt to reproduce these non verbal cues that are lost in blog comment

interactions.

Table 8.3 summarizes how the need for harmonious online blog communication dictates the need for explicit communication, verbal or otherwise, as represented through linguistic language based and extra-linguistic UMCs. The use of UMCs, which is intended to avoid miscommunication, places responsibility on the writer to create a clear online message, one that can be understood within the CMC environment. There is a shift, therefore, from listener responsibility within face to face communication to writer responsibility within these blogs as the communication medium changes.

Table 8.3 A Model for Understanding Japanese UMC Usage in Blog Comments

Compatibility and rapport / harmony driven. UMCs enhance a positive intimate online environment. Linguistic and non-verbal UMCs clarify author feeling and pragmatic intention which can lead to intimacy and rapport. Communication in these comments is friendly and the UMCs add to this.
Interactions are comment writer or message creator responsible. The writer tries to be explicit in what they want to say through the use of linguistic and non-verbal UMCs.
Reliant on extra-linguistic signs (category 1 non-verbal UMCs) to supplement and add semantic meaning to the comment (Emoticons were the most used UMC in the Japanese data) Signs were used to add to the function of the sentences in terms of propositional content (icons), politeness orientation (indexes) and selective self representational and positive face function (symbols). The American data had no instances of signs that were classified as symbols. This, it is argued, is a result of a multitude of factors such as the technology available to blog users, Japanese cute culture (symbols are used to project a cute online persona), the influence of pop culture such as <i>manga</i> , and the creation of a selective self presentation.

8.4.2 The American Blog Comments

As reflected within the literature American communication styles are said to be speaker / writer orientated. Clear, concise and direct communication is preferred over a vague or indirect style. It can be argued that American UMCs worked in the same way as Japanese UMCs but in a much more subtle and infrequent distribution. Interactions were writer responsible as reflected in the literature but it could be argued that the lack of UMC implementation can lead to implicitness which in turn leads to miscommunication and online altercation. In this respect, the responsibility of deciphering the comment correctly would be placed on the shoulders of the reader, a misinterpreted comment that may have been intended as a joke may be interpreted as

sarcasm and interpreted as offensive. The reader, therefore, has to ‘read’ the intended meaning of the author based on a black and white text that is absent of vocal and visual cues.

There was no evidence of online altercation between blog writers, however, as the blog author administers the blog and can easily delete such comments and, therefore, no examples were found within the data. Overall, however, there was less reliance on UMCs in comparison to the written word to convey communication online within the American comments, a reflection of the face-to-face literature which suggests that Americans are more reliant on the spoken word to convey accurate meaning in interactions. Japanese UMC usage in contrast mirrors its face to face interaction in that it is dependent on non-verbal cues. Table 8.4 summarizes how UMCs were used within American blog comments.

Table 8.4 A Model for Understanding American UMC Usage in Blog Comments

The emphasis is on friendly positively polite communication within American blog interactions. This seems to be the nature of this blog speech community where people with similar interests share their ideas and stories. These UMCs, when used, can enhance this positive intimate online environment. Similar to the Japanese data, linguistic and non-verbal UMCs clarify author feeling and pragmatic intention but Americans achieved this mainly through the function of the written sentence alone and did not feel a need to add emphatic support to the comment by employing UMCs. This was a significant contrast to the Japanese data.
In comparison to the Japanese data, the lack of UMCs may lead to the responsibility of deciphering the message in the hands of the writer. As there are no vocal or visual cues the reader must interpret or imagine both the emotive stance and the tone of voice of the writer.
In comparison to the Japanese data there was no evidence to suggest that Americans rely on non-verbal cues (extra-linguistic signs) to convey added meaning to their blog comments. This reflects the literature that the spoken / written word is more important than non-verbal cues in face-to-face communication.

In comparison to the differences between Japanese face-to-face communication and online blog interactions the differences within the American data was less revealing. Americans, in comparison to the Japanese blog writers used far less UMCs and relied on the conventional written word to express themselves. UMCs were not relied on to promote positive and harmonious interactions and the use of extra-linguistic signs to promote the ‘public self image’ as Goffman (1967) would suggest, or to enhance self presentation and discussed within Walther’s hyperpersonal model (1986) was not evident.

8.5 Chapter 6 Politeness Strategies

If Japan is a collectivistic culture, it could be expected that the emotions displayed would mainly consist of positive emotions as negative ones could be disruptive towards the harmony and the adhesiveness of the group. This was reflected in the emoticons used here. Emoticon usage that supplemented the comment writers feeling (as opposed to a feeling towards their reader) was both positive and negative.

However, when emoticons were used towards their reader as in, for instance directed at their reader's ability or appearance, then the emotion and attached emoticon was a positive one. In such cases the emoticon and the comment it was attached to, was categorized as an index that highlighted positive politeness strategies that emphasized rapport. Emoticons that highlighted negative politeness strategies such as hedging statements and opinions all acted as purveyors of maintaining harmony. The illocutionary force or negativity of the comment was acknowledged and subsequently softened with the emotion. However, the fact that the Japanese used significantly more emoticons to emphasize positive politeness strategies than their American counterparts is in contrast to the literature that suggests that Japan is a negative politeness culture. Within this online environment, therefore, these assumptions are challenged.

A fundamental reason behind Japanese emoticon use is to maintain harmony, which the literature describes as a fundamental part of Japanese communication. Within this online communication platform where your interlocutor is invisible the use of positive politeness strategies which make your reader feel good about themselves far outweighed negative politeness usage in the Japanese data and also the positive politeness usage within the American data. The objective in using these negative politeness strategies within face to face communication is to maintain a sense of harmony where speakers may adhere to a set of particular linguistic practices as in *wakimae*, but within the online Japanese blogging community the use of positive politeness strategies were used to create a sense of friendliness and intimacy motivated by group identity and shared ideas that cement the sense of solidarity that is created.

Politics was not a topic often covered within these blogs, nor other topics that

may lead to disagreement or altercation. The theme or the topic of the blog drew readers in, with similar experiences and ideas and these were reflected in comments that emphasized positive politeness. Therefore this blog environment can be classified as different genre when compared to 100% anonymous bulletin boards which may invite trolls or other types of deviant linguistic behaviour.

Ide (1986) divides politeness into volition (*hatarakikake houshki*) and discernment (*wakimae*). Positive and negative politeness strategies can be found within volition such as the verbal strategies of seeking agreement, joking and being pessimistic. The Brown and Levinson (1987) framework disregards *wakimae* which she claims acts out an important role within the Japanese linguistic politeness system.

However, it can be argued that within the blog community the need for *wakimae* is not as important when hierarchical differences are blurred. In this setting rather than *wakimae* Japanese display politeness by closing the distance within cyberspace through Ide's (1986) volition (*hatarakikake houshki*) concept which parallels her descriptions of American politeness. Usami (2001, 2002) points out that positive politeness strategies are important for the Japanese to display feelings of empathy and support and these are expressed linguistically through humor and sentence final particles to shorten the psychological distance between conversational partners. In an online setting these linguistic devices are strengthened through verbal UMCs as in unconventional vowel extended phonetic spellings of the SFP *ne* which are also punctuated with emoticons to add emphasis or act as a double marker of the intended positive politeness strategy.

The American data paralleled the Japanese data in that the use of positive politeness strategies was abundant in the data. However, this was at sentence level and without the use of UMCs. The use of positive politeness strategies that were further heightened by emoticons was significantly less than the Japanese data.

Table 8.5 A model for Politeness in Japanese and American Blog Comments

Politeness objectives	Emphasis	Explicitness
Rapport and friendliness dominant factors. (*Less <i>wakimae</i> orientated as status, age and rank largely unknown). Nature of the speech community may influence this.	On positive politeness strategies to maintain interpersonal relations.	Emoticons highlight these politeness objectives and make them more explicit. This was predominant within the Japanese data.

*Applicable to Japanese data only

It is argued, however, that although the politeness objectives, emphasis and explicitness were also goals for American writers the fact that they were used significantly more by Japanese comment writers suggests that these influential factors as outlined in table 8.4 played a larger, more significant role in emoticon usage and frequency. Extra-linguistic signs were also added to linguistic devices to emphasize meaning, and this was reflected in their attachment to the sentence final particle *ne*.

In chapter 6 the sentence final particle *ne* was discussed which according to Cook acts as non-referential index which directly indexes affective common ground between the speaker and the addressee. In addition, she states that *ne* also indirectly indexes speech acts such as the marking of intimacy and showing agreement. The use of *ne* and an emoticon was used as a double marker to emphasize the politeness strategy, firstly in a linguistic way through the SFP and then visually to reinforce its emotive or pragmatic meaning. Negative politeness strategies were also double marked with a *kana* (I wonder) SFP or the modal *kamo* (might) and an emoticon to soften the mitigating effect of the comment. On these occasions we, therefore, see how linguistic structures are used to index a sense of indirectness or perhaps even vagueness and how the emoticon makes this intention explicit because of the absence of non-verbal cues.

8.6 Chapter 7: UMC and Gender

Japanese women used significantly more emoticons than Japanese men but this was not repeated in the American data. When the gender divided comments were compared across the Japanese and American data Japanese females used more text based emoticons than Americans and Japanese males used significantly more

emoticons as indexes than American women. In addition the unconventional spelling data also showed Japanese males using significantly more than American women.

With the exception of the Japanese female v Japanese male pairing these results do not agree with the literature that women use more emoticons. Japanese men used more unconventional phonetic spelling than American women, which can suggest that there are other factors involved in influencing their use. These factors can be described as being more cultural related rather than ones associated with gender. These cultural aspects include the influence of *manga* on unconventional online spelling.

The Japanese writing system has 3 scripts as well as the Roman alphabet and this flexibility allows for the creative use of orthography. Gottlieb (2010) states that Japanese users can play with standard orthographic conventions in cyberspace that is not possible for single alphabet users.

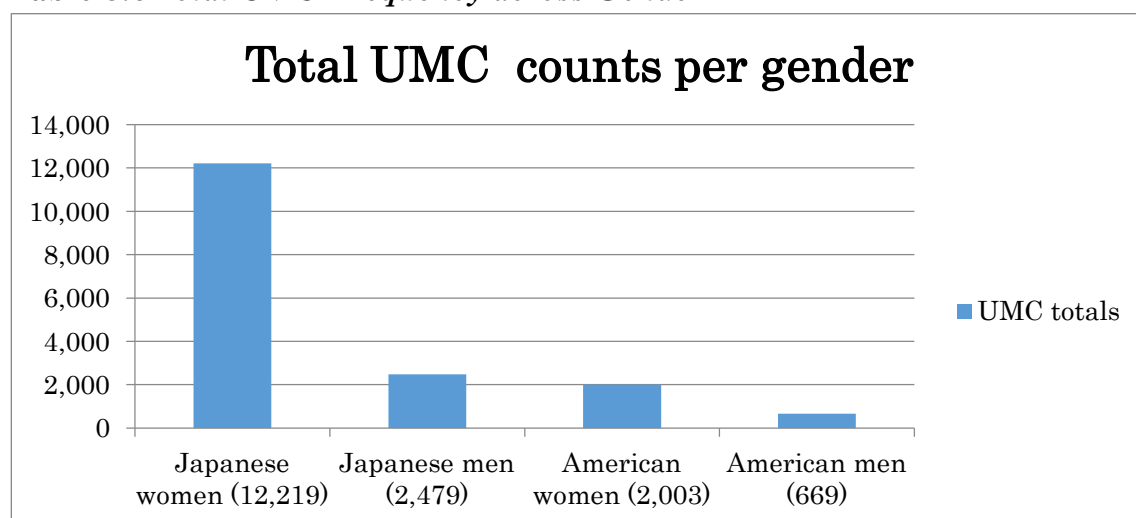
Both Japanese men and women used these UMCs to create intimacy and rapport online. Japanese and American women used more UMCs within comments and were generally much less conservative in their use when compared to men. Some female users included these UMCs collectively to produce semantic and pragmatic meaning in addition to decorative self representation purposes that indexed cute femininity, a public image that appeals to their desire to appear cute and interesting. There were a multitude of UMCs expressed in female comments with some sentences punctuated by two UMCs and whole comments being littered with UMC deployment. This was in contrast to male usage which was a little more conservative (there were for example only 425 to the female overall count of 2305 *kigou* which all functioned as symbols).

Within the Japanese data women used UMCs (mostly *emoji* and *kigou*) that were classified as symbols to add a visual identity to their comments, to add a tone and to act as a replication of their online selected self presentation and may also be a product of replicating the non-linguistic behavior of the speech community. This was not seen within the American data as *emoji* and *kigou* were used very infrequently. Reasons for this could, therefore, be that the technology was not available for American users to exploit (although this argument is weak as these UMCs can be

available). Another reason is the connection between language play and cuteness. Users adopted these UMCs to be more eye catching and cute, a notion that as already mentioned pervades Japanese society. Gottlieb (2010), for example, argues that language play online as reflected in UMCs is far from new but built on an already existing tradition of orthographic creativity. This creativity, it can be argued, stems from the flexible writing system it employs and the technology online that allows this.

There were no indications that women used more positive politeness strategies than men in both sets of data through emoticons. However, Japanese women used significantly more than American men and women. It is argued that within the Japanese communication that takes place within these blogs, the need for rapport between reader and writer is a driving force that dictates Japanese UMC usage. Japanese females used emoticons significantly more than any other gender pairing to indicate as sense of rapport with their reader. The reasons for this relate to gender marking, the presentation of self, cuteness as well as the need for harmonious communication. This perspective can also be applied to Japanese men's use of positive politeness strategies as the need for a harmonious online environment influenced the use of these emoticons and their UMC usage did not suggest that males adhere to report talk. Table 8.6 below shows the overall frequency of UMC usage per gender within the American and Japanese data.

Table 8.6 Total UMC Frequency across Gender



There was no evidence to suggest that women use more positive politeness strategies than men in both data sets, although when we compare languages Japanese women used more than both American men and women. It is argued that cultural factors such as the performance of self and cuteness that is derived from tradition language play and *kawaii* culture influence this trend. Japanese men also used more UMCs overall than Americans, which can point to another strongly influencing factor, the need for harmonious communication online.

There were patterns, however, within the Japanese and American female comments where multiple and various UMCs were inserted in one comment. The use of emotive adjectives such as *kawaii*, *sugoi*, wonderful and love were often punctuated with UMCs, as in an emoticon or spelt phonetically to create the ‘voice’ of the author. These patterns were more widespread within the Japanese female data. The male comment data, specifically American men, tended to be more conservative in the expressing of emotion through UMCs and usually limited themselves to one UMC within their comments. Their comments tended, therefore, to be more conservative in their expression of feeling.

Table 8.7 A Model for Gender and UMC Usage in Japanese and American Blog Comments

Female UMC usage	Male UMC usage
*More likely to use multiple UMCs in sentence endings More expressive emotionally through UMCs UMCs punctuated more emotive adjectives Used UMCs for selective self presentation** **Used more non verbal UMCs (extra-linguistic signs) than men	More likely to use just one UMCs in sentence endings Less expressive emotionally UMCs rarely punctuated emotive adjectives Less concerned with selective self presentation Used fewer more non verbal UMCs (extra-linguistic signs) than women
Gender and language offline (according to literature)	Gender and language online with emoticon punctuation
Female 'talk' is more rapport orientated than males	Not found in the American or Japanese data sets. However when comparing languages Japanese female comments were found to be more rapport orientated than American males and females through emoticon usage when comparing languages.
Female pay more compliments than males	Not found within the American or Japanese data or when comparing the data sets.
In comparison men women are more likely to use no-verbal cues	Japanese women used more non-verbal extra-linguistic signs than any other gender pairing in both the American and Japanese data. This pattern was not repeated when just comparing the male and female American data.
Women use more politeness strategies than men	Japanese women used more positive politeness strategies than American men and women through emoticon use. However Japanese men used more positive politeness than American men.

*Especially strong within the Japanese female data

** Found only within the Japanese data and predominately within the female blog comments

8.7 A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Online Personal Blog Communication

In an examination of the findings the following can be used to describe a framework for understanding the dynamics of blog comment interaction.

The personal blog

1. The personal blog is a representation of the author / the self. It is 'personal' in nature and not 100% anonymous. Japanese used handle names; Americans used their real names. Handle names allow for a creation of a unique online persona.
2. The personal blogs and their comments are not intended to be hostile in nature. This may not

be reflected in other communication platforms such as bulletin boards where trolling and flaming may be evident and the site administrator is a third party. Blog users are the administrators of their own blogs and can delete comments of a disparaging nature if they wish.

The Japanese personal blog

1. Japanese use UMCs to maintain a non-hostile harmonious environment.

This reflects the face to face communication that stresses the need for harmonious smooth communication.

2. The need for harmonious or rapport driven communication leads to explicit communication through UMCs. This goes against the face to face empirical data findings (Nisugi, 1974; Haugh, 1998; Takai and Ota, 1994) that suggest the Japanese communication is implicit or indirect.

(The emphasis here, however, was on UMCs. The largest UMC frequency was extra-linguistic signs followed by unconventional phonetic spellings. Non-linguistic UMCs were used in conjunction with language to produce more explicit communication).

Japanese used more emoticons that supplemented more positive than negative politeness strategies. In addition Japanese used more positive politeness strategies than Americans. This is in contrast to the literature that describes Japanese communication as negatively polite.

3. There were no significant differences in gender and emoticon usage to suggest that women use more positive politeness strategies than men. In addition women's emoticon usage did not reflect the notion of 'rapport talk'. This does not reflect the literature that describes face-to-face communication.
4. Japanese is considered to have a non-verbal orientation process. The lack of these visual and audio cues in a CMC environment leads to Japanese using UMCs to compensate for this loss. This in turn can make semantic and pragmatic meaning more explicit and lead to smoother communication with fellow blog writers.

The American personal blog

1. Americans use less UMCs but their function to promote harmony and intimacy is the same.
There is a reliance, however, to do this with the written word over UMCs.
2. No significant differences between blog communication and its face to face counterpart. There is a suggestion, however, that the lack of UMCs make semantic meaning and pragmatic intention implicit and, therefore, reader responsible as the reader is left to interpret what could be an ambiguous message.
3. There were no significant differences in gender and emoticon usage to suggest that women use more positive politeness strategies than men. In addition women's emoticon usage did not reflect the notion of 'rapport talk'. This does not reflect the literature that describes face-to-face communication.
4. Americans did not do not perceive the loss of these visual or auditory cues as being a hindrance to smooth interaction, as the face to face communication process is primarily based on the spoken or written word. When the communication platform moves to the personal blog the infrequent use of UMCs overall is testament to this.

Comparing the Japanese and American blog

1. Both Americans and Japanese use UMCs to promote goodwill and harmony within the blog speech community. There are significantly more UMCs used, however, within the Japanese data.
2. Japanese used more positive politeness strategies that were punctuated by emoticons than Americans.
3. When comments were divided into gender Japanese women used more positive politeness strategies that were punctuated by emoticons than American blog writers regardless of gender.
4. Japanese women used more positive politeness strategies punctuated by emoticons than American men and women to highlighted rapport. Japanese women were therefore, the closest to the definition that women interaction is rapport talk focused.

8.8 Concluding comments

The research questions are restated below with concluding remarks briefly noted underneath.

Research enquiry one: The function and usage of UMCs.

- a. How do non-verbal and verbal UMCs function to-express or supplement semantic meaning and pragmatic intention within American and Japanese online personal blog articles and their comments?
- b. Are there technological parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

The thesis has attempted to show how these UMCs were deployed significantly more by Japanese users to supplement and add to the function of the meaning of the comments they wrote. They were used as emphatic markers of propositional or semantic content (icons), functioned to enhance politeness strategies (indexes) and added pragmatic meaning. This was common to both the American and Japanese data, although significantly more UMCs were used for these purposes within the Japanese data. A major difference between the use of extra-linguistic signs was that the use of symbols such as ♪, ♥ and ★ was very infrequent. Pictograms (*emoji*) were not used. This, it can be argued, is a reflection of *emoji* being a Japanese invented UMC which is not prevalent, not yet anyway, in American blog communication. The types and variety of text based emoticons within the Japanese data had far more variation than the American counterpart which is a result of the 1 and 2 byte keyboard technology distinction. Japanese use 2 byte keyboards which allow for more creative and varying emoticon usage and this was reflected in the data.

Research enquiry two: UMC usage and culture

- a. Does UMC usage mirror the language and culture from which it stems?
- b. Are there cultural parameters that affect their distribution and usage?

Results have shown that UMCs can mirror but also differ from face-to-face communication. The American blog corpus had infrequent UMC usage in comparison to the Japanese data. Their comments relied primarily on the written word even though the CMC environment reflects a ‘cues filtered out’ communication platform where visual and vocal cues are absent. This parallels face to face communication which has an emphasis on the spoken or written word over non-verbal communication. It could be argued however that a lack of UMC usage could lead to miscommunication as the focus shifts from the speaker responsible orientation of face-to-face communication to a more reader responsible focus whereby the reader needs to interpret the messages he or she receives. The Japanese data showed more revealing data when comparing the face-to-face communication literature and UMC usage. UMCs were deployed to supplement propositional meaning, index pragmatic intention and emphasize politeness strategies which had the aim of creating a harmonious positive online environment. This UMC usage mirrors Japanese face-to-face communication which has been described as rapport driven and harmonious within the literature. Signs used as symbols, acted as devices for selective self representation. Walther’s (1996) hyperpersonal model did not specifically discuss UMCs, but in accordance with this model Japanese used these symbols to enhance their impression formation or ‘public self-image’. These symbols did not always add emphatic meaning to the sentence but acted as positive face markers whereby the writer appealed to their sense of cuteness or friendliness, creating an online persona which they wanted to be approved of and liked. This usage can be linked to the notion of cute culture that pervades Japanese society.

As reflected in the literature, Japanese face-to-face communication has a reliance on non-verbal communication. This was reflected in the use of extra-linguistic signs which were the most frequently used UMC within the Japanese data. The abundant use of UMCs within the Japanese comments indicated a desire of the writer to be understood, from both a semantic and pragmatic viewpoint. In order for miscommunication to not occur the writer took on the responsibility to write a comment that would be understood the way it was intended. This is a reversal of face-to-face communication whereby the focus is on the listener to take responsibility

in deciphering the spoken message.

Research enquiry three: Emoticons, politeness and language usage

- a. How are expressions of solidarity and interpersonal communication realized through emoticons in this text based faceless medium?
- b. How do extra-linguistic signs supplement the verbal language content? Are emoticons used in conjunction with particular politeness strategies?

UMCs were deployed by both American and Japanese writers to emphasize the meaning of the comment to maintain the positive and negative face of their readers. This was significantly more important for the Japanese writers. Through emoticons, Japanese supplemented the meaning of their comments to add a sense of intimacy and solidarity with their readers within their speech community. Emoticons were very context dependent and emoticon usage was flexible. The same emoticon could indicate positive and negative politeness. Japanese used far more of these extra-linguistic signs to supplement positive politeness strategies than Americans. This could suggest, at least within this speech community, that Japanese is not purely a negative polite culture.

Research enquiries four: Gender, language and UMC usage

- a. How does UMC deployment reflect the face to face literature descriptions concerning language and gender usage?
- b. Through UMCs are female blog writers inclined to a more rapport orientated communication style than males?
- c. Do women use more UMCs and through them use more positive politeness strategies than men?

UMC usage within the American data did not reflect the literature that women use more UMCs than men, but this notion was represented within the Japanese data findings. Japanese men, however, used significantly more UMCs (phonetic spelling,

emoticons as indexes) than American women. Women did not use more positive politeness strategies or adhere to rapport talk as stated in face-to-face descriptions, although Japanese women used more emoticons to supplement positive politeness strategies than American men and women. These findings can suggest that it is not solely gender that has an influence on UMC usage but that culture plays a significant role especially when you consider the fact that Japanese men used more UMCs than American women in some incidences.

This research has shown that through CMC where interaction is conducted on a computer screen and where the presence of your interlocutor is missing, users adopt the given technology in a variety of innovative ways to express themselves which mirror and differ from face to face interactions. Japanese use handle names and create a unique online persona. The culture from which these UMCs come strongly influences their usage. Their communication is not negatively polite as research suggests within face to face interaction. The UMCs are used in a speech community where everyone shares the same interests and come together to share their ideas and stories. Politeness strategies promote this sense of compatibility and harmony. This pattern was reproduced in both the American and Japanese data but as I have discussed this was considerably more important for Japanese users. They highlighted their pragmatic intentions through UMCs to clarify their stance towards the proposition and towards their interlocutor with the aim of attempting to reproduce offline harmonious interactions which are non-verbal communication dependent. Their communication is explicit emotionally and pragmatically through the use of these UMCs. The responsibility is, therefore, not on the listener as offline communication studies suggest but on the writer to express themselves clearly in a text based environment. For the Japanese within this sample, text alone is insufficient to achieve this and therefore the use of verbal and non-verbal cues are employed to accommodate this. This reflects face-to-face communication styles which suggest Japanese communication is non-verbal orientated and UMCs are used online to compensate for the lack of visual and auditory cues online.

8.9 Limitations of the Study

Sociolinguistic factors such as the demographic of the blog users, their occupation and gender (some comments where gender could not be ascertained were rejected) were not always clear. Therefore, with the exception of gender, the age and occupation of the blog post and comment authors could not be commented on and factored into the analysis with any great accuracy. The blog authors themselves were not interviewed regarding their UMC usage and, therefore, such an analysis is absent within this study.

The study relies on the current literature which describes how American and Japanese communicate within the face to face context. The anecdotal or perceived ideas of how these nations communicate is widespread within the intercultural communication literature and is now quite dated. The empirical evidence is more current, and aims to challenge or test these long held assumptions. Empirical studies are still infrequent in comparison to the anecdotal literature but this is changing. Unfortunately it was beyond the scope of this thesis to examine both face-to-face communication and blog interactions in a single study but this is perhaps a future direction that the field of CMC may take.

8.10 Future Study Suggestions

The limitations of the study can lead us to questions that may remain after reading this thesis. Is there a generational difference in UMC usage? This study examined popular personal blogs. If only teenager blogs were collected or another CMC platform used, would there be slightly differing results in terms of the UMC used and frequency.

This study has attempted to examine how American and Japanese online personal blog communication differs to its face-to-face counterpart because the communication medium takes place through computers. It has challenged assumptions of how Japanese communication is executed when human presence is taken away and how this leads to a different kind of communication emphasis or style, but one which

still retains at its core the commonality of harmonious and rapport driven communication. CMC will only get larger and the technology more complex from now on and as more and more people speak through a computer, the linguistic behavior that the computer technology allows, and how the culture it stems from influences this linguistic behavior will continue to be a source of fascination for scholars for years to come.

Appendix A

Examples and descriptions of how blog data was entered and coded

The coding of the data.

The section describes the processes employed in the collection and coding of the data.

UMCs and Sentences: the blog entries.

File 1. The Japanese data.

Excel files were created and labeled according to the UMCs to be analyzed and numbered per blog 1-100 per each language data set. The blog articles excel file consisted of these categories which were filled in for every blog from 1-100 in both language data sets.

Sentences numbers consisted of all 5 blog articles totaled and placed in their respective columns. The UMCs were counted for overall frequency as in the overall total and then broken down into function as in Icon, index and symbols for the semaisographic extra-linguistic signs, and semantic and pragmatic usage for the phonographic and logographic data as the following list illustrates.

Gender of the blog author was highlighted within the file and with this an analysis cross culturally comparing American and Japanese blog UMC usage and across genders within the same language or across the two languages could be performed.

Blog number =

Total number of sentences =

1. Semaisographic extra-linguistic signs

Text based emoticons totals =

Icons

Indexes

Symbols

Graphic based emoticons (Smiley's)

Icons

Indexes

Symbols

Emoji or pictograms

Icons

Indexes

Symbols

Kigou or codes

Icons

Indexes

Symbols

2. Phonetic data

Phonetic spelling

Semantic meaning (expression of tone or emotion)

Pragmatic meaning (highlighting of a speech act)

Laughter representation: Phonetic spelling.

Semantic meaning (expression of tone or emotion)

Pragmatic meaning (highlighting of a speech act)

3. Logographic data

Laughter representation: Logographic (笑 v LOL)

Semantic meaning (expression of tone or emotion)

Pragmatic meaning (highlighting of a speech act)

Multiple exclamation mark usage (!! or more)

Semantic meaning (expression of tone or emotion)

Pragmatic meaning (highlighting of a speech act)

File 2. The American data

For the American data the same procedure was used in the counting and coding of the data with the exception of capitalized words and abbreviations which were counted and coded and constituted part of the non-comparable UMC data. Within

the Japanese data the use of ‘w’ to signify laughter at the end of sentences was also counted and constituted another part of the non-comparable UMC data.

File 3. UMCs and Sentences within the blog comments

Similar to the creation of excel files for the blog entries the overall comment data was compiled and coded in the same way. The number of sentences within the comments were counted as a whole from each of the blogs five entries and documented in the relevant excel column. So blog 1’s total number of comment sentences were counted, along with their UMCs and coded according to function in a similar fashion to the blog entries.

Again like the blog entries the non-comparable data was also counted and coded for function. In addition within the phonetic spellings section the data was compared in 2 ways. Firstly the data was compared like for like, that is, unconventional phonetic spelling as outlined in the UMC formal distinctions section. Secondly, as whole word capitalization is considered to be a UMC or unconventional language use the American data of capitalization and unconventional phonetic spelling was compared to the Japanese unconventional phonetic spelling data. This was done to see if there were any differences with or without the inclusion of capitalization within the data.

File 4. UMCs and Sentences within the blog comments: Gender divided

The next excel file was done exactly the same as described in the previous paragraph with the exception that on this occasion the data was compiled and coded according to the gender of the comment writer.

One excel file contained the counted and coded data from female authored comment writers and a second file from the male authored comment writers.

File 5. UMCs and Sentences within the blog comments: Divided indexes in their politeness strategies

The index data from the text based emoticon data was extracted and imputed

into this file. The indexes were then coded for what politeness strategies they highlighted. They were then placed into positive or negative politeness strategies based on the work of Brown and Levinson (1987). A description of the speech acts and definitions of positive and negative politeness strategies are given in the above section UMC function and classification 2.

Although the index usage for the other UMCs such as phonetic spelling was counted, coded and documented as outlined within the file 1 explanation general numbers were considered too low to merit an insightful analysis as conducted with these text based emoticons.

File 6 & 7. UMCs and Sentences within the blog comments: Divided indexes in their speech acts and politeness strategies and gender

The index data from the text based emoticon data as documented in the gender divided comments data was extracted and imputed into these files. One file was for male comment text based emotion index usage and the other for female. Both American and Japanese data sets were imputed into the files. The analytical process undertaken followed the same procedures as documented in file 5.

Differences in the analysis of the blog entries and blog comments

The text based emoticon index data from the blog entries accounted for a total of 113 instances within the Japanese blog entries and 2 instances within the American blog data. This data was considered far too low to generate any significant findings considering they are sparingly used.

The politeness strategies that were highlighted by emoticons within the Japanese data mainly consisted of a request at the end of the blog article for comments as in the following example.

The infrequent use of index usage was seen throughout all of the other UMCs the blog entry data. Reasons for this can include the fact that blog entries are not addressed to a specific reader, unlike the blog comments, they are written for a broad readership and therefore the use, function and purpose of UMCs within the blog

articles and comments vary significantly which will be discussed further within the results chapter.

SPSS analysis

Using a Mann Whitney U test, the data was pasted from the excel files into the SPSS statistical programme version 19 and was analyzed for significant differences between the language sets for UMC usage. The null hypothesis was set at ($p < 0.05$). The Mann Whitney U test was chosen because the data was not normally distributed. That is some people used UMCs frequently while some hardly at all. Most statistical test that compare two samples, such as averages and the mean, rely on parametric assumptions. As the data was unevenly distributed the Mann-Whitney non-parametric test was selected to analyze the data.

Within the data a histogram was performed. This is a graph plotting values of observations on the horizontal axis, and the frequency with which each value occurs in the data set on the vertical axis. Based on this it was decided whether transforming the data was a requirement. This transformation changes a non-normal distribution into a normal distribution. Therefore a log transformation was performed on the data when deemed necessary. This corrected the data from being positively skewed to a normal distribution.

Appendix B

Gender and the use of UMCs in blog entries

Full data tables

Japanese female V Japanese male authored blog entries

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons

Table 1 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	6036*	120.7±121.3	4473	89.5±56.8
Text based emoticons	580	11.6±18.9	369	7.4±14.2
Icons	493	9.9±17.8	341	6.8±13.7
Indexes	85	1.7±4.9	28	0.6±1.6
Symbols	2	0.04±.028	0	-

* ($p < .05$)

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons (Smiley's)

Table 2 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons	56	1.2 ± 6.0	37	.74 ± 2.9
Icons	56	1.2 ± 6.0	36	.74 ± 2.9
Indexes	0	-	1	0.2 ± .14
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms)

Table 3 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Emoji (Pictograms)	557	11.1 ± 20.1	281	5.6 ± 14.1
Icons	253	5.1 ± 12	166	3.3 ± 12.1
Indexes	29	0.6 ± 2.1	15	0.3 ± 1.1
Symbols	275*	5.5 ± 9.9	100	2.0 ± 4.2

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Kigou (codes)

Table 4 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Kigou (Symbols)*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Kigou (codes)	264	5.2 ± 8.6	116	2.3 ± 5.06
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	0	-	0	-
Symbols	264	5.2 ± 8.6	116	2.3 ± 5.06

Phonographic data

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

Table 5 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	484*	9.7 ± 12.6	245	4.9 ± 5.7
Semantic function	475*	9.5 ± 12.5	244	4.9 ± 5.7
Pragmatic intention	9	0.18 ± 0.7	1	0.02 ± 0.14

* (*p* < .05)

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations

Table 6 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonographic laughter representation totals	6	0.1±0.8	4	0.8±0.3
Semantic function	6	0.1±0.8	4	0.1±0.8
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Logographic data

Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations

Table 7 *Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Logographic laughter representation totals	57	0.1±0.8	31	0.1±0.8
Semantic function	57	0.1±0.8	31	0.1±0.8
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Manipulation of grammatical markers: The use of multiple exclamation markers.

Table 8 *Logographic data: The use of multiple exclamation markers.*

Japanese female v male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total multiple exclamation usage	174	3.5±12.2	53	1.1±2.2
Semantic function	162	3.2±10.8	53	1.1±2.2
Pragmatic function	12	0.24±1.4	0	-

American female V American male authored blog entries

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.

Table 9 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.*

American female v male authored blog entries

	American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	5986	119.7±70.2	6242	124.8±93.3
Text based emoticons	34	0.68±1.4	9	0.18±.87
Icons	33	0.66±1.4	8	0.16±.73
Indexes	1	0.02±0.141	1	0.02±0.141
Symbols	0	-	0	0

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.

Table 10 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.*

American female v male authored blog entries

	American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons	18	0.36 ± 1.4	1	0.02 ± 0.141
Icons	17	0.34 ± 0.1.3	1	0.02 ± .0141
Indexes	1	0.02 ± 0.141	0	-
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).

Table 11 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).*

American female v male authored blog entries

	American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Emoji (Pictograms).</i>	1	0.02 ± 0.141	0	-
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	0	-	0	-
Symbols	1	0.02 ± 0.141	0	-

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Kigou (codes).

There were no counts of kigou (codes) within the American blog entry data.

Phonographic data

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

Table 12 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings*

American female v male authored blog entries

	American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	74	1.5±2.2	34	0.68±1.3
Semantic function	74	1.5±2.2	34	1.5±2.2
Pragmatic intention	0	-	0	-

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations

Table 13 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations*

American female v male authored blog entries

	American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonographic laughter representation totals	16	0.3±1.0	6	0.1±0.4
Semantic function	19	0.3±1.0	6	0.3±1.0
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Logographic data

Table 14 *Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations*

American female v male authored blog entries

	American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total logographic laughter representations	5	0.1±0.4	0	-
Semantic function	5	0.1±0.4	0	-
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Manipulation of grammatical markers: The use of multiple exclamation markers.

The table below shows the results from the logographic data that includes the unconventional use of multiple exclamation marks defined as two or more that punctuate a sentence.

Table 15 *Logographic data: The use of multiple exclamation markers.*

American female v male authored blog entries

	American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total multiple exclamation usage	23	0.46±1.2	2	0.04±0.283
Semantic function	23	0.46±1.2	2	0.04±0.283
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.

Table 16 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.*

Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	6036	120.7 ± 121.3	6242	124.8 ± 93.3
Text based emoticons	580**	11.6 ± 18.9	9	0.18 ± .87
Icons	493**	9.9 ± 17.8	8	0.16 ± .73
Indexes	85**	1.7 ± 4.9	1	0.02 ± 0.141
Symbols	2	0.04 ± .028	0	-

** (*p* < .01)

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.

Table 17 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.*

Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons	56	1.1 ± 6.1	1	0.02 ± 0.141
Icons	56	1.1 ± 6.1	1	0.02 ± .0141
Indexes	0	-	0	-
Symbols	0	-	0	-

1. Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (pictograms).

Table 18 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (pictograms).*

Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Emoji (pictograms).</i>	557*	11.1±20.1	0	-
Icons	253*	5.0±11.7	0	-
Indexes	29	0.6±2.1	0	-
Symbols	275*	5.5±9.9	0	-

* (*p* < .05)

There were no instances of *emoji* within the American men data to enable a useful statistical analysis as there was no data to compare the Japanese female data with.

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Kigou (codes)

Table 19 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Kigou (codes)*

Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>Kigou (codes)</i>	264*	5.3±8.6	0	-
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	0	-	0	-
Symbols	264*	5.3±8.6	0	-

* ($p < .05$)

As with the *emoji* data there were no instances of *emoji* within the American men data to enable a useful statistical analysis as there was no data to compare the Japanese female data with.

Phonographic data

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

The table below shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional phonetic spellings.

Table 20 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings*
Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	484**	9.7 ± 12.6	34	0.68 ± 1.3
Semantic function	475**	9.5 ± 12.5	34	1.5 ± 2.2
Pragmatic function	9	0.18 ± 0.7	0	-

** (*p* < .01)

Japanese women used unconventional phonetic spelling far more significantly than American male blog writers (*p*<0.01). The pragmatic function data was overall too low, with only 9 instances within the Japanese data and none within the American data to analyze.

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations

The table below shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional laughter representations.

Table 21 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations*
Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total phonetic laughter representations	6	0.1±0.8	6	0.1±0.4
Semantic function	6	0.1±0.8	6	0.1±0.4
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Logographic data

Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations

Table 22 *Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations*

Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total logographic laughter representations	57	1.1±2.3	0	-
Semantic function	57	1.1±2.3	0	-
Pragmatic function	0		0	

Manipulation of grammatical markers: The use of multiple exclamation markers.

Table 23 *The use of multiple exclamation markers.*

Japanese female v American male authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total multiple exclamation usage	174	3.5±12.2	2	0.04±0.283
Semantic function	162	3.2±10.8	2	0.04±0.283
Pragmatic function	12	0.24±1.4	0	-

Japanese female V American female authored blog entries

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.

Table 24 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.*

Japanese female v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	6036	120.7±121.3	5986	119.7±70.2
Text based emoticons	580**	11.6±18.9	34	0.68±1.4
Icons	493**	9.9±17.8	33	0.66±1.4
Indexes	85*	1.7±4.9	1	0.02±0.141
Symbols	2	0.04±.028	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.

Table 25 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.*

Japanese female v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons	56	1.1±6.0	18	0.36±1.4
Icons	56	1.1±6.0	17	0.34±0.1.3
Indexes	0	-	1	0.02±0.141
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).

Table 26 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).*

Japanese female v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Emoji (Pictograms)	557	11.1±20.1	1	0.02±0.141
Icons	253	5.0±11.7	0	-
Indexes	29	0.6±2.1	0	-
Symbols	275	5.5±9.9	1	0.02±0.141

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: kigou (codes)

Table 27 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: kigou (codes)*

Japanese female v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
kigou (codes)	264	5.3±8.6	0	-
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	0	-	0	-
Symbols	264	5.3±8.6	0	-

Phonographic data

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

Table 28 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings*

Japanese female v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	484**	9.7 ± 12.6	74	1.5 ± 2.2
Semantic function	475**	9.5 ± 12.5	74	1.5 ± 2.2
Pragmatic function	9	0.18 ± 0.7	0	-

** (*p* < .01)

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations

The table below shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional laughter representations.

Table 29 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations
Japanese female v American female authored blog entries*

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonographic laughter representation totals	6	0.1±0.8	19	0.3±1.0
Semantic function	6	0.1±0.8	19	0.3±1.0
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Logographic data

Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations

Table 30 *Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations
Japanese female v American female authored blog entries*

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total logographic laughter representations	57	1.1 ± 2.3	0	-
Semantic function	57	1.1 ± 2.3	0	-
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Manipulation of grammatical markers: The use of multiple exclamation markers.

Table 31 *The use of multiple exclamation markers.*

Japanese female v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total multiple exclamation usage	174*	3.5±12.2	23	0.46±1.2
Semantic function	162*	3.2±10.8	23	0.46±1.2
Pragmatic function	12	0.24±1.4	0	-

* ($p < .05$)

Japanese male V American female authored blog entries

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.

Table 32 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	4473	89.5±56.8	5986*	119.7±70.2
Text based emoticons	369**	7.4±14.2	34	0.68±1.4
Icons	341**	6.8±13.7	33	0.66±1.4
Indexes	28	0.6±1.6	1	0.02±0.141
Symbols	0	-	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.

Table 33 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons	37	0.74 ± 2.9	18	0.36 ± 1.4
Icons	36	0.74 ± 2.9	17	0.34 ± 0.1.3
Indexes	1	0.2 ± .14	1	0.02 ± 0.141
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).

Table 34 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Emoji (Pictograms)	281	5.6±14.1	1	0.02±0.141
Icons	166	3.3±12.1	0	-
Indexes	15	0.3±1.1	0	-
Symbols	100	2.0±4.2	1	0.02±0.141

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: kigou (codes)

Table 35 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: kigou (codes)*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
kigou (codes)	116	2.3±5.06	0	-
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	0	-	0	-
Symbols	116	2.3±5.06	0	-

Phonographic data

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

Table 36 Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	245**	4.9±5.7	74	1.5±2.2
Semantic function	244**	4.9±5.7	74	1.5±2.2
Pragmatic function	1	0.02±0.14	0	-

** (*p*<.01)

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations

Table 36 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations
Japanese male v American female authored blog entries*

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonographic laughter representation totals	4	0.8±0.3	19	0.3±1.0
Semantic function	4	0.1±0.8	19	0.3±1.0
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Logographic data

Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations

Table 37 *Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations
Japanese male v American female authored blog entries*

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American female authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total logographic laughter representations	31	0.1±0.8	0	-
Semantic function	31	0.1±0.8	0	-
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Manipulation of grammatical markers: The use of multiple exclamation markers.

Table 38 *The use of multiple exclamation markers.*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (n=50)		American female authored blog entries (n=50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total multiple exclamation usage	53	1.1±2.2	23	0.46±1.2
Semantic function	53	1.1±2.2	23	0.46±1.2
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Japanese male V American male authored blog entries

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.

Table 39 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Text based emoticons.*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (n=50)		American male authored blog entries (n=50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	4473	89.5±56.8	6242	124.8±93.3
Text based emoticons	369**	7.4±14.2	9	0.18±.87
Icons	341**	6.8±13.7	8	0.16±.73
Indexes	28	0.6±1.6	1	0.02±0.141
Symbols	0	-	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.

Table 40 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Graphic based emoticons.*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (n=50)		American male authored blog entries (n=50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Graphic based emoticons	37	0.74±2.9	1	0.02±0.141
Icons	36	0.74±2.9	1	0.02±.0141
Indexes	1	0.2±.14	0	-
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).

Table 41 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: Emoji (Pictograms).*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (n=50)		American male authored blog entries (n=50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Emoji (Pictograms)	281	5.6±14.1	0	0.02±0.141
Icons	166	3.3±12.1	0	-
Indexes	15	0.3±1.1	0	-
Symbols	100	2.0±4.2	0	-

Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: kigou (codes)

Table 42 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic data: kigou (codes)*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
<i>kigou (codes)</i>	116	2.3±5.06	0	-
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	0	-	0	-
Symbols	116	2.3±5.06	0	-

Phonographic data

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings

The table below shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional phonetic spellings.

Table 43 *Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic spellings*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	245**	4.9±5.7	34	0.68±1.3
Semantic function	244**	4.9±5.7	34	1.5±2.2
Pragmatic function	1	0.02±0.14	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Phonographic data: Unconventional phonetic laughter representations

The table below shows the results from the phonographic data consisting of the unconventional laughter representations.

Table 44 *Unconventional phonetic laughter representations*

Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Phonographic laughter representation totals	4	0.8±0.3	6	0.1±0.4
Semantic function	4	0.1±0.8	6	0.1±0.4
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Logographic data

Logographic data: Unconventional laughter representations

The table below shows the results from the logographic data that includes laughter representations as in the Japanese ‘笑’*warau* (to laugh) and the English LOL which is an abbreviation of Laugh out loud.

Table 45 *Unconventional laughter representations*
Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total logographic laughter representations	31	0.1±0.8	0	-
Semantic function	31	0.1±0.8	0	-
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Manipulation of grammatical markers: The use of multiple exclamation markers.

Table 46 *The use of multiple exclamation markers.*
Japanese male v American female authored blog entries

	Japanese male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)		American male authored blog entries (<i>n</i> =50)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total multiple exclamation usage	53	1.1±2.2	2	0.04±0.283
Semantic function	53	1.1±2.2	2	0.04±0.283
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

Appendix C

Full tables of results for each gender pairing within the blog comment data

The Japanese male V female results and tables are listed within chapter 7 as well as the American male V female data. Within this appendix the cross language gender pairings are given of UMC frequency. Only a summary of results table is given within chapter 7 page 305. Full numerical figures and results are therefore given here.

Japanese female v American female pairing data

Table 1 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic signs*

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	20225	202.3±346.2	15201	152±335.6
Text based emoticons	4322**	43.2±93.0	717	7.1±15.8
Icons	3226**	32.3±66.6	340	3.4±7.5
Indexes	1096**	11.0±28.0	377	3.8±8.7
Symbols	0	-	0	-
Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	191	1.9±4.6	129	1.3±4.0
Icons	177	1.8±4.4	95	0.95±2.9
Indexes	14	0.14±0.51	34	0.34±1.5
Symbols	0	-	0	-
Emoji (pictograms)	266**	2.7±6.4	14	0.14±0.78
Icons	42 **	.42±2.5	0	-

Indexes	41 **	.41±1.6	0	-
Symbols	183*	1.8±4.12	14	0.14±0.78
Kigou (codes)	2305**	23.1±60.1	0	-
Kigou as Icons	0	-	0	-
Kigou as Indexes	0	-	0	-
Kigou as symbols	2305**	23.1±60.1	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 2 *Phonographic data*

	Japanese female blog comments ($n=100$)		American female blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	3221**	32.2±65.9	450	4.5±10.7
Semantic function	2831**	28.3±57.4	396	3.9±8.7
Pragmatic intention	390	3.90±9.70	54	0.54±2.4
Phonetic representations of laughter	36	.36±2.0	165*	1.7±3.6
Semantic function	36	.36±2.0	164*	1.6±3.6
Pragmatic function	0	-	1	.01±.10

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 3 *Logographic Data*

	Japanese female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American female blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Multiple exclamation mark usage	850	8.50±24.4	380	3.8±8.8
Semantic function	760	7.60±21.9	276	2.8±5.6
Pragmatic function	90	0.90±2.9	104	1.04±3.6
Logographic representations of laughter	928**	9.3±25	148	1.5±3.7
Semantic function	917**	9.2±25	148	1.5±3.7
Pragmatic function	11	.11±.42	0	-

** (*p* < .01)

Japanese male v American male pairing data

Table 4 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic signs*

	Japanese male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)		American male blog comments (<i>n</i> =100)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	5568	55.7±108.7	4519	45.2±109.9
Text based emoticons	984**	9.8±35.0	169	1.7±5.8
Icons	708**	7.1±22.9	54	0.5±1.5
Indexes	276*	2.8±12.7	115	1.2±5.2
Symbols	0	-	0	-

Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	73	0.73±4.5	50	0.50±2.1
Icons	70	0.70±4.5	36	0.36±1.7
Indexes	3	0.03±0.17	14	0.14±.056
Symbols	0	-	0	-
Emoji (pictograms)	88	1.0±6.6	0	-
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	53	0.53±5.3	0	-
Symbols	35	.35±1.6	0	-
Kigou (codes)	425**	4.3±16.0	0	-
KIgou as Icons	0	-	0	-
Kigou as Indexes	0	-	0	-
Kigou as symbols	425**	4.3±16.0	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 5 Phonographic data

	Japanese male blog comments ($n=100$)		American male blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	630**	6.3±14.8	151	1.5±6.7
Semantic function	564**	5.6±13.2	140	1.4±6.6
Pragmatic intention	66**	.66±2.81	11	0.1±0.90
Phonetic representations of laughter	0	-	102**	1.0±5.0

Semantic function	0	-	102**	9.1±24.6
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Table 6 *Logographic data*

	Japanese male blog comments ($n=100$)		American male blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Multiple exclamation mark usage	101	1.0±2.31	187	1.9±10.5
Semantic function	90	0.90±1.9	175*	1.8±10.4
Pragmatic function	11	0.11±.549	12	1.04±3.6
Logographic representations of laughter	178**	1.8±4.1	10	.1±.5
Semantic function	178**	1.8±4.1	10	.1±.5
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Japanese male v American female data pairing

Table 7 *Semiasographic extra-linguistic signs*

	Japanese male blog comments ($n=100$)		American female blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Total number of sentences	5568	55.7±108.7	15201	152±335.6
Text based emoticons	984	9.8±35.0	717	7.1±15.8

Icons	708	7.1±22.9	340	3.4±7.5
Indexes	276*	2.8±12.7	377	3.8±8.7
Symbols	0	-	0	-
Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	73	0.73±4.5	129	1.3±4.0
Icons	70	0.70±4.5	95	0.95±2.9
Indexes	3	0.03±0.17	34*	0.34±1.5
Symbols	0	-	0	-
Emoji (pictograms)	88	1.0±6.6	14	0.14±0.78
Icons	0	-	0	-
Indexes	53	0.53±5.3	0	-
Symbols	35	.35±1.6	14	0.14±0.78
Kigou (codes)	425**	4.3±16.0	0	-
Kigou as Icons	0	-	0	-
Kigou as Indexes	0	-	0	-
Kigou as symbols	425	4.3±16.0	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 8 Phonographic data

	Japanese male blog comments ($n=100$)		American female blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Unconventional phonetic spelling	630*	6.3±14.8	450	4.5±10.7
Semantic function	564*	5.6±13.2	396	3.9±8.7

Pragmatic intention	66	.66±2.81	54	0.54±2.4
Phonetic representations of laughter	0	-	165**	1.7±3.6
Semantic function	0	-	164**	1.6±3.6
Pragmatic function	0	-	1	.01±.10

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 9 Logographic Data

	Japanese male blog comments ($n=100$)		American female blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Multiple exclamation mark usage	101	1.0±2.31	380	3.8±8.8
Semantic function	90	0.90±1.9	276	2.8±5.6
Pragmatic function	11	0.11±.549	104	1.04±3.6
Logographic representations of laughter	178**	1.8±4.1	148	1.5±3.7
Semantic function	178**	1.8±4.1	148	1.5±3.7
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Japanese female v American male data pairings

Table 10 Semiasographic extra-linguistic signs

	Japanese female blog comments ($n=100$)		American male blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.

Total number of sentences	20225**	202.3±346.2	4519	45.2±109.9
Text based emoticons	4322**	43.2±93.0	169	1.7±5.8
Icons	3226**	32.3±66.6	54	0.5±1.5
Indexes	1096**	11.0±28.0	115	1.2±5.2
Symbols	0	-	0	-
Graphic based emoticons (smiley's)	191**	1.9±4.6	50	0.50±2.1
Icons	177**	1.8±4.4	36	0.36±1.7
Indexes	14	0.14±0.51	14	0.14±.056
Symbols	0	-	0	-
Emoji (pictograms)	266	2.7±6.4	0	-
Icons	42*	.42±2.5	0	-
Indexes	41*	.41±1.6	0	-
Symbols	183**	1.8±4.12	0	-
Kigou (codes)	2305**	23.1±60.1	0	-
KIgou as Icons	0	-	0	-
Kigou as Indexes	0	-	0	-
Kigou as symbols	2305**	23.1±60.1	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 11 *Phonographic Data*

Japanese female blog comments ($n=100$)		American male blog comments ($n=100$)	
Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.

Unconventional phonetic spelling	3221**	32.2±65.9	151	1.5±6.7
Semantic function	2831**	28.3±57.4	140	1.4±6.6
Pragmatic intention	390**	3.90±9.70	11	0.1±0.90
Phonetic representations of laughter	36	.36±2.0	102	1.0±5.0
Semantic function	36	.36±2.0	102	9.1±24.6
Pragmatic function	0	-	0	-

** ($p < .01$)

Table 12 *Logographic data*

	Japanese female blog comments ($n=100$)		American male blog comments ($n=100$)	
	Total	mean±S.D.	Total	mean±S.D.
Multiple exclamation mark usage	850**	8.50±24.4	187	1.9±10.5
Semantic function	760**	7.60±21.9	175	1.8±10.4
Pragmatic function	90*	0.90±2.9	12	1.04±3.6
Logographic representations of laughter	928**	9.3±25	10	.1±.5
Semantic function	917**	9.2±25	10	.1±.5
Pragmatic function	11**	.11±.42	0	-

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Appendix D

Within this appendix the cross language gender pairings are given of emoticons that were attached to comments that highlighted politeness strategies. Only a summary of results table is given within chapter 7 page 313. Full numerical figures and results are therefore given here.

Japanese female v Japanese male gender pairing data

Table 1 Overall Findings

	Japanese female comments (n=100)	Mean	SD	Japanese male comments (n=100)	Mean	SD
Emoticons index total	1100**	11.0	28.0	283	2.83	13.1
Emoticons that index PPS	827	8.3	23.0	191	2.0	8.4
Emoticons that index NPS	273	2.7	7.1	92	.92	5.0

** ($p < .01$)

Table 2 Positive Politeness Strategies

	Japanese female comments (n=100)			Japanese male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons PPS index total	827	8.3	23.0	191	2.0	8.4
Jokes	13	.13	.58	6	.06	.34
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	98	.98	2.8	36	.36	1.3
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	228	2.3	12.6	53	.53	3.2

Expressions of solidarity (<i>markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers</i>)	427	4.3	11.1	90	.90	5.1
Notice, attend to H through compliments	38	.38	.99	5	.05	.29
Other	23	.23	1.0	0	.01	.10

Table 3 Negative Politeness Strategies

	Japanese female comments (n=100)			Japanese male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons NPS index total	273	2.7	7.1	92	.92	5.0
**Minimize the imposition at the time of requests	26	.26	.62	17	.17	.67
Apologies	27	.27	.91	4	.04	.24
***Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)	183	1.83	5.5	55	.55	3.7
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	34	.34	3	15	.15	1.2
Other	3	.03	.17	1	.01	.10

****Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests** comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

***** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment is hedged.**

American female v American male gender pairing data

Table 4 Overall Findings

	American female comments (n=100)	Mean	SD	American male comments (n=100)	Mean	SD
Emoticons index total	377	3.77	8.71	115	1.15	5.2
Emoticons that index PPS	320	3.20	7.28	87	.87	3.8

Emoticons that index NPS	57	.57	1.72	28	.28	1.4
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Table 5 Positive Politeness Strategies

	American female comments (n=100)			American male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons PPS index total	320	3.20	7.28	87	.87	3.8
Jokes	49	.49	1.8	15	.15	.87
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	20	.20		5	.05	
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	25	.25	.6	15	.15	.80
Expressions of solidarity (markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	171	1.73	5.3	37	.37	1.6
Notice, attend to H through compliments	48	.48	1.3	12	.12	.64
Other	7	.07	.3	3	.03	.30

Table 6 Negative Politeness Strategies

	American female comments (n=100)			American male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons NPS index total	57	.57	1.72	28	.28	1.4
Minimize the imposition at the time of requests**	12	.12	.43	4	.04	.31
Apologies	2	.02	.14	1	.01	.10
***Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)	21	.21	.89	8	.08	.44
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	21	.21	.75	12	.12	.75
Other	1	.01	.10	3	.03	.30

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment is hedged.

Japanese female v American male gender pairing data

Table 7 Overall Findings

	Japanese female comments (n=100)	Mean	SD	American male comments (n=100)	Mean	SD
Emoticons index total	1100**	11.0	28.0	115	1.15	5.2
Emoticons that index PPS	827*	8.27	23.0	87	.87	3.8
Emoticons that index NPS	273	2.73	7.1	28	.28	1.4

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 8 Positive Politeness Strategies

	Japanese female comments (n=100)			American male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons PPS index total	827*	8.27	23.0	87	.87	3.8
Jokes	13	.13	.58	15	.15	.86
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	98	.98	2.8	5	.05	.36
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	228*	2.3	12.6	15	.15	.8
Expressions of solidarity (markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	427 *	4.3	11.1	37	.37	1.6
Notice, attend to H through compliments	38	.38	.99	12	.12	.64
Other	23	.23	1.0	3	.03	.30

* ($p < .05$)

Table 9 Negative Politeness Strategies

	Japanese female comments (n=100)			American male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons NPS index total	273	2.73	7.1	28	.28	1.4
Minimize the imposition at the time of requests**	26	.26	.62	4	.04	.31
Apologies	27	.27	.91	1	.01	.10
*** Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)	183	1.83	5.5	8	.08	.44
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	34	.34	1.23	12	.12	.8
Other	3	.03	.17	3	.03	.30

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment is hedged.

Japanese female v American female gender pairing data

Table 10 Overall Findings

	Japanese female comments (n=100)	Mean	SD	American female comments (n=100)	Mean	SD
Emoticons index total	1100**	11.0	28.00	377	3.77	8.71
Emoticons that index PPS	827*	8.27	23.0	320	3.2	7.28
Emoticons that index NPS	273	2.7	7.1	57	.57	1.7

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 11 Positive Politeness Strategies

	Japanese female comments (n=100)			American female comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons PPS index total	827**	8.27	23.0	320	3.2	7.28
Jokes	13	.13	.58	49	.49	1.71
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	98	.98	2.8	20	.20	.60
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	228**	2.3	12.5	25	.25	.59
Expressions of solidarity (markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	427*	4.3	11.1	171	17.2	5.28
Notice, attend to H through compliments	38	.38	.99	48	.48	1.3
Other	23	.23	1.0	7	.07	.3

* ($p < .05$) ** ($p < .01$)

Table 12 Negative Politeness Strategies

	Japanese female comments (n=100)			American female comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons NPS index total	273	2.7	7.1	57	.57	1.7
Minimize the imposition at the time of requests**	26	.26	.62	12	.12	.43
Apologies	27	.27	.91	2	.02	.14
***Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)	183	1.83	5.6	21	.21	.89
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	34	.34	1.23	21	.21	.756
Other	3	.03	.17	1	.01	.10

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment is hedged.

Japanese male v American female gender pairing data

Table 13 Overall Findings

	Japanese male comments (n=100)	Mean	SD	American female comments (n=100)	Mean	SD
Emoticons index total	283	2.8	13.1	377	3.77	8.73
Emoticons that index PPS	191	1.9	8.4	320	3.2	7.28
Emoticons that index NPS	92	0.92	5.0	57	.57	1.7

Table 14 Positive Politeness Strategies

	Japanese male comments (n=100)			American female comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons PPS index total	191	1.9	8.4	320	3.2	7.28
Jokes	6	.06	.34	49	.49	1.71
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	36	.36	1.3	20	.20	.60
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	53	.53	3.2	25	.25	.59
Expressions of solidarity (markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	90	.90	5.1	171	17.2	5.28
Notice, attend to H through compliments	5	.05	.29	48	.48	1.3
Other	1	.01	.10	7	.07	.3

Japanese male v American male gender pairing data

Table 15 Overall Findings

	Japanese male comments (n=100)	Mean	SD	American male comments (n=100)	Mean	SD
Emoticons index total	283*	2.8	13.1	115	1.15	5.2
Emoticons that index PPS	191	1.9	8.4	87	.87	3.8
Emoticons that index NPS	92	.92	5.0	28	.28	1.4

* ($p < .05$)

Table 16 Positive Politeness Strategies

	Japanese male comments (n=100)			American male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons PPS index total	191	1.9	8.4	87	.87	3.8
Jokes	6	.06	.15	15	.15	.86
Intensify interest to the hearer / reader at the time of Comment openings / closings	36	.36	1.3	5	.05	.36
Enhance the positive face of the addressee when Expressing gratitude / thanks towards the addressee	53	.53	3.2	15	.15	.8
Expressions of solidarity (markers of support, agreement, requests as solidarity markers)	90	.90	5.1	37	.37	1.6
Notice, attend to H through compliments	5	.05	.3	12	.12	.64
Other	0			3	.03	.30

Table 17 Negative Politeness Strategies

	Japanese male comments (n=100)			American male comments (n=100)		
	Total	Mean	SD	Total	Mean	SD
Emoticons NPS index total	92	.92	5.0	28	.28	1.4
Minimize the imposition at the time of requests **	17	.17	.67	4	.04	.31
Apologies	4	.04	.24	1	.01	.10
*** Hedging (Hedges on illocutionary force)	55	.55	3.7	8	.08	.44
Be conventionally indirect at the time of expressing one's opinion or making suggestions)	15	.15	1.21	12	.12	.75
Other	1	.01	.10	3	.03	.30

**Minimize the imposition at the time of Requests comprised of asking the reader to do something. Requests, which were very infrequent within the data, usually comprised of the blog author asking blog comment writers for more comments and support.

*** Devices used to soften assertion or illocutionary force of the comment. The forcefulness or impact of the comment is hedged.

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