Lying: Strategies to Manage Undesirable Communicative Situations in Japan and New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how Japanese and New Zealand people manage undesirable communicative situations by applying lying strategies, specifically, how they manage refusal situations by using untruthful excuses.

Lying is a communicative strategy that people sometimes adopt to manage undesirable situations in everyday conversation. However, previous studies have not focused on what types of lies are employed or how lies are delivered in such situations. In addition, the use of lies is likely to differ among different cultures and this could lead to miscommunication. Thus, it is worthwhile to conduct a cross-cultural study on this topic.

The study aims to find out, by focusing on specific situations involving refusals, what types of lies—or untruthful excuses—people use, how lies are employed between different cultural groups, and how culture influences the use of lies in conversation. For this purpose, lies used in refusal conversations—one request-refusal and two invitation-refusal conversations—were analysed within an interactional sociolinguistic framework and by drawing on interpersonal communication theory. The data consisted of role-play conversations performed by 64 pairs of friends (32 Japanese and 32 New Zealanders pairs) in Japanese and English respectively.

The following key findings emerged. First, the choice of type of lies differed between the two data sets. The Japanese participants chose lies to demonstrate an unequivocal refusal message, for example, showing strong rejection with a surfeit of reasoning in their excuses. Such lies preclude negotiation and, therefore, the likelihood of further uncertainty or conflict. In this way harmony was maintained. The New Zealand participants followed social protocols to lie, for instance, lying about a prior arrangement with a simple explanation. Negotiation subsequently took place based on the information provided in conversation.

Second, the emergent data suggested that culture influenced how lies were perceived. Japanese participants appeared to share an implicit understanding that lies are likely to be used in the refusal situation; by contrast, New Zealand

participants acted without this presumption. This interpretation follows from the finding that the Japanese often disregard the information offered in untruthful excuses. The New Zealanders however, treat untruthful excuses as a genuine source of information.

Third, Japanese and New Zealand participants tended to apply politeness strategies differently. The Japanese used strong and direct expressions in their lies. These were positive politeness strategies to show closeness to friends or in-group members. The New Zealanders tended not to differentiate between in-group and out-group members and applied similar politeness strategies to everyone.

Through a comparative analysis, the study provides new knowledge how Japanese and New Zealanders use different types of lies in a different manner to handle potentially difficult interpersonal communicative situations such as refusals. It also demonstrates that lying is the result of complex, culturally influenced processes: the use of lies is underpinned by cultural preferences and protocols in relation to cultural values, the perception of lying, and communication style. The study has made a strong emphasis on importance of understanding the rationale behind the use of lies particularly for intercultural settings.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

We often say that "honesty is the best policy". But the things people say do not always coincide with reality. This study focuses on utterances which are false, deliberately misleading, or for some reason, not reflecting the whole truth. Such utterances constitute what we commonly call a "lie". It is natural to ask: Why do people make statements of this kind? Under what circumstances are lies socially acceptable? Can misleading statements cause deep communication problems between people in different communities or cultures?

I have noticed through my experience of living in New Zealand and speaking with English speaking people here that the word "lie" in English differs from the word "*uso*" in Japanese, which is the common translation. The exclamation "That's a lie!" in English often sounds offensive, but the same is not true for the equivalent statement in Japanese "*Uso!*" One of the most famous Japanese proverbs related to lies is "lying is expedient" while the English famous saying is, as mentioned above, "honesty is the best policy". These two phrases sound contradictory. The famous Japanese proverb, in a sense, encourages using a lie for good purposes, but the English saying does not indicate this route to communicate with other people.

It seems that how speakers in Japan and New Zealand use lies differs in various ways. These differences—and issues related to them—are investigated in the present study by focusing on lies used in conversation to manage undesirable communicative situations, specifically, untruthful excuses employed to manage refusal situations.

1.1 Research objectives

The central aim of the present study is to shed light on the multiplicity of misunderstandings and difficulties relating to lying that can thwart communication between Japanese and New Zealand people. For this purpose, this study investigates lies used by Japanese and New Zealand people as strategies for managing interpersonal communication in undesirable situations. Specifically, lies used in refusal conversations—untruthful excuses for refusals—are analysed.

I choose to study the communicative context of refusals to examine how people use a lie in undesirable communicative situations. For example, people might use a lie in order to excuse themselves from a request or an invitation that they do not wish to meet. This investigation focuses on what lies Japanese and New Zealand people tell, how they organise lies in refusal conversations and why they tell lies in the way they do. These untruthful excuses provide insights into how lies can be constructed to achieve particular communication goals. Comparing data from the two cultures, through this study I intend to reveal the similarities and differences between Japanese and New Zealand speakers. This study also aims to establish what people should consider when they communicate with a person who has a different cultural background, and to understand important aspects for smoother and more fruitful conversation between Japanese and New Zealand speakers.

Therefore, the research objectives of this study are to:

1. examine lies used in refusal conversations provided by Japanese and New Zealand people,
2. explore how similar or different the use of lies is between those two culturally different groups of people, and
3. identify the cultural influences underpinning the ways Japanese and New Zealand people lie in specific undesirable communicative situations.

1.2 Importance of the research

This study is important in several respects.

First, in terms of the importance of lying in our lives. Guerin (2001) has noted that there are many communicative and behavioural strategies for avoiding negative consequences in everyday social life, including veils, anonymity, disguise, covering-up, keeping a poker-face, ambiguity in talk and action, and hiding in large groups. Lying is another method of fundamental social avoidance and the approach adopted in this study explores some of the strategies underpinning the lie in everyday life.

Second, this study is important from a perspective of cross-cultural studies. Although studies relating to lying have involved fields as diverse as philosophy (e.g., Bok, 1978; Kameyama, 1997), linguistics (e.g., Bolinger, 1973; Coleman & Kay, 1981), and psychology (e.g., DePaulo, Kashy, Kirkendol, Wyer, & Epstein, 1996; Lewis & Saarni, 1993), comparatively few studies have contrasted data from different cultures (Kim, 2002).

For example, Yoshimura (1995) and Nishimura (1997, 2005) carried out studies involving Japanese and English speakers' lies. The findings of these three studies indicated that the definition of *lie* was different between them. Nishimura's (2005) data also showed that Japanese and New Zealanders might have different thoughts on lies; for example, Japanese people seemed to be more accepting of lies than New Zealand people.

The above three studies, Yoshimura (1995) and Nishimura (1997, 2005), demonstrated that there was a difference in the attitude to lies between Japanese and English speakers. However, to my knowledge, only Yoshimura (1995) and Nishimura (1997, 2005) have compared Japanese and English speakers and more studies are necessary to understand lies, in particular, the use of lies. Moreover, very little research has examined, for instance, how lies are used in everyday interpersonal conversations and how they may be applied differently in different cultures. This study intends to clarify both these aspects of lying by conducting a comparative study of the lying strategies that Japanese and New Zealand people use in interpersonal communication in the context of refusing a request or an invitation.

Cross-cultural studies are even more significant to our communication than ever. Tokui (2011) described that people now move across the world and communicative issues related to people with different cultural backgrounds have become our everyday matters and emphasised the importance of cross-cultural communication (p. 78). The present study aims to shed light on the cross-cultural aspects of lying in conversation, and fill in the gap left that previous studies of lying have neglected.

Third, this study is also important in regard to the field of studies of refusals; little research has been done on excuses used in refusal conversations. I choose refusals as a context where people may use lies to manage such situations. Many studies have been conducted on refusals (e.g., Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990; Ikoma & Shimura, 1993; Nelson, Carson, Batal, & Bakary, 2002). However, excuses were treated as a strategy used in refusals, and the details, such as what people would or should mention in their excuses, have been little investigated. Previous studies which addressed excuses revealed whether or not excuses were used, when excuses were used, with what other strategies they were used and so on. A study of refusals which focuses on excuses should make a significant contribution to understanding of the use of excuses as well and this is what the present study will do.

1.3 Research rationale

Lying is one of the important linguistic exercises in our everyday social life, and thus, a worthwhile research subject. People use lying from time to time as a communication strategy to deal with interpersonal communication issues. The significance of lying in our everyday life has been emphasised by Ekman (1985):

> I have come to believe that examining how and when people lie and tell the truth can help in understanding many human relationships. . . . Lying is such a central characteristic of life that better understanding of it is relevant to almost all human affairs. (p. 23)

To use lies successfully, people have to know how to lie, when they should lie and what sorts of lies they should tell in a given context. These communicative

aspects relating to the use of lies are worthy of investigation because of their importance in our everyday life.

When it comes to language use, people with different cultural backgrounds often communicate differently (Thomas, 1983; Tannen, 2007). The use of lies is no exception. As a Japanese person living in New Zealand, I occasionally face situations that puzzle me, especially concerning the cultural issues of lying. Because of the importance of these two issues mentioned here—lying in everyday life and cultural differences in language use—I decided to study the use of lies from a cross-cultural perspective.

Here is an example I experienced as a non-native English speaker in an English speaking country, New Zealand. People may suggest a social gathering sometime in the next week but fail to follow up the suggestion. I seem to be the only person who regrets this situation. As another example, I sometimes give an untruthful excuse when I confront an awkward situation such as declining an invitation or request. My excuse often does not work as I anticipated and I consequently receive an unexpected response. Then I have to deal with the inviter or the requester in my confused state of mind.

I consider another example of how different people may react to a lie as I believe this shows the different perception of lies among different cultures. A friend of mine, who is a New Zealander, asked me something related to one of my very personal relationships. I felt uncomfortable about providing such information and I lied to her. It was a very small thing to me, so I did not feel bad about it. Later she found out and rushed to my place to accuse me of not telling her the whole truth. She was truly upset and I was very surprised by her reaction. As a rule, Japanese people prefer not to share information about personal relationships. What I did was natural for a Japanese person, but my friend took it personally and I felt that she was branding me as a liar.

The examples mentioned above suggest that speakers in interpersonal communication might possibly lie in a range of situations to avoid, for example, obligation, embarrassment, conflict, or even prying. But the choice of lies in such situations would not necessarily coincide with the choices that people from different cultures might make.

It is quite likely that people coming from different cultures with their own ways of expression experience communication difficulties, given that they do not share the same social rules, norms, or conventions. In my own case, I probably was not aware of what types of lies are deemed acceptable in New Zealand—for instance, when people may lie for the sake of courtesy. To make sense of these and similar puzzling incidents, I wanted to examine how and why Japanese and New Zealand people lie, and to understand the differences and similarities in their communication strategies.

Although quite a few studies have dealt with lies (e.g., Blum, 2007; Bok, 1978; DePaulo et al., 1996), I have found little research on usage and development of lies in conversation. People normally have an extended verbal exchange in order to establish communication. This is the same with lying— people often build conversation by, for example, providing explanations to make the utterance of lying plausible. In other words, lying is carried out within a series of utterances and those utterances should be looked at to understand how people construct conversation with lies.

Another reason for investigating conversation is that lies could be spread out across conversation to achieve some communication goals such as to manage awkward situations. To convince other people, the speaker could continue to lie or provide background information to the lies engaging in conversation. Therefore, it is important to examine what is going on in conversation to understand how lies are told and how they function in conversation.

Equally, examination of the reactions to those utterances is important in order to understand how lies are received and the conversation works and flows in regard to lies. Researchers of interactional sociolinguistics, such as Gumperz (2001), Tannen (2007), and Schiffrin (1996), mentioned that the meaning of utterances is determined in interactions alongside other social and cultural norms. In other words, to understand the meaning of utterances in certain situations requires seeing not only those particular utterances but also the sequence of interactions related to the utterance concerned. Again, this shows the importance of examination of conversation to understand the utterances of lies. As mentioned above, there is little research about lies in conversation. This study is designed to fill this gap.

To investigate conversations containing lies, I choose a specific but ordinary situation, which is a refusal situation. People would possibly tell a lie to excuse themselves from a request and an invitation.

For example, when people are invited to a dinner party and want to decline because they do not like the inviter's place or his or her family, they avoid mentioning their real reasons for turning down the invitation. Unless the inviter is a very close friend and they feel comfortable about confiding in the inviter, people would not dare to tell the truth. In this type of situation, people may make up excuses to decline an invitation. Many people presumably face this type of awkward situation in real life.

While refusals are not the only situation in which people might lie in their everyday conversation, they are certainly part of our daily communication (Kim, et al., 1990); as such they should therefore provide a glimpse into our practice of lying.

Despite the prevalence of lies, there has been little research that examines what types of lies are often used or how lies are used in such an undesirable communicative situation. Therefore, lying used in refusal situations is a worthwhile research target.

1.4 Lies as the subject matter of research

This section briefly introduces what lies are as the subject matter of this study.

For the research aim mentioned above, I adapt for this study a working definition, specifically, an utterance or statement that evades the truth. This is because I believe that it is appropriate for this study to employ a loose yet applicable definition for most of the circumstances considered rather than seek a concrete and universal definition of *lie*. This study does not aim to provide the ultimate definition of *lie* but aims to demonstrate how people in Japan and New Zealand use lies in undesirable communicative situations; in other words, how people provide untruthful information in conversation to manage such awkward situations.

The question "What is a lie?" is not a simple one. An utterance of a false statement is probably insufficient as a definition where two or more languages

are compared. Data collected in this study, however, have one basic characteristic: they involve statements or utterances that are contrary to the truth. What must be taken into account is the intent and information content as well as the social and cultural context of the dialogue (as emphasised by Sweetser (1987) and Wierzbicka (1990)).

First, the intent and information content are definitely key factors as the content of utterances should be untrue (information content) and the speaker has to intend to present this untrue information as true information. Otherwise, sarcastic remarks, for example, would also have to be included in the category of lies and this is against our ordinary interpretation of lies.

Second, the cultural context is also important since different cultures might have different notions of "truth" and "intention". For example, Pacific communities disregard the intention of the speaker in certain types of ritualistic situations and the truth in such situations can be determined only by an authoritarian figure (Duranti, 1993). The definition of *lie* involves many issues like this example.

In what follows, I explore the definition of *lie* and *uso* which is the Japanese equivalent to *lie* given by the Oxford English Dictionary ("The Oxford English Dictionary," 1933)[1] and Kojien Japanese dictionary ("Kojien," 1991)[2] respectively. The definitions from these two dictionaries are referred to as both dictionaries have authority in their own languages. I also briefly discuss how previous linguistic researchers have argued over ways to define the term *lie*. This discussion will help lead to an operational definition of *lie* for use in the present study.

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[1] The Oxford English dictionary is a corrected re-issue of a new English dictionary with an introduction, supplement, and bibliography on historical principles published by The Clarendon Press in 1933. It is one of the most frequently used dictionaries and "it traces the usage of words through 3 million quotations from a wide range of international English language sources, from classic literature and specialist periodicals to film scripts and cookery books" (Oxford University Press; see http://www.oed.com/public/about).

[2] Kojien dictionary was published by Iwanami Shoten originally in 1955. The publisher has revised the dictionary six times since the original publication. Kojien is one of the most frequently used Japanese dictionaries and more than 11 million copies have been sold so far (Iwanami Shoten; see http://www.iwanami.co.jp/kojien/).

1.4.1 The definition by the Oxford English Dictionary

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (1933) defines *lie* as:

> An act or instance of lying; a false statement made with intent to deceive; a criminal falsehood (Vol. 6, p. 251)

In most instances, this definition closely coincides with most people's conception of a lie. However, it is important to ask what key issues can be extracted from this definition. The first part "an act or instance of lying" is not considered here as this is a tautological explanation: this definition is made to explain the word *lie* and the term "lying" is used in it. The rest of the definition above shows four salient elements namely, "falsehood", "statement", "intent to deceive" and "criminality". I examine these four elements below.

"Falsehood" is something not coinciding with the truth. The OED defines *false* as "contrary to what is true, erroneous". When people say that somebody is lying, this means the content of the utterance incorporates something that is not true. It must be recognised however, that people could possibly present a wrong message by delivering true information as the following example by Meibauer (2005) illustrates.

One of Meibauer's examples was a statement: "Mr X did not drink today". When Mr X did not drink on that day, this is a truth-telling statement. However, if the whole truth is that Mr X has never drunk even once and this statement is given, the implication of this statement would be different. Under normal circumstances, the statement implies that Mr X did not drink on ONLY THAT DAY, but he did on some other days. This case requires careful consideration to determine whether or not it can be called a lie although the intent behind the statement is clearly to "deceive" or "mislead". People can also give a wrong message by not saying anything. This act cannot be described as a lie because they did not utter anything. In this respect, "statement" is a crucial element in the definition given by the OED.

The third element of the OED's definition concerns the use of the word "deceive" as the intention of *lie*. The word "deceive" has a negative connotation and because of its nature careful consideration is necessary when using the word

"deceive". The OED defines "deceive" as "to ensnare; to take unawares by craft or guile; to overcome, overreach, or get the better of by trickery; to beguile or betray into mischief or sin; to mislead". This is followed by "to cause to believe what is false; to mislead as to a matter of fact, lead into error, impose upon, delude, and take in". So if intention to deceive were a required component, *lie* would always be associated with a malicious utterance. To see if this is the case, it is useful to consider the findings of previous research in this area.

A related point is whether the intention of the lie has to be evil, malicious, or somehow against the society as the word "criminal" implies.

1.4.2 The definition by Kojien Dictionary

Kojien dictionary (1991) defines *lie* as:

Things which are not true or its language; falsehood (p. 226)

The Japanese definition looks much simpler than that of English. I checked another Japanese dictionary and found mention of untruthfulness or nonfactualness. I found no mention of intention in either definition ("Kadokawa kokugo dai jiten," 1982, p. 193). In Japanese, the speaker's intention seems not to matter as part of the definition of *uso*. The definition found in Japanese dictionaries indicates an apparent difference between Japanese and English in terms of the meaning of *lie*. This difference could possibly affect people's attitude towards the use of lies. I do not go into further discussion on the definition of *lie* here as the next chapter will give a thorough review of the literature related to this issue.

1.4.3 The definition of *lie* from previous studies

To consider the definition of *lie*, two linguistics approaches—prototype semantics and cognitive semantics—will be examined in the literature review of Chapter Two. However, these approaches are worth mentioning here briefly because they provide useful perspectives to consider the definition of *lie*.

Research based on prototype semantics is typified by the study of Coleman and Kay (1981). They listed three characteristic elements of *lie*: factual truth, speaker's belief, and speaker's deceptive intention. They then investigated which element is deemed most important in American English. However, Yoshimura (1995) and Nishimura (1997) used the same method as Coleman and Kay, and found differences between English and Japanese. In American English, the element related to the speaker's belief (the speaker believes what he or she is telling is not true) is the core of the meaning of *lie*, but in Japanese, the element related to the factual truth, namely what the speaker is telling is not true, is the most important element of *lie*. The only possible explanation for the difference is that it reflects some cultural differences between them. If such differences really derive from different cultural norms, a culturally independent definition of *lie* may not be possible.

The cognitive semantics approach provides a second avenue for research. Sweetser (1987) and Lakoff (1987), both well-known cognitive linguists, treated the research question—what does the word *lie* mean?—by assuming that, when people talk, certain assumptions always exist underneath. An important point from this approach for the present study is that such assumptions underpinning communication play a key role in defining *lie*. To clarify what these "assumptions" mean, I consider below a phrase from our everyday greetings: "I'm fine."

The phrase "I'm fine" is a common response to a routine greeting. People often utter this phrase even when they are not actually fine. There is no expectation of valuable information being exchanged—the exchange of greetings is more ritualistic than informative, and having the exchange is more important than what information people actually exchange in a greeting situation. Therefore, "I'm fine" may not represent a lie. In this sense a lie depends on the cognitive and the social circumstances of the speaker and hearer, and the social context needs to be included in defining *lie*.

In summary, there may be cultural differences in the notion of *lie*, and these differences may emerge in intercultural communication between Japanese and New Zealand people. Therefore, a definition of *lie* that is culture general

cannot be provided at this stage without thorough investigation. I take up this discussion in the next chapter—the literature review.

1.5 Scope of the study

To understand lies in conversation, I take refusal conversations as a research situation for this study and examine lies used in the refusal of a request or invitation. These contextual conversations provide insights as to how people use lies in interpersonal communicative situations in Japan and New Zealand. Therefore, I define this study as a cross-cultural study of lying used in specific interpersonal communicative situations.

The particular interest of the present study is in the practice of lying by individuals who engage in interpersonal communication, and thus, who are operating within the cultural and social norms of everyday life. I am not, for example, concerned with "institutional lying" such as may be undertaken by a large organisation or a government for political or economic expediency. I am interested in lies as social verbal exercises as practised among adults. Therefore, this study is not concerned with the capacity of children to tell a lie or with the non-verbal aspect of lies. Since I am Japanese and live in New Zealand, my research interest focuses on lying by individuals within the norms of Japanese and New Zealand societies. By using such specific data, the outcomes provide, I believe, useful perspectives that may be applied to other cross-cultural communication studies.

1.6 Organisation of this thesis

The study of lying used as strategies in undesirable communicative situations in this thesis unfolds over the forthcoming six chapters in the following way.

In Chapter Two, I discuss literature related to the research topic and describe the background to the present study. Chapter Two examines three important issues related to this study—lies, refusals, and interpersonal cross-cultural communication. These three issues need to be examined because the

present study is about lies used in refusals and data analysis from cross-cultural perspectives is carried out.

In Chapter Three, the research design is detailed. I explain the theoretical frameworks underpinning the methods used to collect and analyse the data. I also detail the methodology and the methods which I have taken for this study.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six present and discuss how Japanese and New Zealand people used lies to manage undesirable communicative situations such as refusals. These three chapters present the findings from the analysis of refusal conversational data of three different settings. These chapters provide discussion based on the findings and answer the research questions of this study. All of the data were organised in refusal settings but the details of each setting vary. In each of these three "findings" chapters, I first analyse excuses which people used to refuse a request or an invitation, and second, examine how those excuses were responded to by the requesters and inviters. Considering any other relevant findings from the conversational data, I provide discussion and interpretation of the data in terms of the use of lies. Specifically, Chapter Four analyses lying in the situation where people decline a request from their friend; Chapter Five presents the use of lies people use to turn down a casual invitation received from their friend; and Chapter Six demonstrates how people lie in refusing to go to a party organised by their friend.

Finally, in Chapter Seven, I briefly review the study and then summarise the major findings. I also present the conclusions and implications and suggest areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review the literature related to this study, namely literature about lies, refusals, and interpersonal cross-cultural communication. When I review literature related to lies, I also refer to studies of deception. "Deception" is not equivalent to "lying" but is nevertheless related as lying provides a key avenue for deceiving people (Buller & Burgoon, 1994).

The first three sections all involve lies: the reality of lies, the definition of lies, and the cultural aspects of lies. In section 2.1, I focus on studies of lies which are told in daily life. Section 2.2 examines what is meant by lying. Several definitions of *lie* are reviewed and elements which motivate these definitions are discussed. Section 2.3 explores the motivation and acceptability of lying as described in previous studies that have adopted cross-cultural perspectives.

In section 2.4, I review literature about refusals: I study what refusals are and what previous studies have already revealed about refusals in terms of the research objectives of this study. As explained in the previous chapter, refusals provide a context of undesirable communicative situations where lies might be used.

Finally, in section 2.5 interpersonal communication related to cross-cultural issues is addressed. Cross-cultural studies are significant as they are concerned with the similarities and differences between the two cultures (Schiffrin, 1994). As one of the research objectives is to reveal similarities and differences between Japanese and New Zealanders' lies, the relevant literature is reviewed in section 2.5.

While many scholars in the United States have investigated lying, there is comparatively little research on the topic in the New Zealand context. Therefore, I draw on the studies from the United States, as well as from other English speaking contexts, in an attempt to characterise lies told in English (see for example, Aune

& Waters, 1994). There are some Japanese studies of lying by Japanese scholars although some of them are not necessarily strongly relevant to this study; e.g., some studies are about the detection of lying, which is not the focus of this study (Hira, Nakayama, Kiriu, & Adachi, 2000). Relevant Japanese studies of lying are referred to in this chapter.

2.1 The reality of lies in our everyday life

In this section, the kinds of lies people tell from day to day are illustrated and their general features are analysed. Knowing the reality of lies is important to the present study as the research interest here is about the ordinary practice of lying in our daily conversation.

Data about lies have been collected and statistically analysed in previous studies. In these studies, the findings have been summarised to illustrate general trends, which I present in this section (Camden, Motley, & Wilson, 1984; DePaulo et al., 1996; Kashy & DePaulo, 1996; Metts, 1989; Murai, 2000; Nishimura, 2005; Shibuya & Shibuya, 1993; Turner, Edgley, & Olmstead, 1975). The data analysed in these studies were typically second-hand data from informants: descriptions of lies that the informants gave about their real experiences of lies, that is self-reports of lies from liars and the recipients of lies.

Descriptions rather than firsthand data of lying have tended to be the focus of analysis in previous studies because it is almost impossible to capture lies told in ordinary situations. This is due to the nature of lying: people normally tell a lie in order not to reveal something and they strive to conceal their lying. The closest possible way to capture real lies is to ask people to describe their own experience of lying, an approach taken by some researchers as mentioned above.

In this section, I outline the findings from previous studies that investigated the reality of lies. Those studies examined, for example, how prevalent lies in our life are and the extent to which they are exposed. The studies also examined the motivations for lying and what people often lie about.

2.1.1 The prevalence of lies

We all know from our own experience that "lies are everywhere" (Barnes, 1994, p. 1) and that lies are "a central characteristic of life" (Ekman, 1985, p. 23). Turner et al. (1975) gathered a verbatim record of conversations at social encounters from 130 American informants and examined the cases which "showed some form of information control" (p. 72). "Information control" here means "a verbal expression which restricts and/or distorts communication to the audience and is understood as an actor's saying something other than what he would have said if, in his judgement, he had been completely honest" (Turner et al., 1975, p. 70). For example, one of the verbatim records that Turner et al. collected was somebody saying "You are really doing a nice job of sewing up the pants" while the speaker actually felt the sewing was "sloppy and messy" (pp. 73-74). Thus, controlled information that Turner et al. investigated is relevant to the research topic of the present study.

Turner et al. reported that 61.5 % of their data, which represented 870 cases, was actually controlled information. DePaulo et al. (1996) also investigated the reality of lying at social encounters. By gaining the cooperation of 147 American informants, they obtained a week-long journal of their social interactions and collected 1,535 cases of lies. "Social interaction" here means "any exchange between you [the informant] and another person that lasts 10 min or more . . . in which the behaviour of one person is in response to the behaviour of another person" (DePaulo et al., 1996, p. 981). DePaulo et al. reported from the statistical analysis of these data that on average men lied around 1.5 times and women lied around 2 times per day. Murai (2000) also carried out an investigation with 24 Japanese informants employing the data-collection method used by DePaulo et al. Murai's (2000) report was very short and did not give many details but claimed that similar findings to those of DePaulo et al. (1996) were found. All of the studies mentioned here indicated that lies are indeed prevalent in our life.

2.1.2 Unnoticeable lies

Although people seem to lie every day, most lies are not detected. DePaulo et al. (1996) and Murai (2000) reported that informants encountered others lying only once every three days. This finding means "we live without noticing most lies being told" (Murai, 2000, p. 57) since the same informants reported that they themselves lied between 1.5 and 2 times per day an average. The inference must be that most lies remain unnoticed. Combined with some other findings from the studies, this result could be interpreted as the outcome from the subtlety of day-to-day lies in social interactions or the involvement with the speakers' feelings and self-image (DePaulo et al., 1996). In day-to-day situations hearers may not easily detect whether or not people are telling the truth about their own feelings or thoughts about themselves.

2.1.3 Noticeable lies

Many lies are not noticed but some of them are noticed (DePaulo et al., 1996; Murai, 2000). Focusing on linguistic features and the speakers' personality, Knapp, Hart, and Dennis (1974) investigated how people detect lies. They did not find any significant relation between personality and the way people lie, but some significant features were exhibited, which are "uncertainty, vagueness, nervousness, reticence, dependence, and unpleasantness" (p. 15). Murai and Tsuruoka (2004) used data drawn from Japanese people's description of lies and reported that their informants tended to think that an utterance was a lie when it was lacking probability, seriousness or humour. On the other hand, when the participants found the utterance humorous, they would decide not to take it seriously and not think of it as a lie: instead, they would consider it a joke.

2.1.4 Self-centred lies

Many studies reported that most speakers' lies were self-centred ones; that is, they are told for the speakers' own benefit such as "Lady on phone asked if a number was my current phone number, I said yes when in fact it isn't. I want to make it

hard for her to find me; they are after me for money" (DePaulo et al., 1996, p. 983).

DePaulo et al. (1996) reported that around half of their data of lies were within the category of self-centred lies. The second study showed that three quarters of the data was self-centred lies (Camden et al., 1984). Although the proportion of lies differed between these two studies, the notable aspect here is the high proportion of self-centred lies.

The difference in the proportion may have been due to different data collection techniques. For example, DePaulo et al. (1996) asked the informants to record all social interactions for a week-long period and then extracted lies from those submitted records. On the other hand, Camden et al. (1984) asked their informants to keep a record of lies only. The definition of lies, discussed later in this chapter, is often thought to be linked with speakers' self-centred intentions. Therefore, the informants in Camden et al.'s study might subconsciously have recorded self-centred lies more often than non-self centred lies, whereas the study by DePaulo et al. (1996) gathered all sorts of social interactions as I described above. Because of the method, the informants in DePaulo et al.'s study recorded all social interaction and probably avoided the subconscious selection of recoding certain types of lies, typically self-centred lies, only.

Nonetheless, the important evidence derived from these two studies is that speakers often lie for self-centred reasons.

2.1.5 Lies about feelings and personal relationships

So far, the literature suggests that speakers lie in situations where they want to gain their own benefit. However, speakers also lie because they want to protect their own image or maintain good relationships with others.

Many examples of lies appear to indicate the importance of self in human relationships, which is consistent with the claim made by some sociologists, such as Stone and Goffman (cited in Turner et al., 1975, p. 79), who emphasised the significance of self-image to human beings. For example, to hide their own feelings, people will lie by pretending they feel more positively than they really do (DePaulo et al., 1996, pp. 985-986). Others lie to avoid interpersonal problems

or to protect themselves from possible trouble (Shibuya & Shibuya, 1993, p. 62); for instance, one of Shibuya and Shibuya's 188 informants reported that she lied to gently turn down an invitation to a party. Turner et al. (1975) also reported that these types of lies—lies to save face and to maintain the speaker's relationships with others—occupied one third of their data. Turner et al. concluded that their findings resulted from the importance of self in human relationships (p. 79). These face-saving and relationship-maintenance types of lies are used in close relationships, for example, engaged or married couples as well (Metts, 1987).

These studies suggest that people are concerned about their self-image and personal relationships with others and these aspects often motivated them to tell a lie, such as people lying to protect themselves "from embarrassment, loss of face, or looking bad . . . from worry, conflict, or other unpleasantness" (DePaulo et al., 1996, p. 983).

2.1.6 The acceptability of lies

Although lies are prevalent and people lie daily, this does not always mean people accept lying. Some studies suggest that the decision regarding their acceptability seems to be based on the type of lie (e.g., Bok, 1978; Lindskold & Walters, 1983; Shibuya & Shibuya, 1993). For example, self-centred lies, such as a lie to bring the speaker some benefits while, at the same time, causing other people a loss, and harmful lies, such as lies told to slander others, are not easily accepted.

Lindskold and Walters (1983) carried out a questionnaire survey on the acceptability of lying by asking their 135 American informants to rate situations given on an 11-point scale. The results suggested that "self-centred" and "harming-others" types of lies were least permissible. "Saving-others" types of lies, ones which were altruistic, were predictably most permissible. However, the overall results did not indicate that they were strongly permissible. This conclusion was derived from the finding that those lies did not always receive high-permissible scores. Lindskold and Walters also found that "lying for the public good" did not seem necessarily permissible. They said: "the moderate ratings [of the saving-others type of lie] also indicated that such behaviour was morally questionable because there probably are other means to accomplish a

beneficial end" (p. 135). This result suggests that lies told for the public good are not wholly accepted.

However, the findings of Lindskold and Walters (1983) might have to be interpreted with caution as their analytical method was not always clear. The moral issue of lies, for example, was discussed in the study, but with no clear categories or guidelines to indicate how seriously different moral issues were taken or how much weight they should be given.

The moral issue is so complex. It is difficult to make clear guideline and offer overall generalised suggestions. One of the questions Lindskold and Walters used was about a lie told to terminal patients by their doctors. The respondents judged this as an un-permissible case because "it is wrong to deny a person the opportunity to live out her or his last days, doing as she or he wishes and enjoying family and friends in open acknowledgement of the facts" (Lindskold & Walters, 1983, p. 133). In contrast, many Japanese people believe it acceptable for medical doctors to withhold the truth from their terminal patients if they, the doctors, and/or the patients' family consider the truth too much for the patients to bear (Etoh, 1999).

A survey carried out by Kameyama (1997) is relevant to the issue of moral judgment. He investigated people's thoughts on lies in various circumstances. One of the findings was that more than a half of his Japanese university student informants (52.1%) considered that the case of medical doctors not telling the truth to their patients was not bad, whereas only 5.6% judged it to be bad. Kameyama (1997) had only Japanese informants and did not offer any comparison with different nations.

The findings of Kameyama (1997) are supported by the description offered by Hoshino (1997). As a medical doctor and expert in medical ethics, Hoshino explained the different attitudes between individualistic American and collectivistic Japanese people on the notion of informed consent. According to Hoshino, Americans consider the family to be a collection of individuals, each of whom has to be independent from and worthy of respect by other members. On the contrary, Japanese people share group belongingness with their family (Hoshino, 1997, pp. 124-125). Because of these cultural differences, people in the United States believe that each patient has the right to be told about his or her own

condition by a doctor regardless of the seriousness before his or her family, whereas in Japan, the patient's family is often informed first by the patient's doctor, particularly in the case of terminal illness (Hoshino, 1997, p. 108). In Japan, the decision on medication and treatment is often not made by patients alone but by or with their family as a whole.

In real life, those patients in Japan sometimes notice lies told by their doctors and/or family about their illness. Even in that situation, the patients would often go along with the line that their family and the doctors put forward since the Japanese would understand and accept the underlying motivation.

The findings from Lindskold and Walters (1983) and Kameyama (1997) did show the complexity of lying: that it is not easy to make a clear-cut hierarchy of items determining the acceptability of lying. Each lie is different and influenced by the complexity of contextual backgrounds and cultural values. This issue, the acceptability of lies, will be revisited later in section 2.5, which deals with cultural differences in lying.

2.1.7 Summary of the studies on the reality of lies

The studies discussed so far suggest that people lie from day to day and most lies are not detected. Many lies relate to people's feelings, self-image, and the need to maintain personal relationships. This finding concurs with Goffman's (1958) claim that people care about their self-image and their relationships with others.

However, the ways in which speakers deliver lies have not been examined and still needs to be investigated in order to understand how people might lie in their daily conversations. Previous studies have not shed light on the manner of delivering a lie in conversation because of their data collection techniques. Many studies employed a questionnaire technique to collect data. Some others also asked research participants to write down their own experiences of lies. These methods cannot capture the dialogue which contains lies. To explore this aspect of lying, conversations containing lies, not just descriptions of lies, have to be examined.

The next section examines the studies on the definitions of lies and considers what lies really mean to people.

2.2 The definitions of lies

In this section, I examine studies which investigated what the word *lie* means. The issues raised by the literature related to the definitions of *lie* provide clues to cultural differences underlying the lie. The studies I examine here offer perspectives on how to see the world of language and capture the meaning and then provide the definition of *lie* on their own perspectives.

People tend to define lies simply as falsehood (Coleman & Kay, 1981). But the meaning of lies in our real life is not that simple and the definition is possibly different among different cultures. Previous studies which attempted to define *lie* bring useful insights into the necessity of considering the cultural aspects of lies. The present study is a cross-cultural study comparing Japanese and New Zealand lies, thus, these studies should be useful here. This section explores several definitions of *lie*: first from the viewpoint of semantics and second, from that of pragmatics.

Semantics is important in addressing the issues of meanings of words. This section first discusses the definitions of lies from the viewpoint of semantics because semantics is "the study of meaning" (Leech, 1974, p. 1). Semantics should help us to understand what *lie* means to people in their everyday lives. Three different ways of defining *lie* via three different frameworks of semantics are reviewed in this section. These frameworks demonstrate how the meaning of *lie* is constructed. They also show that a definition of *lie*, a complex matter in itself, requires cultural factors to be considered as well.

After reviewing studies of semantics, studies on lies from the perspective of pragmatics are explored. Pragmatics defines the meaning concerning its use while semantics captures the meaning in its static state, and cut from any context or denotation in its use. The word pragmatics "generally implies a dichotomy between language per se and the use that is made of that competence by speakers and hearers" (Leech, 1974, p. 319). Pragmatics is also described as "the study of linguistic phenomena from the point of view of their usage properties and processes" (Verschueren, 1999, p. 1) or as the framework which "deals with three concepts (meaning, context, communication)" (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 191). Pragmatics is a framework for looking into the *meaning* of words and expressions

used in *communication*, taking into account a range of *context*ual information. Since this study investigates the use of lies by taking cultural aspects into account, contextual information has to be examined. Thus, pragmatics is a useful approach in this study since it aims to investigate lies in undesirable communicative situations. In fact, Leech (1974) argues that semantics and pragmatics should be treated as complementary frameworks for defining meaning in a broader context.

The focus of pragmatics is the use of language: how people speak and perceive language. For example, a university professor says "What a hard working student!" to a student who is reading a comic book. The student would not take this utterance as praise but as sarcasm. This interpretation stands because it is a professor who says this to a student and what the student was reading was a comic book. Pragmatics takes into account information such as who the speaker is, who the hearer is, and under what condition the utterance is given to reveal what the message of the utterance is. Thus, pragmatics is useful to understand what utterances *really* mean in a certain context.

2.2.1 The semantics of lies

In this section, three different kinds of semantics are used to discuss definitions of *lie*, namely classical, prototype, and cognitive semantics. These frameworks deal with the meanings of words from different perspectives. All perspectives are useful for showing that the definition of *lie* is complex and cannot be conveyed in a simple manner. They also show the limitations of semantics in considering the cultural aspects of lies.

2.2.1.1 Lies in "classical" semantics

This section discusses the key ideas of semantics, especially as they relate to the definition and meaning of *lie*. First, the general idea of semantics, which Cruse (1990) calls classical semantics, is introduced, the way this discipline defines the word *lie* is presented, and the limitations of the approach are described. This discussion serves as a springboard for the introduction of prototype and cognitive

semantics afterwards. Together, all three approaches shed light on the limitations of a dictionary definition of *lie*.

As mentioned previously, the simplest description of semantics is that it is the study of meaning. Cruse (1990) describes this explicitly:

> Every category [of meaning] is associated with a set of membership criteria, or defining attributes, which are both necessary and sufficient. Every entry which satisfies all the criteria is a member of the category, and has the same membership status as all other members; anything which fails to satisfy any of the criteria is excluded from the category. (p. 383)

A key point here is that being both "necessary and sufficient" is a condition for the defining attributes of a word. The notion of defining meaning equates to listing all the components of each word in this framework. Classical semantics gives an absolute single definition for each word in this way. For example, Leech (1974) cited the word "wolf" as a way of discussing semantics and of defining its meaning. Leech quoted the definition from the Concise Oxford Dictionary: "Wolf: Erect-eared straight-tailed harsh-furred tawny-grey wild gregarious carnivorous quadruped allied to dog preying on sheep etc. or combining in packs to hunt larger animals" (1974, p. 206). Classical semantics requires that all the features in the description above are both necessary and sufficient. Therefore, for a certain animal to be 'wolf' it has to have all the features described, such as having that particular type of ears, that particular type of tail and so on.

Similarly, in defining *lie*, the definition that appears in a dictionary should be considered in the same way. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines the word *lie* as "an act or instance of lying; a false statement made with intent to deceive; a criminal falsehood". Following Cruse's description of the framework of classical semantics which is "defining attributes, which are both necessary and sufficient", the OED's description of *lie* is interpreted as offering several different and absolute definitions of *lie*. All look plausible: however a problem remains.

I now consider the definition of *lie* offered by the OED—"a false statement made with intent to deceive" and "a criminal falsehood"—from the perspectives of classical semantics.[3]

The definition by the OED has to be translated into one of the following two because classical semantics has the notion "necessary and sufficient". These two possible translations are either (1) only utterances which have all elements mentioned in the definition above are *lie*, OR (2) there are two types of *lie*—one of them is "a false statement made with intent to deceive" and the other one is "a criminal falsehood"— and they are different lies. Neither translation seems to work neatly.

In the former case, all lies have to have all elements, including criminality, but lies do not necessarily have to be criminal. In the latter case, there have to be two different types of lies and one type of *lie* described as "a criminal falsehood" should NOT be "a false statement made with intent to deceive". From the viewpoint of classical semantics, each definition has to be necessary and sufficient; thus, these two definitions of *lie* have to be both necessary and sufficient as well. Such a lie, "a criminal falsehood" WITHOUT intending to deceive, cannot be assumed. These two possible definitions within the framework of classical semantics can hardly be differentiated from each other; therefore, these two are inconsistent with the classical semantics framework. Leech and Cruise stated that definitions of words that appear in dictionaries were based on the perspectives of classical semantics, but the definition of *lie* offered by the OED cannot be assumed in that way.

Cruse (1990) also pointed out the difficulties with classical semantics citing the view of prototype semantics, which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter:

> First . . . for most natural categories it is impossible to draw up a set of necessary and sufficient criteria: usually what can be agreed on as necessary criteria fall well short of being sufficient. Second . . . the members of a category do not all have equal status; certain members—the prototypical members—have a privileged status. This

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[3] As mentioned before, I do not comment on a definition "an act or instance of lying" here because this is tautological description and does not actually explain much.

> privileged status is often interpreted as full membership of the category, with non-prototypical members being assigned a less than full degree of membership depending on how closely they resemble the prototypes. (p. 383)

Cruse illustrated these limitations of classical semantics regarding membership of categories using the example of BIRD. Flight, for instance, is an attribute (member) of BIRD. But despite its being unable to fly, PENGUIN belongs to a category of BIRD. This shows how the idea of "necessary and sufficient" may be too stringent when defining BIRD. PENGUIN also exemplifies the second point Cruse makes, that is, that certain features can be less important than others. PENGUIN is categorised as BIRD and this can be explained only by assuming that some features of the PENGUIN—beak and wings, for example—are more important than others—such as flight.

The idea proposed by classical semantics, which involves a meaning being made up of several attributes, is certainly useful. But classical semantics requires that word meanings consist of sets of necessary and sufficient conditions and this requirement does not serve well in the definition of *lie*. Hence, classical semantics is not suitable for this study.

2.2.1.2 Lies in prototype semantics

In prototype semantics, "things" can be defined by a list of elements or properties with which they are associated. This sounds almost identical to classical semantics, but prototype semantics lacks the criteria of "necessary and sufficient". In this section, I briefly explain the notion of prototype semantics first and then discuss a study by Coleman and Kay (1981), which defined the word *lie* from the viewpoint of prototype semantics. After this, by introducing Yoshimura's (1995) study, which followed Coleman and Kay's approach to investigating Japanese *lie*, I examine the prototype definition of *lie* in Japanese and the cross-cultural issues related to prototype semantics.

I take BIRD as an example here again to explain what prototype semantics is. The associated elements are feathers, flight, beak, song, and so on as mentioned above. Something that contains all these elements represents a prototypical member of the group. Other members that hold some of the elements,

rather than all of them, cannot be prototypical, but they are still members of the group. PENGUIN is flightless and therefore would not represent a prototypical bird, but prototype semantics still allows PENGUIN to be a member of the BIRD category. SPARROW, with feathers, flight, beak and song, would be closer to the prototype (Cruse, 1990; Yoshimura, 1995).

In regard to lies and prototype semantics, Coleman and Kay (1981) were first to employ this framework to provide the definition of the word *lie*. The following is the definition of *lie* by Coleman and Kay (1981):

> The speaker (S) asserts some proposition[4] (P) to an addressee (A):
> (1) a. P is false.
>   b. S believes P to be false.
>   c. In uttering P, S intends to deceive A. (p. 28)

In this definition, three key elements were identified: factual falsity (1)a, belief of falsity (1)b, and deceptive intention (1)c. Coleman and Kay drew on these elements and created several stories for their questionnaire survey. Each story included an utterance which could be potentially judged as a lie. Some utterances had all three elements (1)a, b, and c above; some others had only (1)a and b; and some others had (1)b and c. The research respondents, 67 American people, were asked to judge the utterances in those stories on a seven-point scale from 1 (very sure non-lie) to 7 (very sure lie). The answers from the respondents enabled Coleman and Kay to find out which element was the most important, and therefore, how respondents constructed a prototype *lie*.

I cite two stories below to show what this questionnaire was like. The first story has an utterance containing all three elements and the second story fulfils (1)c only:

> A story of (1)a, b, and c: "Moe has eaten the cake Juliet was intending to serve to company. Juliet asks Moe, 'Did you eat the cake?' Moe says, 'No.' Did Moe lie?"

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[4] "Proposition" means a particular kind of sentence, one which affirms or denies a predicate of a subject. A proposition is an entity whose truthfulness can always be determined. For example, the proposition of the sentence "Mr Tanaka is sick" is "Mr Tanaka is sick" and "Is Mr Tanaka sick?" is also "Mr Tanaka is sick". The latter sentence can be described as a sentence asking the truthfulness of the proposition "Mr Tanaka is sick" (Mouri, 1980, pp. 45, 64-65).

> A story of (1)c only: "John and Mary have recently started going together. Valentino is Mary's ex-boyfriend. One evening John asks Mary, 'Have you seen Valentino this week?' Mary answers, 'Valentino's been sick with mononucleosis for the past two weeks.' Valentino has in fact been sick with mononucleosis for the past two weeks, but it is also the case that Mary had a date with Valentino the night before. Did Mary lie?" (Coleman & Kay, 1981, p. 31)

The answer to the question, the target utterance in the first story above, is "no". This is a control question and represents "an ordinary lie" (p. 31) which contains all three elements. The utterance in the second story is a question which Coleman and Kay paid particularly attention. The proposition of Mary's utterance ('Valentino's been sick…') offered truthful information, but her utterance implies something different from the whole truth in the given context. Therefore, this represents a case of (1)c only (that is, the intention to deceive).

Coleman and Kay analysed the collected answers statistically and found that any speech that fulfilled these three elements was recognised as a prototype of *lie* and that Element (1)b was the most important component. This means, for example, that the utterance that fulfils Elements (1)a and (1)b does not represent the prototype, but is closer to it than the utterance that fulfils Element (1)a and (1)c as the former has the most important element, Element (1)b, but the latter does not.

The importance of the speaker's belief, which was (1)b, was also supported by another study. Hopper and Bell (1984) attempted to define "deception" (not "lie") using a questionnaire survey on lexical terms for deception. Hopper and Bell asked 180 American respondents to classify each word from a selection of 46 words such as "lie", "fib" and "hoax" in an attempt to discover what the core elements of deception were. They found that evaluation, detectability and premeditation were found to be important notions in making an utterance deceptive. The third element, premeditation, was similar to Coleman and Kay's (1981) (1)b component—the speaker's belief.

So far, two studies have confirmed that a speaker's recognition of falsehood, (as in (1)b above) rather than the falsehood itself, is the most important component of lies among Americans. This, however, does not apply to Japanese lies told by Japanese people. Yoshimura (1995) investigated lies in Japanese using

a translation of Coleman and Kay's question sheets. Yoshimura found that Element (1)a, which was the factual falsehood, was the most important. Yoshimura's finding coincides with the definition of *lie* in Japanese that *Kojien* dictionary provides. As cited in the previous chapter, the Japanese dictionary defines *lie* only by referring to falsehood. This result suggests a limitation of Coleman and Kay's study in that their model may not have the capacity to cover languages other than American English.

Coleman and Kay's (1981) study has two more limitations. First, Coleman and Kay's approach was deductive: they set up the three elements, and then investigated them. This approach could possibly eliminate other elements that might exist, a point which was actually acknowledged at the end of their paper.

Second, as pointed out by Yoshimura (1995) and Nishimura (1997), Element (1)c, intention to deceive, should be treated differently to achieve a more accurate definition of *lie*, perhaps in any languages. People try to make their hearers believe what they say when they lie, so they certainly have an "intention". But this interpretation might be different among different cultures.

Hardin (2010) investigated Spanish data of lies and claimed that different cultures have different values and protocols; therefore, some situations would be interpreted differently in terms of intention. She mentioned that Spanish speakers in Ecuador had convention of lying in certain situations; for example, people give inaccurate information rather than admitting they do not have information when they are asked. Native speakers in Ecuador are familiar with this type of situations and know exactly what is going on in their conversation. Thus, they do not see the speakers' deceptive intention in such situations. However, English speakers often see this type of situation as a deceptive case. In other words, this type of situations can be described as a case lacking of 1(c)—In uttering P, S intends to deceive A— from Spanish viewpoint but a case fulfilling (1)a-c from American viewpoint. Coleman and Kay's framework cannot cover this aspect.

Third, intention should also be treated with precautions for another reason; the contents of intention should also be carefully handled because the description, "*deceptive* intention" may be inaccurate. As briefly mentioned earlier, the word "deceive" usually carries negative connotations. However, people do not always lie for bad reasons: lying can be used for compassionate reasons, such as when a

medical doctor reassures people that a patient's death was painless. Further, even if someone sets out to deceive and has a negative intention in doing so, the degree of negativity must be recognised. There is, for example, a difference among telling a lie to manage interpersonal situations (as in the case of the medical doctor softening the pain for the relative of a patient), telling a lie to slander somebody, and telling a lie mischievously, just to tease.

Because of the reasons mentioned here, the aspect of intentions of lying should be looked into deeply.

In summary, the essence of prototype semantics is to view meaning as a combination of several elements, with each element having a different status depending on its importance. Prototype semantics is a useful approach when having to consider the cases of several different languages. As referred to above, studies on English and Japanese showed different findings (Yoshimura, 1995). Thus, for this particular study I use prototype semantics combined with another framework, cognitive framework (discussed next), to define *lie* for both English and Japanese speakers.

Cognitive semantics compensates for the areas not covered by prototype semantics. Cognitive semantics offers a solution to the problem highlighted by Coleman and Kay (1981), which is that there was a gap between the findings from their study and the common understanding of the word *lie*: specifically, American people believe that lies are plainly falsehoods whereas Coleman and Kay's study showed that falsehood was not the dominant element. The result from their study was that the speaker's belief on the telling falsehood was the dominant element rather than the factual falsehood itself. However, cognitive semantists such as Sweetser (1987) and Lakoff (1987) claimed that this gap could be included neatly within the framework of cognitive semantics.

2.2.1.3 Lies in cognitive semantics

The cognitive semantics perspective does not necessarily conflict with prototype semantics, but takes a different angle. Sweetser (1987) and Lakoff (1987) use a cognitive semantics perspective to comment on Coleman and Kay's (1981) analysis of the word *lie* (described above). The aim of this section is to briefly

describe the essence of the cognitive semantics framework and discuss Sweetser's (1987) and Lakoff's (1987) studies on lies.

The essential view of cognitive semantics is that our communication is based on many layers of assumptions. When people talk, certain underlying concepts always exist. These implicit assumptions form a context which is explicitly recognised in cognitive semantics. For instance, when people talk about a "bachelor", they do not think of Pope Benedict XVI because, being unable to marry, he does not fit into people's typical concept of a "bachelor". People make certain, almost subconscious, assumptions of what it means to be a bachelor based on, for example, age, a desire to marry or social expectation (Lakoff, 1987). Another example is that people normally say "I'm fine" as a response to the question, "how are you?" regardless of how they might be feeling, even if they are suffering from a terrible headache. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this routine response does not normally constitute lying as there is no expectation of valuable information being exchanged on such an occasion.

The important goal of cognitive semantics is to define meaning by taking into account the underlying sets of assumptions. Thus, a definition of meaning always requires the recognition of layers of underlying assumptions or concepts. These concepts or assumptions might sometimes sound very pedantic because they are so ordinary, but these are necessary for clarification of how people form ideas of the meaning of certain words. The assumptions required to define *lie* follow these underlying concepts:

(1) *Rule:* Try to help, not harm.
(2) Knowledge is beneficial, helpful. (*Corollary*: Misinformation is harmful.)
(3) *Rule:* Give knowledge (inform others); do not misinform.
(4) Beliefs have adequate justification.
(5) Adequately justified beliefs are knowledge (= are true).
(6) ∴ Beliefs are true (are knowledge).
(7) *Rule:* Say what you believe (since belief = knowledge); do not say what you do not believe (this = misinformation).
(Sweetser, 1987, p.47, italics in the original)

According to Sweetser, the first concept, indicated as (1) above, is "our general cooperative rule". The second concept, (2), is a belief people normally share. Both (1) and (2) are "assumed to operate in the default cases" and "together, the two

principles yield the result that giving knowledge (since it is beneficial) is part of a general goal of helping others" (p. 45). Hence (3) is built in. The next concepts, (4) and (5), are also beliefs which support (6). Finally, (7) is brought in to explain that "(6) allows us to reinterpret our helpfulness rule (3) yet again" (p. 47).

Sweetser's cognitive semantic approach defining the word *lie* is to first clarify all underlying layers of concepts related to *lie*. She then offers a very simple definition on top of those: *lie* is falsehood and it could exist only under the conditions stated above—that the information or knowledge is beneficial. In other words, any falsehood is not recognised as a lie if the above conditions do not exist.

Saying "I'm fine" while not fine is a typical example of a non-lie whose proposition is false. As we all know, people often ask how you are not because they want to know or believe the information is beneficial, but because this is a social expectation. Likewise, "I'm fine" is the expected response. People do not take the information obtained on such occasions seriously (which is that the person is "fine"). Another example is saying "you look great" when you do not believe it to be so. Again, this utterance is often delivered along with a social expectation. When a new dress does not look "great" on somebody, people will still compliment the wearer. Unless the person is a really good friend who truly wants to know how he or she looks, saying something positive in this context has no serious meaning. It is just for courtesy. The information from such contexts does not fit the conditions listed by Sweetser (1987) as it is not beneficial or helpful. Therefore, falsehood not meeting the underlying conditions required is not *lie*.

Sweetser (1987) also claims, significantly, that this framework is concerned with cultural differences. Different cultures do not necessarily handle information or knowledge in the same way. Sweetser cites the case of the Malagasy language to explain cultural differences. When Malagasy people are asked somebody's whereabouts, they generally avoid a straight answer even if they know exactly where the person is. They would typically answer "she is in the kitchen or the living room". Because Malagasy people have different ideas about information, this type of utterance does not count as a lie. Related to this example from Malagasy culture, Condon (1974) also referred to the way Mexican people pass on information. Condon said that since being friendly has a higher value than

telling the truth, Mexican people will make something up rather than admit lacking the information. Japanese culture also follows similar customs. When Japanese people have to give a negative reply to a request, they often say "I will think about it" when they have no intention of considering the matter concerned. None of these cases reflects the truth, but culturally, none of these is categorised as a lie (although they may be the case in some other cultures). To explain these forms of lying in different culture groups, the rules have to be applied differently.

Another significant claim, made by Sweetser (1987) and Lakoff (1987), has to be mentioned here. Coleman and Kay (1981) alluded to the "gap" between the results of their study and people's common thoughts about lies. That is, when Coleman and Kay asked people in the United States about lies, almost all participants answered that a lie was a false statement. This corresponds to Element (1)a "Proposition (P) is false", in their study. But, Coleman and Kay's research had argued that Element (1)b "Speaker (S) believed P to be false" was the most important element when defining a lie in American English. Sweetser came up with "an elegant way" to resolve the problem and restore Coleman and Kay's argument. This solution was the use of the Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM).

The ICM helps to account for how people see the world or how people categorise things in the world. To define something, such as *lie*, only a simple definition such as a false statement is required and this is a so-called idealized cognitive model of *lie*. But this type of simple definition does not include all possible real-world situations. To make this approach work, cognitive concepts associated with the issue concerned, which is *lie* in this case, have to be described in as much detail as possible (Croft & Cruse, 2004). Lakoff (1987) specifically explained:

> The relative importance of these conditions [the three elements Coleman and Kay set up] is a consequence of their logical relations given their ICMs. Belief follows from a lack of intent to deceive and truth follows from belief. Truth is of the least concern since it is a consequence of the other conditions. Conversely, falsity is the most informative of the conditions in the idealized model, since falsity entails both intent to deceive and lack of belief. It is thus falsity that is the defining characteristic of a lie. (p. 73)

The above conditions are examples of ICMs.[5] These concepts, rather than just defining *lie*, provide interpretive structures that "govern our everyday common sense reasoning" (Lakoff, 1987, p. 73). Lakoff believes this explanation using the ICM is more elegant than that of prototype semantics because of its generality and simplicity. Within cognitive semantics, Element (1)a "P is false" is sufficient to define *lie* because it encompasses all necessary criteria.

Although Sweetser (1987) and Lakoff (1987) claimed that the ICM could explain lies in different cultures, the model for *lie* may not be sufficiently universal. For example, the findings of Yoshimura (1995), who replicated Coleman and Kay's (1981) study with Japanese respondents, did not accord with Sweetser's claims. Yoshimura's study of Japanese lies found Element (1)a (factual falsity), as opposed to (1)b (the speaker's belief on falsity), to be the most important. Sato and Sugiyama (1994) also reported the similar findings to Yoshimura's although Sato and Sugiyama took a different research method. They recruited 64 Japanese respondents and asked them to judge whether the statements in the given situations were lies. The statements had variations in terms of objectivity of falsehood; namely, whether or not the statements contained factual falsity or the speaker's belief on falsity. They found that the respondents tended to view it as a lie if the statement was objectively false. For Yoshimura's and Sato and Sugiyama's findings to fit into Sweetser's classification, the entire interpretive structure must be inverted to allow Element (1)a to assume the dominant role. It is unlikely that Sweetser expected this type of radical modification to be necessary.

Another problem is that the ICM is not sufficient to explain some types of lies. Utterances, called *ostensible lies* (Isaacs & Clark, 1990; Walton, 1998), are somewhat similar to "I'm fine" or "you look great", but cannot be well explained by the ICM. An invitation sent only for the sake of courtesy is an example of this kind of lie, for instance, an invitation sent from a young man to his girlfriend to go

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[5] This example has a plural -s after ICM. This is because the meaning of a word sometimes consists of several concepts and several idealized cognitive models are required. For example, the meaning of "bachelor", as mentioned earlier, requires models of ADULT, UNMARRIED, and MALE to be defined within the framework of cognitive semantics. Therefore, it has to have ICM**s** in this case.

to a football match with a group of his male friends (Isaacs & Clark, 1990). From the contextual information, it is obvious to the girlfriend that her boyfriend is not necessarily keen on having her with him. This case is not as obvious as "I'm fine" as it is not so ritually or regularly exercised. The weight that the invitation carries is also heavier than the case of "I'm fine" and it is not part of a meaningless exchange. The invitation itself is genuine, but its intention is not genuine. In reality, the intention is sometimes even obvious to the recipient of the invitation. Hence Issacs and Clark call this type of lie an ostensible lie.

Ostensible lies can be determined only within individual contextual information. This differs from phrases like "I'm fine", a case of phatic communion (Malinowski, 1956). Phatic communion is "a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words… language does not function as a means of transmission of thought" (p. 315). The social verbal exchange including "I'm fine" is carried out to "establish bonds of personal union between people brought together" (p. 316); thus, "I'm fine" is not normally counted as a lie. However, ostensible lies are a kind of *lies*—unlike "I'm fine"; the information of ostensible lies counts. The ICM does not have capacity to distinguish such lies.

In summary, cognitive semantics and the attendant notion of the ICM do not seem to work in all cases to explain cultural (and even individual) differences such as differences seen between Japanese and English. But cognitive semantics clearly raises an important issue in relation to cultural differences on lies, which is that circumstances where utterances occur play a key role in communication. A lie depends on the cognition of the situation (e.g., whether or not people are in the situation where only the truth is expected), and on the status of the speaker and hearer (e.g., communication between a medical doctor and his or her patient). Thus, the social context needs to be part of any definition of *lie*. This awareness is a significant contribution from the cognitive semantics framework.

2.2.1.4 Summary of semantics of lies

Three different frameworks of semantics have been reviewed. All of them include the notion that a meaning often consists of not just one but several features. However, they do offer different perspectives in terms of a way to grasp the relationships among the features. The following diagrams represent each framework discussed above.

Figure 1 Diagrams of the three semantics frameworks

A	B	C
Classical semantics	**Prototype semantics**	**Cognitive semantics**

a, b, and c: elements consisting of meaning.
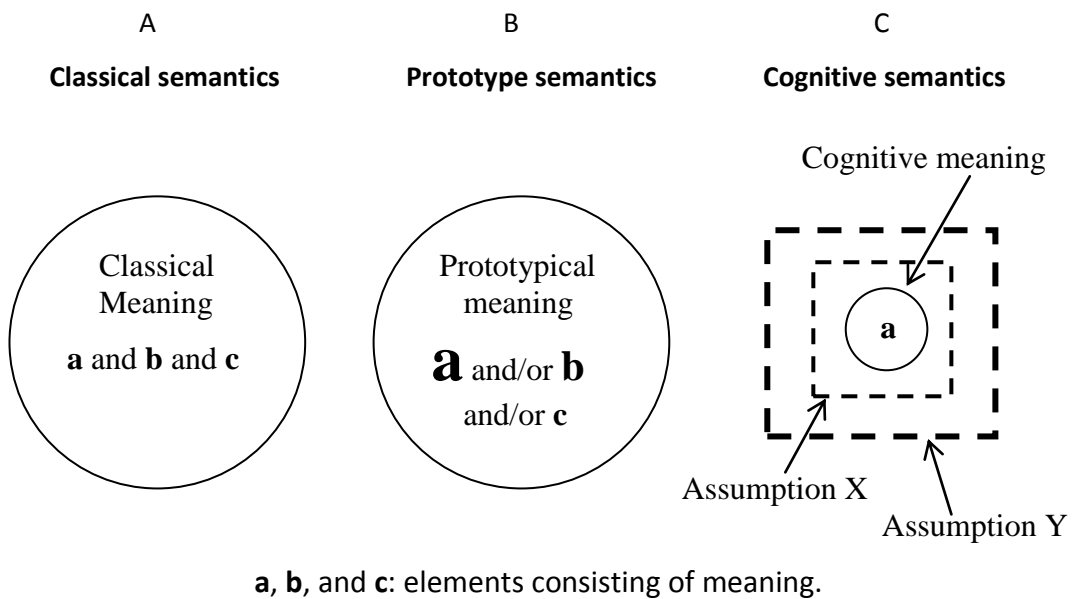
Figure 1A includes "a", "b", and "c"; a particular meaning can stand only when all these elements exist and are equally important. Thus, if Element "a" is missing, the meaning does not stand. Nor does it stand if Element "c" is missing.

Figure 1B also comprises "a", "b", and "c", making it look similar to Figure 1A. But in Figure 1B the size of each letter shows its importance: the bigger the letter is, the more important the element is. This means that Elements "a", "b", and "c" are NOT equally important. Element "a" is the most important and cannot be missed to form this particular meaning. Element "c" is, on the other hand, the least important. Therefore, if Element "a" is missing in Figure 1B, the meaning would be unlikely to stand, whereas if Element "c" is missing, the existence of Elements "a" and "b" would be sufficient for meaning. But this case

does not form a prototypical meaning. For a prototypical meaning, all Elements "a", "b", and "c" have to be present.

Figure 1C, representing cognitive semantics, defines meaning very simply—only one element, "a" is present—but this definition must meet the conditions shown by the rectangles which represent underlying assumptions. Figure 1C outlines only two assumptions because of the limitations of space, but many more could be presented as Sweetser (1987) demonstrated.

To illustrate, suppose Coleman and Kay's (1981) elements are used to define *lie*. The elements appearing in the three figures above are thus: a = Proposition (P) is false, b = Speaker (S) believes P to be false, c = In uttering P, S intends to deceive Addressee (A). All of the elements in Figure 1A are necessary and sufficient. Therefore, only the utterance which consists of "a", "b", and "c" is a 'lie.' The utterance that fulfils only "a" and "b" is not a lie according to Figure 1A.

In Figure 1B, *lie* does not have to have all three elements. If the proposition of the utterance is false ("a"), and S believes P to be false ("b"), but there is no intention to deceive A, this utterance is still categorised as a lie, although not a prototypical lie. Figure 1B also shows the ranking of the three elements. To simplify the argument here, the rankings 1, 2, and 3 have arbitrarily been allocated to "a", "b", and "c" respectively (Figure 1B). The utterance that incorporates Elements "a" and "b" is closer to a prototype lie than the utterance incorporating Elements "b" and "c" as Element "a" is the most and Element "c" is the least important.

Figure 1C defines *lie* as simply Element "a" (P is false). But this definition is only true when certain outside assumptions are satisfied. If Element "a" lies outside these assumptions, it is not a lie, even if the utterance fulfils the conditions of Element "a".

To conclude, the present study does not consider that a definition of *lie* from a classical semantics perspective is flexible enough to capture the reality of lies in people's everyday lives. Thus, classical semantics is ruled out of this study. The definitions from the other two frameworks, namely prototype semantics and cognitive semantics, are not perfect either. A major obstacle is in dealing with cultural differences. And neither framework has as yet provided an all

encompassing definition. Prototype semantics offered a prototype of *lie* within which there were "higher *lie*-score" lies (Coleman and Kay, 1981, p. 43) and "lower *lie*-score" lies. But this framework by itself lacks the capacity to cover cultural differences. Other frameworks are needed to cover the cultural aspect of lies.

Cognitive semantics, as demonstrated by Sweetser (1987) in particular, presented a model in an attempt to cover cultural differences. Sweetser's model seemed to explain American English lies in relation to the findings from Coleman and Kay (1981), but not Japanese lies. The model also had a problem distinguishing certain types of lies (i.e., ostensible lies). Because of these shortcomings, cognitive semantics is not perfect either. Yet both frameworks offer valuable insights that clarify the complexity of lies and at least give some space for cultural elements in defining *lie*. Therefore, a judicious combination of the prototype and cognitive semantics frameworks as well as some other framework is required to address issues to do with the definition of *lie*, in particular, the need to consider cultural perspectives.

The other framework here is pragmatics, which is explored in the following section. As mentioned above, semantics and pragmatics are both important in the context of the present study. Semantics is the field which deals with meaning as is pragmatics, but pragmatics does so in a broader context. This broader context includes usage and purpose of communication and these aspects cannot be ignored in the discussion of any kind of communication including lying.

2.2.2 The pragmatics of lies

To consider the meaning of *lie* in terms of its usage, this section examines lies, first, using a pragmatics framework, speech act theory (SAT) (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), and second, using Gricean pragmatics (Grice, 1975).

SAT is examined here because lying is an act carried out with speech and this framework explains how such an act works. Gricean pragmatics is also important in understanding use of language in all types of communication; it is even referred to as "the hub of pragmatics research" (Fasold, 1990, p. 128). Gricean pragmatics mentions truth-telling: therefore, this aspect makes the

framework even more relevant to the present study. Specifically, Grice (1975) proposed the notion of the Cooperative Principle to explain our communication. One of the maxims of this principle discusses truth-telling. Last, this section reviews the studies of lies which address the issue of speakers' motivations which play an important role in lying (Sato & Sugiyama, 1994). Pragmatics, the framework for use of language, pays great attention to motivations, while semantics, as demonstrated above, places emphasis on the falsehood of utterances. To understand an act of lying used in our everyday conversation, the motivations for lying cannot be ignored; otherwise, as mentioned above, jokes and sarcastic remarks, for example, would also have to be part of a category of lying. Therefore, this section looks into the motivations for lying.

2.2.2.1 Speech act theory and lies

SAT sees our verbal behaviour as acts performed by speech. Lying is indeed an act performed by speech. Therefore, lying is a speech act. This section first briefly explains SAT and examines the extent to which SAT can and cannot explain lying.

How to do things with words, written by Austin (1962), initiated studies of SAT. In the case where somebody says "I certainly will help you", SAT describes this statement as an act consisting of three layers. One layer refers to the surface level of the act, which is the utterance ("I", "certainly", "will", "help", and "you"). Another layer is the core of the speech, which concerns what this utterance actually does. In this case it is a promise. The last layer can be described as the outcome from speech or "the consequence or effects such acts have on the actions, thoughts or belief, etc" (Searle, 1969, p. 25), which is to provide reassurance to the hearer in this example (Mouri, 1980). These three layers were named "locutionary act", "illocutionary act", and "perlocutionary act" respectively (Austin, 1962).

This three-layer structure can be applied to explain lying. In the case where somebody says "the forecast said it would be fine this afternoon" while knowing the weather forecast predicted rain, the three layers of the act are (1) uttering those words ("the", "forecast", "said", "it", "would", "be", "fine", "this", and "afternoon") (the locutionary act), (2) delivering a piece of information (the

illocutionary act) and (3) convincing others that it will not rain this afternoon (the perlocutionary act).

The description of the above statement of the weather forecast actually sounds very similar to the act categorised as "assert, state (that), affirm" in Searle (1969). According to Searle, "assert, state (that), affirm" is basically an act to deliver any sort of information by using any proposition. An expression of an opinion is an example of this type of speech. The perlocutionary act of "assert, state (that), affirm" is to make the hearer believe the information delivered by the speaker. With lies, the hearer has to be made to believe the *untrue* information delivered by the speaker, when only the speaker knows the truth. If the speaker allows the hearer to notice the untruth, the speech act of lies will not meet its goal—to convince the hearer that "it will be fine this afternoon". Therefore, from the hearer's point of view, lies are no different from "assert, state (that), affirm". This is not the aspect of speech that SAT meant to explain.

Austin (1962) offered this framework to explain how certain acts were achieved by just speech and how the speaker as well as the hearer mutually understood what was carried out in the speech. As explained above, when the speaker is lying, he or she cannot share with the hearer the fact that he or she is lying to the hearer. This means that the act of lying is something outside of the range of the framework of SAT.

Searle (1969) also explained the mechanism of speech acts in terms of conditions required for speech acts to function. He used the term *felicity condition* for this explanation which consisted of four rules, namely, the propositional contents rule, the preparatory rule, the sincerity rule, and the essential rule. Each speaker needs to follow these rules when performing speech acts; otherwise, the acts would misfire (Searle, 1969). In the present study, two of them, the preparatory rule and the sincerity rule, are relevant to lies. The preparatory and sincerity rules of "assert, state (that), affirm" are as follows:

> **Preparatory rule:**
> 1. S (speaker) has evidence (reason, etc.) for the truth of P (proposition).
> 2. It is not obvious to both S and H (hearer) that H knows (does not need to be reminded of, etc.) P.
>
> **Sincerity rule:**
> S believes P. (Searle, 1969, p. 66).

Needless to say, the proposition of lies has to be that the proposition is not true. But the speakers must perform as if the proposition were true to make their utterance stand as a lie. Also when people lie, they do not actually believe the proposition but pretend they do. But again, these facts are known only to the speaker and the speaker should strive not to let the hearer know the facts; otherwise, the act of lying would not stand. In this sense, lies look exactly the same as a normal "assert, state (that), affirm" act from the hearer's viewpoint. The framework of Searle's felicity condition was not capable of explaining this type of situation, where the speaker and the hearer cannot share the information equally. Therefore, SAT is still not adequate to explain the act of lying.

SAT by itself is also not adequate in explaining cultural differences, which are one of the most significant aspects of the present study. However, by bringing in different perspectives on the felicity condition, SAT could be used to explain cultural differences. According to the findings of studies on lies from prototype semantics, the rules of the felicity condition could be of unequal value. If this were true, SAT could be used to explain differences in performing speech acts in different cultures. Although SAT itself neither measures nor mentions the importance of different rules within the felicity condition, some slight modification of SAT may be useful when exploring the cultural differences of lies.

The following shows the summary of cultural differences between American and Japanese lies mentioned above (Coleman & Kay, 1981; Yoshimura, 1995) with reference to some of the rules from the felicity condition:

According to Coleman and Kay (1981),

The most important element to **American lies**:
Speakers' belief of the proposition →
                                            Searle's **sincerity** rule (**S believes P**)
According to Yoshimura (1995),
The most important element to **Japanese lies**:
Falsehood in the proposition → Searle's **preparatory** rule
                    (**S has evidence (reason, etc.) for the truth of P**)

The above view is now applied to the weather forecast example again, where the speaker stated "the forecast said it would be fine this afternoon" after hearing that the forecast actually predicted rain. If the forecast was wrong and the day turned

out to be fine, the findings of Yoshimura (1995) suggested that this case was NOT considered to be a lie by Japanese people because the weather, which occurred later, was exactly what the speaker stated. On the other hand, Coleman and Kay (1981) still defined it as a lie because the speaker believed what was said was untrue at the time of the speech.

The idea that the rules from the felicity condition are not of equal value to Americans and Japanese seems to be effective in explaining cultural differences between Japan and America. Sincerity is of most importance to American people. Therefore, when an utterance breaches the sincerity rule, it would be considered as a lie no matter what eventuates. On the other hand, evidence, namely the preparatory rule, is of most importance to Japanese people. In the above example, the actual weather which occurred later, verified the speaker's statement, even though this evidence was not available when the speech was made.

In summary, the speech act of lying could be perceived differently among different cultures because some rules of SAT might have different weight among those cultures. The framework of SAT itself, however, is not designed to cover the issues that arise from this type of cultural difference. SAT merely suggests that the felicity condition has to be met fully to make speech acts work. SAT therefore, needs something additional to address cultural differences if it is to be applied to the present study.

2.2.2.2 Gricean pragmatics and lies

Gricean pragmatics is another pragmatics framework important to the present study as it discusses communication in regard to truth-telling. This section first briefly explains the Cooperative Principle (CP), which is the core of Gricean pragmatics, and then considers how CP can give an account of lies.

CP explains why people are able to communicate with each other. CP consists of four maxims: quality, quantity, relation, and manner. Adherence to these maxims enables our communication to work smoothly, according to Gricean pragmatics. The four maxims are as follow:

Quantity:
1 Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the
current purpose of the exchange).
2 Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality:
Try to make your contribution one that is true.
1 Do not say what you believe to be false.
2 Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Relation:
Be relevant.

Manner:
Be perspicuous.
1 Avoid obscurity of expression.
2 Avoid ambiguity.
3 Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4 Be orderly. (Grice, 1975, p. 46)

For example, somebody receives an invitation to a party and responds by saying "I have a big assignment due the day after the party". This response does not say yes or no explicitly, but the inviter perceives the response as a refusal. The inviter has inferred that the invitee has said something *related* to the situation and eventually got the message that he or she believes that the invitee intended (Sperber & Wilson, 1996). In this type of situation, people would normally not provide the details of the assignment because such *quantity* of information is not required. They would also *briefly* mention their commitment to an assignment rather than providing detailed information such as why they are studying that particular subject in relation to the assignment: (i.e., adherence to the maxim of manner). People might lie about their reason to turn down the invitation; for example, the due date of the assignment might not be that imminent. But this type of excuse would normally work and the conversation would go smoothly based on the assumption that everybody adheres to CP (Grice, 1975).

People sometimes deliberately violate one or more maxims in conversation to achieve a certain communicative goal. Sarcastic remarks are such a case. I referred to one of those examples earlier in this section to explain pragmatics. The example arose from a university professor remarking to a lazy student who was reading a comic book (the professor said "what a hard working student"). What the professor witnessed did not match what he said. In fact, the

statement was completely opposite. Therefore, this is a case of violation of the maxim of quality. But this utterance would be acceptable and the student should perfectly understand what the professor really meant. The professor could have said "you should study now" to the student. But the sarcastic remark would possibly deliver the message better. For this type of communicative goal, people occasionally choose to violate a maxim on purpose.

To consider lies for the present study, the maxim of quality is most relevant, but some other maximums could also be relevant. For example, a violation of the maxim of quantity could also possibly constitute a lie (Nishimura, 2005). When people deceive somebody, the maxim of quality is normally violated (Takubo, Nishiyama, Mitoh, Kameyama, & Katagiri, 1999) because this maxim basically says people should tell the truth. An example Nishimura mentioned was that of a medical practitioner who made a partial disclosure to a patient. Under normal circumstances, when people hear a statement such as "Medicine A and B were injected", they assume no other kinds of medication were injected. If Medicine A and B as well as C are injected, this doctor's utterance could be considered a case of violation of maxim of quantity and possibly taken as a lie (Nishimura, 2005, p. 253). Therefore, omission of expected information could be a lie.

An investigation on violations of the maxims can be found in McCornack (1992) while Takubo et al. (1999) and Nishimura (2005) referred to above merely mentioned a possible explanation of lies and did not investigate lies with CP in detail. McCornack (1992) carried out an investigation by putting forward the Information Manipulation Theory (IMT) with CP to explain "how deceptive messages become 'deceptive'" (p. 13). His theory, IMT, "views deception as arising from covert violations of one or more of Grice's four maxims (quality, quantity, relevance, and manner)" (Yeung, Levine, & Nishiyama, 1999, p. 1).

McCornack applied a questionnaire to investigate how IMT would work. The descriptions of three awkward situations were given to 295 American respondents and they were asked to describe how to deal with those situations. McCornack divided these 295 respondents into three groups and each group was assigned one of the three situations. In one situation, participants had to explain their whereabouts to their "jealous and possessive" (McCornack, 1992, p. 8)

boyfriend or girlfriend when he or she tried to contact them. The situation described in the questionnaire was one of attending a "couples only" party with a friend when their true boyfriend or girlfriend was unavailable. McCornack studied how the respondents handled this type of awkward situation and analysed the responses in terms of IMT. Predictably, the respondents did not necessarily tell the truth. McCornack's data demonstrated that violation of any or all of the four maxims of CP occurred in an attempt to deceive others.

McCornack's investigation targeted English language speakers in the United States. However, further studies targeted non-English languages (e.g., Murai's (1998) study of Japanese speakers, and Yeung et al.'s (1999) study of Hong Kong Chinese speakers). All these three studies showed that people believed a message to be deceptive when there was a covert violation of the maxim of quality (falsification). However, Yeung et al. (1999) found more specifically that "only violations of quality (falsification) and relevance (evasion) were rated as more deceptive than the baseline message in Hong Kong. . . . These results differ dramatically from those obtained in the United States" (p. 7). Yeung et al. (1999) suggested that fundamental differences in the appropriateness of maxims between American English and Hong Kong Chinese might explain the results of their study. They explained:

> They [Hong Kong Chinese] often leave certain things unsaid, expecting the others to read between lines. To U.S. Americans, such violations of the conversational maxims would be seen as covert and thus would constitute an act of dishonesty. Under such circumstances, the U.S. Americans would take the partial or ambiguous message coming from the Chinese as intentionally deceptive. (p. 9)

The conversational style of Hong Kong Chinese might seem to violate the maxims in American eyes, but it does not in Chinese because the "unsaid" part of the conversation fulfils their communication requirements.

Something akin to the Chinese tendency to leave things unsaid was found in commentary on the Japanese communication style. Shigemitsu (2005) reported that Japanese people had the tendency to leave things unsaid expecting their hearers to understand. She suggested that this came from a high-context nature of Japanese culture (Shigemitsu, 2005, p. 233). People from high-context culture rely

heavily on the context for communication. Therefore, they often do not say everything but they can still achieve the message using the contextual information (Hall, 2000). Shigemitsu also mentioned that the Japanese tendency to leave things unsaid seemed to make American people uncomfortable.

However, two other studies of Japanese speakers showed that Japanese people tended to explain in a detailed manner, which differs from the claim of Shigemitsu (Murai, 2000; Watanabe, 1993). Murai reported that violating the maxim of quantity did not make such utterances deceptive. In fact, he hypothesised that longer utterances which contained more information than required would be more deceptive. But his statistical analysis did not support the hypothesis. Watanabe (1993) also reported that Japanese people preferred to explain in great detail. Thus, these two studies suggest that unnecessarily detailed information might be acceptable and not sound deceptive in Japanese.

The findings of Yeung at al. (1999), Shigemitsu (2005), Murai (1998), and Watanabe (1993) do not appear completely consistent in regard to the maxim of quantity, but at least all four demonstrate that the maxim of quality applies to both Hong Kong Chinese and Japanese differently from the way it applies to American English. To make sense of these different findings, the data as well as the research methods of each study have to be closely examined. Moreover, further discussion on the definition of the "necessary" or "required" amount of information with attention to specific contexts and cultures is required. To provide satisfactory discussion, cultural perspectives beyond CP have to be included as well, for example, the role of cultural values for explaining the communication style referred to in Yeung et al. (1999) and Shigemitsu (2005).

Although CP could theoretically explain lying as the deviation from the maxims, CP is not sufficient to address the cultural differences that impact on how and why people in different cultures may lie. This section has demonstrated that the meaning of each maxim of CP differs among different cultures. It has also shown that other factors such as cultural values influencing interpersonal communication style have to be employed to consider cultural aspects, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

There is another limitation of the framework of CP to explain lying. Under normal circumstances, violation of the maxims is known only to the speaker. For

successful lies, the speaker pretends to respect CP (Hardin, 2010) and the hearer should not know the whole truth. Thus, lying looks same as any normal communication when the speaker is adhesive to CP fully. In this respect, Gricean's CP is very similar to the framework of Searle's felicity condition mentioned above; neither is capable of explaining this type of situation, where the speaker and the hearer cannot share the information equally.

This section and the previous section looked at lies in terms of the structure of lies in pragmatics frameworks. The next section focuses on the motivation of speakers in uttering lies.

2.2.2.3 Motivations for telling lies

As noted in the section on semantics above, "falsehood" is not a sufficient description of lying. Falsehood has to be delivered with some sorts of purposes of the speaker. Motivation plays an important role in lying. Levine, Kim, and Hamel (2010) says that "Lying is typically defined as an intentional behavior. Therefore, it follows that people lie for a reason" (p. 272).

Some of the previous studies of lying, therefore, pay particular attention to this side of lying (Buller & Burgoon, 1994; Hopper & Bell, 1984; Knapp & Comadena, 1979). In general, speakers' motivation is one of the most important issues in terms of language usage in pragmatics. Buller and Burgoon (1994) and Knapp and Comadena (1979) also addressed the part motivation played in deception. Buller and Burgoon's (1994) claim was as follows:

> Like other strategic communication, deception is encoded to achieve a variety of communication goals, some beneficial to the communicator, others to the target, others to the relationship, and still others to a third party. (p. 193)

This description is, as it stated, about deception, not about lying. But what Buller and Burgoon said here can be applied to lying. People do not lie just to tell a lie. They have some motivations or communication goals they want to achieve. And to achieve those communication goals, people may choose to lie.

Buller and Burgoon (1994) listed three types of motivations for deception, which are instrumental, interpersonal, and identity motives. These motives include

acquisition or protection of information from others, entertainment (these are instrumental motives), conflict avoidance, self-disclosure avoidance (these are interpersonal motives), saving face, and maintenance of self-esteem (these are identity motives). Buller and Burgoon then emphasised the necessity of examining multiple motives and the importance of one's personal values and experiences. Deception is carried out to the hearer as if the speaker were telling the truth. To achieve this, the speech has to sound as normal as possible. The speaker then must follow the "right" procedure to make this happen by, for example, being polite, providing an adequate amount of information (not too much and not too little), using appropriate expressions, and so on. An analysis of lying in communication clearly requires multiple perspectives.

Knapp and Comadena (1979) placed "motivation" as one of three important elements determining "a deceptive act in everyday practical affairs" (p. 275). (The other two were the level of awareness and possible consequences of the act concerned.) They listed possible reasons for lying, referring to previous studies, but did not determine any particular precursors to lies. They claimed instead that motivations were usually complex. Knapp and Comadena also mentioned the complexity of deception in terms of the sequence of deceivers' behaviours and emphasised the necessity for further research:

> Most research focuses on a relatively brief temporal segment, but deception in everyday encounters is often the result of a series of behaviours in which the deceiver attempts to gradually refine and make ideas more believable over the course of the encounter.
> (p. 277)

Knapp and Comadena's (1979) claim about the paucity of research on lies in a longer dialogue rather than in a brief temporal segment still seems to apply now.

As briefly mentioned before, Hopper and Bell (1984) also showed the importance of motivation. They used a questionnaire for their study of deception. In the questionnaire, 46 words such as "lie", "fib", "hoax" and so on were presented and the participants were asked to classify words with the aim of finding out the core elements which constitute the concept of deception. Their statistical analysis confirmed that three dimensions—evaluation, detectability and premeditation—played important roles in classifying words related to deception.

Hopper and Bell did not use the word "motivation" in their study, but a dimension called "evaluation", which seems to be related to motivation. For example, if somebody told another person a lie to slander one of his or her friends, this case would be judged as a harmful case because of the speaker's malicious motivation. The concept "harmless-harmful" was one of the scales used as part of "evaluation" in Hopper and Bell's (1984) study. Thus, their findings could be taken as reinforcement of the importance of motivation to lies.

2.2.2.4 Summary of pragmatics of lies

The studies from a pragmatics perspective showed the complexity of the structure of lies. The pragmatics frameworks, Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) and the Conversation Principle (Grice, 1975) showed that lies can be described as examples of some form of violation of rules. These frameworks can define the act of lying, but that definition would not be adequate in dealing with practical aspects of lying. These pragmatics frameworks also do not hold any capacity to deal with cultural differences. Cultural values need to be included in the discussion because as shown above, similar violations were not necessarily perceived in the same way among different cultures.

The elements comprising lies appear to weigh differently among different cultures and as a result, the perception and/or the notion of lies may vary among different cultures. This section has shown the significance of the role of motivation in lies. Different perceptions on the motivation for lying could also possibly play an important role in understanding how people in different cultures perceive lies. This aspect will be discussed in the coming section of cultural differences on lies.

2.2.3 Summary of the definitions of *lie*

What is clear above everything else is that defining *lie* is a complex matter and made more so when cultural issues are involved. This section has presented several frameworks and studies in relation to lies and all of them have mentioned "falsehood" and "intention". It is therefore appropriate to include these two

concepts as inevitable elements of lies, at least to describe lies in Japanese and English.

As mentioned before, people do not lie for the sake of lying. There is always something else which encourages or drives people to tell a lie. Lies in themselves are complex, but the necessity to investigate them across a range of different frameworks adds to the complexity in each individual situation. Therefore, in this study I confine the definition of *lie* to a speaker's utterance of a falsehood with the intention to make the hearer believe the information in the utterance.

When discussing "intention", I prefer to say "intention to make the hearer believe the information in the utterance" rather than "intention to deceive". The term "deceive" often carries a negative connotation. As mentioned above, people sometimes choose to give false information for a "good" reason. If the definition of *lie* has the concept of "deceive", that type of utterance would likely to be eliminated; namely potential lying candidates would be eliminated. Furthermore, I prefer not to add any more description or explanation in attempting to define *lie*. Any additional information intended to create a firmer, tighter, looser, or broader definition would not contribute to the understanding of the entity of *lie* because of its complexity. In particular, to investigate lying from a cross-cultural perspective, more considerations seem to be required such as how cultural values may influence the type as well as the ways of lying, how people use lying as a strategy to manage interpersonal communicative situations, and how different these types of lies and the use of lies are among people who have different cultural backgrounds.

The above elements of "falsehood" and "intention" are not sufficient to explain some of the examples already referred to in this section. While none of the studies and frameworks examined so far appeared to be completely authoritative, all of them offered strengths and weaknesses. Thus, the frameworks indicate the complexity of issues in trying to understand how and why people lie, and what might motivate people to lie. Their complexity suggests that there are many individual factors to address. And this complexity is compounded when attempting to understand lying in different cultures.

This section has emphasised the lack of cultural perspectives in some frameworks. The following section reviews the literature which examines lies from cross-cultural perspectives to establish if there are any useful insights that may contribute to the present study.

2.3 Cultural differences in lies

This section focuses on cultural differences in lies. Previous studies discussed above did not take into account these types of differences. The studies discussed in this section have been carried out from cross-cultural perspectives. I also revisit some of the studies referred to above, where they have included cross-cultural aspect.

As mentioned earlier, people tend to think that a lie is a mere falsehood (Coleman & Kay, 1981) and many tend to ignore cultural differences in lying. Seiter, Btuschke, and Bai (2002) claimed that there was no great difference in lying among cultures. Children sometimes lie to their parents to avoid punishment for their naughtiness and adults malinger when they do not feel like going to school or work. Medical doctors might assure their young patients that "this won't hurt" (Knapp & Comadena, 1974). These lies are not uncommon in either Japan or New Zealand. Barnes (1994) also supported Seiter et al.'s above claim in general, but at the same time he admitted that there were cultural differences in the situations that prompt people to lie. Barnes (1994) referred to the following example:

> In Australia, for instance, an invitation to lunch is an invitation to lunch, particularly in rural areas. But Simpson-Herbert (1987: 26) reports that in urban Iran, in the days of the Shah, invitations to a meal were extended frequently; these were almost always insincere, and were recognized as such by those who were invited. (p. 67)

Barnes also cited the famous research by Keenan (1976) about Malagasy society, which was described earlier in this chapter. People in Malagasy society do not reveal a person's whereabouts in the same way as Europeans. Malagasy people will say "my mum is either in the house or at the market" even when they know exactly where she is. This might sound like telling a lie from the viewpoint of

people in cultures other than the Malagasy one. Besnier (1994) and Duranti (1993) also mentioned the different ways of determining the truthfulness of utterances in Polynesian communities. Their fieldwork revealed that a certain type of formal community gathering did not permit speakers to claim the right to the meaning of their own utterances. In such situations, the speakers' intentions (what they meant) were disregarded as only the authoritarian figure had the right to determine the meaning of the utterances.

These examples match Sweetser's (1987) claims that different cultures have a different structure or scheme for information, knowledge, evidence, or authority. This means that clarification is required to determine when and how people in a particular culture respect the truthfulness of information. Knowledge of how Sweetser's definition would actually work in each culture is also needed. Sweetser also claimed that as people's actions could be based on different social behavioural rules and customs, these rules and customs have to be included in an examination of the truthfulness of a certain utterance. Ludwig's 1965 study also mentioned that each culture has developed its own general orientation toward deceptive acts and their admissibility in certain situations (as cited in Knapp & Comadena, 1979, p. 277).

The following two sections examine what previous research reported about lies from cross-cultural perspectives in terms of the motivation and acceptability of lies.

2.3.1 Cultural differences in the motivation of lies

A few studies on lying examined motivational factors to understand lying in certain cultural contexts. Studies on lies from cross-cultural perspectives typically choose two cultures to compare, and most have collected data using a questionnaire survey.

There are studies which have investigated motivations for lying in relation to cultural values (e.g., Fu, Lee, Cameron, & Xu, 2001; Lee, Cameron, Xu, Fu, & Board, 1997). Lee et al. (1997) and Fu et al. (2001) both made a comparison between Chinese and Canadian people and revealed the relation between lying and their culturally motivated reasons behind it. Lee et al. asked questions to

Chinese and Canadian children and found that "the particular trend with Chinese children suggests that the emphasis on self-effacement and modesty in Chinese culture increasingly asserts its impact on Chinese children's moral judgement" (p. 930). They reported that Chinese children tended to lie when they thought that telling the truth would conflict with their morality. Fu et al. (2001) found similar results among Chinese adults. These two studies employed the concept of cultural values to explain differences in the motivation of lies.

Aune and Waters (1994) used the dichotomous concepts of individualism and collectivism to explain the findings from a comparison between Samoans and North Americans on motivation for lying. They reported:

> Samoans, being more collectivistic than North Americans, reported that they would be more motivated to deceive another if the deception were for the good of the deceiver's family or group or if the deception were necessary to please an authority figure. North Americans, on the other hand, reported that they would be more inclined to deceive about issues they considered private. (p. 166)

Nishimura (2005) also conducted a cross-cultural study to examine the motivation behind lying by focusing on the smaller details in each situation such as exactly what people tried to conceal, what they lied to others. Nishimura asked Japanese and New Zealand people about their experiences of lies in real life and revealed differences between them. The difference between the responses from these two groups of people came partly from differences in the preference for conversational topics. In the Japanese data, Nishimura presented cases where informants were aiming to conceal their own relationships. However, the New Zealand data did not include such cases. The Japanese informants did not seem to have any serious moral issues with having extramarital affairs, for example. Rather, the Japanese cases resulted from a mere preference, on the informants' part, to conceal from their friends the fact that they were already involved with someone. This finding is supported by interpersonal communication studies reporting that Japanese people tended to be less willing than English-speaking people to talk about any topic (Barnlund, 1973; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983; Nishimura, 2002). Preference for conversational topic seems to create different motivations for lying; namely, people, particularly Japanese, might lie to conceal some personal information.

Kim, Kam, Sharkey, and Singelis (2008) also carried out a cross-cultural study on lies and clarified cultural differences by the concept of individualism/collectivism. Kim et al. obtained data from people in Hong Kong, Hawaii, and the mainland United States and examined the impact of cultural identity on the motivation to lie. Kim et al. (2008) chose these three regions because they believed that Hong Kong and the mainland United States were very different, and Hawaii fell between them in terms of the individualism-collectivism dimension. They found that "the mainland U.S. culture has been described typically as highly individualistic and the culture of Hong Kong has been described typically as collectivistic. . . . [Hawaii] we presume, cultivates both East-Asian and Western cultures" (Kim et al., 2008, p. 31). Their findings were that people of strong independent self-construal (in other words, people from individualistic cultures) do not like to lie and feel more guilty or self-conscious about lying in general, even when the lying benefits the recipients of the lie. On the other hand, people of strong interdependent self-construal (in other words, people from collectivistic cultures) show more positive attitudes towards lies even in self-benefit situations.

Kim et al. (2008) offered the following explanation in relation to people of strong independent self-construal who place a high premium on independence: "the morality of a human being is determined primarily by one's willingness to speak the 'truth' above all else" (p. 41). In the cases of people with strong interdependent self-construal who come from collectivist cultures, Kim et al. implied that "the altering or rejection of truthful information is not typically considered 'deception'. . . Rather, this manipulation of the pure, unsparing truth is a necessary means by which harmony is maintained and preserved" (Kim, et al., 2008, p. 42). Kim et al. showed that individualistic cultures encouraged people not to tell lies in general whereas collectivistic cultures, while not necessarily encouraging lying, allowed people to tell lies for the greater good—which was typically to maintain harmony within the group. In other words, people from collectivistic cultures would choose to tell a lie if they had good motivation, whereas a motivation factor would not work in the same way for people from individualistic cultures. Similarly, Nishimura (1997) found that the speaker's

motivation of lying seemed to impact more on the judgement of her Japanese participants about lying than on that of the Australian ones.

In considering this point, it would be useful to revisit Coleman and Kay (1981) and Yoshimura (1995) for the purpose of making a comparison. These researchers conducted more or less identical studies and therefore, their findings may help to shed light on cultural differences between American and Japanese lies.

As mentioned before, Coleman and Kay (1981) found that speakers' beliefs about the falsity of the concerned propositional content were the most important element in the lies of their American participants. By contrast, Yoshimura (1995) found actual falsity itself was more important to the lies of his Japanese participants. Moreover, Coleman and Kay's study found that the second most important element was intended deception and the third was factual falsity. On the other hand, Yoshimura found that the speaker's belief was the second and intended deception the third. The following table summarises the findings of the two studies:

Table 1 Summary of findings from studies of lying by Coleman and Kay (1981) and Yoshimura (1995)

	The most important element for the definition of *lie* ⟵———⟶		The least important element for the definition of *lie*
Coleman and Kay (1981)	belief on falsity	deceptive intention	factual falsity
Yoshimura (1995)	factual falsity	belief on falsity	deceptive intention

Table 1 shows that the element of motivation ("deceptive intention") is more important to lies told by American participants than lies told by Japanese participants and this applies likewise to "belief on falsity". The findings from Coleman and Kay (1981) and Yoshimura (1995) respectively imply that lies told by Americans breach sincerity (Searle, 1969) and lies told by Japanese distort factuality. People from individualistic cultures (American, in this case) are more guilty-conscious (Kim et al., 2008), which means that they are probably sensitive to sincerity. Lying is considered to be a breach of sincerity in America (Coleman & Kay, 1981; Searle, 1969). Thus, guilty-conscious "individualistic" people might not be motivated to tell a lie even if they have a good reason. On the other hand,

people from collectivistic cultures highly value harmony within a group, and to them, a lie is just factual falsity. Thus, good reasons for lying may motivate them to tell a lie.

In summary, previous studies suggest that different lies occur in different cultures because of different cultural values. Cultural values differ, for example, between individualistic and collectivistic people, thus, differences in motivation for telling lies may occur between Americans and Japanese. This section has also shown that the differences in motivations for lying might arise from different ways to handle communication.

The next section addresses cultural differences in the acceptability of lies. Some of the studies below also use dimensions such as cultural values and the concept of individualism/collectivism to explain cultural differences. However, these studies show that the concept of individualism/collectivism does not always provide satisfactory explanations.

2.3.2 Cultural differences in the acceptability of lies

Like motivation, acceptability is a culturally influenced area of lying. Acceptability is important when considering lies and the degree of acceptability would highly likely vary among cultures. Seiter et al. (2002) and Mealy, Stephan, and Urrutia (2007) carried out two cross cultural studies of the acceptability of lies between Chinese and American respondents and Euro-American and Ecuadorian respondents respectively. Both studies employed the concept of individualism/collectivism to interpret their findings. And these studies set up conversational situations containing lies and asked respondents to rate the acceptability of lies in the given situations on a 6-point scale. Mealy et al. recognised that many of their findings were similar to the findings of Seiter et al.'s (2002) study; for example, other-centred lies were more acceptable than self-centred lies. A similar finding was also reported in Nishimura (1997), who collected data from Australian and Japanese people.

Both Seiter et al. (2002) and Mealy et al. (2007) showed some relation between acceptability and the types of lies. For example, the Chinese respondents in Seiter et al.'s (2002) study generally showed a higher acceptance than the

American respondents. However, this was not true when it came to a lie told to their teachers: the American respondents accepted the situation more readily than the Chinese respondents. This means that the acceptability of lies, even of the same type of lies, varies depending on the relation between speaker and hearer and the context in which the lying takes place. The relationship between students and teachers in China is particularly significant as students are taught to show respect to teachers because of Confucianism which underpins Chinese cultural values.

Mealy et al. (2007) claimed that "In Ecuador, lies for the purpose of flattery, enhancement of others' self-esteem, and conflict avoidance were among those that were the most acceptable" (p. 699). This finding, however, seemed to be inconsistent to the finding of Seiter et al. (2002). While Seiter et al. found a higher acceptability rate in the answers from the Chinese than those from the American participants; Mealy et al. noted that Euro-Americans considered lies to be more acceptable than Ecuadorians did. The question was how the findings from these two studies could be explained. Seiter et al. (2002) claimed that because of the nature of collectivism, Chinese accepted lies more readily than American people. This finding implies that there is a higher rate in the acceptability of lying among people from collectivistic than individualistic cultures. By contrast, Mealy et al. (2007) found that "individualistic" American people accepted lies more readily than "collectivistic" Ecuadorian people.

Aune and Waters (1994), referred to in section 2.3.1, also explained their findings by borrowing the concept of individualism/collectivism. However, the concept of individualism/collectivism does not sufficiently explain the differences in the findings of both Aune and Waters (1994) and Mealy et al. (2007). Mealy et al. suggested three areas that might offer an alternative explanation: (1) the different attitude towards uncertainty—whether people are afraid of uncertainty, (2) the different time orientation—whether long-term or short-term consequences are more important, and (3) the different religions. However, the findings from their study were based on supposition only, and therefore, further cross-cultural research is required to clarify the three points Mealy et al. suggested.

Nishimura (2005) also reported cultural differences between Japanese and New Zealand people in their acceptance of lies and showed difference between

them. The Japanese recipients of lies in her study were lenient towards lies whereas the New Zealand recipients were angry or resentful overall. The contrast between these two was salient, particularly in the cases of lies told for the benefit of others. None of the Japanese cases reacted negatively, but the New Zealand recipients claimed that they were hurt because they were not given the truth. Similarly, Kim et al. (2008) found that highly-interdependent people (such as Japanese) did not see deceptive communication as a condemnable action, while people in independently-oriented cultures (such as New Zealand people) were not likely to share this attitude to the same degree. Individualistic cultures value the truth highly, regardless of the condition or circumstances (Kim, 2002). Researchers have to be cautious when applying this type of dichotomous framework to interpret data (Walkinshaw, 2009). However, cultural values that I reviewed in this section so far would possibly affect the acceptability of lies. Therefore, the concept of cultural values has been retained in this study as an analytical device to examine the data.

2.3.3 Summary of cultural differences in lies

Previous studies on the motivation for telling lies indicated that cultural differences could be explained by the concepts of cultural values, in particular, their origin in terms of the concept of individualism/collectivism, and preferred communication topics. This meant that several different arguments were necessary to explain the cultural differences in the motivation for telling lies. In other words, the motivations have multi-dimensional issues. I also showed that the motivation for lying had a different role among different cultures; for example, the nature of individualism disallowed lies while that of collectivism tolerated lies for maintaining harmony.

The acceptability of lies was found to vary among different cultures as well. This difference was explained by the dimension of individualism/collectivism to a certain extent, but not completely. To explain cultural differences in the acceptability of lies, contextual and situational factors need to be considered. This complexity was also revealed in regard to the motivations of lying. As Knapp and Comadena (1979) mentioned, lies are not

independent but involve series of incidents and contextual information. Thus, holistic approaches are necessary to understand the complexity of lies fully.

The next section reviews the studies of refusals. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I chose refusal situations for this study as a context where lies would possibly be used. As discussed early in this chapter, people sometimes lie in their interpersonal relationships. Refusals could potentially harm the relationship between a person refusing and a person receiving the refusal (Goffman, 1971). To prevent that, people may lie about their true reason to turn down a request or an invitation to offer a good excuse and try to minimise potential harm. To understand the nature of lies used in this type of interpersonal communicative situation, a review of literature of refusals is necessary for the present study.

2.4 Refusals, excuses and lies

In everyday life, people regularly ask favours of or offer invitations to others, but nobody can meet every single request or invitation. People sometimes have to perform refusals even though they know a refusal is not ideal (Leech, 1983).

Refusals are not necessarily easy to carry out because nobody likes to be refused. But people sometimes have no choice but to refuse. Therefore, it is useful to know how to refuse well. There are various ways to carry out refusals and one of the frequently used ways is to offer an excuse. When people offer an excuse, they may make up an untruthful excuse in order to make their refusals go smoothly and peacefully. Thus, untruthful excuses used for refusals were chosen as a case subject for investigating the use of lies in conversation.

In this section, I clarify through a review of the literature what refusals are, why people use excuses for their refusals, and what types of cultural differences exist regarding refusals.

2.4.1 Refusals as communication acts

Refusals arise in situations where people receive requests they cannot comply with or invitations they cannot accept. Under normal circumstances, the inviters

or requesters want acceptance or compliance respectively from the recipients when they make an invitation or request. This is Searle's (1969) sincerity condition of performing speech acts properly. Clearly, therefore, refusals are acts against other people's wishes. In particular, refusals could be detrimental to the requesters' or inviters' ability to maintain a positive face, which is "the desire to be approved of" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 13). Thus, refusals are face-threatening acts (FTAs). Performing FTAs without damaging relationships is not easy. To perform refusals smoothly, people should know what the appropriate behaviour is in that culture. It is also important to know the protocol in order to understand when and how to receive refusals from somebody else. To deliver successful refusals in intercultural settings, it is obviously important to discover culturally common or approved ways to carry out refusals.

There are several ways to deliver a refusal message. One of the most commonly used strategies is, as mentioned above, to offer an excuse with which people explain why they would not like to or could not meet the invitation or request (Beebe et al., 1990; Nelson et al., 2002). Excuses which are well enacted enable the inviters or the requesters both to understand the decliner's situation and to accept the refusal. The next section focuses on this important strategy of refusals.

2.4.2 Excuses as a strategy for refusals

Excuses are often used for refusals because this strategy works well for interpersonal communicative purposes. One of the important functions of excuses is to send a "no" message indirectly. An excuse does not literally contain a "no" message but mentions obstacles to accepting the invitation or meeting the request. The description of those obstacles allows the recipients of the message to make the logical inference that they are being given a refusal (Sperber & Wilson, 1996). An explicit "no" would normally make the message sound too direct or offensive. It is because, as mentioned above, nobody wants to be refused, and being given a "no" message is in itself face-threatening. Sending an indirect message is a better option as it is considered less threatening than a direct one (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The ideal response to requests or invitations is, of course, acceptance

(Leech, 1983), but if speakers decide to say "no", they should deliver a refusal message in a non-threatening way.

Another reason to use an excuse can be found in its function as a mitigator. As refusals could impact negatively on the relationship between requesters/inviters and decliners, the decliners need to act in a way that mitigates possible damage. Goffman (1971) called this type of damage a "virtual offence", and an excuse (Goffman used the term "account") was listed as a way to remedy it. Excuses can help inviters or requesters to understand the decliners' difficult situations and to help them accept the unlikelihood of the decliners agreeing with what the inviters or requesters initiated. If an explanation of their difficult situations is successfully delivered, the inviters or the requesters can accept the refusals without holding any grudges. In order to make this happen, the inviters or the requesters need to receive good excuses to withdraw from their original actions. Therefore, the quality of excuses such as the contents of excuses and the way of delivering them is key to the success of refusals.

If the excuse is not appropriate, the communication goals of minimising potential damage and maximising acceptance of the refusals by the inviters or the requesters will not be met. Giving excuses, therefore, has a very important mission to have an amicable outcome between the inviters/requesters and the decliners.

However, excuses have been treated as a mere strategy and have not yet been closely examined in previous studies. Although Kinjo (1987) and Taira (2008) mentioned some of the findings related to excuses in refusals, their main focus was not on excuses themselves but strategies of refusals. Thus, further research is required for the issue to be properly understood.

The next section looks more closely at excuses; namely, what previous studies have not revealed about excuses in refusals, and thus, what further research is necessary.

2.4.3 Unexamined details of excuses

Offering excuses is one of the strategies for performing refusals, but it has not yet been fully studied. This is in part owing to the research method which most

studies have used. The method is the Discourse Completion Test (DCT), which limits the range of analysis. I briefly explain what DCT is first and then describe the limitation of this data collection method.

DCT uses the format of discourse containing blanks which respondents are asked to complete. By using DCT, previous studies revealed the preference and order of the use of speech formulas of refusals. Speech formulas are strategies needed to carry out a certain speech act and each formula "consists of a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy; any one or more of these can be used to perform the act in question" (Cohen, 1996, p. 265). For example, if somebody says "I'm sorry. I have already planned something on that night" to refuse an invitation, this refusal is noted as a combination of two speech formulas, according to Beebe et al. (1990): [Statement of regret] and [Excuse, reason, explanation]. Here is an example of DCT.

Table 2 An example of DCT data collection format

A: Hey, I need an extra 20 dollars to buy a textbook today. Could you please lend me some money?	← *the first turn provided by the researcher*
B:	← *the second turn filled in by the participants*
A: No worries. I will ask Tom then. Thanks.	← *the third turn provided by the researcher*

The information that appears in the format is that Person A requests Person B to lend some money and then Person A's request is refused. To complete this discourse, a respondent might fill in the blank with an utterance like "Sorry, I do not have cash on me now." It could be just "No, sorry." This data collection method would be useful to find out the ways of using formulas—for example, whether or not most people use "sorry" first, whether they explain the reason why they cannot comply with the request, and so on.

For example, Beebe et al.'s (1990) study, which is one of the most frequently cited refusal studies (Gass & Houck, 1999; Ikoma & Shimura, 1993; Nelson et al., 2002; Saeki & O'Keefe, 1994), compared Japanese and American data, aiming to find tendencies in the usage of English language by Japanese learners. They found Japanese language-oriented patterns in the use of English of

the Japanese respondents in terms of the order and frequency of the semantic formulas of refusals. In other words, Beebe et al. (1990) confirmed that Japanese people kept certain manners of their own language even when they spoke in English. These findings are very useful on pedagogical grounds. Language teachers, for example, could tell their students how different native speakers of the their target language would carry out certain speech acts (Ikoma & Shimura, 1993; Yokoyama, 1993). However, methodologically they fail to address the detailed information such as exactly what they should say in particular situations, which the students definitely need to know in intercultural situations.

Since these previous studies were not designed to investigate the progress of subsequent dialogue, they did not reveal the whole picture of refusal conversations. The excerpt in Table 2, for example, shows one possibility of how request-refusal conversations might occur. The reality is that people often have longer conversations than the one illustrated in the example. Person A in the above situation might push Person B harder by saying something like "Come on. I will pay you back tomorrow" if he or she is desperate. Then Person B might offer another excuse in the hope that Person A would give up. Person A might ask a question like "Do you know anybody who might lend me 20 bucks?"

Because of the format, previous studies looked at one or two utterances only, which were those used to refuse requests or invitations. The DCT format could only collect data which possibly appears in a blank between two turns. A longer conversation in DCT with many blanks would be theoretically possible, but even if it was possible, the test format itself would govern the direction of the conversation too much and the gathered data would be influenced by the researchers' guidance.

Most studies on refusals were based on data employing DCT, but recent studies such as Hsu (2007), Kuramoto and Ohama (2008), and Taira (2008) used role-play conversational data. Hsu (2007) carried out cross-cultural comparisons between Japanese and Taiwanese participants, but her main focus was on requests rather than refusals. Kuramoto and Ohama (2008) did mention refusals in their study, but their focus was on invitations and no cross-cultural data were presented.

The aim of Taira's (2008) study was to reveal the difficulties for English-speaking learners of Japanese language. Thus, she collected Japanese data from

Japanese native speakers as well as English-speaking learners in the United States to make a comparison. That is, Taira examined the second language learners' language usage by comparing their data to the data from the native speakers. Of interest to this study is Taira's observation that the Japanese participants tended to convey concrete information in their excuses, while the English-speaking participants often used vague terms in theirs. This could be interpreted as an outcome of the cultural differences in their preferred communication style.

Claims supporting Taira's conclusions were found in Kinjo (1987), in the study of refusals in Japanese and English. Kinjo observed that Japanese participants tended to give specific reasons for refusing, particularly when the excuses were about the condition of their health. Although Taira acknowledged that her findings could have stemmed from the fact that the learners lacked Japanese language skills, Japanese and English-speaking people may have different protocols for the content of excuses. The findings reported in Taira (2008) and Kinjo (1987) seem to contradict the usual description of the Japanese communication style, specifically, that it is more vague than English and tends to leave things unsaid (Haugh, 2003; Shigemitsu, 2005). To clarify this point further, thorough discussion is required with more extensive data in order to find out the rationale underlying such behaviour.

In summary, excuses used for refusals are yet to be fully examined. Some studies have been done but only on refusal conversations with insufficient focus on excuses and with a limited methodology (namely DCT). Therefore, excuses should be investigated in relation to conversation. Thus, the present study addresses this methodological and knowledge gap by investigating lying behaviour and strategies in extended conversation.

The next section focuses on literature related to interpersonal communication. The studies related to this issue offer useful insights into the rationale behind the use of lies.

2.5 Lies and interpersonal communication

In the present study, it is clearly important to understand differences between Japanese and New Zealand people in terms of communication. This section

examines how different cultural values and preferences—in particular, preferred conversational topics—in interpersonal communication contribute to differences in the use of lies. As mentioned earlier, lies are often used to maintain relationships. To reveal the contexts behind these lies, interpersonal communication studies are useful.

Although some scholars saw lying as a moral threat (Bok, 1978; Kameyama, 1997), others saw it as a social skill (DePaulo et al., 1996). The present study is interested in lying from the latter view-point. Lying is necessary in our daily lives (Ekman, 1985) and could provide a very useful strategy for managing awkward or undesirable interpersonal situations. The famous English proverb "Honesty is the best policy" does not always apply in day-to-day situations (Kim, 2002; Turner et al., 1975). When people do not want to disclose information for some reason, they might choose to tell a lie rather than the truth.

It is important to know what types of elements are involved to make such a decision: for example, under what circumstances would people decide to tell a lie and in what way would they tell it? As briefly mentioned before, Japanese and New Zealand people could use lies in different ways to refuse a request. These ways could be rationalised by cultural rules or protocols. These differences between the two cultures could be related to different preferences for interpersonal communication. It is important to study the cultural rules or protocols underpinning behaviour in order to understand how to communicate effectively in different intercultural contexts. Barnlund (1974) explained the role of cultures in communication:

> Every culture attempts to create a universal discourse for its members, a way in which the members of that culture can interpret and share their common experience. This system for qualifying sensations is undoubtedly one of the most precious of all cultural legacies transmitted from one generation to another within a culture. Without it, life will be absurd and efforts to share meanings all but impossible. Cultures give explicit instruction on the universe of discourse. (p. 34)

This section reviews interpersonal communication studies from cross-cultural perspectives, mainly studies which relate to cultural values. Next, studies about differences in appropriate conversational topics among different cultures are

examined. These studies are closely related to the issue of lies because uncomfortable conversational topics might work as a trigger to tell a lie. Therefore, this section considers the literature on appropriate conversational topics from cross-cultural perspectives as well.

2.5.1 Cultural values

To consider cultural communication differences, the concept of cultural values is useful. Cultural values are one of the important factors that underpin people's behaviour (Cohen, Hoshino-Browne, & Leung, 2007; FitzGerald, 2003; Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Wierzbicka, 1991b). Schwartz (1992) referred to various studies such as Rokeach (1973) and Williams (1968) and summarised values as "the criteria people use to select and justify actions and to evaluate people (including the self) and the events" (Schwartz, 1992, p. 1). Values are, according to Hofstede (2001), "a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (p. 5). Condon (1974) says that "values have to do with what members of the society believe are good. Values are sometimes contrasted with beliefs, which have to do with what the society believes is true" (p. 136). All of these definitions indicate that values are the basis for people's actions.

These cultural values play an important role in determining what we want to communicate and also how we communicate. Being familiar with this type of information is important, especially when communicating with people who have different cultural backgrounds because lack of this type of information could potentially cause miscommunication.

Needless to say, for communication with other people, first, semantic and syntactic knowledge is necessary. If people have no knowledge of the meanings of words (semantic knowledge) or rules of composing sentences (syntactic knowledge), they would not be able to produce a sentence. But even if people know words and syntax, they could still encounter some communication problems—unless they know what people are expected to say in a given context and how to say it.

Miscommunication can occur anywhere among any groups of people, but in particular, in intercultural settings. This is because people from different

cultures do not necessarily share culturally determined knowledge (Shimura, 1992), which manifests itself in the patterns and protocols of communication within a culture.

The researchers of the studies cited earlier attempted to explain certain types of behaviour using the concept of cultural values. For example, Condon (1974) as mentioned earlier tried to explain his own experience. When he asked three local people on separate occasions for directions in Mexico, all three confidently gave him completely wrong information. It was evident that none of them knew where he wanted to go. Condon interpreted this incident as a demonstration of Mexican values; he concluded that Mexican people valued being friendly more than being truthful. It is always difficult to identify the exact reasons behind such culturally different behaviour (Condon, 1974), but Condon's conclusions sound plausible; the Mexican value that Condon claimed explains why those three Mexican people did not admit ignorance.

Something similar to Condon's claim can be found in Hardin (2010). As mentioned before, her research targets are Spanish speakers at Ecuador and according to Hardin, Ecuadorian shop owners often deliberately supply their customers a wrong date of arrival of items which the customers are after. The store owner would do so "to maintain a relationship with the client and does not wish to appear unhelpful or unfriendly" (p. 3207). Native speakers in Ecuador would not see this type of utterance as a case of lying because "The desire to maintain a relationship supersedes the need for truth, and for that matter, accuracy" (p. 3209).

Davis and Henze (1998) also provided a relevant case here. They used an example of intercultural communication to discuss socially-embedded protocols which determine how people present themselves. Their example was as follows: basically, a Chinese worker in the workplace offered to undertake jobs less often than her American colleagues and her behaviour caused friction. Later, Davis and Henze discovered that the Chinese worker volunteered only when she was certain she could achieve the requisite outcome. On the other hand, one American worker in particular tended to take on tasks the moment they arose, and predictably she found herself often missing the deadline. This type of consequence was exactly what the Chinese worker tried to avoid. But the American worker thought it

acceptable and noted that "I would give excuses after the fact" (Davis & Henze, 1998, p. 414). The Chinese worker considered the American worker's attitude to be untrustworthy because, to her mind, it was irresponsible to take on a task without having a reasonable expectation of achieving it. The Chinese worker could infer that the American's promise to perform beyond her capability was tantamount to lying. On the other hand, all her American colleagues thought that the Chinese worker was mean or lazy. The differences in the attitude to work between them caused friction in the office. The report from Davis and Henze (1998) showed that it was important to understand the values behind the behaviour of people who have different cultural backgrounds.

When this type of miscommunication occurs, people tend to ascribe it to rudeness or malicious intent, which are often not the aim of the speaker (Ohama & Wang, 2006). Condon's (1974) experience, described above, indicates the importance of understanding other cultures' values; otherwise those Mexican would be branded as liars or malicious. Unlike grammatical mistakes, these types of mistakes, pragmatics mistakes, do not necessarily look or sound like "mistakes".

For example, Japanese people sometimes forget to add a plural suffix "s" after nouns like *three apple* in English. This is a simple mistake which would lead nobody to doubt the speaker's integrity. But if a Japanese person failed to say "thank you" or "please" when expected, English native speakers could possibly be annoyed and unforgiving, even though this failure could arise from the speaker's lack of culturally-related or pragmatics knowledge (Liddicoat, 2008). Native speakers would be unlikely to think that it was a genuine mistake.

Understanding cultural values and knowledge which manifest themselves in the patterns and protocols of communication within a culture could help to clarify language use and misuse.

2.5.2 Appropriate topics of conversation in different cultures

The choice of appropriate conversational topics is relevant to the present study. People presumably talk about matters they think appropriate. However, when

topics thought inappropriate or unmentionable arise, people might choose to avoid them by lying.

Some studies, including Barnlund (1973) and Gudykunst and Nishida (1983), investigated Japanese and American preferred topics of conversation. Both Barnlund (1973) and Gudykunst and Nishida (1983) found that Japanese people were reluctant to discuss many topics, while Americans were willing to talk about almost anything. But Gudykunst and Nishida (1983) reported from their data that the Japanese made an exception regarding their physical condition, which was a highly talked about topic of conversation (p. 601). Nishimura (2002) also questioned Japanese and New Zealand people about their preference for topics of conversation. Her data confirmed the findings of Gudykunst and Nishida (1983): the New Zealanders felt more comfortable than the Japanese informants talking about almost all topics, other than their physical condition. Kinjo's (1987) study also reported that the Japanese participants used specific details of their physical problems as an excuse to decline an invitation. This tendency was not indicated in the American data. The findings of these studies suggest that Japanese might be more tempted to lie to conceal various types of information than English-speaking people because of their preference for topics of conversation. One such topic where Japanese people might lie, as mentioned before, is that of personal relationships (Nishimura, 2005). As mentioned earlier, the case where the Japanese respondents lied did not show any serious problems, such as where extramarital affairs are concerned. They simply concealed the fact that they had seen somebody, whereas the New Zealand data did not show such examples. By contrast, the New Zealand respondents lied when they were asked about *very* personal questions such as their sexual experience with a particular person.

These tendencies are supported by another cross-cultural study. Barnlund and Yoshioka (1990) examined the role of self-expression in the apologies of Japanese and American people. They observed that American people feel comfortable expressing themselves while Japanese people are highly reserved about such self-expression. Their finding below implies that Japanese might even lie to maintain social expectations:

> It is not surprising to find that Japanese are highly sensitive to
> failures to fulfil social expectations and to the status of their parents,
> and that they prefer more direct and even extreme ways of
> acknowledging failure to meet such obligations. . . . Among
> Americans, where self-expression and spontaneity tend to be valued
> over the maintenance of social harmony, it is not surprising that
> social infractions occur with greater frequency. (p. 204)

Saarni and Lewis (1993) also mentioned a difference between Japanese and
American people. They explained that American people would generally tolerate
the expression of anger while Japanese people found such expressions totally
unacceptable (p. 15). Kim (2002) also mentioned that Japanese saw a virtue in
controlling the expression of their innermost feelings. Japanese, therefore, can
behave and express themselves in a manner contrary to their feelings, behaviour
and expression which may well appear deceptive to Americans.

In summary, the above findings suggest that, generally, there seem to be
more reasons for Japanese people than New Zealanders to tell lies. As Japanese
people are self-reserved in general, their chances of facing unwanted
conversational topics may be higher than those of New Zealanders.

2.6 Summary of the literature review

This chapter has reviewed three key areas of literature concerning this study: first,
the literature related to lies—the reality of lies in our everyday life, the definitions
of lies, and the cultural differences in lying; second, refusals; and third, cross-
cultural interpersonal communication.

In this chapter, first, I have examined literature about lies starting with the
studies on the reality of lies. The review has confirmed that lying is a prevalent
social act and important for our everyday life. The literature has shown the
general trends of our everyday lies but did not reveal much about the details of
lies such as exactly what lies we tell from day to day in a particular context.

I have also explored the complexity involved in defining lies and in
considering cultural issues. In relation to the definitions of *lie*, I examined the
strengths and weaknesses of semantic and pragmatic frameworks. None of them
was found capable of defining *lie* without borrowing other perspectives. With

consideration of prototype semantics as well as pragmatics studies, the minimum components of a definition of lies seemed to be "falsehood" and "intention", although these two were not necessarily sufficient to describe the entity of lies at all times. For example, "falsehood" with "intention" in certain situations would not be recognised as a lie. In another example, a semantic study revealed that American lies emphasised the speaker's belief about falsehood more than the falsehood itself, but this was not true for Japanese lies (Coleman & Kay, 1981; Yoshimura, 1995). Additional description from various frameworks combined with "falsehood" and "intention" seemed to define individual cases of lies, but not necessarily all examples. As Buller and Burgoon (1994) mentioned, not one but many motives could lead to lying, and the issues seemed to be too complicated to be handled by one framework. Pragmatics frameworks such as speech act theory and the cooperative principle seemed to be capable of defining *lie* in some sense but could not describe the true nature of lying altogether. These theories meant to describe our normal well-functioning communication, which are situations where a speaker and a hearer both understand what is going on in conversation. Lying is obviously a case where only the speaker knows the situation of the truth. Moreover, these theories were not designed to explain cross-cultural issues.

The literature reviewed in this chapter also revealed that the cultural aspects of lies were indeed complicated. In terms of the motivation and acceptability of lies, previous studies indicated that there was no authoritative, overall theory to explain the characteristics of lies among different cultures. Some studies, explained cultural differences plausibly with the concept of individualism/collectivism (e.g., Seiter et al., 2002), but the concept did not explain the data from other studies as well. To comprehend the cultural aspects of lying fully, not just one or two lines of dialogue but many more, along with contextual information, is necessary. And a careful application of a judicious mixture of several frameworks appears to be required to explain lies in context.

Second, I reviewed the literature related to refusals. Examination of previous studies of refusals showed that most studies did not investigate utterances longer than one or two sentences because they tended to employ the discourse completion test technique for data collection. This data collection method precluded getting the big picture in the use of refusals in awkward

conversations. Excuses which people used to perform refusals were treated as mere strategies in those studies. Although some tendencies in Japanese excuses were already revealed, they were not fully explained or supported by any theories.

Third, I examined the frameworks on interpersonal communication. The literature reviewed in this chapter emphasised the importance of understanding cultural values and protocols underpinning behaviour within different cultural backgrounds. To interpret possible cultural differences in lying, it is necessary to link the behavioural patterns of people from different cultures and the interpersonal communication theories which underpin them.

2.7 Research questions

So far, I have examined literature related to this study. It has become obvious that, although quite a few studies have been carried out on lies, lying in conversation has not been fully addressed yet. Previous studies also revealed differences of various aspects of lies in different cultures. But again, those studies did not focus on lies in conversation. It is not clear what lies people would use in a certain context, how their hearer would react, how they would continue their conversation, and why such patterns of conversation would be formed. We still do not know if there would be certain patterns among people from a particular culture or, if there is, what rationale could explain those patterns. This type of information is particularly important for people who have to communicate with others who do not share the same cultural norms and protocols. Therefore, a study of lies in conversation from cross-cultural perspectives is an important research topic.

To explore aspects of lying in conversation in our real life, namely, what people would lie about and how those lies would be delivered in conversation, examination of specific communicative situations involving lies is necessary. This is necessary in order to carry out a good comparative study of conversational data provided by people from different cultural backgrounds.

In choosing specific communicative situations for this study, various situations were considered. In this literature review chapter, I discussed studies that found that people tended to save their own and others' faces and/or relationships with others. One of the situations where this communication

behaviour occurred was in a refusal situation. Refusals are face-threatening acts and people need to act carefully so as not to offend the recipients of refusals. Needless to say, refusals could badly affect the relationship between the inviter/requester and the decliner and to prevent such unwanted consequences, people may choose to tell a lie.

As reviewed above, refusals are a common and regularly exercised act. Offering an excuse is one of the frequently chosen ways to deliver a refusal message yet excuses have not been investigated in detail.

In choosing cultures for this study, I selected Japanese and New Zealand cultures. Studying data related to these two cultures is most appropriate as I am Japanese and have lived in New Zealand for several years. My empirical knowledge about Japanese and New Zealand cultures, and how people in each communicate, provide a reasonable understanding, thus enabling me to examine the data closely. Being familiar with the culture of the research data is important for the analysis (Verschueren, 1985).

The issues, problems, and knowledge gaps exposed in my review of the extant literature relating to lying, along with the need for comparative research that uncovers cultural issues related to lying, all point to the need for further research on the topic of lying. Therefore, this study is guided by the following research questions that emerge from this literature review:

1. What kinds of lies do people tell in conversation, particularly in refusal situations in Japan and New Zealand?
2. What are the cultural differences in the lying patterns and strategies between speakers of Japanese and New Zealand English?
3. What culture-specific rules and values may affect those differences?

The next chapter describes the research design I adopted to answer the research questions, and thus, achieve the research goals of the study.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter describes the design of the study. The theoretical frameworks, the methodology, and the method of this study are outlined. The structure of this chapter is as follows.

Section 3.1 provides an explanation of the theoretical frameworks which underpin this study. In this section I describe the nature of communication and the aspects of communication on which the present study focuses. In sections 3.2 and 3.3, I deal with the methodology and describe the method that I used in order to answer the research questions. The method section provides details of data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with a summary.

3.1 Theoretical frameworks

In this section, I discuss the theoretical frameworks that ground this study. The study is a cross-cultural one and its objective is to examine the use of lies by Japanese and New Zealand people in undesirable communicative situations. This study deals with multiple issues and several theories are required to achieve the research goals. Thus, I employ the following three frameworks; first, I introduce interactional sociolinguistics; second, I discuss politeness theories; and third, I examine cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories.

Generally speaking, people communicate with others to achieve multiple communication goals such as conveying information, being polite, being inoffensive, avoiding further problems, maintaining good friendships and so on. Lying is no exception. Moreover, people in undesirable interpersonal communicative situations such as refusals must concern themselves with many issues because the situations are delicate. In order to understand why people speak or deal with given tasks in a certain way, several theories are required.

First, interactional sociolinguistics is grounded in the following assumption: the meaning of utterances in conversation is determined by the situation where the conversation takes place. Therefore, this framework should provide the means to understand the meaning of the utterances of lies in given situations, such as lies used in undesirable communicative situations. This framework also takes into account social and cultural factors which affect construal of the concerned utterances. Schiffrin states: "The meaning, structure, and use of language are socially and culturally relative [in interactional sociolinguistics]", and therefore, this framework is the theory to address these aspects of language in communication (Schiffrin, 1996, p. 312). Interactional sociolinguistics is a useful framework to analyse the use of lies in conversation and reveal culturally related aspects of lying for this study.

Second, politeness theories are introduced as they strengthen interpretation of the findings. Politeness theory is underpinned by the notion that people act to maintain relationships with others in their social interactions. Particular actions like refusals are likely to cause problems as they could offend the recipients of refusals. People who perform refusals often do something to soften the tone of their refusals for the maintenance of the relationships with the recipients. Thus, to understand this type of behaviour, politeness theories are useful.

Third, cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories are also required to make a comparison between the findings from the Japanese data and the New Zealand data. As Thomas (1983) said, people from different cultures often do not share social norms or protocols of communication: "1. In different cultures, different pragmatic 'ground rules' may be invoked; 2. Relative values such as 'politeness', 'perspicuousness', may be ranked in a different order by a different culture" (p. 106). In this study I seek to find the pragmatic "ground rules" and "values" in lying in Japan and New Zealand. Japanese and New Zealand people might have different rules and protocols to follow in lying. Even if they share similar types of rules, the application and/or the priorities of those rules might be different between the two groups. To address these aspects, cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories are needed.

I next examine these three approaches in more depth.

3.1.1 Interactional sociolinguistics

This framework, as the term states, is a type of *sociolinguistics* which aims to reveal what one is saying and doing in conversation by examining *interactions* with reference to the social and cultural factors underpinning the conversation (Schiffrin, 1994, 1996). These social and cultural factors are, for example, the cultural background of the conversational participants, the relationship between participants, and the social meanings of the given situation of the conversation. Interactional sociolinguistics is employed to interpret the particular functions and meanings of lies within given contexts. This framework provides the means to see how lies work in certain settings: what the speakers' intentions are, what the hearers' perceptions are, and which cultural norms underlie their use of language.

According to the framework of interactional sociolinguistics, utterances in conversation can only be interpreted in the context of each particular setting and the context includes cultural and social factors. Gumperz (2001) explained:

> Interactional sociolinguistics . . . has its origin in the search for replicable methods of qualitative analysis that account for our ability to interpret what participants intend to convey in everyday communicative practice. It is well known that conversationalists always rely on knowledge that goes beyond grammar and lexicon to make themselves heard. But how such knowledge affects understanding is still not sufficiently understood. (p. 215)

According to this framework, a meaning of each utterance is determined in the particular situation where the concerned utterance is delivered. To comprehend each utterance, contextual information in the situation has to be utilised. The meaning determined in this way is called "situated meaning" in this framework. "Situated meaning" is, as Gumperz described above, "knowledge that goes beyond grammar and lexicon". Schiffrin expresses that the situated meaning is "socially and culturally relative" matters (Schiffrin, 1996, p. 307).

Interactional sociolinguistics is important in three ways: first, it reveals situated meaning of particular types of utterances and culturally related communication style. Second, it helps to understand the rationale behind those particular types of utterances and communication style—which is related to cultural preferences and protocols. And third, these findings enable us to

understand miscommunication at intercultural situations which occurs because of the different cultural backgrounds of the participants of the conversation (Hashiuchi, 1999; Tannen, 1984). Researchers using the framework of interactional sociolinguistics deliver these research outcomes by examining concerned utterances as well as interactions where the concerned utterances take place and by considering the social and cultural factors.

To clarify the usefulness of this framework for my purposes I discuss some studies (e.g., Tannen, 1984; Turner & Hiraga, 2003; Watanabe, 1993) that have employed it. I also discuss how I adapted this framework to this study.

3.1.1.1 Previous studies with interactional sociolinguistics

Tannen (1984) employed interactional sociolinguistics to reveal the culturally distinctive conversational style of Jewish discourse. She examined the conversational data that occurred in two different cultural groups, such as New York Jewish and non-Jewish, and clarified the differences between the groups. In a comparison of Jewish people's conversation to non-Jewish' conversation, various cultural characteristic conversational styles were revealed; for example, Jewish people often asked a lot of questions in a high pitch and at a rapid rate. Tannen named this type of communication style "machine-gun questions". Giving firing a volley of questions could be taken as rude. But Tannen's analysis revealed that it was not perceived as rude, but rather appropriate among Jewish people. This type of communicative strategies functions among Jewish people to show a strong interest to the person who received those "machine-gun questions". Tannen's study with interactional sociolinguistics achieved the real meaning of "machine-gun questions" which occurred in certain situations.

Turner and Hiraga (2003) revealed cultural difference between Japanese and English discourse in a pedagogical setting. They analysed conversational data collected from British and Japanese students who were studying at an art school located in London and examined the social expectations held by each society. Turner and Hiraga analysed the students' utterances to see how the students handled their tutors' questions and how their tutors reacted. Their interactions showed that Japanese students were trained to store up knowledge, but not to

develop their own opinions. British students, on the other hand, were taught to express their own opinions and saw tutorials as an opportunity to do so. Turner and Hiraga's findings indicated that cultural differences in assumptions about tutorials created different patterns of conversations in the context of the tutorials between British and Japanese students. Their study demonstrated that communication was underpinned by social norms and expectations.

Watanabe's (1993) study using this framework revealed differences in discussion style between American and Japanese conversations. She asked groups of Japanese and American students to discuss their experience of learning languages. Each group held a discussion in their native language.

The first difference that emerged in the conversations was that the Japanese and American students began the discussion differently. The second difference was about the way of explanation.

I will not describe the details of Watanabe (1993) here now as I will discuss her findings in later chapters of this thesis to interpret the findings of the present study. Watanabe demonstrated that social norms and expectations explained the differences observed between Japanese and American students' discussion, particularly in the ways of organising conversations.

These three studies demonstrated that the use of interactional sociolinguistics in the analysis of utterances may enable the cultural norms and expectations that underpin conversation to be revealed.

3.1.1.2 Interactional sociolinguistics for this study

I examine interactions in conversational data in this study to understand the use of lies in interpersonal communicative situations. I will use this framework for analysis on a limited basis: I will not look at every single utterance of the conversations from beginning to end but will mainly focus on utterances of lies and the reactions to those lies, that is, how participants use untruthful excuses in refusal conversations and how these excuses are reacted to. I will also look at any other relevant utterances.[6] This is partly due to limited space in the thesis. I

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[6] I will, however, examine some conversations from beginning to end in the early sections of Chapter Five.

decided to focus on examining a wider range of conversational data in order to reveal particular cultural characteristics that appear in each data set. I also intended to find general tendencies across the Japanese data and across the New Zealand data. In order to analyse such a large number of data, I needed to focus on the most important and relevant utterances only.

As I emphasised above, I agree with the notion behind the framework: understanding the meaning of utterances requires seeing them in interaction. Therefore, as a compromise, I mainly examine the utterances of lying and what comes before and after.

This approach sheds light on how lies function in particular circumstances. It seeks to clarify characteristics in each data set, and to understand the cultural rationale underpinning certain ways of communication regarding the use of lies.

For this study I analyse verbal behaviour, that is, linguistic expressions that the participants used in their conversations. Some researchers who analyse conversational data within the framework of interactional sociolinguistics examine verbal as well as non-verbal behaviours (Schiffrin, 1996). However, many researchers, including Gumperz mentioned above, analyse verbal behaviour only; they use this framework to examine what and how people use certain utterances to communicate in given situations. The present study also follows these processes in order to reveal the use of lies; namely the types of lies people tell (in other words, *what they say*) and differences in lies among people of different cultures.

Next, I discuss politeness theories. People are almost always required to have some degree of politeness in communication with others (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In particular, the participants of the present study were expected to have politeness in order to pursue their given task—refusals to a request/invitation. Therefore, politeness theories are required to analyse data for this study.

3.1.2 Politeness theories

For this study, politeness theories are needed to explain how people might use politeness in lying to avoid potential communicative obstacles in awkward situations such as refusals. As mentioned in the previous chapter, politeness is

normally required to perform refusals as nobody wants to be refused—unless they do not care about the relationship with or feelings of the person being refused.

The framework of politeness provides the means for examining the effectiveness of lies used in refusal conversations. Politeness is used for discerning speakers' intention and hearers' perceptions. The framework should help explore the cultural norms underlying speakers' use of such lies. In this section, I briefly explain the politeness theory posed by Brown and Levinson (1987), and then discuss some studies that have applied politeness theories and cultural issues related to politeness in the present study.

3.1.2.1 Brown and Levinson's politeness theory

Brown and Levinson (1987) established politeness theory starting with a definition of people's "basic wants". These wants concern the self-image that members of the public want to claim for themselves. These wants are called *face*. There are two types of face. One is "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" (p. 61). The other one is "negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction—i.e., to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (p. 61). Actions which undermine these two types of face are called face-threatening acts (FTAs). Refusals which threaten the positive face of the inviter or requester by expressing disapproval of an invitation or a request are, therefore, FTAs. Politeness theory provides effective explanations of how people deal with FTAs, including refusals.

Needless to say, complete avoidance of FTAs would be ideal, but this is not possible at all times. When FTAs occur, "it is in general in every participant's best interest to maintain each other's face, that is to act in ways that assure the other participants that the agent is heedful of the assumption concerning face" (Brown & Levinson, 1987). To minimise the threats caused by FTAs and to maintain people's face, politeness strategies are employed. For instance, when people refuse an invitation, they may apologise ("I'm sorry"), express a wish ("I wish I could accept your invitation, but…"), suggest an alternative plan ("what

about next Wednesday instead?"), and give an excuse ("I have already arranged something on that night"). These are all politeness strategies, which soften the tone of refusals and minimise the possible threats.

People choose politeness strategies based on their own assessment of the given situation. Brown and Levinson (1987) listed three factors used to assess the seriousness of FTAs and choose appropriate strategies: the social distance between speaker and hearer, the relative power disparity between speaker and hearer and the ranking of imposition. When the distance and/or disparity between speaker and hearer are wider, the seriousness is higher; therefore, the speaker is required to use more and/or stronger politeness strategies. If the ranking of imposition is low, the seriousness is low and politeness strategies would be needed less. For example, people would be more polite making a request to their boss than to a friend. Another example of ranking of imposition arises when people change their way of asking a favour depending on the magnitude of the favour. People might make a request simply to borrow a pen to take a quick note, but politeness strategies would be required more if they wanted to borrow 10,000 dollars.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, giving an explanation of the reasons for refusing is one of the strategies (Beebe et al., 1990, Brown & Levinson, 1987, Goffman, 1971) and "giv[ing] reasons" is recorded as *Strategy 13* in Brown and Levinson (1987, pp. 128-129). Numerous studies have shown that this is one of the most frequently used strategies for refusals (for example, Beebe et al., 1990). But there is little study on the contents of the reason. To minimise the damage from FTAs, the contents of the reason must be important.

In order to give a satisfactory and reasonably polite explanation for refusals, people may lie. This is because giving the true reason to decline a request/invitation sometimes would not be polite enough. Politeness theories allow perspectives that enable researchers to understand what types of lies, or in the case of this study—untruthful excuses, exist, and how they are used in conversation as a means to carry out refusals.

3.1.2.2 Cultural differences regarding the politeness theory

Brown and Levinson posed their theory as being "universal", but this does not mean that this theory can be blindly applied to any language use in any culture. The presence of face itself is a universal phenomenon, but "the situated and affective meaning of face differ[s] from one culture to the next" (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2003, p. 129). In particular, researchers who have studied on languages other than English challenged Brown and Levinson's theory (Haugh, 2005; Walkinshaw, 2009). Kasper (2005) remarked: "Face can be correctly understood only in the context of notions of self, emphasising that such notions are necessarily informed by culturally varying perceptions of personhood and relationships between an individual and society" (p. 64). Even Brown and Levinson (1987) themselves noted that "the content of face will differ in different cultures" (p. 61).

Japanese studies remarked on this issue as well. For example, Ide (2006) analysed Japanese politeness behaviour and found that certain behaviours could not be explained by Brown and Levinson's theory. She claimed that the theory relied on English language analysis and the fundamental perception of politeness was different among different cultures. For instance, Japanese people must understand the formality of the situation they are in and choose appropriate expressions, grammatical forms and so on. This type of politeness is used not because of the speaker's or addressee's face (Ide, 2006, p. 72). Thus, the politeness theory, as developed by Brown and Levinson, has limitations to explain verbal behaviour observed in non-Western societies like Japan, as is the case in this study.

One of the key underpinnings of Brown and Levinson's theory is that people voluntarily choose strategies to manage FTAs. This tendency is not universal according to Ide. Ide (2006) and Ide, Hill, Carned, Ogino and Kawasaki (1992) claimed that Japanese people behaved politely, not voluntarily but obligatorily, in many situations. In other words, so-called "strategies" in Brown and Levinson (1987) are not really strategies, but rules or regulations to be followed from the perspective of Japanese people. Ide named this type of politeness behaviour *wakimae*. She used a Japanese word to describe this even in

her English publications and the word "discernment" and the expression "sense of place" were used to explain its concept. However, she preferred to use the original Japanese word *wakimae* rather than any English words because of the uniqueness of Japanese politeness (Ide, 2006, p. 115 and p. 199). People in Japan are almost always expected to discern given situations and behave accordingly. If people did not follow *wakimae* rules, they would need to be prepared for the consequences.

Fraser (1990) also made a remark similar to Ide's: "It [politeness] simply involves getting on with the task at hand in light of the terms and condition of conversational contract" which was intended to explain behaviour in general (Fraser, 1990, p. 233). The key point of this remark is that politeness behaviour is not a choice. Fraser referred to this rule governed behaviour as "the terms and conditions" of communication in this context. To determine the "terms and conditions" which need to be followed, people obviously have to discern the situation correctly first and then behave accordingly. Ide's *wakimae* has some commonality with what Fraser described as "an adherence to the obligations" (Fraser, 1990, p. 233) which, in Fraser's terms, is an "obligation" rather than a chosen strategy.

So far I have discussed the application of politeness theory in different cultures. But the application is not the only point which shows cultural differences. According to Ide et al. (2005), even the concept "politeness" itself is different, in particular, between Americans and Japanese. This means that American and Japanese people possibly have different ideas on how to be polite to others.

In order to establish the concept of politeness in America and Japan, Ide et al. (1992) organised a questionnaire survey in which they asked American and Japanese respondents, 211 and 282 respectively, to rate several situations using a range of given adjectives. Those adjectives were "polite", "respectful", "considerate", "pleasant", "friendly", "appropriate", "casual", "conceited", "offensive" and "rude". Ide et al. found that both American and Japanese respondents chose the adjectives "respectful" and "polite" to describe a situation. This indicates that both American and Japanese respondents thought that "respectful" and "polite" were similar conceptually. In other words, both American and Japanese people would think that being respectful is equal to being polite. However, the Japanese respondents judged "friendly" quite differently

from the American respondents. To a lesser extent, "appropriate" showed a difference between the Japanese and the Americans.

The adjective "friendly" was judged to be similar to "polite" in the American data, but close to "rude" in the Japanese data. Thus, "friendly" behaviour could be recognised as "polite" behaviour in America but not in Japan. I could imagine a scene in which American people talk to strangers in a *friendly* manner, for example, when they happen to share the same compartment in a public train. This type of behaviour would be almost certainly taken as a *polite* gesture in America. Some Japanese people might behave in a similar way but Japanese would not necessarily welcome that sort of friendly manner; it might instead be taken as intrusive or *rude* behaviour. This is because the notion of "polite" does not include "friendly" in Japanese, according to Ide et al. (1992).

Ide et al. showed another notable difference, which was that "appropriate" was regarded as close to "polite" by the Japanese respondents but this finding was not strongly supported by the American respondents. To be polite in Japan, people's behaviour should be appropriate, but this would not necessarily be the case in America. Being appropriate would require people to understand the situation where there are in accurately – formal or not formal, for example. Thus, these results suggest that the notion of being "polite" is not exactly the same between American and Japanese people.

As mentioned above, refusals, which this study investigates, are FTAs; therefore, behaviours concerned with some degree of politeness are expected in the data of refusal conversations of this study. Previous studies, however, have suggested that English and Japanese show differences in the application and the concept of politeness. I examine the data of this study using the framework of politeness and interpret what "polite" is in Japan and New Zealand.

Next, cross-cultural theories which relate to interpersonal communication are discussed below.

3.1.3 Cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories

Because this study compares how Japanese and New Zealand people lie in interpersonal communicative situations, cross-cultural perspectives are required

for analysis. This study uses three key cross-cultural theories—the concept of individualism/collectivism (I/C), in-group/out-group differentiation, and uncertainty avoidance.

3.1.3.1 Individualism/collectivism

One of the most frequently employed dimensions in cross-cultural studies is the concept of individualism/collectivism (I/C). Kim (1994) argues that I/C provides a useful perspective to interpret interpersonal cross-cultural communication. Since this study examines behaviours of lying in interpersonal communicative situations, I/C is useful for understanding the data.

According to Triandis (1994), Japan is considered to be a collectivistic country and New Zealand an individualistic country. According to Hofstede (2001), Japan is a moderately collectivist country. Japan could be thought of as a collectivistic country in this study as it appears to be much more collectivistic in comparison to New Zealand; Japanese collectivism has been also confirmed by Japanese scholars as well (Yamaguchi, 1994).

Individualistic cultures recognise each individual as a basic unit while collectivistic cultures think of groups as such a unit (Triandis, 1994). These attributes are thought to determine people's way of thinking and behavioural tendencies. For example, the concept of individualism expects that "individuals are *rational* and able to use reason to make personal choices", while collectivism assumes that individuals are "linked in a web of interrelatedness. Individuals are conceived to be embedded and situated in particular roles and status" (Kim, Triandis, Kâğitçibaşi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994, pp. 7-8, italics is in the original). Given that New Zealand falls in the individualism category (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1994), I/C might explain the apparent differences to some extent between Japanese and the New Zealand people's behaviour.

Hofstede's (2001) study is one of the most frequently referred to studies in terms of I/C. While I am aware of critiques on Hofstede's study (Chuang, 2003; McSweeney, 2002; Takano, 2008), the claims Hofstede (2001) made in his study reflect to some extent aspects of the national cultures of, for example, Japan and New Zealand, two of the countries he targeted in his survey.

The Individualism Index, used by Hofstede (2001), shows the degree of a country's individualism. New Zealanders ranked 6th out of 53 countries and regions according to his Individualism Index Values, whereas Japan ranked 22nd/23rd (Hofstede, 2001, pp. 215). Hofstede's analysis (2001) showed that New Zealand was more individualistic than Japan. Previous studies suggested that each member of an individualistic society is different. This means that each respects the uniqueness of the individual, and each accepts debate and confrontation (Triandis, 1994). Triandis also claimed that "[i]ndividualism is high in generally the English-speaking countries" (Triandis, 1994, p. 41). Triandis's study indicated as well that New Zealanders are expected to display characteristics of individualism. These categorisations are, however, general tendencies of behaviour in specific nation states, and within these groupings, individuals in certain contexts and communicative situations may well behave differently from these broad, sweeping roles that Hofstede has identified as being culture specific.

3.1.3.2 In-group/out-group differentiation

In regard to the concept of I/C, Nishida (2004b) remarked that people from collectivist societies, more than those from individualist societies, differentiate in-group and out-group people: "In-group" people normally include friends and family whereas "out-group" people are acquaintances and strangers. Nishida (2006) showed this cultural difference using his study comparing Japanese (collectivist) and American (individualist) university students. He found that Japanese more than American students found differences between their own classmates and mere acquaintances. That is, Japanese students felt that, in-group people (classmates) and out-group people (acquaintances) were different, but this was not the case for American students. Differentiation between in-group and out-group people could be achieved by the following two approaches: (1) people would show polite behaviour to out-group people but not to in-group people; or (2) people would be moderately polite to in-group people but be extraordinarily polite to out-group people.

This claim is endorsed by Nishida; he reported that Japanese people in particular differentiate in-group and out-groups clearly (Nishida, 2004b, p. 54). Nisbett's (2003) model, shown in Figure 2 below, demonstrates this distinction.

Figure 2

Eastern and Western views of the relations among self, in-group, and out-group
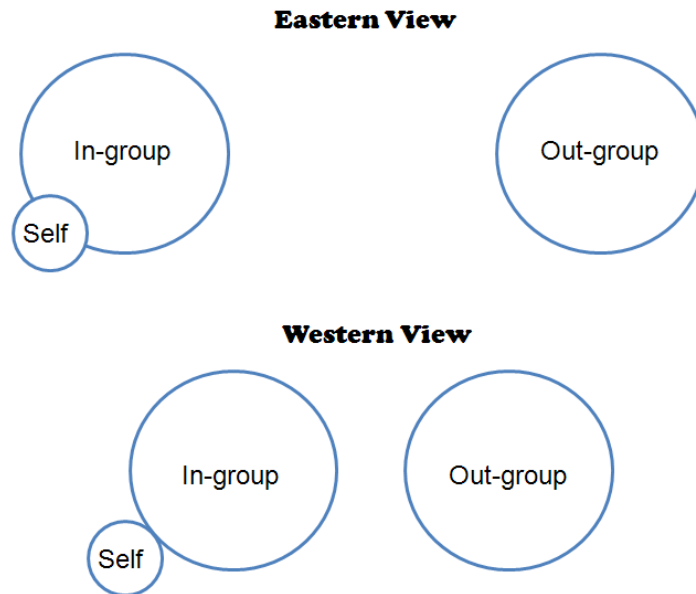
Reprinted from *The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently... and why* (p. 52), by R. E. Nisbett, 2003, New York, NY: The Free Press. Copyright 2003 by R. E. Nisbett.

Nisbett's diagram shows two salient differences between the Eastern and Western views. I note that this type of dichotomised categories has been criticised as it is over simplified. For example, Nadamitsu, Chen and Friedrich (2000) warned about this type of categorisation with their comparative analysis of two "Eastern" nations: Chinese and Japanese. China and Japan are geographically closely located but they are not same in many respects. Nadamitsu et al. presented various examples of the differences between Chinese and Japanese people. Researchers cannot put these two nations into one category "Eastern" nation and discuss them together. Yet, the figure above proposed by Nisbett is useful to demonstrate the possible difference between the Japanese and New Zealand data of this study. I will later cite another presentation from Kimura (1982). Kimura also used the

term "Westerners". Again, all "Western" nations are not same. Yet, Kimura's presentation is also useful to explain some cultural issues relevant to this study. Therefore, I cite these figures and discuss them in detail in this chapter.

First, in terms of the position of "self", in the Eastern view in Figure 2 above, self is half-embedded in the in-group circle, while in the Western view self is attached to the in-group but is clearly not part of the circle. Second, the distance between the circles of in-group and out-group is different in the Eastern and Western views; the circles convey the relative distance between in-group and out-group. To show the different distances clearly, I modify Figure 2 by adding arrows between the circles shown in Figure 3 below. These differences indicate that "Easterners feel embedded in their in-groups and distant from their out-groups. Westerners feel relatively detached from their in-groups and tend not to make as greater distinctions between in-group and out-group" (Nisbett, 2003, p. 51).

Figure 3

Eastern and Western views of the relations among self, in-group, and out-group with arrows
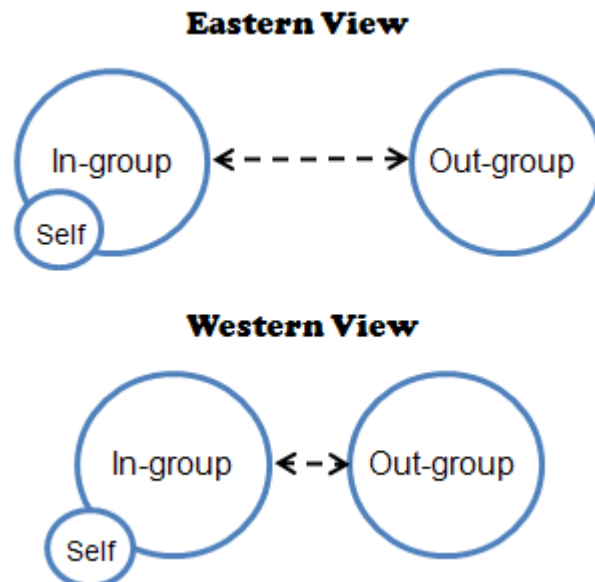
Adapted from *The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently… and why* (p. 52), by R. E. Nisbett, 2003, New York, NY: The Free Press. Copyright 2003 by R. E. Nisbett.

A similar model to Nisbett's (2003) can also be found in Kimura (1982). Although Kimura contrasted Japanese, rather than Easterners in general, with Westerners, Nisbett's basic notions are identifiable in Kimura's model (Figure 4) below.

Figure 4

Dynamic model of interpersonal relationships
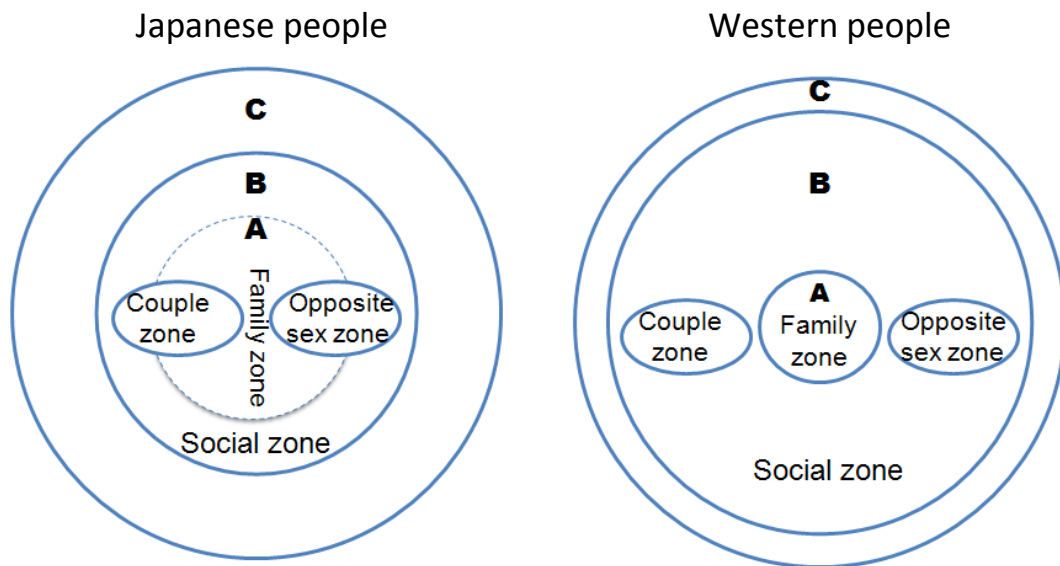
From *Nihonjin no taijin kyohu [Japanese anthropophobia]* (p. 115), by S. Kimura, 1982, Tokyo, Japan: Keiso Shobo. Copyright 1982 by S. Kimura. Reprinted and translated with permission.

Zone A is the family zone. It only includes close people such as family members, boy/girlfriends and/or spouses. Zone B is called the social zone and all sorts of social interactions such as greetings and conversations happen there. Zone C is not specifically named and it is explained as a zone where interactional relations do not exist (Kimura, 1982, pp. 13-14). Strangers, people seen on the street, for example, belong to zone C.

These figures are mainly drawn with solid lines. But the figure for Japanese people shows a dotted line between zones A and B. This indicates that the boundary between the zones is not so rigid. This condition allows the possibility of mixing among family, couple, and opposite sex zones. The lack of a rigid boundary between zones A and B also means that close friends would

possibly be treated in a similar manner to people in zone A. People in zone B could easily become quasi-zone A members in Japan, as Kimura explained (pp. 116-117).

The figure for Western people is drawn only with solid lines. Zone A consists of only family members. Couples and opposite sex people are part of the social zone. Unlike the figure for Japanese people, the figure for Western people shows clear boundaries among zones.

Notable differences between Japanese and Western people are found in zones A and B. Zone A's difference concerns the boundary line: the diagram for Western people has one clear component in zone A, while the boundary line of zone A in the Japanese figure blurs which is shown with the dotted line. This means zone A of the Japanese people could be joined by people who originally belong to zone B. There is another difference in relation to zone A: the Westerners' zone A has only one type of members, who are family members, whereas the Japanese zone A could have non-family members as described above.

The difference in zone B is about its size. The Westerners' zone B is much bigger than that of the Japanese. This means that for Westerners, most people would fall into zone B. For Japanese, not so many people would fall into zone B, and to compare this to the Westerners' case, people who would be part of zone B for Westerners could be categorised as people of zone C.

Kimura's model indicates that in general Western people treat most other people more or less equally as almost of all people are in the social zone, zone B. Japanese people, on the other hand, do not have a big social circle. Many people are recognised either as zone A/quasi-zone A people, or zone C people and there are not many people in zone B. In other words, close people are treated as *very close* and most of other people are put at a distance in Japan. These indications are consistent with Nisbett's (2003) remarks.

These previous studies imply that Japanese people, who are the Easterners, tend to differentiate in-group and out-group people while New Zealand people, the Westerners, tend not to do so. Japanese people would treat their "friends" as very close friends while New Zealand people would treat any friends and any acquaintances in their social life more or less equally. What this means to the

present study is that the Japanese and New Zealand participants would possibly behave differently (Kimura, 1982; Nisbett, 2003; Nishida, 2004b, 2006).

3.1.3.3 Uncertainty avoidance

Another issue of cross-cultural interpersonal communication related to the present study is uncertainty avoidance. This is a dimension of national culture presented in Hofstede (2001). Hofstede developed an uncertainty avoidance index (UAI) which shows the degrees of preference for avoiding uncertainty. Hofstede explained that "the high-UAI society seeks clarity, structure, and purity; the low-UAI society is comfortable with ambiguity, chaos, novelty, and convenience" (p. 161). For example, the high-UAI people are not good at dealing with unfamiliar situations while the low-UAI people are not afraid of such situations. The high-UAI people prefer to play by the rules and this is not necessarily the case for the low-UAI people.

According to Hofstede (2001), Japanese have a high incidence and New Zealanders a low incidence of uncertainty avoidance. These characteristics could be a key to understand people's behaviour on how to manage undesirable communicative situations because such situations could possibly contain uncertain elements.

The UAI of the Japanese informants in Hofstede's (2001) survey ranked 7th while the New Zealand informants ranked 39th/40th among the 53 countries and regions targeted (New Zealand and South Africa were equal). These findings suggest that while Japanese people are highly likely to avoid uncertainty, New Zealanders are the opposite.

The Japanese tendency to avoid uncertainty seems to be evident in many studies about Japanese people and culture. One of the cultural values for Japanese people was harmony within a group. One described this as "harmonious Japan" (Noda, 2004, p. 95) and another researcher explained "[Japanese] cultural values emphasize the importance of avoiding confrontation and maintaining harmony" (Jones, 1995, p. 142). A concrete way of exercising this value was observed by some other researchers. Kondo (2007) reported that Japanese people changed topics of conversation when they encountered disagreement or conflict. At times,

Japanese people can quite suddenly change a topic of conversation to avoid confrontation among the participants. Kondo reported that, when used at international business meetings, this type of tactic for preserving harmony confused those who were not Japanese. This type of strategy was also remarked in a Japanese language textbook (Tohsaku, 2006).

This tendency of Japanese can be explained in terms of Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance as uncertainty could be taken as a threat to harmony because of insecurity about possible consequences. The findings from Hofstede (2001) suggest that, generally speaking, Japanese people would make language choices which avoid uncertainty in communication, while New Zealanders would not in similar situations. Japanese people also tend to value harmony highly while New Zealanders are more able to tolerate non-harmonious situations.

However, a cautious application of this theory is required. As mentioned above, Nishida (2006), drawing on his comparative study of Japanese and American university students, noted that Japanese students felt less uncertainty towards their own classmates than American students did towards theirs (p. 148). Beebe and Takahashi (1989) also showed that Japanese were sometimes more direct than American people, particularly when they talked to a lower-power interlocutor. These contradictory findings from Hofstede, Nishida, and Beebe and Takahashi mean that researchers should be cautious to apply this type of theory: application of one theory might be too simplistic. To this end, Kim et al. (1994) qualified Hofstede's claim by suggesting that it would probably stand in default situations, and they thus referred to his study as a direction supplier for cross-cultural studies. This means that Hofstede's framework could explain general tendencies, but not necessarily specific situations such as communication occurring between close friends.

When one sees somebody whom one knows well, uncertainty between them is likely to disappear or at least diminish to some extent. In Japanese cases, according to Nishida (2006), the closeness among participants of conversations would make a great impact on their behaviour. Kim (1994) therefore clarified that, "the generic nature of I/C must be contextualised within each culture, and the meaning and phenomenology of experience must be added to the content of I/C" (p. 40).

Thus, in cross-cultural studies like this particular study, it is necessary to look at the big picture—on both a cultural as well as an individual level—and interpret the findings of the data cautiously. In this study, I look closely at data to reveal the tendencies of behaviour seen among most participants as well as at details of each communication and interpret the findings by using multiple theories.

3.1.4 Summary

This section has discussed three frameworks of importance to the present study, interactional sociolinguistics; politeness theories; and cross-cultural interpersonal communicative theories.

Interactional sociolinguistics helps to shed light on the similarities and differences between Japanese and New Zealand people's behaviour and the cultural norms and protocols underlying their conversations. These findings are then examined and interpreted with the politeness theories and the cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories which are the concepts of individualism/collectivism, in-group/out-group differentiation, and uncertainty avoidance. These frameworks give this study a guidance to interpret the findings on the use of lies observed in the Japanese and the New Zealand data.

The aims of this study can be described by borrowing phrases from previous studies, which are to reveal "different ground rules" (Thomas, 1983) and "the knowledge that all of us already have" (Schiffrin, 1996) in regard to the use of lies. To achieve these aims, the three frameworks discussed above would be useful.

3.2 Methodology

This section provides the methodology underpinning this study. First, I outline methodological challenges that this study faced; this is because methodological problems are inherent in a study of lies. Then, I discuss possible methodological choices for the study and, last, summarise the methodological choice I made and the rationale for the decision based on the prior discussion.

3.2.1 The methodological challenges

I needed to collect spoken/conversational data of lies used in refusal situations. However, it is almost impossible to collect firsthand data on lying. As mentioned in the previous chapter, people manage to lie successfully most of the time in their daily lives, thus implying that, it is difficult to notice lies immediately in our real life (DePaulo et al., 1996; Murai, 2000). People lie when they have something to hide from other people; therefore, revealing the truth behind lying is clearly contrary to the nature of lies.

Moreover, this study is a cross-cultural study and examines two sets of data collected from people of different cultural backgrounds. It requires a reasonably large number of data based on similar conditions for the comparison. It is realistically impossible to collect a body of conversational data with similar content from different cultures in natural settings. Thus, I had to discover a way of obtaining something similar to real conversational data on lying.

This type of problem is common not only to the study of lies. Mackey and Gass (2005) observed that many researchers of interpersonal communication would be likely to face this type of problem. Mackey and Gass used a study of rudeness to explain the difficulty of data collection. Again, it is almost impossible to gain enough conversational data from real life on rudeness to "draw reasonable generalizations" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 86). As the current study shared this type of data collection problem, I had to "create contexts that require the necessary tokens" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 86).

To overcome this problem, Mackey and Gass (2005) introduced several alternatives to data collection. One was the discourse completion test (DCT) technique and the other was the role-play technique. This study employed the latter, although many cross-cultural studies have employed DCT. The reason for this choice will be given in the following section.

3.2.2 The possible data collection techniques

In this section, I describe the two techniques—discourse completion test and role-play techniques. I also discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each technique to explain how I reached a decision as to which technique to adopt for this study.

3.2.2.1 Discourse completion test (DCT)

DCT is, as briefly described in the previous chapter, a **T**est to ask research respondents to **C**omplete **D**iscourse by filling gaps that appear in the discourse. Researchers devise a question sheet with blanks as exemplified below:

> Person A: How are you
> Person B: _____ (← blank, to be filled by a respondent)
> Person A: Not too bad.

Respondents would likely fill in the blank above with "I'm fine. And you?" Researchers hand out question sheets to potential respondents and collect them once the respondents have completed them.

One of DCT's merits is that it is relatively easy to get a number of data in a limited time period (Gass & Houck, 1999) because many types of question sheets can be sent by post, fax, and e mail. Nowadays researchers use the Internet as well. Also researchers do not have to supervise the respondents completing a questionnaire. Although the retrieval rate of completed questionnaires would not be necessarily high, DCT is considered a relatively easy means of acquiring data.

However, DCT has a disadvantage as well, which is the limitation in the length of the data. In the above example, small talk, which often occurs after "how are you?"/"I'm fine" type of exchanges, might emerge in real life (Ide, 2005). But this type of talk cannot be collected with DCT. This technique is not suitable for the purpose of collecting certain length of conversation.

As the present study required the extended conversation for the analysis of lies, DCT was not chosen.

3.2.2.2 Role-play technique

Another technique used to collect data for cross-cultural studies is role-play. Role-play is, as the term suggests, **play**ing a certain **role** directed by someone conducting research.

There are two types of role-plays: closed role-play and open role-play. Closed role-play can be described as an oral version of DCT. A scenario with a blank is prepared in advance and delivered orally. For example, a researcher utters "how are you?" to a research participant and records the participant's response. This procedure is repeated with different participants.

Nelson, Carson, Batal, and Bakary (2002) used this closed role-play technique to find out how refusals were delivered in Arabic. They aimed to examine *'aamiyya*, a version of Arabic that is mainly spoken. Nelson et al. chose this data collection technique "because they [closed role-play conversations] more closely resemble real life communication than written role plays" (p.168). The provision of a setting for closed role-play helps participants feel the conversation is close to reality because they have to perform. But the technique's limitation is that "it does not allow a free range of answers or interaction" (Gass & Houck, 1999. p. 6) because the phrases the researcher utters to the participants have to be all set in advance. This does not allow free conversations to occur.

On the other hand, open role-play technique allows "a free range" of conversational data to be collected. Open role-play provides situations for research participants in which they are instructed to create a conversation based on the given scenario. For example, a situation might be "you are a university student on campus and you see a classmate walking towards you. Please greet her/him". The participants would be likely to start their conversation with an exchange such as "hi" "how are you?" but the choice of expressions is totally up to the participants. Thus, some other participants might start with an exchange like "howdy" "what's up?" Also, the participants could continue the conversation after this type of exchange, which would most likely result in longer data being collected than that with DCT. This is an advantage of the open role-play technique.

Another advantage of role-play technique is in the naturalness of data elicited. This aspect was discussed in Gass and Houck (1999) with reference to

previous studies, such as those by Turnbull (1994) and Sasaki (1998). Both Turnbull and Sasaki collected DCT data as well as role-play data for their studies, and also actual telephone conversations in the case of Turnbull's study. Their conclusion, based on the comparison among those methods, was "open role plays seem the closest to what we might expect to reflect naturally occurring speech events" (Gass & Houck, 1999, p. 7). This method also enables researchers to collect identical role-plays in similar contexts from different groups. However, the major disadvantage of role-play technique is that it is cumbersome to operate and time-consuming (Buttny, 1993; Gass & Houck, 1999).

To conclude, I chose the technique of open role-play to examine the use of lies in undesirable communicative situations within these two groups of people for three reasons: (1) role-play yields conversational data rather than just one or two utterances (which is the case with DCT); (2) the technique enables me to collect the closest possible data to real lies, and (3) the technique permits the acquisition of data from two cultures under similar contexts. This is important since I want to reveal the distinctive features of lying in each culture by a comparative analysis.

The following section describes the method undertaken in this study to collect data.

3.3 Method

In this study, the role-play method was used to collect data. This section describes the data collection process—namely, the construction and implementation of role-play scenarios for data collection, the analytical focus—lies, the identification and sampling of research participants, the ethical considerations, and the transcription and analysis of audio-recorded conversational data.

3.3.1 Scenarios for the role-play data collection

In order to investigate how people in Japan and New Zealand might use a lie, I set up role-play conversation sessions. I instructed the participants to perform a role-play using an untruthful excuse in a refusal situation. To collect useful

conversational data for the study, the role-play scenarios were carefully developed considering the following aspects.

First, the scenarios had to be as close-to-real to enable the participants to pretend easily that these situations were real. I also consulted scholars in Japan and New Zealand in the development of scenarios that sounded natural in both cultures and that something familiar to potential participants.

Second, the scenarios had to allow people to develop their own conversation because I wanted to see what types of lies they would tell. For this purpose, I set scenarios enabling the participants to make their own excuses in refusal situations.

Third, the scenarios had to represent undesirable communication situations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, nobody wants to refuse nor wants to be refused, thus, refusals are good scenarios for this aim.

Last, and most importantly, the scenarios had to be ones in which people would naturally tell a lie. People may use untruthful excuses to turn down a request/invitation; therefore, refusals are good for this aim too.

After considering the points raised above, three scenarios of refusals, namely one request-refusal and two invitation-refusal scenarios were set for role-play data collection for this study. The reason for setting scenarios of request-refusals as well as invitation-refusals was in order to find any common tendencies seen in refusal situations in general.

The reason for setting two scenarios of invitation-refusals was to see if there are common tendencies in managing undesirable communicative situations regardless of the seriousness of the situation, in other words, regardless of the ranking of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This factor might or might not affect the ways of managing the given situations. For example, Holmes (1990) revealed that high ranking of imposition affected the language that participants used to apologise. Scenarios Two and Three described below are both invitation-refusal situations: Scenario Two contains a casual situation (to go to a pub) and Scenario Three includes a serious situation (to go to an organised party). Going to a pub to have a drink is a fairly normal, routine activity and occasion and would not be so difficult for the invitees to decline; namely this situation has low ranking of imposition. The inviters also would not find a reason to persist as they could

ask again some other time. On the other hand, Scenario Three had an invitation to an organised party, which was a one-off occasion. It also involved the effort put into organising the event. In this respect, the ranking of imposition in Scenario Three was higher than that of Scenario Two. It would be useful to see conversations made under these different situations in order to understand the rationale behind certain uses of language.

The following is the description of each scenario[7]:

Scenario One

Role A tries to sell his or her own used microwave to Role B. Role B is not keen on the idea since Role B has heard from somebody else that Role A's microwave oven was quite old. Role B refuses to buy the microwave oven, by not mentioning the fact that Role A's machine is old.

Scenario Two

Role A asks Role B to visit a pub tonight together and Role B declines by making up some excuses.

Scenario Three

Role A invites Role B to a singles party. Role B is not interested in the party since he or she has started going out with somebody. Role B declines the invitation without mentioning his or her girlfriend or boyfriend as Role B just started the relationship and wants to remain quiet about it at the moment.

In the next section, I describe the utterances which I take as lies for this study.

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[7] The actual scenarios will be given later in the finding chapters; see pp. 111-112, pp. 167-168 and pp. 215-216 for Scenarios One, Two and Three respectively.

3.3.2 Data of lies: untruthful excuses for refusals

The untruthful excuses the decliner-role participants used for refusals were considered as data of lies in this study and these lies were the main focus of the analysis.

For this study, "excuses" means explanations of untruthful reason why the decliners would not like to, or could not, meet the request or invitations.

Here is an extract from the request-refusal conversational data collected under Scenario One described above provided by the New Zealand participant pair Number 2 (NZ pair 2, hereafter). The excuse that appears in Example 3.1 below is indicated with →.

EXAMPLE 3.1:

> A: I was wondering um if you would like to buy my old microwave. I know you have not got one. I thought it might be useful for you.
> →B: Yeah. Oh, it is really cool, but, um, my flatmate, he just arranged to get one so.   (NZ pair 2)

In this example, Role A, who was the requester, asked if Role B wanted to buy Role A's microwave oven. This was the initial request in the conversation provided by NZ pair 2. Role B started his response to the request by saying "Yeah. Oh, it is really cool" and then explained his situation, which was that his flatmate had already arranged to get a microwave oven. This explanation was an indirect way of saying that they did not need a microwave oven anymore. Therefore, the utterance indicated with → above conveyed Role B's refusal message to Role A. This was the reason for Role B not to buy Role A's microwave oven, so in this study, I call such an utterance an excuse.

In the next section, I give the information in regard to the participants to this study.

3.3.3 Participant identification and selection

In order to collect sufficient data to address the research goals of this study, I planned to obtain cooperation from university students for the data collection of

this study because of the accessibility to potential participants. In New Zealand, I called for participation at the university where I was undertaking this study. In Japan, I selected two universities where I knew some lecturers personally and could possibly gain cooperation of their students through those lecturers' classes.

The process that I took to access the potential participants was as follows. For the New Zealand data, I invited participation through posters on campus notice boards.[8] For the Japanese data, I visited several lectures in Japan. I had received permission from the lecturers in charge prior to those visits. I was typically given five minutes to explain this study in a classroom alongside a lecturer prior to the lecture beginning. Then I asked the students to contact me by email if they would be happy to participate in this project. Some participants immediately decided to participate at the lecture. In these cases, they approached me in person immediately afterwards. In both the New Zealand and Japanese cases, people were asked to bring one of their friends in real life as I needed to have two people at each session to make a conversation. Participants normally confirmed their agreement to participate via email; otherwise, they confirmed in person.

As a result of this process a total of 32 Japanese pairs and 32 New Zealander pairs participated in this study. The average age among the participants was 22 years for the Japanese and 24 years for the New Zealanders. In both groups, I gained cooperation from more females than males and most pairs were females. In terms of the relationship between the participants in the pairs, the majority were good friends with each other. The details of these aspects are summarised in Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3 Number of participants of role-play data

	Number of participants			Average Age	Number of pairs			
	Male	Female	Total		Male-Male	Female-Female	Male-Female	Total
Japan	14	50	64	21.90	7	25	0	32
NZ	21	43	64	23.89	5	16	11	32

[8] See Appendix A.

Table 4 Relation between the participants of each pair of role-play

	Classmate	Friend	Good Friend	Best Friend	Girlfriend/ Boyfriend	Total
Japan	6	7	16	3	0	32
NZ	5	4	15	3	5	32

3.3.4 Ethical considerations

For the data collection of this study, I was granted an approval from the Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato. I followed the guidelines and regulations provided by the university: the participants were provided with information on this study before agreeing to participate in it; the participants were told that they had right to withdraw from the study at any point in the data collection session. The participants were also assured that their identification would be treated confidentially.

The information on this study was normally provided to the participants prior to the data collection session via email; otherwise, in person. At the session, I reiterated and further explained the purpose and nature of the study, and the procedure of the session. The participants were then asked to sign the research consent form and to fill in a questionnaire about themselves, including their age, gender, and relationship to their conversation partner. I then explained more details of the role-play.

The participants were encouraged to ask any questions if they have any. When I received questions from the participants during this explanation time and the answers were given immediately. After these procedures, the first role-play began.

3.3.5 Procedure of data collection

In each session, each pair of participants enacted three role-plays. Before a conversation began, the participants were given a role card to read. One participant was given a card for Role A and the other participant was given a card for Role B. They were instructed not to share the information on the card. The

participants were told to spend as much time as they needed to understand the role given.

When the participants read the first role card and said they were ready, they started a conversation of the first role-play. After they finished the conversation, they were given the second card. After the second role-play, the third one took place.

For the first and second situations, I asked the Role A participants who played the role of requester or inviter to stand a little away from the Role B participants. The Role B participants were asked to remain seated. The Role A participants were instructed to walk from where they stood towards the Role B participants pretending they happened to find the Role B participants. I conducted the sessions in this way to help the participants feel as if this were real. I did not do this for the third situation as I considered that two performances should be enough for the participants to adopt the pattern of the role-play conversational sessions. Between the first and second situations, the participants changed their roles. This meant that one person played a decliner role twice and the other person played a decliner role once.

I personally met all conversational participants for this study individually and recorded all conversational data myself. While a conversation was going on, I kept myself away from the participants so that they would not be intimidated by my presence. When they finished a conversation, I appeared again and gave them the next role card. All conversations were recorded on audiocassette tapes.

Table 5 below shows the number of conversations I collected and the average length time they took. The numbers of the data shown below do not match the numbers of the participants listed above due to occasional faults of the recording machine.

Table 5 The number of conversations and the time duration of each scenario

	Scenario One		Scenario Two		Scenario Three	
	Number of conversations	Average length of time	Number of conversations	Average length of time	Number of conversations	Average length of time
Japan	32	1 min 32 sec	32	48 sec	32	1 min 59 sec
NZ	32	1 min 27 sec	30	1 min 7 sec	31	1 min 48 sec

The average length of time varied among the three situations. This difference probably stemmed from the difference in the seriousness of the request/invitation. In terms of the length of conversations, I found a relevant comment in Holmes (1990), which investigated apologies. Holmes said that a longer and more elaborate phrase was likely to be interpreted as a more polite one in general. The longer conversations in this study could be the results of the decliner participants' attempts to deal with the given situation more politely.

3.3.6 Data analysis

Recorded conversational data were transcribed, coded and then analysed. This section provides how these processes took place.

3.3.6.1 Transcribing and coding process

In order to make recorded data available for analysis, each conversational role-play was transcribed. I transcribed the Japanese data since I am a Japanese native speaker and had had experiences of transcribing Japanese conversations before. The New Zealand data were at first transcribed by professional transcribers at my university. When some of the data were not clear either to them or to me, I asked several native English speakers to listen to these unclear utterances. Through this process, eventually, I was able to capture most of the utterances in all the role-plays.

Transcriptions for both Japanese and New Zealand data were done referring to Schiffrin's (1994) transcribing system. This system requires not only transcribing expressions uttered, but also catching overlap-timing and transcribing

pauses when they occurred. I decided to transcribe those details after I observed Maxwell's (1996) claim regarding validity of research, which suggested that the researchers should have rich data for better research. By "rich" data Maxwell meant that they showed "detailed and complete enough that they provide a full and revealing picture of what is going on" (p. 95).

I then coded the data. First, I coded all excuses that appeared in conversation which explained the reasons why the participants could not or would not meet the request or accept the invitation. I then classified those excuses according to the reason or reasons described in them. For example, some participants claimed they were not well enough to go out and others mentioned their prior arrangement. The details of classifications will be given later in the findings chapters. These analyses were carried out aiming to know the general tendencies throughout the Japanese and New Zealand data such as participants' preference for certain types of excuses, the varieties of excuses, and the frequencies of use of excuses. The participants sometimes gave long excuses. For these types of excuses, I looked into the participants' reasons which prevented from meeting a request or an invitation in terms of the information referred to in their speech.

Second, I noted the types of responses to the excuses from the participants who took the role of requester or inviter. I classified their responses according to the type of content in their response to the excuses. These classification processes enabled me to see how particular excuses were interpreted by the other conversation participant, and then how those excuses functioned in each data set.

Third, I coded all other utterances used to decline a request or an invitation, such as a phrase of apology and a suggestion of alternatives (e.g., a suggestion of inviting some other people). Fourth, I noted utterances used by requesters/inviters to persuade decliners to accept a request/invitation as well. I noted and classified these utterances according to what the participants said. These helped to clarify differences in preferred conversation strategies between the Japanese and New Zealand participants, which were considered as effective ways to carry out a conversation with a lie. These utterances were also looked into to interpret how the participants approached the given situations.

3.3.6.2 Analytical process

I mainly focused on the untruthful excuses used for refusals, but not only on those—I also examined the sequence of utterances. I aimed to reveal the "situated meaning" (Schiffrin, 1994) of lies in given settings and for this purpose, I analysed not only what lies were provided but also how one particular utterance was perceived by another conversational participant and then how conversation developed subsequently.

My approach to the conversational data followed two phases. First, I analysed the data as refusal conversations, focusing on the excuses used for refusals as I wanted to explore how excuses functioned in the conversation and how participants managed refusal situations. In this phase, I did not pay attention to the truthfulness of the excuses. Second, I examined the excuses in terms of their falsehood. With reference to the theoretical frameworks and previous studies reviewed in the previous chapter, I aimed to reveal the tendency of the use of lies in conversation as well as the rationale for the use.

Here are more details of the first phase: as described above, I examined the conversational data as refusal conversations regardless the truthfulness of the excuses. At this stage, the particular focus was the *types* of excuses and the *ways* they are delivered, as these aspects of excuses have not been addressed by previous studies.

The "types" of excuses here means what reasons the participants used, in other words, the contents of the reasons they referred to. For example, the Role B participant in Example 3.1 above chose to explain that his flatmate had made another arrangement. In this example, the reason given to decline the request was a prior arrangement to purchase a microwave oven elsewhere. He could have said something different in order to excuse himself such as lack of money or no need for a microwave oven. But for some reason, he chose the excuse that his flatmate had arranged to get a microwave oven from somebody else. The particular types of excuses that the participants chose would be one of the first crucial information to understand the use of lies in undesirable communicative situations.

The "ways" means that how the participants delivered those excuses; for example, he mentioned "a prior arrangement" in a straightforward manner

immediately after the request received from the Role A in Example 3.1. But he could have provided all sorts of marginal information related to his household situation first and then mentioned "a prior arrangement" afterwards. This type of findings would help to reveal communicative strategies for the participants to handle the given situations.

At this analytical phase, I also examined the requesters' and inviters' reactions to the excuses. This was to clarify how these excuses were received and functioned in conversation. As Schiffrin (1994) said, "What is said, meant, and done is sequentially situated, i.e. utterances are produced and interpreted in the local contexts of other utterances" (p. 416). Therefore, investigating the response to the excuse is important in order to understand fully the meaning and functions of the untruthful excuses used/applied in conversation, namely the use of lies in the context of this study.

In the second phase of the analysis, I looked at the falsehood of the excuses. When people lie to manage an undesirable situation, they may say something appropriate to make the refusal situation less threatening and to avoid upsetting the requesters/inviters. What types of lies are often created for refusals remains unclear. I focus on the content of lies with the aim of revealing the motivation behind the participants' choice and seeing if there is any cultural rationale behind the participants' choices of lies, for example, the extent of the lies; the nature of the contents the lies delivered; particular results that lies meant to achieve; and so on. These issues are discussed in the second phase of analysis.

To reveal cultural tendencies in regard to the use of lies, I counted the number of participants who chose particular types of excuses, responses, lies and so on in the analysis described above and compared the results between the Japanese and the New Zealand data. This process helps to see the tendencies of a particular choice of lies in each data set and understand the performance of the participants in conversation.

3.4 Summary

This chapter has described the theoretical frameworks, the methodology, and the method employed for this study.

This research project employed three different frameworks, which were (1) interactional sociolinguistics, (2) politeness theories, and (3) cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories, to find out about lies in conversation used by Japanese and New Zealand people.

The first framework, interactional sociolinguistics represents how this study approaches conversation. This framework shows that meanings of each utterance are determined in each given situation with contextual information. This type of meaning is called situated meaning. This framework is utilised to retrieve contextual information which underpins the situated meaning of lies used to refuse a request/invitation.

The other two frameworks—politeness and cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories—are useful to interpret the findings and explain the rationale underpinning language use in each culture. I believe politeness theories are useful for understanding how people try to be polite to manage undesirable communicative situations such as refusals and what polite behaviour is in such situations. Cross-cultural interpersonal communication theories would give bases to interpret the ways in which participants with different cultural backgrounds handle such situations. Both these theoretical lenses should be useful in understanding what types of lies people tend to use and why they use these particular types of lies in certain ways to manage undesirable communicative situations.

In relation to the methodology, I described the methodological choice that I made for this study based on discussion of the research questions, challenges for the study of lies, and strengths and limitations of possible methodological choices. I set up role-play conversation sessions which were designed to record lies used in conversation from two different cultural groups. The scenarios for these role-play sessions were carefully organised to collect good quality data. I collected data from 64 pairs of participants (32 Japanese and 32 New Zealand pairs respectively). This way of collecting data enabled me to capture a range of data of lies, which are close to real lies in very realistic situations. This method allowed me to capture not only utterances of lies but also responses to those lies; these types of data are important to carry out the analysis using the frameworks referred to above.

The findings from the analysis of these data are reported in the following three chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR
ROLE-PLAY CONVERSATION
EXCUSES IN REQUEST-REFUSAL SITUATION

This chapter, the first of the three findings chapters in this study, aims to reveal how people use lies in refusal conversation and how Japanese and New Zealand people use lies differently. For this purpose, I analysed role-play conversational data of request-refusal situations collected from Japanese and New Zealand people, focusing on untruthful excuses used in conversation.

Refusal was chosen for this study as a context in which lies in undesirable interpersonal communicative situations are likely to occur. Refusal is a common undesirable exercise and people may use untruthful excuses to manage such situations. For the purposes of this study, untruthful excuses are considered to be lies.

As described in the previous chapter, three role-play sessions were conducted. Because of the volume of role play data elicited from these three role plays, the findings are reported over three chapters: Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six. Three chapters are allocated because the collected data derived from three different situations: (1) a refusal to a request to buy a second hand microwave oven, (2) a refusal to an invitation to go to the pub, and (3) a refusal to an invitation to go to a singles party. This chapter gives the findings from the analysis of data from the first role play: conversations concerning a refusal to a request to buy a second hand microwave oven.[9]

The structure of this chapter is as follows: in section 4.1, I give the basic information about the data of the first role play session. The following three

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[9] An earlier version of the findings of the request-refusal conversational data shown here was presented at AILA 2008, the 15th World Congress of Applied Linguistics held in Essen, Germany, August 24-29, 2008.

sections, sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 report the findings of the analysis. After briefly summarising the findings, I discuss those findings in section 4.5. A conclusion of this chapter is provided in section 4.6.

4.1 Basic information: Refusal to a request to buy a microwave oven

This section gives the basic information relevant to the request-refusal conversational data. First, I repeat the procedure of the data collection here briefly to remind the reader of the nature of this study. Second, I describe the instruction given to the participants prior to the data collection. Third, I give the rationale behind the context of the conversation from which data was collected and finally, I provide the numbers of data collected.

The following procedure was taken to collect the data. Participants in each pair were instructed to base a conversation on the situations described on the cards given. Participants who received a card for Role A were to ask their conversational partners to buy their microwave oven, and participants who received a card for Role B were to decline Role A's request.

The information the participants were given prior to providing their conversational data follows:

The scenario for Role A
- You have a microwave (your own one) at your flat.
- You will move out soon and the new flat has a microwave. So you want to sell your own one. You know your friend doesn't have one.
- You bought your current one a long time ago, so you cannot say it's "new", but it's still good enough to use.
- It would be great if your friend would buy it because you could save some money and his/her place is close to your place (meaning it is easy to deliver).
- It would be great for your friend too, you reckon.
- You heard s/he is now at McDonald's, and let's go there to talk to him/her.

The scenario for Role B
- You don't have a microwave at your flat.
- You have thought for a while about buying one because it must be convenient to prepare meal.
- You thought about buying a second-hand one, but you are not sure of its quality although a cheaper price sounds nice…
- You heard your friend wants to sell her/his one and considered the possibility. But you have decided not to buy it because recently some other friends mentioned that one is quite old.
- So you would MAKE UP SOMETHING and decline it even if your friend would offer now.

This situation was chosen for request-refusal conversation as one familiar to many people. For New Zealanders, it is common to sell or buy unwanted appliances such as microwave ovens. For Japanese people, it is becoming more common to sell or buy second-hand appliances through non-dealers such as friends or strangers who advertise on a community notice board or on the Internet. In particular, among Japanese students, such transactions can occur, and I myself had experience of selling and buying unwanted appliances to and from Japanese friends when I was a student in Japan. In addition, there are many second-hand goods shops in Japan. Therefore, the idea of buying and selling second-hand appliances should be familiar both to Japanese and New Zealand people.

To facilitate the conversation between the participant pairs, I made it a condition of the role-play that Role B lacked a microwave oven and Role A knew about the lack.

Based on the above scenario, the conversational data were collected using the role-play technique from 32 Japanese pairs and 32 New Zealand pairs for the study of request-refusal conversations. The length of each conversation from the Japanese and New Zealanders averaged 1 minute 22 seconds and 1 minute 27 seconds respectively. The Japanese participants provided data in Japanese and the New Zealand participants in English.

All examples of Japanese and New Zealand data presented from now on will be presented in English. In the previous chapter, I wrote that the detailed

information such as overlap-timing or pause was also recorded in the process of the data transcription. In this chapter as well as the following two chapters, I show edited examples of small details, such as overlap-timing, for ease of reading. Where the Japanese data is concerned, I include both the original Japanese transcript in Romanised form and my English translation of it.

The following sections, sections, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.5, report the findings from the analysis of the data.

4.2 Preferred types of excuses

The main focus of the analysis was the excuses employed to turn down the request. I extracted all of the excuses given by decliners from the conversational data and classified the refusals according to the reasons given in the excuses.

4.2.1 Types of excuses

The following six types of excuses were found:

- "No need" :   Saying there is no need for a microwave oven
- "Not sure":   Mentioning their uncertainty about the purchase of a microwave oven
- "New one":   Mentioning a desire for a brand new microwave oven
- "Somebody else":   Saying they are getting one from somebody else
- "No money":   Saying they have no money to buy a microwave oven
- "A's is old" :   Saying that Role A's microwave oven is old

I describe each type of excuse in more detail below with examples from the data.

"No need"

This type, as the following examples show, denied the necessity of possessing a microwave oven. This type gives a strong reason for declining Role A (the requester)'s proposition as it denies the idea of getting a microwave oven altogether.

EXAMPLE 4.1:

I'm quite happy without a microwave eh?   (NZ pair 20)

EXAMPLE 4.2:

I have no great need of it right now.
<ima n tokoro son'na ni iran kara>   (JPN pair 7)

"Not sure"

The "not sure" approach showed ambivalence about purchasing a microwave oven, and as the following examples show, the participants were not ready at that moment to make a decision. This type of excuse still delivers a "no" message, but in a non-committal way. Therefore, it is not as strong as the "no need" type.

EXAMPLE 4.3:

We were we were[10] thinking but we're not too sure now eh.
                                                        (NZ Pair 26)

EXAMPLE 4.4:

I have not really thought of it, um, what should I do, I wonder.
<watashi mada chotto kangaete nakutte kara um doo shiyoo kana>
                                                        (JPN Pair 31)

"New one"

This type of excuse means that the participants would be happy to get a microwave oven but not, however, from Role A. This type did not reject the offer as strongly as "no need" since the decliner at least considered the requester's idea of having a microwave oven.

EXAMPLE 4.5:

I'm thinking it might be better to go for a brand new one.   (NZ pair 1)

EXAMPLE 4.6:

There is one particular type I want.
<nani ka ne hoshii denshi renji ga atte>   (JPN Pair 20)

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[10] The repetition is the speaker's.

"Somebody else"

This type of excuse, as with the "new one" type, suggests that the participants would be happy to get a microwave oven but not, however, from Role A.

>   **EXAMPLE 4.7:**
>
>   My flatmate, he just arranged to get one.   (NZ pair 2)
>
>   **EXAMPLE4.8:**
>
>   I have bought one from somebody else.
>   <ta no hito kara katta n yo>   (JPN pair 24)

"No money"

These excuses mentioned not being able to afford to buy a microwave oven as in the following two examples. Although having "no money" denies the possibility of buying a machine from anybody or anywhere, this excuse, like the "new one" and "somebody else" excuses, did not rule out the idea of owing a microwave oven. However, the difference from the "new one" and "somebody else" excuses is that Role B denied Role A's expectation, which Role A thought that Role B would want a microwave oven and could buy it.

   This type of excuse implied that the decliners wished they could have bought it from Role A but their circumstances disallowed it. In this sense, this excuse seems to support the idea of Role A selling his or her microwave oven and seems polite.

>   **EXAMPLE 4.9:**
>
>   I've sort of been looking at the finances again and I probably won't be
>   able to do so [buy the microwave oven][11]   (NZ pair 8)
>
>   **EXAMPLE 4.10:**
>
>   I am short of money this month.
>   <chotto kongetsu kinketsu nan da yo ne>   (JPN pair 4)

"A's is old"

This type of excuse did not deny the necessity of a microwave oven, but rejected the idea of purchasing one from Role A by pointing out the age of his or her

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[11] I added the phrase in [ ] in the example and in all forthcoming examples to clarify what the speaker meant.

appliance. Since this excuse explicitly pointed out a negative aspect of Role A's microwave oven, it sounded face-threatening (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The following example, Example 4.11, is the excuse which appeared in the Japanese data. None of the New Zealand participants used this type of excuse initially so no New Zealand example is given here.

EXAMPLE 4.11:

No, yours yours is old.
<Iya omae no omae no hurui yan> (JPN pair 14)

This excuse was actually a truthful excuse, which showed the participants did not follow the instruction given. As described earlier, the participants were instructed to *make up something*, but three Japanese participants gave the true reason why they did not want to buy Role A's microwave oven. I treat this type of excuse same as the others in the analysis at this stage and will discuss the issue of the truthfulness later in the discussion section.

"Others"

Aside from the six types of excuses described above, New Zealand and Japanese participants used other types. However, none fitted easily within those six categories.

In the Japanese data, one said "I have a microwave at home". This could be categorised as having "no need" because it implied therefore that she would not buy the appliance. But I put this into the "others" category because this was the only one that specified that she had already owned a machine, whereas the other cases of "no need" admitted that although they did not have one, they did not need one. Another Japanese participant said "I want to get a microwave with a baking function". This participant did not say that she was looking for a brand new microwave oven or thinking of getting from some other sources. Therefore, this case was also not classified as an example of "new one" or "somebody else".

In the New Zealand data, one New Zealand participant provided no excuse at all. The other three New Zealanders said "I have a microwave at home", "I prefer not to buy things from friends", and "I hate cooking" respectively. These four cases were categorised as "others".

4.2.2 Trends in the choice of excuses

I have described six main types of excuses observed in the data of Japanese and New Zealand so far. This section now focuses on the trends in the choice of excuses.

To see the trends in the choices of excuses, I counted the frequency with which each type occurred. I found that the trends among the Japanese and the New Zealand participants differed: the "no need" type was the most popular among the Japanese participants while the "somebody else" and "new one" types were popular among the New Zealand participants. To clarify the nature of each type of excuse and the wider trends in the choices of particular types, I examined the nature of those six types of excuses and re-categorised them into three groups depending on the participants' interest in a microwave oven. Those categories are: (1) not interested in a microwave oven (the "no need" type belongs to this category), (2) not sure about a microwave oven, and (3) interested in a microwave oven (the "somebody else" and "new one" types are in this category). The third category has two subcategories according to a timeframe for the purchase, which are "buy now" and "not now". And these "buy now" and "not now" have further subcategories.

The following table shows the frequency with which each type occurred at the beginning of the refusal conversations of the two data sets.[12]

Table 6 The first excuse that appeared in the data

	Interested in a microwave oven?					
	No	**Not sure**	**Yes**			
			Buy now		**Not** now	
Types of excuse	Because there is no need for a microwave oven		Because I buy a new one	Because I buy one from somebody else	Because A's is old	Because I have no money
Japan	10	2	6	6	3	3
NZ	2	5	9	10	0	2

[12] This table does not include the examples referred to as "others" above.

The data indicate that the Japanese more than the New Zealand participants chose "No" types of excuses which include "**No**, not interested in a microwave oven" and "**Not now** interested in a microwave oven" (highlighted in Table 6 above).

The New Zealand participants, on the other hand, chose "Buy now" types of excuses more than the Japanese participants. The number of these two types occupies nearly two thirds of the total cases in the New Zealand data.

4.2.3 General trends in the choice of excuses across the conversations

I discuss the general tendency in the choice of excuses across the conversational data here now.

The numbers in Table 6 resulted from counting the initial excuse used by the participants. A thorough examination across the conversational data revealed that the trend seen in the table also represents the overall tendencies for choosing particular types of excuses.

Almost all participants kept using the same type of excuse throughout their conversation. The participants *theoretically* could have used many different types of excuses in a conversation; for example, they had freedom to state that they did not have money first and to reveal later that they actually wanted to buy a brand new microwave oven at a store. The data of JPN pair 6 for example, was such a case; Role B of this pair first said she did not have the money and then later said she would buy a cheap brand new microwave oven at a local store (she gave the specific name of a shop) if she really wanted to buy one. The data show that four participants each in the Japanese and New Zealand data offered different types of excuses within a conversation like JPN pair 6.

However, the remaining pairs, 28 Japanese pairs and 27 New Zealand pairs, repeated the same type of excuse several times in their conversation. Once these participants had begun with a "no need" type of excuse, for instance, they kept reiterating that they had no need of a microwave oven until the end of the conversation and did not offer any other types of excuses.

Therefore, the majority of the participants of the study adhered to the particular type of excuse they first employed throughout their conversation and the types they chose were presented in Table 6.

The next section deals with the presentation of excuses in conversation in greater detail.

4.3 Ways of presenting excuses

In section 4.2, I illustrated the frequency that different types of excuses occurred in the conversational data. In this section, I show the ways of presenting those excuses, that is, how much information was presented and how those excuses were structured in the conversation.

4.3.1 The degree of detail in excuses

In this section, I present examples from the Japanese and New Zealand data and show the difference between the two data sets in terms of the degree of detail of the excuses.

First, I explain the general tendency seen in both data sets in terms of information provided in the excuses. Second, I use examples of the "somebody else" type of excuses to show the difference between the two data sets. In this part, I cite examples of short and long excuses from both data sets and demonstrate the general tendencies seen in those examples. Third, I examine the "new one" type and show the tendency seen there.

I chose the "somebody else" and "new one" types of excuses to examine here as these two types were most commonly used by both Japanese and New Zealand participants. The "no need" type was very popular among the Japanese participants but only two New Zealander used the "no need" type; therefore, I chose the "somebody else" (used by six Japanese) and "new one" types (used by six Japanese) for examination here. The findings from close analysis into these two types represent the general tendency of the data of this study.

4.3.1.1 General tendencies in terms of the degree of detail in the excuses

Most participants in this study repeated the same type of excuse throughout their conversation. However, this does not mean they used exactly the same phrase repeatedly.

If participants started with the excuse that they did not need a microwave oven, for example, they often simply said they did not need one for a start and then gave more details; they explained why they did not need one or described how they had survived without one.

In the case of "new one", the participants often added information about which shop they were thinking of buying one from, explained why they wanted a new one, expressed what kind of machine they wanted, said why Role A's machine was not good enough, or described the way they had reached this conclusion.

The participants were not instructed on how much detail their excuses should provide, so the extent of the detail in the excuses was totally up to the participants. The data varied; both the Japanese and New Zealand data showed simple excuses as well as detailed ones. But overall, Japanese participants seemed to give more detailed explanations in their excuses than the New Zealand participants, as illustrated below.

4.3.1.2 The degree of detail in the "somebody else" type of excuses

The "somebody else" type was the most popular type of excuse among the New Zealand participants. It was not the most popular one among the Japanese participants, but still six of them, almost 20% of the sample, chose this type. To see the degree of detail in the data, simpler examples of the "somebody else" type of excuse are shown first and then more detailed examples next.

The participants who chose the "somebody else" type often mentioned from whom they would get a microwave oven, explained why it was better than A's machine, said why A's machine was not good enough, explained how they decided to get it, or explained who organised it for them. But the following two cases did not give much explanation. The excuses in both examples below were

given immediately after Role A's request. After the excuse shown below, Role A shifted the conversation to talking about other possible buyers of their microwave oven and no more excuses were offered by Role B.

EXAMPLE **4.12:**

B: Oh, it is really cool. But my flatmate, he just arranged to get one so. He has it all arranged.   (NZ pair 2)

EXAMPLE **4.13:**

B: Um, somehow… somebody else has asked me if I would like one and I have been thinking of getting one from her. Timing was bad. It would have been good if you had asked me a bit earlier.

<an ne nan ka ima choodo nan ka betsu no hito kara nan ka iran tte iware totte de socchi wo moraoo ka na tte omoyo run yo un a taimingu warukatta moo chotto hayakattara yokatta kedo>
                                                                              (JPN pair 13)

In terms of the amount of information provided, the two examples above were similar. Both of them basically had already arranged or more or less arranged to get a microwave oven from somebody else and apart from mentioning that, no further information was provided. But the ways of presenting the information were different between the examples. Example 4.12, from the New Zealand data, simply said that his flatmate had arranged to get one, whereas Example 4.13, from the Japanese data, went through the situation little by little, detailing exactly how the whole thing occurred; Role B started by saying "somebody else has asked me" and then "I have been thinking of getting one from her". Consequently, the New Zealand example sounds simple and straightforward while the Japanese example sounds diffuse and almost like a narrative.

There are other examples of the "somebody else" type of excuse. The following two, Examples 4.14 and 4.15, give much more information about the arrangement for getting a microwave oven. Example 4.15 shows Part 1 and 2; this is because Role B's whole excuses were broken up by Role A's utterances. The excuses shown in Example 4.14 as well as in 4.12 and 4.13 referred to above were presented by Role B without giving the Role A participant a turn. All of the conversations after these three examples moved to discussion of who else would want a microwave oven.

EXAMPLE 4.14:

B: Coz my mum, she's just, she's selling hers; she's getting a new one and so I'm kind of used to like, you know, how the buttons and stuff, [like I already] know how it works. So yeah, I'm just gonna in fact she's giving it to me for like real cheap. So that's good. (laughter) Because you know us students are real poor.

(NZ pair 10)

EXAMPLE 4.15 – PART 1:

B: Um, I am thinking of it now but somebody else has approached me saying he has a good one and it has taken my fancy. Because he approached me first, I might go for it.

<a un to ne ima ne kangaete iru n da kedo ta no hito kara mo ne ii no attatte iwarete de socchi ni ne ki ga ne ugoite iru n da de socchi no hoo ga hayaku iwareta kara socchi ni naru kamo shirenai>

[*Between Part 1 and 2, Role A offered to sell hers at a low price and to treat Role B to dinner if Role B would agreed to buy it*]

EXAMPLE 4.15 – PART 2:

B: Um, what shall I do? But I have not said "no" to him and I like it very much; for example, the colour of the machine and so on. I have also hinted to him that I would buy it from him, so…

<e demo a do doo shiyoo ka na demo ne socchi ni ne mada ne kotowatte nai shi kekkoo ne ki ni itte run da yo ne iro toka dakara ne moo chotto kanari kau kau tte ne mukoo ni wa itte aru kara>   (JPN pair 27)

Both Examples 4.14 and 4.15 presented more detailed information in their excuses than Examples 4.12 and 4.13. To see clearly how much information Role B put into each example, I underline and number each piece of information presented below.

EXPLANATION PRESENTED IN EXAMPLE 4.14:

Coz my mum, [(1)] she's just she's selling hers; she's getting a new one and so [(2)] I'm kind of used to like, you know, how the buttons and stuff, [like I already] know how it works. So yeah I'm just gonna in fact [(3)] she's giving it to me for like real cheap. So that's good. (laughter) Because you know [(4)] us students are real poor   (NZ pair 10)

EXPLANATION PRESENTED IN EXAMPLE 4.15:

> Um, I am thinking of it now but [(1)] somebody else has approached me saying he has a good one and it has taken my fancy. Because [(2)] he approached me first, I might go for it. ... Um what shall I do? But [(3)] I have not said no to him and [(4)] I like it very much for example the colour of the machine and so on. [(5)] I have also hinted to him that I would buy it from him, so…   (JPN pair 27)

Both of them represented a rather longer version of the explanation of the "somebody else" type of excuse. Example 4.14 explained who that "somebody" was and then gave two reasons why that somebody's machine was suitable: (1) it was cheap and (2) it was familiar to the participant. Example 4.15 did not mention who that "somebody" was but the participant explained how much she had already talked with her potential seller and why she liked the machine. It appears that in the Japanese example the participant repeatedly explained his or her situation and went into very small details such as the colour of the microwave oven. Example 4.15 also sounds diffuse—this is somehow similar to Example 4.13, where each piece of information was presented little by little in a chronological order.

To check the detail in the excuses, I examined the other cases employing the "somebody else" type of excuse. Six Japanese and 10 New Zealand participants used this type of excuse.

One detail involved the potential seller. Two Japanese participants revealed the identity of the potential seller and the rest, four of them, mentioned just "somebody". On the other hand, five New Zealand participants revealed the identity of the potential seller. Other than these five, three New Zealand participants referred to the organiser of the purchase; e.g., "my flatmate had arranged to get it" (NZ pair 2). In this example, the participant did not say from whom he would buy a microwave oven, but revealed that it was his flatmate who had talked and made a deal with the original owner of the microwave oven. The rest, two of the New Zealand participants, simply mentioned that "I will buy from somebody else".

The data mentioned here appear to show that the New Zealand participants revealed more details about the potential seller. But the New Zealand participants actually described their potential seller more briefly and in a more straightforward

manner than the Japanese participants who again went into the small details. The following four examples demonstrate this; the first two are from the New Zealand data and the other two are from the Japanese data.

EXAMPLE 4.16:

B: Oh, oh, yeah, that's right. Um, yeah, my grandmother died and I'm getting her one for free. So I might wait for that one eh.

(NZ pair 35)

EXAMPLE 4.17:

B: Um, yeah, we did [need a microwave oven] but, um, my dad's got an old one at home, ya, so I think we might just take that one.

(NZ pair 28)

EXAMPLE 4.18:

B: A microwave oven. Yeah, it's not good; I do not have it, I do have a toaster though. I think I need a microwave oven as well. You know, I will move next year, so anyhow I have been thinking of Year 11 senior students. There might be some who are about to graduate and go back to hometown. So I have been investigating the possibility.

<a soo da ne denshi renji ne uchi yabai n da yo ne nakutte kara sa so so so nan ka ne toosutaa wa aru n da kedo ne nan ka denshi renji mo hitsuyoo ka na tte omotte ru n da kedo sore ga sa uchi rainen hikkosu jan un son de ne nan ka 11 no senpai ni moshikashitara koo sotsugyoo shite kaeru hito ga oru ken kiite miyoo ka to omottotte ima iroiro atatte miyo n yo   (JPN pair 18)

EXAMPLE 4.19:

B: Okay, I do not have a microwave and really want one. I thought of buying it but it's expensive and I thought twice about it. I asked my older sister and then she said she would give me hers, so I decided that I would get one from her, so sorry I am fine now.

<A so kka de watashi ano denshi renji ano nakute sugoi hoshikute kaoo ka na to omotta n da kedo takai kara dooshiyoo ka na to omotte oneechan ni soodan shitara oneechan ga yuzutte kureru tte itta kara oneechan kara morau koto ni shita kara gomen ano konkai daijoobu>   (JPN Pair 11)

The New Zealand data, Examples 4.16 and 4.17, gave information about the "somebody" at the early stage: "Oh my grandmother died …" in Example 4.16 and "my dad's got an old one…" in Example 4.17. These utterances did not

literally state that Role B would receive a microwave oven like "my dad will give me his microwave oven". However, the whole utterance "my dad's got an old one at home" clearly implied that Role B would get one from his father. This information was referred to at the very beginning of the conversation.

On the contrary, Examples 4.18 and 4.19 from the Japanese data gave a rather long "prelude" before getting to the point—"I do have a toaster but I need a microwave oven as well", "I will move next year", and "Year 11 senior students will graduate and go home soon" in Example 4.18 and "It's expensive" and "I consulted with my big sister" in Example 4.19. Unlike the New Zealand data, Role A in the Japanese data could not know what Role B was saying in relation to Role A's microwave oven until the end of the explanation. The small details such as the participant's current situation and the process of reaching a particular potential seller of a microwave oven and a rather lengthy wordy prelude were seen more often in the Japanese data and this made the Japanese excuses look more diffuse and informative.

4.3.1.3 The degree of detailed in the "new one" type of excuses

The following Japanese data also provide a good example of the tendency to go into small details such as exactly what sort of cooking functions Role B was after. This example employed not the "somebody else" but a "new one" type of excuse. The "new one" type was the second most popular type of excuse of both the Japanese and the New Zealand participants. Again, I underline each explanation and number them to show how detailed Role B's information was.

EXAMPLE 4.20:

B: I thought I wanted a microwave oven [(1)] a little bit newer not new, but I have heard we could find a bit better second-hand microwave ovens [(2)] I was thinking of looking around those and buy one [(3)] The old ones are different from the latest ones like; having only heating-food-function and so on [(4)] I want have more functions such as baking biscuits

<watashi hoshii to wa omotte ita kedo un chotto yappa moo chotto atarashii atarashiku wa nai kedo chuuko demo moo chotto ii no ga aru tte kiite iru kara sooiu no wo mite kaoo kana to omotte yappa mukashi no dattara sa kinoo toka ga sa yappa

> chigau desho renji dake toka nani ka motto koo iron'na kukkii
> mo yakeru shi toka iron'na kinoo ga tsuita no ga hoshii shi>
>
> (JPN pair 15)

Role B in Example 4.20 explained her wish to buy a newer microwave oven. She mentioned that there were good second-hand microwave ovens available and expressed her desire to purchase a better second-hand microwave oven (which was the first explanation). She then mentioned her intention to look around to find one for herself (which was the second explanation). She added also why she wanted a slightly newer one (which was the third explanation) and described what she wanted to cook with her future microwave oven (which was the fourth explanation). She could have simply stated once that she wanted a newer one, but instead, provided very detailed explanations. This, Example 4.20, was an example of rather longer detailed explanation in the Japanese data. But some other Japanese examples also referred to certain features they needed in a microwave oven. Those features were, for instance, "a machine big enough to hold a whole chicken" (JPN pair 17) and "a machine which can both defrost and cook food at the same time" (JPN pair 20). Most New Zealand participants who chose the "new one" type of excuse also explained why but the reason was mentioned only briefly; they simply referred to the warranty (NZ pairs 1, 16, and 23). None of the New Zealand participants referred to cooking functions as did the Japanese participants.

The difference in the excuses of the Japanese and New Zealand participants concerns not only the extent of the detail but also the structure of the presentation. The next section will focus on this aspect.

4.3.2 Structure of the excuses

This section cites two examples each from the Japanese and New Zealand data to show how the excuses were presented. All Role B participants in these examples spent a great length of time giving their first excuses. They provided longer excuses than any other participants and for this reason I present these four examples here to show the characteristics of their structure. I chose to present the

examples of longer excuses here because longer ones could possibly show more clearly how the participants tended to construct their excuses.

Those Role B participants continued talking for a while without having input from Role A participants. These participants, whose role was that of a decliner, voluntarily gave lengthy explanations of their situation (Role A asked no question and Role B kept talking). These four cases were quite similar in regard to the length of time they took. However, the manner of explaining the situation was different between the Japanese and New Zealand participants. The Japanese examples resembled a story unfolding, which was not the case with the New Zealand data. In the two New Zealand examples, in contrast, the speakers seemed to go through a process of logical reasoning to reach their decision.

Examples 4.21, 4.22, 4.23, and 4.24 of conversation are presented below:

EXAMPLE 4.21[13]:

B: Okay, I do not have a microwave and really want one. I thought of buying it but it's expensive and I thought twice about it. I asked my older sister and then she said she would give me hers, so I decided that I would get one from her, so sorry I am fine now.

<A so kka de watashi ano denshi renji ano nakute sugoi hoshikute kaoo ka na to omotta n da kedo takai kara dooshiyoo ka na to omotte oneechan ni soodan shitara oneechan ga yuzutte kureru tte itta kara oneechan kara morau koto ni shita kara gomen ano konkai daijoobu>   (JPN Pair 11)

EXAMPLE 4.22:

B: Um, I have said I wanted one. Um, well, somehow till last year, um, I wanted it but this year somehow I am going to graduate from the uni soon and I have thought that I should not buy anymore stuff. I bought a toaster and I now eat bread and so on for breakfast and most of my cooking is done with the toaster[14], so a microwave is, as I survived last winter without one, no longer needed.

<a hoshi tte itte ta yo ne a ano ne nan ka kyonen made ano hoshikatta n ya kedo kotoshi tte iu ka moo sorosoro sotsugyoo

---

[13] This example is the same as Example 4.19 appearing earlier.

[14] Toasters in Japan are normally like small simplified ovens. Therefore, people could prepare many different types of dishes rather than just toasting slices of bread with the toaster.

yashi nan ka anmari moo kawande koo ka na tte omotte te de
nan ka toosutaa wo katta n yo ne n de nan ka ima pan toka asa
tabete run ya kedo daitai toosutaa de tsuku cchatte denshi renji
wa moo nan ka moo kyonen no fuyu mo koshita shi ii ka na tte>
(JPN Pair 21)

EXAMPLE 4.23[15]:

B: Coz my mum, she's just she's selling hers; she's getting a new
one and so I'm kind of used to like, you know, how the buttons
and stuff, like I already know how it works. So yeah I'm just
gonna in fact she's giving it to me for like real cheap. So that's
good. (laughter) Because you know us students are real poor and
she's going to buy a new one and she's going to give me her old
one because I know how to work it and it's still you know, good
and cheap.   (NZ Pair 10)

EXAMPLE 4.24:

B: Well, I was thinking about buying a microwave. But I was
trying to decide whether to buy a second hand one or a new one,
and I think we've decided to invest in a new one rather than buy
an older model on the assumption that it will probably last a bit
longer. Make an investment in some furniture. Because we're
thinking about settling down and buying some stuff.
(NZ Pair 25)

The information offered in the examples above is itemised and presented in Table
7 below.

---

[15] This example is the same as Example 4.14 appearing earlier.

Table 7 The initial response from the decliners

JPN Pair 11	1. I do not have a microwave 2. I want it very much 3. I was about to buy one 4. But it's expensive and I thought twice 5. I consulted with my older sister 6. My older sister said she would give hers to me 7. So I decided to get one from her [a case of an excuse "getting one from somebody else"]
JPN Pair 21	1. I have said I wanted 2. I wanted it till last year 3. I am going to graduate from the university this year 4. I have tried not to buy stuff so much 5. I bought a toaster 6. I now eat bread for breakfast 7. Most of my cooking is done with the toaster 8. I survived last winter without a microwave oven 9. I do not need a microwave anymore [a case of an excuse "no need for a microwave oven"]
NZ Pair 10	1. My mum is selling hers 2. She is getting a new one 3. I'm used the buttons and stuff and I know how it works 4. She's giving it to me for like real cheap 5. It's good because you know us students are real poor [a case of an excuse "getting one from somebody else"]
NZ Pair 25	1. I was thinking about buying a microwave 2. I was trying to decide whether to by a second hand one or a new one 3. I think we've decided to invest in a new one rather than buy an older model 4. On the assumption that it will probably last a bit longer 5. Make an investment in some furniture 6. Because we're thinking about settling down and buying some stuff. [a case of an excuse "getting a new one"]

Table 7 shows that the Japanese examples contained more items than the New Zealand examples. This difference has been already mentioned above: the Japanese data tended to be more diffusive and informative than the New Zealand data.

In order to show the structure of the excuses clearly I now illustrate the information in Table 7 in Figures 5, 6, 7, and 8 below.

Each figure shows how Role B participants presented their excuses. Thick arrows → in the figures show the chronological order in which the information occurred.

Figure 5 The information structure of excuses in JPN pair 11 data (Example 4.21)

```
┌─────────────────┐
│   I wanted a    │
│   microwave.    │
└─────────────────┘
         ↓
┌─────────────────┐
│ It's expensive and │
│  thought twice  │
└─────────────────┘
         ↓
┌─────────────────┐
│ I consulted with my │
│  older sister.  │
└─────────────────┘
         ↓
┌─────────────────┐
│ My older sister said │
│ she would give hers │
│     to me.      │
└─────────────────┘
         ↓
┌─────────────────┐
│ I decided to get one │
│    from her.    │
└─────────────────┘
```
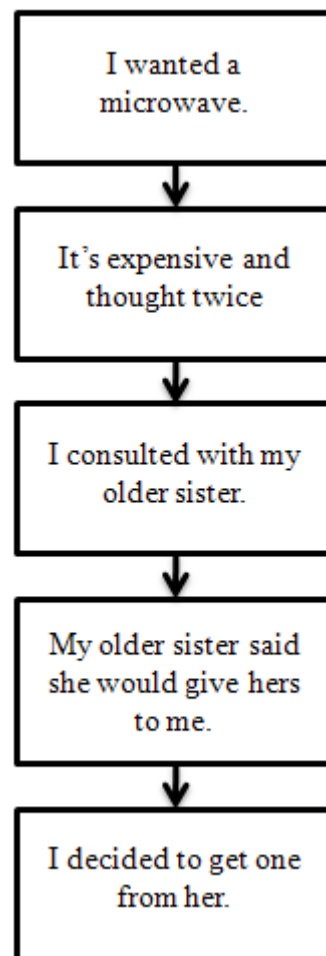
Role B in this and in the next Japanese example presented the information chronologically. Role B of JPN pair 11 started talking about what she thought about a microwave oven first, which was her desire to buy a microwave oven, and then what she thought next, which was an obstacle, namely the high price. She then discussed the consultation she had with her big sister—this consultation occurred after she had considered the matter and also before she reached her final decision. Indeed, the structure of her explanation was organised in a chronological order. Since the Role B participant explained everything chronologically, the Role A participant, the requester in this conversation did not know Role B's decision until the end of the explanation. The following figure illustrating the information structure of excuses in JPN pair 21 also shows a similar tendency to this. Weak line arrows → together with the inserted phrase "therefore" are included to clarify the way pieces of information are related.

Figure 6 The information structure of excuses in JPN pair 21 data (Example 4.22)
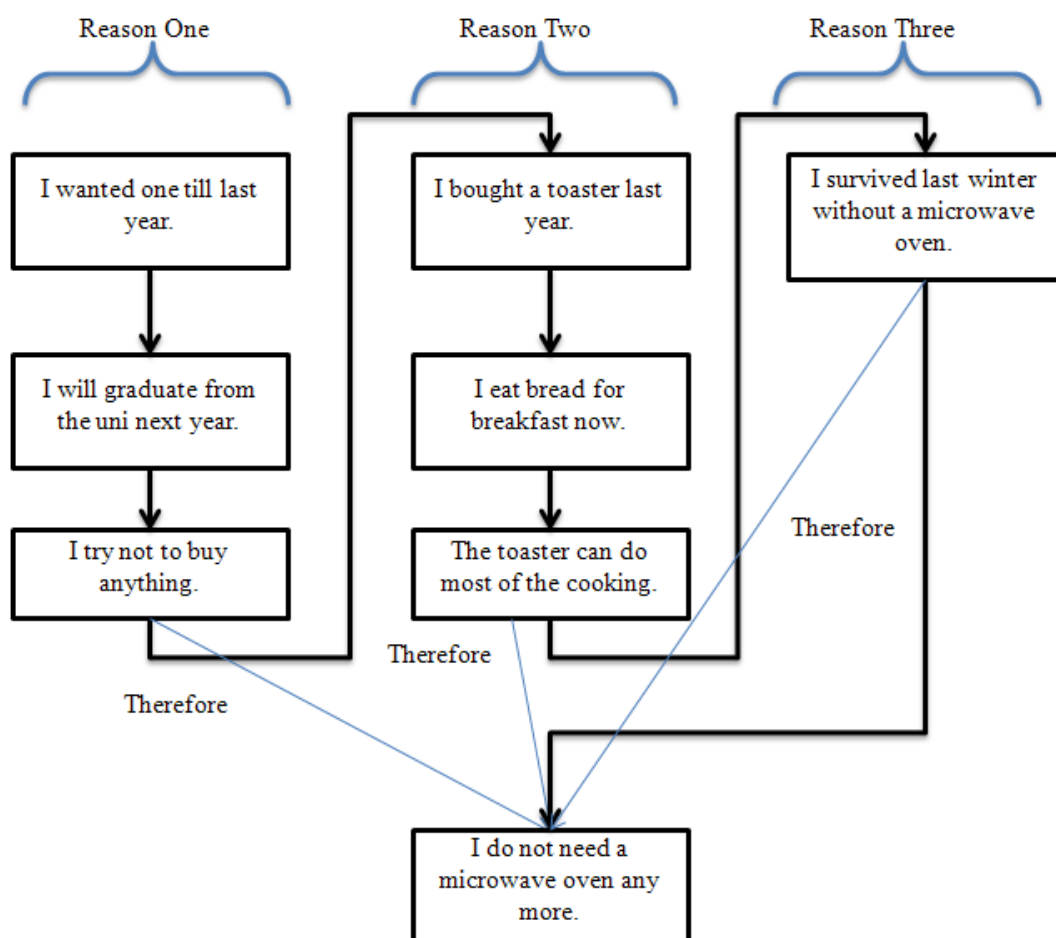
This example also presents the pieces of information chronologically but in a slightly more complex way than in the previous example. Role B of JPN pair 21 offered three different kinds of reasons as shown in the figure above. The left part of Figure 6 shows how she reached the decision not to buy anything yet. This part of the narrative started with what she had in her mind regarding a microwave oven *last year* and then talked about how she changed her mind *afterwards*. The middle part of Figure 6 also shows a chronological pattern; she started by talking about what she did last year, which was her purchase of a toaster. This reference to a toaster sounded sudden and even bizarre since the topic of the conversation was a microwave oven. But this piece of information had to be in this position because she purchased a toaster *last year*—this purchase happened prior to the other things mentioned in the conversation including how she used the toaster later and then

how this purchase led her to decide not to buy a microwave oven. This narrative, the middle part of Figure 6, reflects the chronological order of what happened in her life: (1) she bought a toaster, (2) she now eats toast for breakfast, and (3) she cooks most dishes with the toaster. The section to the right of Figure 6 adds another reason why she did not need a microwave oven, which was the fact she survived the previous winter without one.

  The following two figures show how the New Zealand participants explained their situations. Contrary to the Japanese cases, the following New Zealand cases did not show chronological patterns. Their focus seemed to be to present their reasoning logically by saying something first and then adding a reason to endorse what they said next.

Figure 7 The information structure of excuses in NZ pair 10 data
(Example 4.23)
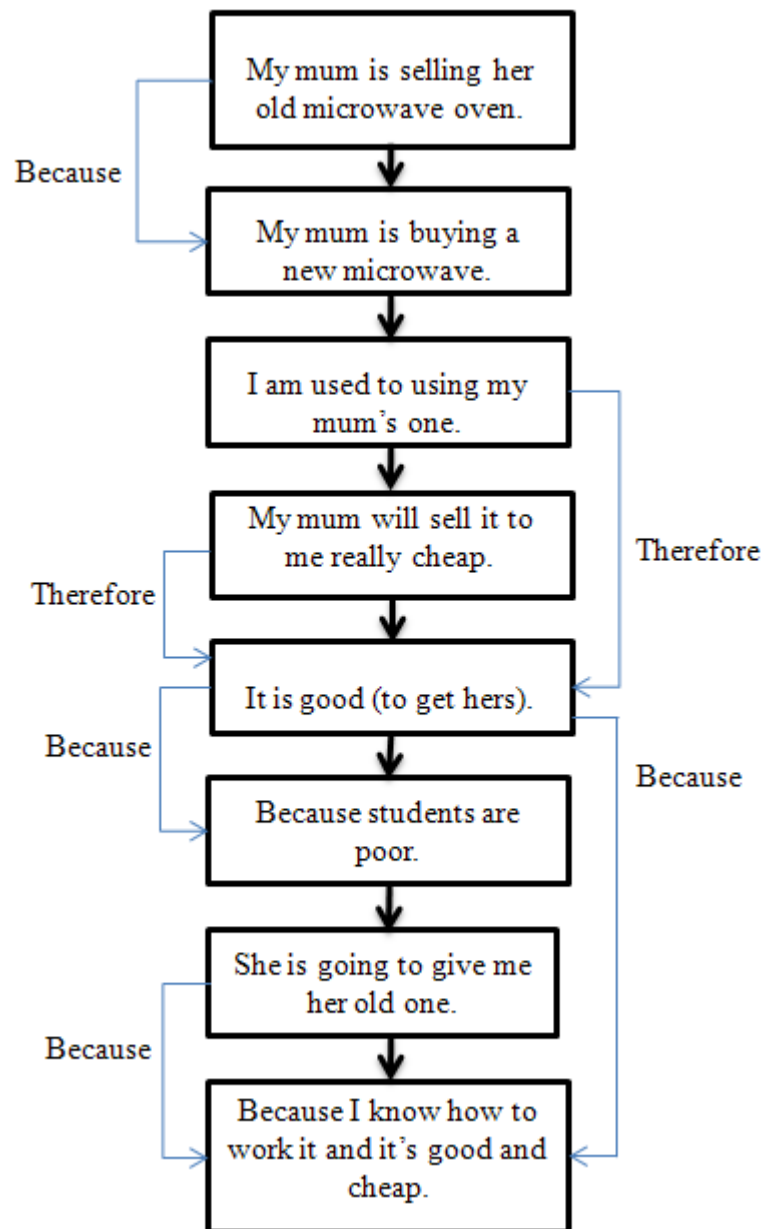
Role B of NZ pair 10 in Figure 7 began by discussing her mother's plan to sell her microwave oven. Role B did not explain the reason at first; she mentioned her mother's intention initially and then gave an explanation. Next she mentioned that her mother would sell it to her cheaply and added, "It was good" because she would not have to pay much money for it. The implication is that reason it was good was that students are poor, and therefore, need to buy things cheaply. After the explanations, Role B repeated what she had said earlier.

The beginning of the explanation in this example is somewhat similar to that of Figure 5. Both mentioned that Role B's mother or sister was going to sell her microwave oven but neither of them directly stated at the beginning that their mother or sister was going to sell or give their microwave oven to them. But the way in which Role B of NZ pair 10 mentioned her mother strongly implied that she would buy her mother's microwave oven. On the other hand, at a similar stage, the explanation given by Role B of JPN pair 11 gave no idea how the sister would be involved in the business of the microwave oven. That Role B's sister was going to sell Role B her microwave oven was revealed to Role A only at the end of discussion. Figures 5 and 7 show that the ways of presenting information are quite different although both participants mentioned their potential seller's name at the beginning of the explanation.

The main pattern observed in Figure 7 is (1) the statement and then (2) the rationale behind the statement, although Role B deviated from the pattern when she mentioned reasons ("I am used to how to use my mum's" and "My mum will sell it to me really cheap") before the conclusion ("It is good [to get hers]"). The pattern observed in this example was also observed in the following New Zealand case presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8 The information structure of excuses in NZ pair 25 data (Example 4.24)
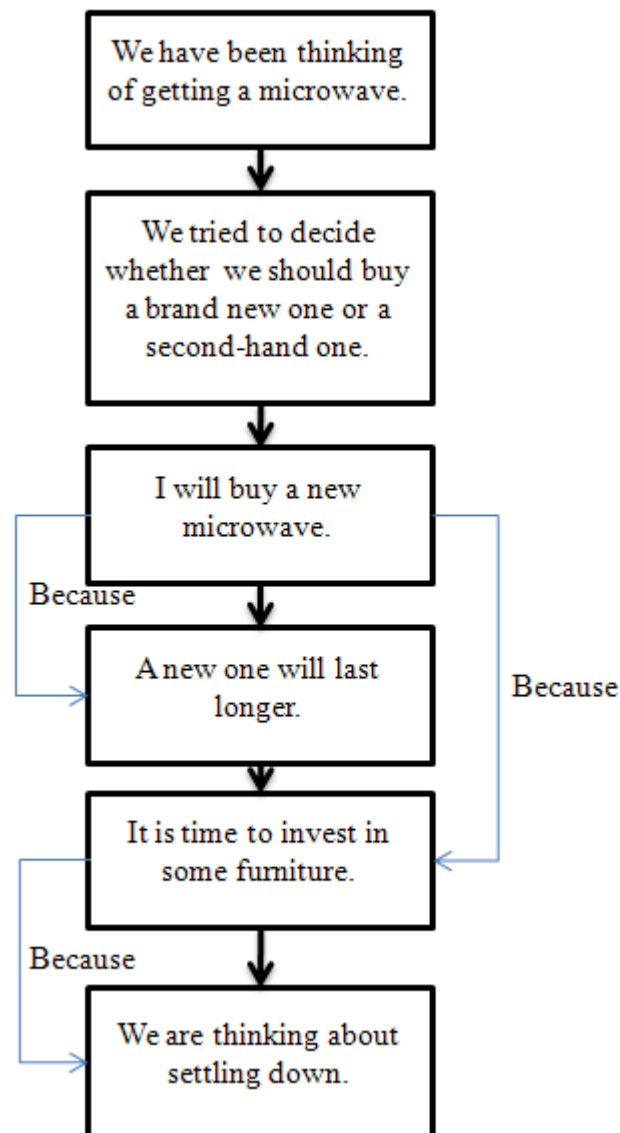
Role B of NZ pair 25 in Figure 8 revealed at the beginning her thoughts about buying a microwave oven. She next revealed her wish to buy a new microwave oven and then added the reasons for that, which were (1) A new one would last longer, and (2) It was time for them (for her and her partner) to settle down and to start buying furniture. This order, a statement first and then a rationale, seems very similar to what was observed in Figure 7, but very different from what was seen in Figures 5 and 6 of the Japanese data.

Figures 5, 6, 7 and 8 show the difference between the Japanese and the New Zealand data. What characterised the Japanese data was evident in the

middle part of Figure 6 where the decliner suddenly began talking about a toaster when the discussion had concerned the purchase of a microwave oven. At this point, the change of topic did not seem logical or relevant. The only way the conversational partner could understand the introduction of the "toaster-story" was to wait until the end of Role B's explanation.

To fully understand the meaning and function of these excuses in interpersonal communication, it is useful to see how requesters received and responded to the excuses. Thus, I will now proceed to the next section which looks into the requesters' responses to those decliners' excuses.

4.4 Types of responses by requesters to the excuses

This section examines the responses to the excuses in order to find how conversational participants communicated with each other, and specifically how excuses functioned in conversation.

In this study, Role A participants were given the situation that Role B would be a good candidate to purchase Role A's microwave oven. Role A approached Role B aiming to sell the microwave oven. After being refused by Role B, most Role A participants did not give up immediately after receiving an initial refusal from Role B and responded to Role B's refusal in the following ways:

- By saying it was cheap
- By saying the machine functioned well
- By explaining the reason for selling
- By agreeing with what Role B said
- By disagreeing with what Role B said
- By asking a question
- By repeating the request
- By explaining the advantage of microwave oven
- By asking to have a look

In their responses, the Japanese requesters showed a preference for mentioning the cheapness of the microwave oven: 9 out of 32 Japanese participants chose this type of response. On the other hand, 12 of the New Zealand participants preferred to mention the workability of the microwave oven (such as its goodness or non-agedness).

No particular pattern was found between the (decliners') excuses and the (requesters') responses. For example, the "no need" type of excuse, which was the most popular type among the Japanese participants, received eight different types of response from requesters in the Japanese data. The "somebody else" example, which was the most popular excuse with the New Zealand participants, received three different types of responses in the New Zealand data. Thus, any strong connection between particular types of excuses and particular types of responses was unlikely.

There was one characteristic pattern observed in the responses made by the Japanese participants. Some Japanese participants responded in an unengaged way while almost all New Zealand participants responded in an engaged way. "An unengaged response" here means that the response does not actually address the previous utterance and instead mentions something irrelevant. The Japanese Role A participants' responses sometimes appeared to be evasive and irrelevant to the reasons given in Role B's excuses, as if Role A participants were avoiding facing the issues raised by the Role B participants.

I first, refer to examples of non-evasive and more fully engaged responses which were common in the New Zealand data. The following two examples are non-evasive cases and the utterances concerned here are indicated with →.

EXAMPLE 4.25:

    B: I'm quite happy without a microwave, eh just.
→A: Because you can make rice in a microwave.   (NZ Pair 20)

EXAMPLE 4.26:

    B: I really, I really think I don't need one. Like I need one every
        now and then but I don't really need it on a daily basis like. But
        it would be nice to have it at home. But I mean for the amount
        of time that I might be amount that I actually use the microwave.
        I don't think it would be sort of a good
→A: Ah, what happens at the time that you need a microwave and
        you don't have one?   (NZ Pair 34)

These responses engaged and properly connected with what Role B said. Role B in these data declared that they believed they did not need a microwave oven. Role A then tried to convince Role B of the usefulness of a microwave oven in order to sell the appliance to Role B. Thus, Role A in Example 4.25 mentioned the advantage of having a microwave oven to cook rice. Role A in Example 4.26 questioned the problems that might arise from the lack of one.

By contrast, many Japanese participants did not show this type of connected dialogue. One such example from the Japanese data follows.

EXAMPLE 4.27:

> B: I do not need it so much at the moment.
> →A: Oh, is that so. I won't need it soon and I thought that I would
> pass on it to you.

> <B: ima n tokoro son'na ni iran kara:
> A: soo nan yaa moo doose iran yooni naru mon ya kara na moo B
> ni yuzuroo ka to omotte>   (JPN Pair 7)

Role B in Example 4.27, similar to Role B in Examples 4.25 and 4.26 above, did not think she needed a microwave oven. Following Role B's excuse, Role A explained why she wanted to sell her microwave oven; this had nothing to do with the feelings about a microwave oven that Role B had just expressed to Role A. Role A's response still applied to her microwave oven but did not directly address the issue Role B raised. In this sense, Role A's response in Example 4.27 did not sound relevant to what Role B had just said. A response like this is referred to as an "evasive" or "unengaged" response in this section.

This type of response was offered not only to the excuse of "no need for a microwave oven" type but also to some other types of excuses in the Japanese data. In the following examples, Examples 4.28 and 4.29, Role B said they had already found a good, brand new, or relatively new microwave oven which they were to receive soon. But Role A's reaction to them had nothing to do with the machine Role B participants intended to get.

EXAMPLE 4.28:

> B: Um, but, um, well, I have already found a new and good one. So
> I think I am going to buy the new one.
> →A: Oh, but I absolutely recommend mine; almost somehow… it's
> not fantastically tidy though it's definitely cheap.

<B: aa demo un an ne atarashikute ii no mitsuketa ken sore kaoo ka
to omotta n ja kedo ne
A: Ee demo zettai osusume wa suru tte da hotondo nan ka ne betsu
ni son'na ne sugoi kirei tte wake ja nai kedo zettai yasui yo >

(JPN Pair 23)

EXAMPLE 4.29:

B: I thought I wanted one a little bit newer, not new, but I have
heard we could find better second-hand microwave ovens. I was
thinking of looking around those and buying one. The old ones
are different from the latest ones like; having only heating-food-
function and so on. I want have more functions such as for
baking biscuits.
→A: Oh, would you consider buying a second-hand one? A second
hand… if you buy it from me, I would reconsider the price and
make it cheap for you; so think about it.

<B: watashi hoshii to wa omotte ita kedo un chotto yappa moo chotto
atarashii atarashiku wa nai kedo chuuko demo moo chotto ii no
ga arutte kiite iru kara soo iu no wo mite kaoo kana to omotte te
yappa mukashi no dattara sa kinoo toka ga sa yappa chigau
desho renji dake toka nani ka motto koo iron'na kukkii mo
yakeru shi toka iron'na kinoo ga tsuita no ga hoshii shi
A: So kka nan ka ma chuuko de kau no ka chuuko de ka demo maa
watashi kara katte kureru to chotto ma nedan no hoo toka mo
yasuku suru kara chotto kangaete>   (JPN Pair 15)

As can be seen above, Role A in both examples did not confront what they just
heard from Role B; instead they said something, even if only vaguely or distantly
relevant. What they said was always relevant to the topic of the microwave oven.
In this sense, they were always engaged with the conversation; Role A did not
ignore what Role B said and Role A and Role B in both examples continued the
conversation. But some sort of indirectness was apparent there.

In a sense, the participants were always engaged with the conversation; for
instance, Role A in Example 4.29 started her response by repeating what Role B
said ("Oh, would you consider buying a second-hand one?"). This utterance
clearly shows that Role A listened to what Role B said and responded to her.
However, their conversational "coils" did not seem to fully engaged; Role A'
attempt to sell Role B her microwave oven did not sound getting to the point. Role
B in Example 4.29 was obviously very conscious of the functions of her future
microwave oven and that was the reason for Role B not to buy Role A's
microwave oven. Role A, however, did not refer to any of those features Role B

raised but, instead, mentioned the price of her microwave oven. Role A was still
discussing her microwave oven, but was not directly addressing the problems
which prevented Role B from buying Role A's microwave oven. There was one
case like this in the New Zealand data as well.

EXAMPLE 4.30:

> B: Um, yeah. I was, I was looking for one but I actually found one
> so.
> →A: Oh, really. Coz I was wondering if you wanted to buy my one
> like it's quite cheap. It's quite good and I don't need it any more
> so. (NZ pair 5)

Role B in this New Zealand example said she had found one, but Role A, rather
than inquiring about the appliance Role B had found kept discussing his own
microwave oven; this conversation sounds similar to that of Example 4.28,
offered by JPN pair 23. This example was, however, the only example of this kind
observed in the New Zealand data. By contrast, a non-evasive and engaged
response was predominant in the New Zealand data, as in the following examples,
4.31 and 4.32.

EXAMPLE 4.31:

> B: Yeah, yeah, if you give me an idea now because, I mean, there is,
> um, I sort of, um, really looking at getting a new one, you know.
> Cause, um, well, it depends on the price you know, quite cheap
> now so.
> →A: Yes, so what's the new one? (NZ pair 23)

Role B in this case said he was thinking of buying a new one and Role A asked
about the particular microwave oven that Role B had in mind.

EXAMPLE 4.32:

> B: Well, I know but you know me, like, I like to have all this new
> flash stuff in my house and I want to buy a new one.
> →A: It's not that old. (NZ pair 18)

Role B in this case also wanted to buy a new microwave oven. He explained that
his procedure for buying appliances was to choose only new products and then
Role A claimed his machine was also a kind of new ("not that old").

There were, of course, non-evasive and engaged cases in the Japanese data as in Example 4.33 below.

EXAMPLE 4.33:

    B: Um, somewhat there is a particular one I want. There is a fantastic one like… you could defrost and heat food at the same time. And I want that one now, so I have thought that I would save up money and buy it.

→A: Oh, mine has got a lot of functions too.

    <B: Nan ka ne hoshii denshi renji ga atte nan ka sugoi yatsu ga arun yo kaitoo to nan ka attame ga issho ni dekiru tte de watashi ima sore ga hoshii to omoi yoru ken sa moo chotto okane tamete kaoo ka na tte omotto n yo ne

    A: A demo watashi no bun mo ippai tsuitoru yo kinoo wa>

<div align="right">(JPN Pair 20)</div>

In this case, Role B expressed her desire for certain functions in a microwave oven. Role A then claimed that her microwave oven had many functions. But the Japanese more than the New Zealand participants offered evasive and unengaged responses

I examined the top three frequently employed initial excuses, namely "no need for a microwave oven", "wanting a new one", and "getting one from somebody else". The three excuses occupied around two-thirds of the total data (22 out of 32 in total, 69% of the Japanese data, and 21 out of 32 in total, 66% of the New Zealand data). I looked at these trends in the response to the excuses in the Japanese and the New Zealand data in order to understand how the participants tackled the given task.

In examining responses to those excuses, I found that seven Japanese participants out of 22 (33%) gave such responses while only one New Zealand participant out of 21 (5%) offered this type of response (Example 4.30 referred to above). This finding indicated that the New Zealand participants did not think that they should avoid addressing the issues that appeared in the conversation. Among the Japanese participants, more people seemed to think that addressing the issues directly in the given situation was not preferable.

In summary, this section looked at how the Role A participants responded to excuses of refusal received from the Role B participants. Almost of all the New Zealand participants addressed the issues raised in the excuses, whereas the

Japanese participants were not always fully engaged with the obstacles raised in the excuses and responded to them in an evasive way.

The way the Japanese participants' responded, which was also illustrated in the studies by Nisbett (2003) and Kondo (2007), can be interpreted as a conflict-avoidance strategy. On the contrary, Westerners, including New Zealand people, would not necessarily see conflict as negative (Nisbett, 2003). Consequently, the New Zealand participants in this study did not attempt to avoid it, but just dealt with it.

4.5 Discussion

In this section, I discuss the findings reported above in order to understand what the data of this study mean in regard to the research questions that I posed in Chapter Two. The questions are as follows:

1. What lies do people tell in conversation, particularly in refusal situations in Japan and New Zealand?
2. What are the cultural differences in the lying patterns and strategies between speakers of Japanese and New Zealand English?
3. What culture-specific rules and values may affect those differences?

To discuss these points, I recall the scenario given to the participants and then summarise the findings I reported in the previous sections.

In the given scenario, Role B (the decliner) participants of this study were instructed to make up something to turn down their friend's request: to buy the friend's microwave oven. The scenario was that Role B participants did not want to buy Role A's microwave oven because Role A's microwave oven was old. Role B participants were attracted to the idea of owning a microwave oven since they did not have one but had no intention of accepting one from the Role A participants. In the given situation, the excuse mentioning the age of Role A's microwave oven represents the speaker's situation truthfully. Any other excuses are considered as cases of lies because they are not the true reason for declining the request from Role A.

Here is a summary of the findings from the analysis of the Japanese and the New Zealand data sets I have reported so far:

1. Preferred types of excuse
    a. Many Japanese participants used the "no need" type of excuses while the New Zealand participants tended to choose the "somebody else" and "new one" types of excuses.
    b. More Japanese than New Zealand participants mentioned the age of the microwave oven.
    c. More New Zealand than Japanese participants expressed their uncertainty about the purchase of a microwave oven.

2. Preferred ways to present excuses
    a. Some Japanese participants offered many pieces of information chronologically for their excuses which consequently sounded like a story-telling dialogue.
    b. The New Zealand participants linked the information logically and delivered it little by little.
    c. More detailed excuses were offered by the Japanese participants than by the New Zealand participants.

3. Preferred ways to respond to the excuses
    a. Some of the Japanese requester participants responded to the decliner's excuses in an evasive way.
    b. The New Zealand data rarely showed such an evasive response and almost all inviter participants dealt directly with what the decliners had said.
    c. There seemed to be no strong connection observed between the types of excuses and the types of response to them across both groups. The participants had preferred ways of responding to the excuses regardless of the types of the excuses offered beforehand.

I now discuss these findings including the above contradictory ones in regard to the falsehood of the excuses in order to answer the research questions of this study.

4.5.1 Types of lies

The findings reported above indicated that the Japanese and New Zealand participants tended to tell different types of lies to manage a refusal situation.

In the following, I discuss the types of lies the participants used to decline the request. I also examine the truth-telling cases observed in the data as a small number of participants told the truth to decline the request; they mentioned the age of Role A's microwave oven despite the instruction given not to do this. After this, I discuss the findings in terms of the perception of lying.

4.5.1.1 Lie-telling cases

Most Role B participants in both data sets followed the instruction given and lied to Role A participants to turn down the request. I first examine the excuses which the Japanese participants tended to use and then move onto the excuses which the New Zealand participants preferred to use.

4.5.1.1.1 Japanese lies

As reported above, the Japanese participants tended to lie about the need for a microwave oven. This excuse would dash the requesters' hope of selling the microwave oven because the "no need" excuse denies the possibility of a sale of the appliance almost completely. People normally presume that there will be a chance for them to gain agreement from the people they talk to when they make a request. This is generally a part of premeditated conditions of a request (Searle, 1969). In the case of this study, the Role A (requester) participants presumed that the Role B participants would possibly need or want a microwave oven. The "no need" excuse completely contradicts this presumption.

This "no need" excuse could be also taken as a "less negotiable" type in terms of the degree of possibility for further negotiation. Presumably anything is negotiable. But the preferred type among the Japanese participants, which was the "no need" excuse, would be less negotiable than the other types of excuses since this showed the decliners' negativity overall towards the purchase of a microwave oven. It is possible to argue that the "no need" type of excuses would be

negotiable because they pointed out the benefits that the decliners could gain from owing a microwave oven. But Role B's refusal attitude would possibly dampen Role A's expectation that Role B would be interested in buying a microwave oven. The findings indicate that the "no money" excuse was also used more by the Japanese than the New Zealand participants. This excuse also shows low possibility for further negotiation.

This "no need" excuse could also be considered as "an extreme lie" in terms of the extent of lies. The extent of lies here is determined according to the degree of deviation from the truth.

The idea that lies have 'extent' has already been demonstrated by Coleman and Kay (1981); they discussed the definition of *lie* from the viewpoint of prototype semantics. Verschueren (1985) also used scales of quantity and quality to clarify the meaning of lying. He explained his study as "scrutinizing the lexical field associated with linguistic acts of distorting the truth" (Verschueren, 1985, p. 145). Although cognitive semantic linguists avoided the use of this type of scale (Lakoff, 1987; Sweetser, 1987) in order to offer instead a "simplified and elegant definition of *lie*" as they claimed, the notion of 'extent' is useful in the examination of the nature of lies and the exploration of the rationale behind the use of the excuses in this study.

The information contained in the "no need" excuse, which was popular to the Japanese participants, was opposite to the information given in the role card which stated "*You have thought for a while about buying one because it must be convenient to prepare meals*".

In summary, the Japanese participants used lies to decline the request, which could be considered as extreme, less negotiable, and strong ("dashing the requester's hope") types of lies.

4.5.1.1.2 New Zealanders' lies

The New Zealand participants tended to lie about their purchase arrangement: they tended to choose the "somebody else" or "new one" types of excuses. These two types of excuses are basically saying that Role B (the decliner) was already committed to some other purchase agreement prior to Role A's request. Therefore,

the preferred lies among the New Zealand participants could be described as a lie about a prior commitment.

The preferred lies among the New Zealand participants could be described as more negotiable and softer compared with the rest of the excuses: the "prior commitment" type of excuse at least expresses an interest in buying a microwave oven. The "no need" and "no money" types, for example, would be less negotiable than the "somebody else" and "new one" types since the former two showed, as mentioned before, the decliners' negativity overall towards the purchase of a microwave oven.

These preferred types among the New Zealand participants could also be considered as softer ones in terms of the requesters' presumption: the information delivered in these types is beyond the requesters' knowledge or presumption. These types would not work like the "no need" type; instead, they would indicate that the decliners were interested in a microwave oven, but without the requester's knowledge, the decliners had already arranged something else.

In regard to the interpretation, the use of gratitude phrases must be mentioned here. Some participants from the New Zealand group thanked the requesters for considering them: nine of the New Zealand participants showed their appreciation while only five Japanese thanked the requesters. The gratitude phrase showed the acknowledgement or approval of the requesters' presumption that the participants needed or wanted a microwave oven. In this sense, the "somebody else" and "new one" types of lies did not deliver a strong refusal message.

In terms of strength of the rejection, some New Zealand participants used the "not sure" type. Needless to say, this lie does not sound like a strong rejection at all. More New Zealand than Japanese participants chose this type. This type showed weaker rejection in a non-committal way: it was an ambiguous response to the request. This was still a refusal as it did not express an agreement to the request. But it sounded less threatening than giving a clear "no" message because of its ambiguity. Thus, it could be perceived as a polite refusal.

The New Zealanders' preference resonate with Neustupny's (1982) description in regard to refusals to an invitation. Neustupny (1982) said that a prior engagement was the only acceptable excuse to turn down an invitation

among English speaking societies. Many New Zealand participants of the study in this chapter chose the "prior commitment" type of excuses to refuse the request. Although the data here are concerned with *request*-refusal rather than *invitation*-refusal conversation, with which Neustupny was concerned, the findings in the New Zealand data of this study seem relevant to the claim of Neustupny (1982). For New Zealanders, mentioning "prior commitment or engagement" would be an appropriate type of excuse for refusals.

In summary, the types of lies which the New Zealand participants preferred to use were "prior commitment" types. Those were more negotiable and softer types, as indicated by the ambiguous nature of the excuses offered, and the gentle force. The other finding from the data also indicated the tendency for more New Zealand participants to appreciate the request.

This means that the New Zealand participants did not go for the extreme lies the Japanese participants employed; the New Zealand participants did not go for complete denial of the requesters' presumption and in a sense they gently declined the request. The findings discussed in this section indicate that the Japanese and New Zealand participants took different approaches to manage undesirable communicative situation such as a refusal in this study.

4.5.1.2 Truth-telling cases

As mentioned above, some participants used the "A's is old" type of excuse. This type of excuse was not a lie as the scenario set for this study included the information: "*recently some other friends mentioned that one* [= A's microwave oven] *is quite old*".

Despite the instruction given, three Japanese participants did not lie about why they refused the request: they mentioned the age of Role A's microwave oven. None of the New Zealand participants used this information for their excuse, at least as the initial excuse. Later in the conversation, when their refusals were not readily accepted, two New Zealand participants mentioned the age of A's microwave oven.

The "A's is old" type directly pointed out the negative aspect of something that belonged to Role A. Consequently, it could be taken as impolite and face

threatening. Saying something against people's wish is not ideal (Leech, 1983) and taken as a face threatening act (Brown & Levinson, 1987). No matter how the decliners deliver the message, refusal is in itself already a face threatening act. In those three Japanese cases, a refusal message, delivered in an impolite way would make the situation, already face-threatening, worse. Although the number of participants who used this type, "A's is old", was small, this finding also indicated that the Japanese participants preferred to show strong rejection in their excuses.

This type of explicit refusal was observed by previous studies. For example, Kinjo (1987) reported that one of her Japanese participants declined a request to borrow notes from his/her friend by saying "the exam is tomorrow. It's impossible to lend you the notes" (p.97). No American participants of Kinjo's gave this type of direct excuse. The findings Kinjo (1987) claimed are summarised in the following paragraph:

> The Japanese people, who are conventionally known to be indirect, gave much more specific reasons than American subjects . . . some of which might be taken as rudeness rather than directness" (p. 97).

This type of explicit reasoning would be a preferred way to decline a request for Japanese people in order to give a clear flat refusal.

There were some other "sorts of" truth-telling cases observed in the data: two Japanese and five New Zealand participants mentioned uncertainty about the purchase of a second-hand appliance. One of the descriptions given on the role card was "*you thought about buying a second hand microwave oven, but you are not sure of its quality although a cheaper price sounds nice…*". Uncertainty about the purchase of second-hand microwave ovens was, according to what the participants read on the role card, *true* in a sense. But the prime reason to decline Role A's request was the age of Role A's microwave oven and not their uncertainty. This type of excuse conceals some aspect of the truth and does not provide the full picture; thus, this type of excuse, where information is partially given, could be considered a case of deviation from the maxim of quality and/or quantity (Grice, 1975). Therefore, it could be interpreted as a lie (Nishimura, 2005; Takubo et al., 1999).

My interpretation of the truth-telling cases of those three Japanese participants is that they gave first priority to following the cultural protocol of

refusals rather than following the instruction given. As mentioned above, the choice of lies among the Japanese participants seemed to be made aiming to give a clear refusal message. Mentioning the age of A's microwave oven suited this purpose. Role A could not do anything about the age of their microwave oven. If Role B did not like the fact that the microwave oven was old, it would be difficult for Role A to persuade Role B to buy it.

No New Zealand participants used the "A's is old" type. For the New Zealand participants, it would be important not to say "no" unless they had a prior arrangement preventing them from taking up a new opportunity. Thus, if they did not have such a prior arrangement, the next good choice would be to say "no" by not saying "yes": this finding means that the New Zealand participants sometimes used an indirect approach as a strategy to handle such an awkward interpersonal situation. This finding is interesting because people often said that English speakers normally exercise direct communication (Haugh, 2003). Although they studied American communication, Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2003) reported that U.S. Americans used assertion more than Japanese. They also mentioned that "U.S. Americans were oriented strongly to achieving justice, whereas Japanese were oriented strongly to maintain relationships" (p. 134). However, the findings here do not necessarily coincide with the previous studies. This inconsistency is explainable. Haugh (2003) and Ting-Toomey and Oetzel (2003) aimed to reveal the perception of Japanese language use *in general* while the present study examined the data collected *under a very specific interpersonal communicative situation*. This indicates the importance of revealing the rationale behind certain types of cultural behaviour and the importance of interpreting the data.

4.5.1.3 Cultural perception of lying

The different choices of lies between the Japanese and the New Zealand data could be related to the different perceptions of lying between these two cultural groups. The interpretation here is that the Japanese tended to accept lies as a convenient means to manage undesirable situations. They used lies without much stigma and focused on delivering a clear refusal message. By contrast, the New Zealanders did not accept lies in general and they followed a convention to

manage such situations when they made up their excuses. The convention was, as stated before, to use a prior arrangement.

In regard to lies and their perception, Nishimura (2005) showed that the Japanese participants did not stigmatise lies so much as the New Zealand participants. Kim, Kam, Sharkey and Singelis (2008) also studied deception and the perception of lies, although their subjects were people from the mainland U.S, Hawaii and Hong Kong. Kim et al. showed that individualistic cultures (according to Hofstede (2001), New Zealand is included in this category) encouraged people not to tell lies in general whereas collectivistic cultures (Japan belongs to this group), while not necessarily encouraging lying, allowed people to tell lies for the greater good which was typically to maintain harmony within the group.

The Japanese participants possibly thought that they should tell a "legitimate" lie in order to manage undesirable interpersonal situations such as refusals. Because of the cultural perception, the Japanese did not have to worry much about lying itself and then they lied to deliver a clear refusal message in keeping with their cultural value, which is to maintain harmony (Wierzbicka, 1991b). If they manage to refuse at their first attempt, they would possibly stop the request-refusal conversation immediately and would not have to go through an uncertain and conflictive situation any further. Telling the truth might sometimes come second after the maintenance of harmony.

The structure of "harmony comes first" is similar to the claim shown in Condon (1974). Condon referred to an example from his own trip to Mexico to explain cultural values; his experience indicated that Mexican people valued being friendly more than being truthful and sometimes sacrificed truth-telling to being friendly. Condon's case seems to be relevant to a customary example about truth-telling in Japan in general.

For example, many Japanese people believe it acceptable for medical doctors to withhold the truth from their terminal patients if they, the doctors, and/or the patients' family consider the truth too much for the patients to bear (Etoh, 1999). Kameyama's (1997) study as well as Hoshino's (1997) theoretical argument and experience as an expert of medical ethics support this claim. Although lies told to terminal patients about their conditions might sound extreme,

certain types of lies are prevalent and culturally acceptable. The famous Japanese proverb "lies are expedient" reflects this prevalence.

If lying was a culturally accepted and prevalent strategy to deal with awkward situations such as refusals, people could be prepared for the idea that the excuses are likely to be lies. Both, the requesters and the decliners would share this idea and their focus would be the remaining important message in the excuse: the "no" message. Then, they would not rely on the information in the excuses because it could be false and there would be no point therefore in taking it literally and seriously.

The interpretation above could not be applied to the New Zealand data of this study because of the social stigma attached to lie-telling (Kim et al., 2008). The New Zealand participants did not seem to focus on sending a *clear* refusal message as did the Japanese participants; instead, they seemed to follow their social convention of refusals, which was to mention a prior arrangement (if applicable). Because the New Zealand requesters or decliners did not have a cultural assumption that people were likely to use a lie for refusal, the requesters assumed that the excuses were truthful. The responses from the New Zealand requesters were engaged with the excuses and the problems raised by the decliners were addressed. This means that the New Zealand requesters took the excuses at face value and behaved accordingly: they applied the normal politeness rules and discussed the issues sincerely.

4.5.2 Patterns and strategies of lies

To examine the patterns and strategies of lies, I focus on two key aspects derived from the findings: the directness of excuses and the degree of detail of excuses.

4.5.2.1 Directness of excuses

In terms of directness of excuses, the conversational data of this study showed the Japanese preference for directness. On the other hand, the New Zealand data did not show such directness.

Haugh (2003) reported that Japanese communication was perceived as vague and indirect by native Japanese speakers as well as Japanese language learners. Kumagai (2004) also mentioned that many studies (e.g., Lebra, 1976; Reischauer, 1977) noted that indirectedness in Japanese communication was preferable to directness because it avoids conflict. For example, Kumagai claimed: "Japanese try to avoid conflict as much as possible in conversation, and in approaching other social interactions which do not necessarily involve verbal communication" (p. 199). Some cross-cultural studies mentioned that Japanese people tended to prefer indirect communication while American people prefer openness and directness in their communication and consequently conflict rarely occurred in Japanese conversations (Barnlund, 1973; Doi, 1972; Minami, 1979; Szatrowski, 2004a)[16]. These studies all suggested that Japanese people avoid conflict or deal with confrontational situations indirectly or even non-verbally.

However, other studies reported findings opposite to these (Kinjo, 1987; Kuramoto & Ohama, 2008; Nisbett, 2003; Szatrowski, 2004b; Taira, 2008), namely, that Japanese people do use direct expressions. These studies lend support to the findings of this present study.

For example, Szatrowski (2004b) reported that her Japanese conversational data showed several direct and strong refusal messages. In her data, an inviter made a phone call and tried to invite her friend to lunch on that day. They kept talking for a while and the decliner managed to refuse the invitation at the end. During the conversation, the decliner provided direct and strong (and detailed) explanations why he refused. For example, he said "It's bad, my head is not focused and my body isn't moving either" (p. 243).

Szatrowski's data were also natural conversational data. Her findings demonstrated that Japanese people used direct and strong expressions in refusing an invitation.

Kuramoto and Ohama (2008) also found direct expressions in their role-play conversational data in Japanese. They explained that such expressions were

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[16] I cite the cross-cultural studies comparing Japanese to American people as illustrations of English language studies as there is a lack of cross-cultural studies that deal specifically with Japanese and New Zealand people.

acceptable as they were used as a positive politeness strategy to acknowledge close friendship.

Another possible explanation for the contradiction between the present study (plus some other studies such as Kinjo (1987)) and other studies (which claimed "harmonious Japan") is that there is conflict and directness in Japanese communication but it is not obvious to non-Japanese people.

Szatrowski (2004a) argued that the claim of Japanese indirect or conflict avoidance communication style as a "myth of harmony in Japan". Szatrowski (2004a) and Jones (1993) mentioned that conflict in Japanese conversation could "be difficult to recognize at times, in particular by a non-native Japanese participant/observer" (Szatrowski, 2004a, p. 2). One of the examples of non-obvious conflict in Japanese conversation Jones (1993) mentioned is as follows:

When Jones was a student, she had a chance to stay with a Japanese family in Japan. One time she had a terrible cold and constantly blew her nose. Then the grandmother of the family made the comment, "Ms Jones blows her nose really gushingly." Although the grandmother said this in a pleasant way which sounded almost like an expression of admiration, it was actually a rebuke. It is against etiquette in Japan to blow one's nose in front of other people, which Jones did not know at that time. The intention of utterances like the grandmother's is obvious to Japanese native speakers. It could be even considered a clear and direct message to Japanese native speakers. The grandmother's comment sounds indirect at a denotative level, but it actually gives the message very clearly. In a sense, the grandmother confronted the undesirable situation and clearly showed conflict with Jones. But when such a situation is described from a non-native speakers' viewpoint, conflict hardly ever seems to have occurred.

Another possible explanation for the use of direct expression by Japanese people is that the Japanese participants used directness to achieve harmony. The purpose of the Japanese strong and undefeatable excuses would have been to convey a clear "no" message to the requesters and not to leave any space for further negotiation. If they managed to pass a strong "no" message, they would prevent further possible conflict, uncertainty, and so on and the risk to harmony would be managed. In other words, the Japanese participants tried to save themselves from possible greater undesirable situations. This interpretation

supports well the claim of previous studies about the priority of harmony in the Japanese cultural values as well as among collectivistic people generally (Hofstede, 2001).

On the other hand, the New Zealand participants did not appear to put so much weight on preventing further negotiation perhaps because they were more open to talking about most topics (Nishimura, 2002). This could be explained in regard to the characteristics of individualistic people who have less of a tendency towards uncertainty avoidance (Barnlund, 1973; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983; Hofstede, 2001; Nishida, 2004a). New Zealanders share the values of individualists (Hall, 1976), and therefore, they accept difference among individuals and willingly negotiate with others to resolve conflict.

4.5.2.2 The degree of detail in excuses

Another important aspect of untruthful excuses reported in this chapter was about how those excuses were delivered; what sorts of patterns were observed and what kinds of strategies the lies represented.

One of the findings was that the Japanese participants, more than the New Zealand participants, gave detailed information about their situation such as the desirable functions of their future microwave oven. As the participants were not instructed on how detailed their explanations should be, the amount of the information given in the excuses was up to the participants. The information was totally the participants' creation. Presumably, the creation was something the participants assumed appropriate for the situation given.

This type of Japanese tendency—supplying detailed excuses—was acknowledged by Taira (2008). She collected request-refusal conversational data and found that her Japanese participants, more than her American participants, gave concrete excuses.

One of Taira's American participants who gave vague excuses told Taira later that she (the participant) was uncomfortable about lying to make an excuse because it was "dishonourable" (Taira, 2008, p. 78). On the other hand, some of Taira's Japanese participants claimed that concrete excuses were convincing and also helpful in saving the other person's face. According to Taira's participants,

subtle reasons for declining would deliver a message to the requester that the request itself was unimportant, and thus, that the requester had not been taken seriously. In Taira's (2008) study, the student participants performed in a situation which required them to refuse a request from a professor. All participants in my study, both Roles A and B participants, played as friends to each other whereas Taira's setting, which I am discussing here, involved a situation between a student and a professor.

Taira's and my situations were not exactly comparable. However, what Taira (2008) reported might help to explain why the Japanese participants used "extreme-lying" and the New Zealand participants chose "less-lying" type of excuses. The Japanese participants used extreme lies with detailed information because they had to sound convincing in order to convey a clear "no" message. On the other hand, the New Zealand participants probably focused on different goals of communication. Certainly those goals were not to give a *strong* refusal message.

Another notable issue related to the patterns of lies and the degree of detail in excuses is the preferred communication style. The Japanese participants gave detailed excuses by supplying relevant information in a chronological order whereas the New Zealand participants seemed to give their excuses aiming to supply logical reasoning to reach their conclusion.

The tendency in Japanese people's talk was remarked on by S. Watanabe (1993), who reported that Japanese people tended to employ a story-telling style. Her American participants, in contrast, tended to give reasons in a "briefing" or "reporting" style.

When the participants in S. Watanabe's (1993) study, for example, were asked why they started studying English (for the Japanese participants) or Japanese language (for the American participants), one of her Japanese participants did not give her answer straightaway; instead she continued telling a story subtly related to her answer to the question for a long time before she gave the answer towards the end of the dialogue. The Japanese participant's answer started like "I, since when I was little I had desire to go to a foreign country, and my father was what should I say, an American fan if I could say" (S. Watanabe, 1993, p 195). Her focus shifted to the university where her father had studied,

what the father wanted his children to do, and then finally what she felt like doing. Her answer to why she had studied English was that she was interested in America and wanted to do something related to America. She did not give that answer straightaway, but instead gave a long story about her father who influenced her to become interested in America. This chronological pattern was observed in the Japanese data of the present study, as I reported in section 4.3.2.

On the contrary, American participants of S. Watanabe's tended to give an answer to the question immediately. One of them said "I went on YFU also, and it was just the opportunity, I was interested in Japan and the opportunity came up" (p.194)[17]. This American example looks simple compared with the Japanese example cited above because the American participant gave more or less straightforward explanations rather than a lengthy story.

S. Watanabe (1993) explained that the American participants "used 'single-account' arguments, which give a single account to support one conclusion or position at a time, while the Japanese participants used 'multiple-account' arguments, which give more than one account, both supportive and contradictory, and draw a conclusion" (p. 204). Although the English language conversational data in the present study were collected from New Zealand people, not American people, Watanabe's description of her data has similarities with the data of this study. The Japanese participants of this study tended to give long explanations of their situations and present the conclusion towards the end while the New Zealand participants gave information in much briefer and more reasoned accounts.

M. Watanabe (2001) also reported different styles in Japanese and American explanation. Her participants were instructed to describe a cartoon about one day in the life of a baseball-loving boy. M. Watanabe (2001) found a tendency towards chronological explanation in her Japanese data whereas "American students tend to state the result or effect first and identify causes in their explanations" (p. 346). Although her study subjects were elementary school

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[17] YFU stands for Youth for Understanding, which is a non-profit organisation that offers people the possibility to work or study for a year, semester or summer in a foreign country.

pupils (around 12 years old), the findings of the present study coincided with her findings.

This study has reported that the Japanese excuses were structured chronologically with detailed information while the New Zealand excuses seemed to be structured in an analytical manner—a declarative statement was given followed by reasons to support the statement. These tendencies in Japanese as well as in English were also observed by S. Watanabe (1993) and M. Watanabe (2001) although the type of data of the present study was quite different from that of those previous studies.

The present study required the participants to create an excuse in order to decline a request. The participants of S. Watanabe's (1993) and M. Watanabe's (2001) studies, on the other hand, did not create a story because the tasks for the participants were to tell some facts or a pre-existing story. The researchers examined which pieces of information the participants picked up from the "story" or "fact", how the participants presented those pieces of information, and so on. The findings observed in the data of this study evidenced that the participants adopted their culturally defined communication style in interpersonal communicative contexts where lies were required. In other words, this study demonstrated that the communicative strategies that people took to manage undesirable situations would be influenced by their cultural protocols. Thus, it could be inferred that it is their default communication style or protocol regardless of the types of "story" they are telling.

4.5.3 Cultural influences underpinning the use of lies

In this section, I discuss what culture-specific rules and values may affect the differences between the Japanese and the New Zealand data: I first discuss the Japanese data, and second, the New Zealand data.

4.5.3.1 Culture-specific rules and values in the Japanese data

As reported above, the Japanese participants tended to use lies to express less-negotiable and strong rejection and describe their situation in detail. Stronger

rejection seems confrontational. However, it could be interpreted as an attempt to avoid engaging with the request. This interpretation is supported by the finding that the Japanese requester participants often used evasive responses; both decliners as well as requesters tried to avoid engaging with each other. In other words, the Japanese participants applied several different strategies in order not to confront the issues there. In this section, I refer to cultural values of Japanese, preferred communication style, and in-group/out-group differentiation in order to interpret the findings of this study. My focuses here are the rationale for strong rejection and also for acceptance of direct expression to deliver such rejection.

As mentioned before, group harmony carries a lot of weight among Japanese people (Wierzbicka, 1991b). Nisbett (2003) and Kondo (2007) reported how Japanese people would exercise this cultural value in conversation.

Nisbett summarised the difference between Japanese and Americans on decision making in boardrooms thus:

> Japanese managers tend to deal with conflict with other managers by simple avoidance of the situation, whereas Americans are far more likely than Japanese to attempt persuasion. What is intrusive and dangerous in the East is considered a means for getting at the truth in the West. Westerners place an almost religious faith in the free marketplace of ideas. (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 194-195)

Nisbett's description above was limited to "boardroom" discussion (therefore the word *manager* is used in the text cited above), but it seems to reflect the general tendency of Japanese and American people. This description coincides with the findings of this study.

Based on her conversation analysis, Kondo (2007) also reported that Japanese people used avoidance as a conflict-management strategy. Kondo examined real Japanese conversations which occurred in a business setting. Two companies got together (five participants in total) to discuss details of a joint project which included cost, deadlines, prospective obstacles, and ideal materials. The data showed that the conversational participants changed the topic suddenly without warning when disagreement surfaced in the conversation. Kondo explained that, where business matters were concerned, this was a politeness

strategy to save face as people in Japan often interpret difference of opinion as interpersonal conflict which they believe should be avoided (Kondo, 2007, p. 102).

Her claim about Japanese face saving behaviour seems a plausible explanation for the findings from the data of my study. Although "changing the topic" might overstate the issues that appeared in the examples of my study, the participants' non-engaging manner observed in the Japanese data of the present study appears similar to that of Kondo's. This is a negative politeness strategy within Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework. The New Zealand participants, on the other hand, did not use evasive tactics. Instead, they responded directly to what they heard from their conversational partners. The New Zealand way of addressing the issues was to aim to satisfy the positive face of both the requester and the decliner and to respect the wishes of both sides.

In the data of the present study, both Japanese requesters and decliners seem to have tried to avoid future negotiation. The effort from both participants made the conversation seem superficial since neither of them addressed the issues there.

A question remains: why is conflict avoidance important, so important that the participants would even risk using such a strong expression? In order to discuss this issue, the concept of cultural values is useful. As discussed in Chapter Two, cultural values underpin people's thoughts and behaviour (Cohen et al., 2007; Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Wierzbicka, 1991b). One such value in Japan is "harmonious Japan" (Noda, 2004, p. 95). According to Jones (1995), "[The Japanese] cultural values emphasise the importance of avoiding confrontation and maintaining harmony" (Jones, 1995, p. 142). The findings of the Japanese data in this study seem to make sense if explained by the value of harmony.

The participants of this study had to refuse the request even though refusal itself was a face threatening act which could potentially weaken harmony within the group. In order to keep the potential damage minimum, in other words, to keep the situation as harmonious as possible, people needed to eliminate uncertain features to prevent further conflict. In this case, "preventing further conflict" meant avoiding further negotiation which could involve unpredictable elements and possibly bring more conflict. Eliminating uncertain features on these grounds

would be beneficial. For this reason the Japanese participants of this study used stronger lies in their excuses as well as detailed explanations to deliver a clear refusal message and to efficiently shut down any possibility of further negotiation.

The findings from Hofstede (2001) related to uncertainty also seem to support the above interpretation of the data of the study. Hofstede calculated on the Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI), which meant to show the degrees of preference for uncertainty avoidance. According to Hofstede, "the high-UAI society seeks clarity, structure, and purity; the low-UAI society is comfortable with ambiguity, chaos, novelty, and convenience" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 161). The UAI of the Japanese informants of Hofstede (2001) came in 7th while the New Zealand informants ranked 39/40th among 53 countries of the targeted counties of his survey (New Zealand and South Africa tied). These findings meant that Japan was a country where there was a high likelihood that uncertainty would be avoided whereas New Zealand was the opposite. Consideration of the findings from Hofstede (2001) leads to the conclusion that the Japanese participants in this study would have preferred to avoid uncertainty which would have arisen from further negotiation. To express their preference for this avoidance, the Japanese participants could have employed a few culturally acceptable strategies. One was to give evasive responses, another was to give excuses of stronger rejection to pass the "no" message clearly and the other one was to give detailed explanations to make Role A participants lose hope of persuading Role B participants. There seem to be wide differences among these three strategies on the surface, particularly between "being evasive" and "giving stronger excuses". However, all of them could have been used for the same aim, which was to avoid uncertainty and conflict in this context.

One more issue remains still regarding the seeming contradictions in the Japanese data: why such strong excuses became acceptable among the Japanese participants.

I interpret that the direct expressions that appeared in the data of this study were used as a positive politeness strategy. They were accepted especially because they occurred between friends. The reason only Japanese participants used such direct expression was that the Japanese and New Zealand participants had

different preferences in interpersonal communication regarding the concept of in-group/out-group differentiation.

Cross-cultural studies have reported that Japanese people behaved differently towards between in-group and out-group people (Barnlund, 1973; Kimura, 1982; Nisbett, 2003; Nishida, 2004b). Nishida (2004b) mentioned that people from collectivistic societies (including Japanese) more than those from individualistic societies (including New Zealanders) differentiated in-group people from out-group people. Nishida added that Japanese people in particular clearly behaved in that way (Nishida, 2004b, p. 54). The Japanese data of this study, therefore, could be interpreted that they represented the tendency of communication for in-group people.

Theoretically, there could possibly be two ways of differentiating in-group and out-group people in terms of politeness; by being particularly polite to out-group people or impolite to in-group people. The Japanese participants of this study seemed to make the latter choice. This interpretation seems to be consistent to the reports of other studies as (Kinjo, 1987; Kuramoto & Ohama, 2008; Taira, 2008). The Japanese participants in those studies used direct and impolite-sounding expressions to their friends to show their psychological closeness (Kuramoto & Ohama, 2008). Their intention could possibly backfire (that is, it could offend people's negative face, which is "the desire to be unimpeded in one's action"). However, this type of positive politeness strategy should work when people are close (Takiura, 2005, p. 188) and should satisfy one's positive face ("the desire to be approved of") (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 13). The Japanese participants in this study may have shown strong rejection in their excuses because they assumed that their friendship was close enough to use a direct communication style.

4.5.3.2 Culture-specific rules and values in the New Zealand data

In the New Zealand data, there were no strong expressions observed; the participants seemed to politely turn down the request and that probably suited their general social norms for politeness.

It would seem that New Zealanders, like American, would belong to the category of people who tend not to change their behaviour depending on whether they talk to in-group or out-group people (Nisbett, 2003; Nishida, 2006). Although the informants in these two studies were American and Japanese university students, Nishida (2006) mentioned that the studies in which he was involved (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986; Gudykunst, Nishida, & Schmidt, 1989) found that the American university students gave similar ranking to classmates as to strangers while the Japanese felt closer to their classmates. The finding stated "the uncertainty that Japanese university students feel towards their classmates is lower than that of the American students. The American university students feel the similar amount of uncertainty with their classmates as well as people they meet outside. . . . it is because the feeling of being in the same group is present among the Japanese students" (Nishida, 2006, p. 148, the original text was in Japanese which I translated into English). This report fits well with the description of preference regarding in-group and out-group differentiation between Easterners (including Japanese) and Westerners (including Americans and New Zealanders) (Nisbett, 2003).

The findings of this study observed so far indicated that the New Zealanders behaved somehow more similarly to Americans than to Japanese (e.g., M. Watanabe, 2001; S. Watanabe, 1993). According to Hofstede (2001), New Zealanders were indeed similar to Americans in regard to the UAI. Hofstede reported that the American informants ranked 43rd and the New Zealand informants came in 39/40th regarding UAI. These two countries seem similar. The New Zealand participants of this study would have been polite as usual and would not have applied positive politeness strategies (using particularly direct expressions).

A reasonable interpretation of the New Zealand data would be that the New Zealand participants were unlikely to be concerned about uncertainty or to be afraid of further negotiation. As reported above, the New Zealand participants did not show such strong rejection in the excuses or give long diffuse explanations as did the Japanese participants. The New Zealand participants turned down the request politely with simple explanations. The issues in the excuses raised by the decliners were taken at face value by the requesters. Those issues worked as a

platform for the next possible stage of negotiation. In this sense, the excuses in the New Zealand data seemed to function as an indirect messenger of the "no" answer as well as an information contributor to further conversation. Discussion and negotiation developed in the process of taking one thing at a time. The communication patterns of the New Zealand data resembled a "single-account" argument (S. Watanabe, 1993) rather than one which delivered most of the information at once.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter set a request-refusal scenario to elicit data of lies. The Japanese and New Zealand participants were asked to make role-play conversation based on the given scenario, that was that one person was to ask his or her conversational partner to buy his or her microwave oven and the other person was to decline that request by giving untruthful excuses. The data analyses demonstrated that the Japanese and New Zealand participants used lies differently to decline the request; namely they used different types of lies and delivered them in different manners. The reception of the lies—untruthful excuses—in the conversations also differed between the two different cultural groups.

The ways to tackle awkward tasks such as refusing a request are expected to vary among different cultures as "people from different cultures have not only different languages, but also different emotive styles and strategies of interacting" (Janney & Arndt, 2005, p. 30). The differences observed in this chapter were explained with cultural values and protocols of lying and refusals. The following provides answers to the research questions.

First, the study identified the types of lies the Japanese and New Zealand participants tended to tell. The Japanese participants seemed to be willing to tell lies which conveyed a strong rejection while the New Zealand participants did not to the same extent. The focus of the New Zealand participants, on the other hand, was to deliver a message of "a prior arrangement". The difference of their choice of lies can be explained by the different perception of the use of lies between the two cultures and also by the different communication goals they had in their mind.

Second, the ways of telling lies were clarified. The Japanese participants gave detailed information for their excuses while the New Zealand participants gave simpler excuses. The style of delivering excuses also differed; the Japanese participants gave a lot of diffuse information all at once in a chronological manner while the New Zealand participants employed a "single-account" argument. The interpretation was that the differences derived from different cultural values as well as different preferences for communication style. Multiple explanations seem to be required to explain the usage of lies in conversation.

Third, the above findings were influenced by cultural values and protocols. Lies which appeared in the data of this study seemed to be used alongside the following points: (1) fulfilment of the important communication goal; (2) delivery of the important message; (3) acceptability of communication strategies, in meeting (1) and (2) above; and (4) consideration of the culturally critical factors in the relationship among the conversational participants to enable them to apply (3) above appropriately.

For the Japanese, the important communication goal was to maintain harmony. To achieve this, the Japanese participants avoided further possible negotiation with their conversational partners—the decliners did it by giving a clear refusal message which did not leave any room for negotiation and the requesters also cooperated with the goal by responding to their refusals in an evasive manner. This implied that both requesters as well as decliners took refusals to be a situation to be avoided. In Japan, lying for the greater good is often considered as acceptable (e.g., Shiina, 1996). At the same time, being direct would be also acceptable among in-group people and this type of communication was taken as a positive politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The Japanese participants exercised their culture-specific rules and values in the data of this chapter.

On the other hand, the New Zealand decliners also applied their social protocols for refusals. Their important communication goal was to show a respect to individuals by acknowledging their right. In other words, they used positive politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987). To achieve this, the New Zealand participants tended to lie about a prior arrangement to decline. This type of lie worked among the New Zealand people as every arrangement is important and

has to be acknowledged. As a result, the first arrangement has to have the first priority in that respect. Because this type of cultural protocol has been established (Neustupny, 1982), mentioning a prior arrangement worked as an accepted way for refusals. The New Zealanders took the given undesirable communicative situation as an opportunity for negotiation. Almost all of the New Zealand requesters responded to those refusals in an engaged manner. They acknowledged the difference among them and acted on the difference.

The participants' behaviour observed in this chapter can be summarised thus: the Japanese and New Zealand participants had different concerns in their minds; therefore, they used different types of lies. For example, the Japanese participants of this study seemed reluctant to negotiate further whereas the New Zealand participants seemed willing to talk openly.

People are mindful of various things while communicating with others: they strive to deliver the intended meaning of the message while at the same time adhering to cultural norms, and taking care not to offend other people. A request-refusal conversation, the context of the study employed for this chapter, required careful manoeuvres. The conversational participants of the study were concerned with various issues such as cultural values and preferred communication styles. To gain acceptable outcomes from communication, they used several strategies which, while sometimes seeming inconsistent were actually consistent. Thus, several different notions and theories were needed to explain the phenomena that happened in conversation.

The findings reported in this chapter indicated possible miscommunication at intercultural situations: when individuals from another culture encounter such "foreign" ways of handling request-refusal situations, they could possibly be puzzled and even upset. As mentioned in the previous chapters, such pragmatic differences tend to be ascribed to rudeness or the malicious intent of the speakers (Liddicoat, 2008; Ohama & Wang, 2006).

More data on refusal conversation will be presented in Chapter Five. Excuses used in invitation-refusal conversation will be examined and comparisons between the Japanese and New Zealand data made.

CHAPTER FIVE
ROLE-PLAY CONVERSATION:
EXCUSES IN REFUSALS TO A CASUAL
INVITATION

In this chapter, I aim to reveal how lies are used to turn down an invitation.[18] In the previous chapter, I examined how participants lied to refuse a request and now I examine lies used to refuse an invitation. For this purpose, I collected role play conversational data of invitation-refusals. The role-play setting for this role-play is, as with the setting in Chapter Four, a situation among Japanese and New Zealand people: one person is required to invite a friend to go to the pub and the other person has to turn down the invitation.

Both situations of this chapter and the previous chapter are refusal, which are against the requester/inviters' wish. However, these two communicative acts are different in terms of the potential beneficial outcome. Requests are normally made for the requester's benefit while an invitation is *offered* considering the benefit of recipients of the invitation; it might not be beneficial, but at least the inviters believe that the invitation will be welcomed by the recipients. These differences might affect the type of lies the decliners would use to refuse and the ways the refusals are delivered. Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate invitation-refusal conversations as well to examine lies used to achieve these interpersonal communicative tasks.

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[18] An earlier version of this chapter, part one of the analysis of the invitation-refusal conversational data, was published in *AUMLA: Special issue, Refereed proceedings of the 2007 AULLA conference: Cultural interactions in the old and new worlds*, pp. 310-320. The article was entitled "Accounts for refusals in Japanese and English".

The participants were instructed to make up excuses to refuse an invitation. Therefore, the collected excuses were expected to be lies and are the main focus of the analysis in this chapter. Chapter Four reported how the Japanese and the New Zealand participants used excuses in request-refusal conversations, how these excuses were received, and how the whole conversation developed. These focuses of analysis are also shared with this chapter.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: in section 5.1, I give basic information about the data. In section 5.2, I cite and briefly describe the shortest and the longest conversations from the Japanese and the New Zealand examples to show general trends and characteristics in the data before detailed examination. The reports of the findings from the analysis follow in sections 5.3, 5.4, and 5.5. Based on these findings, discussion is provided in section 5.6. Finally, a conclusion is presented in section 5.7.

5.1 Basic information: Refusal to an invitation to go to the pub

In this section, I describe the instructions given to the participants prior to their conversational session and the numbers of data collected.

The participants were given details of a situation written on a card. The participant who received a card for Role A was to invite his or her conversational partner to accompany him or her to the pub that night. The other participant who received a card for Role B was to decline Role A's invitation. The information the participants were given prior to providing their conversational data follows:

The scenario for Role A
- You are walking towards a café on campus now.
- You have been busy recently, but you have just completed the things you have been working on, and want to go out tonight.
- You just noticed your friend at the café. You just got a good idea, going to a pub together. You believe that both of you will have a great time.
- Let's talk to him/her now!

The scenario for Role B

- You are at a café on campus now. It is not lunch time anymore and the place is not crowded.

- You have been busy recently and you are thinking of a quiet night at home tonight like watching TV or something.

- So you do not have any particular plan for tonight.

- You've just noticed that your friend is walking toward you now. S/he looks happy and an idea crossed your mind: s/he might ask you to get together or something.

- If s/he asks you such a thing, you will MAKE UP SOMETHING and decline it. You are not in the mood to be with him/her tonight and do not think "having a quiet night at home" would work.

This scenario, involving refusing an invitation, was chosen as one that would be familiar to many people in Japan as well as New Zealand. Hence, the participants in this study would find it easy to meet the conversational requirement. After all, the pub is a common venue to which individuals often invite friends. The type of invitation here needs no preparation, thus allowing it to be light-hearted and casual.

Data were collected from 32 Japanese pairs and 30 New Zealander pairs whose conversations averaged 48 seconds and 67 seconds respectively. The number of the New Zealander participants differed from that of the previous chapter. This discrepancy arose from the failure of the audio recording equipment when some data could not be retrieved.

5.2 The shortest and the longest conversations

This section presents first, the shortest, and second, the longest conversations from the data collected under the situation mentioned above. A brief summary is also given on the tendencies observed in the data.

The rationale for showing these conversations here is that they are good examples for seeing general trends. The relatively short conversations—on average one minute—in this chapter lent themselves to the presentation of the

shortest and longest conversations here whereas the data of Chapters Four and Six were much longer as reported in Chapter Three: they averaged around 1.5 minutes and 2 minutes respectively. In Chapters Four and Six, I focus instead on particular types of utterances to see how the participants used lies in the given situations. The ideal analysis would be to examine every single conversation thoroughly from beginning to end across the three different data sets. However, that is difficult due to the limited space in the thesis. Therefore, as a compromise, I will pick the longest and shortest conversations and show them from the beginning to the end in this chapter.

5.2.1 The shortest conversation

The shortest conversations were provided by Japanese pair 26 and by New Zealand pair 32 which are shown as Examples 5.1 and 5.2 below. These data took 21 seconds and 26 seconds respectively. The phrase in [   ] was given to clarify what the speaker meant.

EXAMPLE 5.1:

    A: Hey B. Do you have [some spare] time tonight?
    B: Today. Yes, I do
    A: Shall we go out for drink?
    B: Well, today. Recently somehow I have been busy and a bit tired. So I was thinking of relaxing [at home].
    A: Is that right. Okay, another time.
    B: Yes, please ask me again.
    A: Okay.

  <A: Oo B kyoo no ban aito ru
    B: kyoo aito ru koto wa aito ru un
    A: kyoo nomi ika hen
    B: a kyoo ka nan ka ne saikin ne chotto zutto isogashikatta kara chitto tsukarete te ne kyoo wa ne chotto yukkuri shiyoo to omotte run da kedo
    A: a soo nan ka un ja mata kondo iko
    B: un mata sasotte ne
    A: un>   (JPN pair 26)

EXAMPLE 5.2:

    A: Hey B, how's it going?
    B: I'm good, thanks. How are you?
    A: Yeah, pretty good. What are you up to tonight?

> B: Well, not much, but I sort of plan to sit home and not do anything much.
> A: Okay. What do you think about going out to the pub? Fancy a drink?
> B: Um, I don't, right, thanks. I think I'd rather stay at home.
> A: Okay, you're not keen
> B: No.
> A: Oh, all right. Are you sure?
> B: Yeah, I'm sure. Maybe another time.
> A: Okay, cool, cool. Right. We'll see you then.
> B: All right. Bye.
> A: See you.   (NZ pair 32)

These two examples are similar in terms of (1) the duration of the conversation (21 seconds and 26 seconds respectively), (2) the way of starting the conversation—both Role A participants began by asking about Role B's schedule, and (3) the type of excuse—both Role B participants more or less said they wanted to remain at home. About the third point, although the main reason for the Japanese decliner was that "she wanted to relax at home", she also briefly mentioned that "she was a bit tired". Thus, a slight difference between the two examples has to be acknowledged in the excuses used to decline the invitation.

A clear difference between the two examples above was that Role A in Example 5.1 gave up immediately after Role B's first refusal while Role A in Example 5.2 kept asking Role B if he was sure about it. In other words, the Japanese inviter readily gave up while the New Zealand inviter did not.

5.2.2 The longest conversation

The longest conversations were offered by Pair 1 from the Japanese data and Pair 24 from the New Zealand data. These data took 1 minute 41 seconds and 2 minutes 22 seconds respectively. The longest role-play conversation of the New Zealand data exceeded that of the Japanese data by a significant margin but was not so much different in substance. This is because Role B of NZ pair 24 stopped conversing while she looked in her bag for her calendar to check her schedule. No interaction between Role A and B took place during the search, which took 35 seconds. Therefore, the longest data of the Japanese and the New Zealand data were similar in conversational length.

Example 5.3 below shows how the longest data of Japanese started.

EXAMPLE 5.3:

  A: I want to go out today and have a drink. Would you like to come?
  B: I have a headache.
  A: You have a headache. You'll forget it once you have a drink.
  B: No. The headache will definitely get worse.
  A: (Laughter) It'll get worse. True.

  <A: kyoo wa chotto paa tto nomi ni ikitai na toka omotte ita n da kedo B san doo
  B: atama itai
  A: atama itai nomeba wasureru yo
  B: iya motto atama itakunaru zettai
  A: (Laughter) itaku naru soo ka>   (JPN pair 1)

In this example, the Role B participant declined the invitation with the excuse that she had a headache, which was Role B's first refusal. Role A participant did not readily give up inviting Role B; Role A tried to persuade Role B saying that alcohol would help her headache, which was the second attempt of invitation. Role B resisted this idea by saying that alcohol would make the condition worse, which was the second refusal.

After the conversation shown as Example 5.3, the participants continued their invitation-refusal conversation. In the rest of their conversation, the participants kept refusing and inviting in the following manners:

- **Role B's refusals by suggesting or responding to Role A** (this part is indicated with ➔ in Example 5.4):
  Role B suggested that Role A should go home and sleep.
  Role B also negatively responded to Role A's opinions or suggestions.

- **Role A's invitation by giving positive opinions or suggestions in regard to drinking** (this part is indicated with ⇨ in Example 5.4):
  Role A insisted that a drink would help her sleep well. Role A suggested that Role B could stay at her place afterwards.

Both Roles A and B persisted in what they wanted. No attempt at compromise was made by either of the pair. Consequently, their conversation went in parallel. Here is the rest of the conversational data of JPN pair 1:

EXAMPLE 5.4:

→ B: You need to sleep too.
A: [Shall we sleep] together? (laughter)
→ B: You had better sleep.
A: Had I better sleep?
→ B: You have bags under your eyes.
⇨ A: Are they that bad? (laughter) It that so, but we should eat as well. I thought we would sleep better after a drink.
→ B: I have already eaten.
A: Have you eaten? (laughter) Tonight… True, true. Okay, so will you go home and go straight to bed tonight?
→ B: It takes one hour by car [for me to get home].
A: Wow, your home is far away. [It takes that long] by car… Ah,
⇨ you can sleep at my place. How about staying at my place after drinking?
→ B: That would be okay, but today is [no good].
A: Today is no good.
B: Today is no good. (laughter)
A: (Laughter) So, you want to sleep today. Okay, see you tomorrow.
B: Thanks.
A: Sure.

< B: A mo neyoo.
A: Issho ni? (laughter)
B: Neta hoo ga ii yo.
A: Neta hoo ga ii no kana
B: Datte me no shita no kuma
A: Kuma, sugoi? (laughter) So kka. Ee demo gohan mo tabenai to ne. Nondara kekko kimochiyoku nereru kana to omotte.
B: Sakki tabeta.
A: Tabeta. (laughter) konban. So kka. E soo da ne e demo ne. E ja kyoo no yoru wa moo sugu katte ne chau
B: Kuruma de ichi jikan kakaru.
A: Aa, tooi n da ne. Kuruma ka, so kka. E demo kyoo uchi de nereru yo. Nonda ato koo uchi ni tomaru no wa doo?
B: Sore mo ii kedo. Kyoo wa.
A: Kyoo wa chotto.
B: Kyoo wa chotto (laughter).
A: Kyoo wa netai ka. Un ja mata asu ne. Un.
B: Onegai shimasu.
A: Hai.>   (JPN pair 1)

In Example 5.4, Role B sent her refusal message clearly by mentioning that Role A as well as she herself, should sleep tonight, which was Role B's third refusal and Role B added the reason she thought Role A also should sleep: that was about Role A's negative facial condition: it said that Role A had bags under her eyes

(therefore, she needed sleep). This utterance is very direct and could be even taken as a rude remark.

Role A tried to persuade Role B to accept the idea that drink would be good for them, which was Role B's third attempt of invitation. This was obviously the last thing Role B wanted in this occasion. Therefore, Role A's persuasion did not sound sympathetic. Role A attempted one more time by offering her place for Role B to come back to sleep after the drink, but it did not work to Role B either. When the Role B participant said "not today", the Role A participant finally accepted Role B's refusal.

Now I examine the longest conversation from the New Zealand data. The beginning of the New Zealand longest data follows:

EXAMPLE 5.5:

A: I've been busy lately, if you want to come for a drink tonight at
      The Outback.
B: Oh, at The Outback. Oh, okay. Um, oh, where is my calendar?
      Hang on a sec. Um. Calendar, calendar, oh, that's right; it's on
      my phone. Let's have a look. Um, one, two, three, okay,
      calendar. Um. Thursday, what are we on? Oh, I've actually got a
      movie on tonight eh.   (NZ pair 24)

The "Outback" is the name of a popular pub in town. After Role A gave the initial invitation, Role B started looking for her calendar. Her calendar reminded her that she had planned to go to see a movie that night. Role A's response to the Role B's excuse follows:

EXAMPLE 5.6:

A: Righty oh. We're thinking of clubbing all night long, doesn't
      really matter.   (NZ pair 24)

In Example 5.6, Role A indicated his acceptance of Role A's prior plan. Role A did not try to change Role A's mind in regard to her plan.

The conversation continued, which is shown in Example 5.7 below. As with the Japanese example examined above, I indicate the utterances of invitation and refusal that appeared in Example 5.7 with arrows:

- **Role B's refusal by responding to Role A's questions or giving
  suggestions** (this part is indicated with → in Example 5.7):

Role B explained that she did not have an answer to Role A's question about the time. Role B repeated her plan to go to a movie and also gave another excuse as a response to Role B's alternative suggestion.

- **Role A's invitation by asking questions or giving suggestions in regard to drinking** (this part is indicated with ⇨ in Example 5.7): Role A asked about the finishing time of Role B's plan. Role A also suggested that it was no big deal and they could have a drink on a different day.

EXAMPLE 5.7:

⇨   A: What time does the movie finish?

       B: Lately, eh, like, today, oh, today, oh, today's been insane, eh. Like, you know, statistics is just such a mind challenge. You know, um, and I've got this friend who wants to take me to the movies and um, meet up with some other people, um, to do with the university just um, you know, either [a movie entitled] "Whale rider" or um, what's the other one, it's a free one, Japanese one, um, at L3 [Lecture Theatre Three at

→   the university]. So, I don't really know, I mean, probably probably one of those movies but, um, yeah, probably not.

⇨   A: Oh, okay. Yeah, I just wanted to drink.

       B: Well, oh, just want a drink, yeah.

       A: Yeah, yeah.

→   B: Yeah. No, sorry. I just need to do the movie and the rest thing tonight, eh.

⇨   A: Yeah. What about tomorrow?

       B: Um, tomorrow. Well, Friday, find out again, hang on, um

→   calendar, Friday. Work all day. Buggar. Um. No, seriously, I won't, won't. I see you next, next week in the statistics lab?

       A: Yep.

       B: So, would that be Monday 11 o'clock-ish or.

       A: Yep.

       B: Um. No, probably one, no, nine o'clock, nine o'clock, eight thirty. I'm on campus on Monday.   (NZ pair 24)

In Example 5.7, Role A made his second attempt of invitaion by asking what time Role B's film would end. This type question would often work as a pre-question to offer the amended plan. This seemed to work in that way as Role B gave her second refusal after this question. Role B explained why she had been stressed out first. Then she started explaining which movie she was going to see. She did not give a straight answer to Role A's question about the finishing time of the film;

instead, she gave a reason for not answering the question by explaining that she and her friends had not decided which film they were going to watch.

Role A did not try to change Role B's plan at all. Role A emphasised that his plan was no big deal by saying "I was just wanting to drink". Role A then made his third attempt of invitation by suggesting that he could have a drink with Role B some other time: Role A asked "What about tomorrow". This alternative suggestion drew another excuse, which was Role B's third attempt of refusal of the invitation from Role B that appeared ("work all day"). This excuse and the first excuse (presented in Example 5.5 by saying "I've actually got a movie on tonight") were both lies about her prior engagement.

None of Role A's attempts succeeded. The conversation of invitation-refusal eventually finished with an acknowledgement that they would next meet in the statistics laboratory and their entire conversation ended as follows:

EXAMPLE 5.8:

B: Yeah, pro, probably Monday, yeah.
A: Monday night.
B: But tonight, I definitely have to do the movie and the rest thing, eh.
A: Yep.
B: Is that, is that cool?
A: Yep.
B: Probably see you round on Monday.
A: Yep.
B: Yeah.
A: Cool.
B: Ah, so, what do you want to eat anyway?[19]
A: Ah, I'm not really hungry. I just saw you in here and wondered if you wanted to go out tonight.
B: Oh, no, no worries. No worries. Um, maybe next week, yeah.
A: Yeah, cool.
B: Okay.
A: Okay.
B: Catch you later, then.
A: See you.   (NZ pair 24)

This conversation ended with an indication that they would possibly have a drink together sometime next week. A noticeable point in Example 5.8 is that they

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[19] Since the conversation was supposed to be taking place at a café, Role B asked this question.

checked many times with each other whether it was okay. Towards the end of the conversation, the participants checked with each other quite a few times as follows:

- B: Is that cool? →A: Yep
- B: Probably see you round on Monday →A: Yep →B: Yeah →A: Cool
- B: Maybe next week, yeah →A: Yeah, cool →B: Okay→A: Okay

In summary, the longest cases from the Japanese and the New Zealand data showed a similarity in that both Role A participants were persistent. They did not give up easily and kept asking for a while. Role B also kept turning down the invitation.

However, the conversations differed in the way Role B declined. The Japanese Role B participant more or less told Role A to give up the invitation using direct expressions (i.e., "Role A should go home and sleep"). Role B's expressions for refusals sometimes even sounded rude (i.e., "Role A had bags under her eyes"). The New Zealand Role B kept mentioning her prior engagement (e.g., "I've got this friend who wants to take me to the movies", "[I will] work all day [on that day]").

The two longest conversations also differed in terms of the manner of Role A's persuasion. Role A in the Japanese data tried to influence Role B's thinking (e.g., "You will forget it [a headache] once you have a drink"). The Japanese inviter tried to change the decliner's mind, which was completely different from the approach of the New Zealand inviter. The New Zealand Role A participant made no attempt to change Role B's plan. Role A tried to negotiate an arrangement compatible with both Role A and B's plan. Role A did not try to dissuade Role B from going to the film (e.g., "What about tomorrow").

The conversations ended differently as well; the New Zealand pair checked with each other whether the decision they reached was okay quite a few times at the end of the conversation. This type of checking was not seen in the Japanese data.

The tendencies observed here will be revisited in the following sections; I will present more details of the findings with other examples from the overall data

analysis. First, the types of excuse and the tendency in the choice of particular types of excuses are revealed. Second, the responses to those excuses are examined. For fuller understanding of the excuses, they are examined from the inviters' perspective. Third, the decliners' responses to the inviters' responses—in other words, the decliners' second refusals—are analysed. Finally, the findings from the analysis are discussed.

5.3 Preferred types of excuses

As in the previous chapter, refusal excuses are the main focus of analysis. The excuses I took from the conversational data were classified according to the reason given in the excuses. The following five types emerged:

- "Prior engagement":   Mentioning something they had arranged
- "Physical condition": Mentioning their physical problems
- "Relaxation at home": Mentioning their desire to relax at home
- "Busyness":   Saying they are busy
- "Lack of money":   Saying they lacked money for going out

Each type of excuse is discussed below with examples from the data.

"Prior engagement"
In this type of excuse, the decliners stated they had already arranged something else.

EXAMPLE 5.9:
Um, actually, ah, sorry. I already I already have something planned.
(NZ Pair 26)

EXAMPLE 5.10:
Oh, today I have something to do.
<a demo kyoo chotto watashi yooji atte sa>   (JPN Pair 7)

The above two examples are about something already arranged. This category also includes the participants' commitment to their homework; two examples are

shown below. Participants who used this excuse typically said that the deadline for their assignment was the following day. Therefore, they had no choice. Because the participants had "engaged" with a commitment beforehand, I included this type of excuse in the category of "prior engagement".

EXAMPLE 5.11:

Oh, oh, no, I've still got assignments and stuff so.   (NZ Pair 12)

EXAMPLE 5.12:

No, but I have an essay due tomorrow, it is, no, [going out tonight is] not for me.
< iya demo ore asu dasana akan repooto aru kara betsu ni ee wa>
(JPN Pair 14)

"Physical condition"

The participants claimed they had a headache or some other health issue, which prevented them from going out.

EXAMPLE 5.13:

Um, no, I'm a bit tired.   (NZ Pair 13)

EXAMPLE 5.14:

I have a headache.
<atama itai>   (JPN Pair 1)

"Relaxation at home"

Some participants expressed their desire to have a relaxing time at home as in the following.

EXAMPLE 5.15:

Um, um, I really kind of wanted a nice night home.   (NZ Pair 1)

EXAMPLE 5.16:

Ah, I think, a little bit, I want to come, but I would like to relax and watch TV and so on.
< a un chotto ikitai na to omou kedo yappa hisashiburi ni terebi toka
  mitai na toka omou n da kedo>   (JPN Pair 17)

This excuse was a truthful excurse, which expressed the participants' desire for being at home that night. Briefly speaking, going to a pub is not such a major event and the participants might not have taken the situation worth making up a

lie to decline the invitation.[20] I will discuss the truthfulness of this type of excuse later in the discussion section.

"Busyness"

Some participants used their busyness to turn down the invitation. They typically said they were "busy" first and then gave the reason for their busyness.

EXAMPLE 5.17:

Oh, I've actually I'm quite busy tonight; I've actually got pilates tonight.   (NZ Pair 5)

EXAMPLE 5.18:

Ah, but recently somehow I've got ah terribly busy with essays, a part-time job and so on.
<e demo ne saikin ne nan ka sugoi repooto toka ne baito toka
   isogashiku tte>   (JPN Pair 31)

"Lack of money"

Some participants said that they had no money for going out.

EXAMPLE 5.19:

Oh, yeah, um, I could but I don't really have any money eh?
                                                          (NZ Pair 4)

EXAMPLE 5.20:

Now I do not have money.
< ima tsutto okane nai n da yo ne>   (JPN Pair 10)

"Others"

Aside from the five types of excuses described above, the Japanese and New Zealand participants used other types. However, none fitted easily within those five categories.

The four Japanese cases included "my husband is away today (therefore, the participant would have to stay at home)", "It's bothersome", "I cannot drink alcohol" and "I do not feel like it". In the New Zealand data, the four did not give

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[20] Because of this nature of the invitation, one of the situations given "you do not think 'having a quiet night at home' would not work" might not possibly be taken seriously by some of the participants.

excuses to the invitation. One of them did not even say "yes" or "no" and the conversation ended without establishing whether Role B (the decliner) would go to the pub. One participant just declined without giving an excuse. Role A (the inviter) then suggested going to the pub some other time and the decliner accepted. The two others did not give an excuse at first either, but later one of them expressed his desire to stay at home and the other participant mentioned his financial problems as well as a homework deadline.

To see whether there was a tendency in the data for the Japanese and New Zealand's to choose particular type of excuses, I counted the number of each type of excuses. Table 8 shows the results of this classification.

Table 8 The first excuse that appeared in the data

	Prior engagement	Physical condition	Relaxation at home	Busyness	Lack of money	Others	Total
Japan	10	11	3	3	1	4	32
NZ	14	5	4	1	2	4	30

Overall, the most and second most popular types of excuses from both data sets are "physical condition" and "prior engagement". But there are some differences between the two data sets.

The most popular type of excuse for the Japanese participants was their "physical condition" which involved physical problems such as a headache and tiredness. This excuse was used by 11 Japanese participants, a third of the total sample. The second most popular excuse for the Japanese participants was "prior engagement" (10 cases). On the other hand, for the New Zealand data, a "prior engagement" was the most popular and was used by 14 participants; significantly, almost half of the New Zealand participants chose this type of excuse. Their "physical condition" was second most popular type (5 cases).

I note another finding in regard to the "physical condition" type of excuse here: six out of 11 Japanese participants who chose this excuse gave specific information such as a stomach ache or headache rather than saying they were simply unwell or tired. The five New Zealand participants on the other hand, who used this kind of excuse, mentioned only tiredness. Thus, The Japanese

participants generally gave more detailed information about their physical condition.

The next section looks at how these excuses were received by the inviters.

5.4 Types of responses to the excuses

According to the instruction given, Role A participants had to invite Role B participants to go to the pub that night. In both Japanese and New Zealand data, one third of the total Role A participants, 11 participants each, gave up after Role B's initial refusal. The remaining Role A participants, 21 Japanese and 19 New Zealand participants, persisted after the initial refusal.

In this section, I show the general tendencies across the data first, and then examine the responses in detail to understand the nature of those responses and the preferred ways that appeared in the Japanese and the New Zealand data.

As with the types of excuses, the Japanese and the New Zealand participants tended to respond to those excuses differently. These differences between the Japanese and the New Zealand data could possibly be influenced by the types of excuses. To clarify this point, I checked the connection between Role B's excuses and Role A's responses. The result was that the data did not show any consistent patterns between Role B's excuses and Role A's responses. This means that the participants had their preferred ways of responding to the excuses regardless of the types of excuses.

To see the general tendencies of the responses across the Japanese and New Zealand conversational data, I classified responses and counted the number of each type of response. Table 9 shows the results of this classification.

Table 9 Role A's responses to Role B's excuses

	Japan	NZ
Seeking more information	11 (6)*	6 (4)*
Dismissing the excuse	7	1
Amending the plan	0	6
Telling the reasons for going to the pub that night	2	2
Emphasising the pleasure of his or her company	0	2
Simply asking again	1	1
Suggesting a change of date	0	1
Giving up	11	11
TOTAL	32	30

*The number in ( ) shows the cases of "maji de" or "are you sure" type.

As mentioned above, one third of Role A (the inviter) participants in both data gave up inviting Role B (the decliner) participants and this was the most chosen type of response to the excuses in both data sets. Apart from the "giving up" type of response, the "seeking more information" type of response was commonly seen in both data sets but was used by more Japanese participants.

For the New Zealand participants, suggesting an amended plan was the most popular after the "giving up" and "seeking more information" type of responses. This response was not chosen by any Japanese participants at all. On the other hand, seven Japanese participants dismissed what Role B said while only one New Zealand participant used this type of response.

Another notable difference shown in Table 9 concerns the number of varied responses. The New Zealand data had seven different types of responses while the Japanese data had only four.

In the following sections, I examine the popular responses: first, the cases in which Role A persisted (sections 5.4.1, 5.4.2, and 5.4.3) and second, those in which Role A gave up (section 5.4.4).

5.4.1 "Seeking more information" type of response

This section looks into the "seeking more information" type of response, which was the most popular type among the Japanese participants; 11 of them responded in this way. This type of response was also popular among the New Zealand participants although it was not as popular as among the Japanese. Here is a Japanese example. The utterances concerned here are indicated with →.

EXAMPLE 5.21:

     B: Oh, have a drink. Um. Today is a bit… I'm a bit stuffed really.
→A: Have you caught a cold or something?

     <B: a nomi ni ne un kyoo chotto ne shindoi n yo ne honto ni un
     A: kaze demo hiitan?>   (JPN Pair 8)

Role B's excuse in Example 5.21 was insufficient, so Role A sought more information with a further question by asking if Role B had caught a cold. Another example similar to this is shown below. Role B in the following example mentioned a prior engagement and Role A asked for more details.

EXAMPLE 5.22:

     B: Um, I was thinking of having a practice at the club.
→A: The club... Practice practice... Have you got club activities
        [today]?
    <B: aa saakuru itte renshuu shiyoo ka to omo ttotta
     A: e saakuru tte renshuu suru renshuu saakuru ga aru no>
                                (JPN Pair 20)

Some other cases were slightly different from the above, but Role A still asked for more information by saying "do (have) you really?"—"*maji de?*" in Japanese.

EXAMPLE 5.23:

     B: Ah, but I have something to do today.
→A: Do you really?

     <B: a demo kyoo chotto watashi yooji atte sa
→A: **maji de**?>   (JPN Pair 7)

EXAMPLE 5.24:

     B: Ah, but recently somehow I have been busy with essay
        assignments, part-time work and so on.

→A: Have you really?

  <B: e demo ne saikin ne nan ka sugoi repooto toka ne baito toka
     isogashikutte
→A: **maji de**?>   (JPN Pair 31)

"*Maji de*" literally means "seriously" and this phrase in conversation normally means something like "really?" "do you?" (or have you?, did you?, is she?—depending on context) or "do you mean it?". Six Japanese participants used this "*maji de*" response.

The phrase "*maji de*" is a common phrase particularly among young people in Japan. They often use this phrase when they hear something unexpected or unwanted. Ohama (2006) described this phrase as a sign of the speaker's slight surprise (p. 181). This type of phrase is termed a "backchannel" (Ohama, 2006; Ohama & Nishimura, 2005) and often functions as encouragement for speakers to continue talking (Miller, 1991; Ohama, 2006). With certain contextual conditions, it sometimes works as a pre-question before urging the speaker to provide more information in the conversation. The above two examples continued on to the conversations shown in Examples 5.25 and 5.26 below. The utterance of a pre-question and the utterance of a proper question here are indicated with → and →→ respectively.

EXAMPLE 5.25:

    B: Ah, but I have something to do today.
→   A: Do you really?
    B: Sorry, next time.
→→A: What are you up to?

 <   B: a demo kyoo chotto watashi yooji atte sa
  →A: **maji de?**
    B: Gomen na kondo mata
→→A: Nani ga aru n>   (JPN Pair 7)

EXAMPLE 5.26:

  B: Ah, but recently somehow I have been busy with essay
    assignments, part-time work and so on.
→A: Have you really?
  B: Um a sort of, you know, I am quite tired and let's do it some
    other time.

 < B: e demo ne saikin ne nan ka sugoi repooto toka ne baito toka

isogashikutte
→A: **maji de?**
B: un chotto ne shindoi ka na dakara mata kondo ni shiyoo yo>
(JPN Pair 31)

Role B in Example 5.25 responded with "next time" after "*maji de*", so Role A then asked a proper question, which was "what are you up to?". "*Maji de*" in this case functioned as a pre-question. Role B in Example 5.26 on the other hand, provided further information after "*maji de*" which was that he was quite tired (the reason for that was already provided prior to this part of conversation— "essay assignment and part-time job"); in this case "*maji de*" worked as a phrase demanding more information. The basic function of this type of phrase is "to indicate to the person speaking that he should continue" (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 92) and as described above, it could work as a phrase used to seek information as well.

This "seeking more information" type of response was also employed by six New Zealand participants. Of these six, four used a phrase like "are you sure" or "have you" which sounds similar to "*maji de*" in Japanese. In Example 5.27, a question was asked. In Example 5.28, the phrase "have you" served as a means to seek more information in the conversation.

EXAMPLE 5.27:

B: Oh, too tired, eh. I've got a, what, a test tomorrow morning.
→A: A test tomorrow morning. What time tomorrow morning?
B: Nine.   (NZ Pair 9)

EXAMPLE 5.28:

B: Oh, I've got to work on an assignment.
→A: Oh, have you?
B: Yeah, it's due in and I've got to get it done.   (NZ Pair 6)

Both of them are similar to their counterparts in the Japanese data above. Role A in Example 5.27 asked a question about the time, to which Role B gave the answer "Nine."

Role B in Example 5.28 also, after receiving the phrase "*have you*?" provided more information about his situation, which was that the deadline of his assignment was close. The phrase "have you?" used in Example 5.28 was not a proper question, but as with the Japanese examples referred to above, functioned

as a question; Role B in Example 5.28 provided further information after Role A's utterance.

This section has looked at the information-seeking type of response so far. The Japanese examples were quite similar to the New Zealand examples in terms of the type of phrases the participants used. But this type of response was more popular among the Japanese than among the New Zealand participants. More Japanese participants, 11 of them, used this type of response while six New Zealand participants did so.

The finding reported here seems consistent with the finding reported in the previous section, which is that the Japanese participants described their physical condition in a more specific way, in other words, in a *more informative* way than the New Zealand participants. The similarity between the findings is that the Japanese data contained more detailed information. These findings might reflect Japanese people's general desire for detailed information or a social expectation of detailed information in explanations.

To confirm the tendency for detailed information among the Japanese people, I address the information provided in invitation by Role A (the inviter) participants below as these phrases also showed a difference between the Japanese and the New Zealand participants in regard to the degree of detail of delivering information.

In offering an invitation, Role A participants were not required to explain the reasons for the invitation at all as they were given the situation only: "*you just completed the things you had been working on*". But some participants provided the reasons for their invitation, as shown in Example 5.29. In this example, Role A described what she had been doing, which was filling out application forms and how long it had taken her. This was the participant's unique and voluntary contribution.

EXAMPLE 5.29:

    A: I just completed filling application forms. I had been working on those for a week or so. I feel like going out for a drink after a long time. Shall we do that?

    <A: kyoo sa yatto gansho ga kakiowatta n yo mo isshuukan kurai nan ka zutto kaite ta yatsu ga hoi de na kyoo hisabisa ni nomi ni ikitai to omou ne n kedo ika hen>   (JPN Pair 7)

Mentioning filling out an application form might not seem a very full explanation. However, any Japanese students would infer from the time of the conversation (the typical job hunting season for senior university students in Japan) that the forms were for a job application.

There were 16 Japanese participants who explained the reasons for the invitation, as seen in Example 5.29, while only 10 New Zealand participants provided this type of explanation for the invitation. These numbers do not include statements such as "we have not been to a pub for a while" or "we should go to a pub together sometimes". These cases could be considered as reasons for the invitation since the condition "we have not been to a pub for a while" could lead to the conclusion "*therefore,* we should go to the pub today". The number of Japanese data including these cases then, is 21 (66% of the total sample) and the equivalent in the New Zealand data is 11 (37% of the total sample). These figures might also indicate the Japanese preference for detailed explanations.

In summary, the "seeking more information" type of response was chosen by both Japanese and New Zealand inviters to respond to the excuses made by the decliners. However, more Japanese participants used this type. This finding as well as the finding reported above about the invitation—Japanese tended to give more detail for inviting reasons—suggest that Japanese preferred an abundant supply of explanation. In other words, providing details would be a preferred communication style for Japanese people.

In terms of the invitation, this "seeking more information" response did not pursue the inviter's goal. It did not encourage the decliners to change their mind or negotiate a possible compromise to get the decliners to the pub. In a sense, the inviters did not deal with the problem presented by the decliners in conversation. I note here again that more Japanese participants chose this type.

5.4.2 "Dismissing the excuse" type of response

This section focuses on the dismissal type of response, which was a popular response among the Japanese but not among the New Zealand participants. As shown in Table 9 above, seven Japanese inviter participants dismissed what the decliner said.

This type of response did not seem to show any sympathy or respect for the inviter's situation. Such a strong, blunt response was used and accepted by the participant. This is probably because the participants in this study were friends with each other; in other words, there was small social distance between the participants. Therefore, politeness strategies were less likely to be required (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

This type of response did not address the problem going to the pub presented to the decliners, thus, it would not direct the conversation towards discussion to solve the difference between the inviter and the decliner. The following example shows the dismissal type of response. The dismissal is indicated with → below.

EXAMPLE 5.30:

B: Oh, sorry. I have been doing "tenkai"[21] research at the moment, you know. So I have to write up an essay. I have been told by the lecturer to work harder.
→A: Oh, you can rustle up something.

<B: a gomen an ne ima ne tenkai kenkyu yatto ru ja n hoi de ne kakan to iken no n yo un sensei toka ni suggoi dame dashi sareto tte
A: e son'nan tekitoo de ee tte>   (JPN Pair 13)

Role A in this example more or less denied the importance of Role B's research. Role A's response in Example 5.30 sounds blunt and even rude. Role B said that she had to work hard as the lecturer had told her to do so but Role A basically said Role B should not care about that. This seems selfish and inconsiderate. Example 5.31 is another case.

EXAMPLE 5.31:

B: I cannot be bothered.
→A: Oh, no let's go. You are young and shouldn't say things like that.

<B: mendo kusai

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[21] "Tenkai" is a Japanese word, but it is not clear what this means in this context. Therefore, I used the original Japanese word here in this transcription. My guess is that this is a term referring to a certain type of research assignment given to students at the university these participants study at.

A: ee ii ja n ikoo yo son'na wakai noni mendo kusai itto ttara
dame>   (JPN Pair 5)

Role A in Example 5.31 did not accept what Role B said at all. She was unsympathetic to Role B's excuse and tried to persuade Role B by dismissing what Role B had said. There was a case in the New Zealand data, which looked very similar to Example 5.31.

EXAMPLE 5.32:

B: Um, no, I'm a bit tired.
→A: Oh, man. We can never go. What is it? You are young. Let's go.
I want to go for a dance.   (NZ Pair 13)

As with Example 5.31, Role A in Example 5.32 did not accept what Role B said at all and persisted with the idea of going out. These cases, Examples 5.31 and 5.32, showed a very strong response from Role A which might be acceptable between close friends when the excuse Role B offered in these examples was so trivial ("I cannot be bothered" and "I'm a bit tired"). However, Example 5.32 presented the only case of dismissal of the excuse observed in the New Zealand data. Thus, it can be said that this kind of dismissal was not the preferred way of responding for the New Zealand participants and this would be a typical Japanese response. The counterpart to this in the New Zealand data seems to be offering an amended plan to the decliners. This type of response was used by six New Zealand participants whereas none of Japanese participants chose this. I report this type in the next section.

5.4.3 "Amending the plan" type of response

This section looks at one of popular responses among the New Zealand participants, which was "amending the plan". Six responded in this way whereas none of the Japanese participants chose this type of response. The utterances concerned here are indicated with → .

EXAMPLE 5.33:

B: Well, I'm actually going to stay. I'll actually go home and, um, you know, just have some time out. I just really need to be, you know, get to bed early and yet just have a quiet night at home.

→A: Um, ah, okay. What about some a couple of drinks after
campus?   (NZ Pair 23)

Role A in Example 5.33 suggested having a couple of drinks, which should not make demands on Role B. Role A had described his present situation prior to the conversation in Example 5.33 above: he had been studying hard to prepare for a statistics test and wanted to have a drink to take his mind off anything related to the subject. From that description, Role A seemed to suggest that Role A might be looking for more than just "a couple of drinks". But since Role B said he wanted to go home, Role A decided to compromise by amending his original plan. Example 5.34 is also an example of this type of response.

EXAMPLE 5.34:

B: I've got about six hours' work to do, I think so. Ah, I'll probably
get home at midnight, I should imagine.
→A: Oh, really. Do you want to go out then?   (NZ Pair 21)

The excuse in this example was that Role B had to do an assignment. The quotation mentioned just "work" in Example 5.34, but prior to this part of the conversation, she said she was going to go to the library to do an assignment. After hearing Role B's situation, Role A suggested going out for a drink afterwards. It was clear from the whole conversation that Role A had planned to go out earlier than "midnight" when Role B would finish working. Role A obviously decided to respect Role B's intention to work on an assignment and to amend his original plan. In terms of the type of excuse, Example 5.34 is similar to Example 5.30 mentioned before because these examples contained the excuse of "assignment". However, the responses in these two examples were quite different: Role A participant in Example 5.34 showed his understanding towards Role B's assignment situation while the Japanese Role A participant in Example 5.30 dismissed Role B's statement and did not show any sympathy for Role B's situation at all.

I have looked at popular responses to the excuses in the Japanese and the New Zealand data so far. These cases are all ones in which Role A participants continued inviting Role B after the initial refusal. As seen in Table 9 above, the

"giving up" type was another popular response among both Japanese and New Zealand participants. In the next section, I report this type of response.

5.4.4 "Giving up" type of response

In this section I examine the "giving up" type of response: the cases in which Role A did not continue to invite Role B after the initial refusal. Table 9 shows that 11 participants from both data sets made this choice. But these 11 cases were not exactly the same in the way they gave up inviting.

For example, five of 11 New Zealand participants added a phrase like "please come if you change your mind". The following example was one of them. Role B in Example 5.35 said she had already made arrangements. This was her initial refusal which Role A readily accepted by saying "Okay. That's alright, that's all right". But Role A added "if you change your mind" afterwards which is indicated with → in the example below.

EXAMPLE 5.35:

B: Oh, just cause kind of made plans already for the movies.
A: Oh, I see. Okay. That's alright, that's all right.
B: Alright?
A: Just thinking of getting a whole lot of people together anyway. But,
→ um, if you change your mind you are welcome to come along to.

(NZ pair 22)

The phrase "if you change your mind, please come along" is a way of allowing the possibility for Role B to accept Role A's invitation. Role B participants who received this type of invitation replied with a phrase like "okay, I might, I might" (NZ pair 16). None of the Japanese participants added a "If you change your mind…" type of phrase. It implies that a case like Example 5.35, which involves giving up inviting a friend but leaving a possibility to have her/him to get to the pub, is typical among New Zealand people. For the Japanese, "persisting" or "completely giving-up", in other words, "all or nothing", would be the preferred way.

Some other participants also gave up but not completely. One case each from the Japanese and the New Zealand data sets reached an agreement at the end of the conversation to go to the pub the next day, instead of that day as instructed.

The following example shows such a case. Role B in this case suggested going to the pub the following day and the line including this part of the initial suggestion is indicated with →. This case was classified as a "giving up" case since the compromise of going to a pub tomorrow was suggested by Role B, the decliner, not by Role A, the inviter. All cases shown as "amending the plan" in Table 9 were the cases that Role A (the inviter) participants offered the amended plan to Role B (the decliner) participants.

EXAMPLE 5.36:

→B: I have something to do today. Can we do it tomorrow?
A: Is it okay with you tomorrow?
B: Tomorrow would be fine with me.
A: Oh, true.
B: Yeah.
A: Okay, then. I will talk to other people and [let's get all together].

<B: kyoo wa chotto yooji ga aru n da kedo asu toka dame
A: un asu dattara ii
B: in asu nara ii yo
A: a honto ni
B: un
A: ja hoka ni mo sasotte>   (JPN pair 2)

If I regard these "extra phrases" as a second attempt at invitation, the cases in which Role A participants completely gave up after Role B's initial refusal would be 10 from the Japanese and five from the New Zealand data. This means that more Japanese than New Zealand participants gave up easily and readily. The finding is consistent with the one from the section on the shortest and the longest conversation reported earlier, which is that the Japanese participant gave up much more quickly than the New Zealand participant.

In summary, the Japanese inviter participants mainly responded to the excuses in three ways: (1) by giving up inviting, (2) by seeking more information, and (3) by dismissing what the decliners said. None of them discussed the circumstances which prevented the participants from accompanying them to the pub. I interpret that these choices reflect the tendency of the Japanese refusals, which is to avoid problems or resorting to negotiation in undesirable communicative situations such as refusals.

The New Zealand inviter participants mainly responded to the excuses in three ways: (1) by giving up inviting, (2) by seeking more information, and (3) by offering an amended plan. The first two choices look the same as the findings from the Japanese data. But as reported above, when I looked at data closely, some differences were recognised between the data sets. The data indicated that the New Zealand inviters generally showed their respect for what the decliners said and tried negotiation with them based on the reasons stated in the excuses. They also left room for the decliners to change their minds. The Japanese participants did not show such considerations.

In the following section, I examine one further response in order to see the flow of conversation in each data set.

5.5 Preferred types of second refusals

I further examined the development of the conversation in which Role B responded to Role A's reactions to the excuses offered by Role B, in other words, Role B's second attempt at refusal. Table 10 summarises how Role B responded.

Table 10 Role Bs' responses to Role As' second attempts

	Japan	NZ
Saying "some other time"	4	1
Giving more explanations	4	1
Repeating the same excuse	3	4
Giving a different excuse	2	5
Giving a simple answer to Role A's question	1	1
Dismissing Role A's persuasion	2	0
Agreeing with Role A	1	0
Dismissing the amended plan	0	3
Saying "not today"	0	1
Suggesting somebody else	0	1
Total	17	17

The Japanese and New Zealand data in Table 10 show different tendencies in the way the second attempt at refusals was made. Notable findings are that the "saying some other time" and "giving more explanation" types of responses were used by more Japanese than New Zealand participants. The "saying some other time" response could be interpreted as a sign of the participants' determination to refuse. This Japanese phrase ("mata kondo") normally does not mean anything and the speakers of this phrase have no intention to arrange a meeting "some other time" at all (Shimura, 1992). The use of the "giving more explanations" type showed the preference of the Japanese for detailed explanation, which was already reported earlier in this chapter.

On the other hand, the New Zealand participants chose the "repeating the same excuse" and "giving a different excuse" types of responses more than the Japanese participants. These findings could be interpreted that the New Zealand decliner tried to make the inviters understand their situation rather than just sending a flat refusal message (like saying "mata kondo").

To show these tendencies more clearly, I drew Figures 9 and 10 (shown on p. 190) which demonstrate the patterns of conversational development that appeared in the Japanese and the New Zealand conversational data respectively. These figures contain a lot of information in small letters, which are not reader-friendly. These figures were drawn simply aiming to show the number of conversational patterns.

This is how the figures were constructed: both figures have four layers and each layer represents Role A participants' first invitation, Role B participants' first excuse, Role A's second invitation and Role B's second excuse respectively. The first ("Initial invitation") as well as the third layers are presented in rounded rectangles like ⬭ . The second and fourth layers appear in normal rectangles like ▭ . The rounded ones show Role A (the inviter) participants' turns and the normal ones represent Role B (the decliner) participants' turns. These layers are connected with various types of arrows.

Both figures begin with the "Initial invitation", which is the first layer. As reported earlier, the initial invitation was followed by five types of excuses; thus, the second layer of the figures has five boxes. Each box represents each type of excuse. The "initial invitation" and those five boxes are connected with one type

of arrow like ⟶ . The number of participants is indicated in each box; for example, the box "prior engagement" in Figure 9 has the number "10" and this means that 10 participants used the "prior engagement" type of excuse.

Between the second and the third layer there are a lot of different types of arrows. Each variation in those arrows indicates the number of the participants in this way: ⟹ 4-5 participants; ➡ 3 participants; ⟶ 2 participants; ⟶ 1 participant. The information of the number does not appear in the boxes of the third layer because the thickness of each arrow represents the number of the participants. There, boxes are followed by a fourth layer. This is the last layer and also connected to the previous layer with arrows which show the number of the participants. As with the previous arrows, the thicker ones indicate more participants.

As mentioned above, these figures were drawn only to illustrate the number of conversational development patterns. To arrange the entire figures on one page, I had to compromise on the size of the letters used for description of each box; therefore, they might be too small to read readily.

Figure 9
The development of conversation observed in the Japanese data

Initial invitation

| Prior engagement **10** | Physical condition **11** | Busyness **3** | Relax at home **3** | Lack of money **1** |

| No further invitation | "Maji de" | Rejection | Seeking more info | Reasons for drink | Repetitive invitation |

| Another day | Same excuse | Details | Another excuse | Simple answer | Disag-reement | Agree-ment |
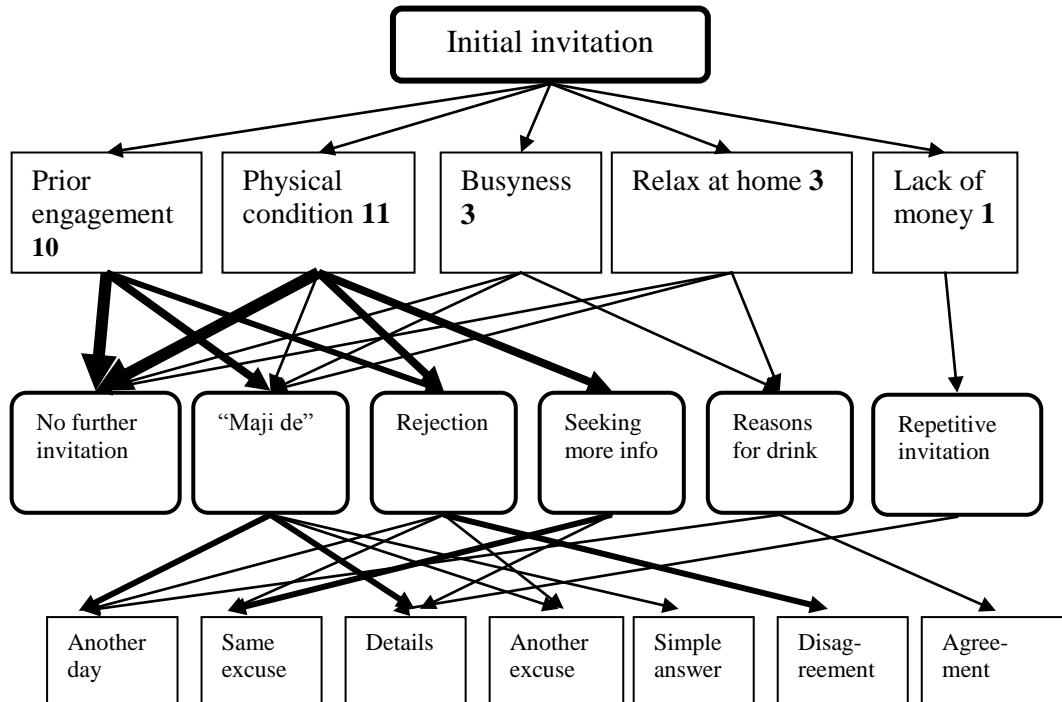
Figure 10
The development of conversation observed in the New Zealand data

Initial invitation

| Prior engagement **14** | Physical condition **5** | Busyness **1** | Relaxing at home **4** | Lack of money **2** |

| No further invitation | "Are you sure?" | "Ano-ther day" | Amend-ing | Rejec-tion | Seeking more info | Reasons for drink | "It'd be great" |

| Another day | Same excuse | Details | Another excuse | Disag-reement | Simple answer | Other people | Not today |
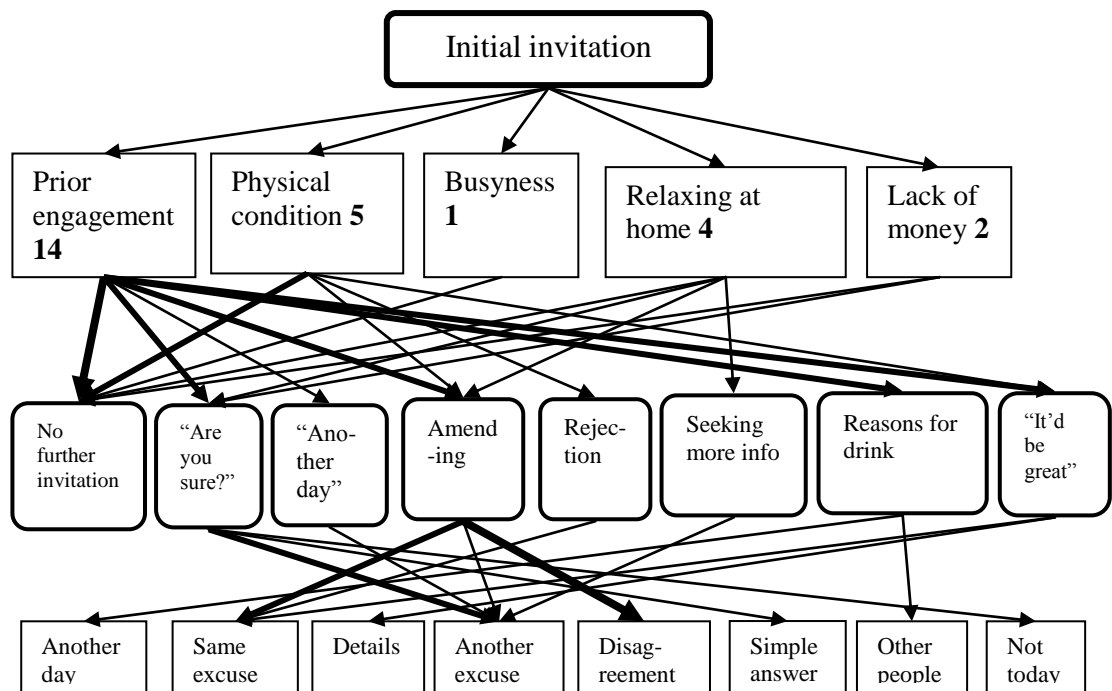
In comparing the two figures, Figure 9, which represents the Japanese data, contains fewer arrows than Figure 10, which represents the New Zealand data. The number of boxes in the third and the fourth layers follow this trend as well. These findings could be interpreted as the result of the effort of the Japanese participants to follow a limited number of the conversational patterns suitable to the given situation: the Japanese participants had conversational protocols to handle this type of situation and many of them followed the protocols. In contrast, the New Zealand participants showed no sign of having such protocols. A greater variety possibly implied that each individual behaved how he or she felt and did not necessarily follow protocols or particularly attempt to make the conversation appropriate.

This contrast seems to fit well with Ide's (2006) claim that politeness in Japanese is based on *waikimae* rules—following the cultural rules rather than choosing a strategy from among the given options—while politeness among English speakers is expressed as strategies, which are optional for each individual speaker.

The findings reported thus far in this chapter are now discussed in the next section, and the research questions of the study are also addressed.

5.6 Discussion

To answer the research questions posed in the previous chapter, I first briefly mention the scenario set for the study and summarise the findings from the data analysis so far. I then discuss the types of lies that the participants tended to tell and the ways they delivered those lies. Lastly, I examine the differences between the Japanese and the New Zealand data sets and consider the cultural influences underpinning the use of lies to manage undesirable communicative situations.

In the given scenario, Role A participants invited Role B participants to go to the pub that night; Role B participants declined the invitation as they were not in the mood for going out with Role A and Role B participants were instructed to make up excuses to decline the invitation.

Here is a summary of the findings from the analysis of the Japanese and the New Zealand data sets I have reported so far:

1. Preferred types of excuses

    a. The most popular excuse of the Japanese participants was their "physical condition" such as a headache and the second most popular one was a "prior engagement".

    b. The most popular excuse of the New Zealand participants was a "prior engagement" and the second most popular was their "physical condition".

    c. The Japanese participants seemed to prefer detailed information generally while the New Zealand participants did not show this preference to the same extent.

2. Preferred ways to respond to the excuses

    a. "Giving up" was the most popular response to the decliners' initial refusals in both data sets. However, there was difference between the data sets. Many New Zealand participants added a phrase of encouragement such as "if you change your mind, please come along". If the addition of this type of phrase is taken as another attempt at invitation, fewer New Zealand participants chose this "giving up" type of response than Japanese.

    b. "Seeking more information" was the second most popular response to the excuses in both Japanese and New Zealand data sets.

    c. The third most popular response of the Japanese participants was dismissal of the excuses, which was chosen by only one New Zealand participant.

    d. For the New Zealand participants, the response of "amending the plan" was equally popular with that of "seeking more information" whereas no Japanese participants chose "amending the plan".

    e. Less variety was observed in the Japanese data in the development of conversation.

    f. There seemed to be no strong connection observed between the types of excuses and the types of response to them across both groups. The participants had preferred ways of responding to the excuses regardless of the types of the excuses offered beforehand.

5.6.1 Types of lies

The findings reported above indicated that the Japanese and New Zealand participants tended to tell different types of lies to manage an invitation-refusal situation. In the following, I discuss the types of lies the participants used to decline the invitation. I also examine the truth-telling cases observed in the data as a small number of participants told the truth; they mentioned their desire to stay at home despite the instruction given.

5.6.1.1 Lie-telling cases

Most Role B participants in the role-play in this chapter lied to Role A participants to turn down the invitation.

Many Japanese participants lied about their physical condition. On the other hand, most New Zealand participants lied about a prior engagement. I discuss the tendencies observed in the Japanese data first and in the New Zealand data second.

5.6.1.1.1 Japanese lies

The preference for lying about one's physical condition is remarked in Kinjo's (1987) study. Kinjo carried out a cross-cultural study of refusals between Japanese and American people and wrote:

> The Japanese often express themselves in relation to a part of the body (there are many proverbs involving parts of the body in Japanese). In my study, they used expressions such as "Chotto atama ga itakute… (I have a bit of a headache)," or "Chotto onaka ga itakute… (I have a slight stomachache [sic]…)." Even more commonly used were general excuses such as "Chotto karada no choshi ga warukute… (I'm not really in good shape)." (p. 100)

Kinjo concluded from these findings that "the frequency [of the reference to physical problems] is a clear indication of its acceptability as an excuse in Japanese society" (p. 100).

As mentioned in the literature review chapter, cross-cultural studies investigating favourite conversational topics reported something relevant to Kinjo's study (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983; Nishimura, 2002). Gudykunst and

Nishida found that Americans were more open than Japanese to talking about any topics except those related to their physical condition. Nishimura (2002) also found that Japanese more than New Zealand people claimed that they felt comfortable talking about their physical condition. So, not only to turn down an invitation but also to have a conversation in general, Japanese people would be happy to talk about their physical condition.

In the context of refusing to go to the pub, the Japanese participants might have found it easier to invent excuses about their physical condition than any other possibilities. The Japanese participants adapted their lies to the situations given while being mindful of social protocol.

The other possible reason why the Japanese chose this type of excuse may be its irrefutable nature. This excuse is powerful as nobody can dispute somebody's headache or stomach ache. In this sense, mentioning physical problems would be a very convenient and effective way to turn down an invitation. This type of excuse could also be thought as a strategy to win sympathy from the inviters and thus oblige them to give up inviting almost immediately. In either case, a statement in which somebody says he or she is ill would be hard for anybody to contest. The findings regarding lies about physical condition could reflect the Japanese people's preference of giving a firm "no" message in order to avoid further possible negotiation.

This interpretation also seems to be supported by other findings in the present data: six out of eleven Japanese participants who chose this type of excuse gave specific reasons such as a stomach ache or headache rather than saying they were simply unwell or tired. The five New Zealand participants on the other hand, who used this kind of excuse, mentioned only tiredness, thus providing a contrast to the Japanese whose excuses were more specific and informative. The specific description of one's physical problem would make a stronger impact than simply claiming one's mere "tiredness".

5.6.1.1.2 New Zealanders' lies

For the New Zealand participants, lying about a prior engagement was the most popular choice. This tendency could be owing to social protocol, which was described by Neustupny (1982).

As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, Neustupny explained the protocol for declining a party invitation in Japanese and English-speaking societies (Neustupny used the expression "English-speaking societies" and did not specify which counties or societies he had in mind), saying "socialising with people in English-speaking societies is not only their right but also their obligation. When they are invited to a party, the only socially acceptable reason to decline an invitation is a prior engagement" (Neustupny, 1982, p. 73; the original text was written in Japanese and I translated his words into English).

The finding of this study matches what Neustupny (1982) described about refusals to invitations: many New Zealand participants used a prior engagement to turn down the invitation. Although Neustupny did not give any background explanation for this claim, the rationale behind this would probably come from the premise that contracts carry a lot of weight in many English-speaking societies.

When people in English-speaking societies are committed to attending a social activity or event, this would be regarded as a type of contract which has priority over later offers (M. Goldsmith, a New Zealand anthropologist, personal communication, August 21, 2009). In reality, people perhaps sometimes face an irresistible offer or invitation after accepting another and choose to cancel the first one to accept the second one. People would do so while knowing that they were not making the right choice. This type of behaviour does not deny the notion of contracts in English-speaking societies. Therefore, mentioning a prior engagement could be considered as a valid response for turning down invitations. This does not seem to be the case in Japanese society.

In terms of the notion of contracts, I refer to Yamamoto (2008) to consider the situation in Japan, which provides a great contrast to the situation in New Zealand. Yamamoto, a professional writer in Japan, describes how her writing work is normally conducted and her case is a good example to show that Japanese people do not put so much weight on contracts as English speaking people. Yamamoto explains that she and an agency normally discuss and agree on a project orally at first. She then works on the project based on their *oral* agreement, submits the completed piece of writing, and receives payment. This means that Yamamoto often works with no written contract with her employer.

Yamamoto's case is not an isolated case in Japan. Nakane (2007), one of the most prominent Japanese anthropologists, also confirmed that "lack of contract-spirit" in a Japanese societies (p. 159). Nakane described that Japanese people tended to weave a close interpersonal net within a group and that net created the belongingness within the group. Such belongingness would bind people and make them put an effort into working towards a goal. In other words, the interpersonal connections function as a written contract. These characteristics concern Japanese people and do not apply in English-speaking societies, said Nakane.

Overall, mentioning a prior engagement or contract was probably the acceptable excuse to decline an invitation for the New Zealand participants, which may explain why so many of them used this type of lie to turn down the invitation.

5.6.1.2 Truth-telling cases

Three Japanese and four New Zealand participants mentioned their desire that they wanted to have a relaxed time at home. The situation described on the role-play card said "*you are thinking of a quiet night at home tonight like watching TV or something*". Thus, these seven participants told the truth.

Those participants told the truth probably because the invitation itself was casual. Going to a pub is nothing special. This means that a refusal to such an invitation only contains a low ranking of imposition in terms of Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework. Therefore, the use of politeness strategies would not be required. Those seven participants did not feel obliged perhaps to put much effort into turning down the invitation. They decided then to disclose what they were going to do at that night, which was to relax at home.

This is merely a possible interpretation, but a possible *plausible* explanation. I consider this plausible based on a finding which will be reported in the next chapter. In the situation set for Chapter Six, a serious invitation-refusal scenario, all participants lied. This implies that the seriousness in the concerned situation would influence people's decision on telling lies in order to manage refusals.

In the situation set for this chapter, some people did not think that it was serious enough to make up something to turn down the invitation.

5.6.2 Patterns and strategies of lies

A notable aspect related to patterns and strategies of lies, was detailed excuses in the Japanese data. While one third of the Japanese and one sixth of the New Zealand participants lied about their physical condition, the Japanese participants tended to give more detailed and specific explanations regarding their condition.

As reported before, the Japanese participants gave a specific description of their physical problems (e.g., headache) while the description given by the New Zealand participants was merely "tiredness". This could be interpreted as a result of the preference for detailed explanation.

Nobody could know or do anything about other people's physical problems; thus, they would work as convincing and powerful excuses for refusal and not leave any room for the inviters to negotiate. The detailed and specific information in this type of excuse would work even better; if somebody said he or she suffers from a bad headache in this and that way, others would have had to leave the person alone.

This tendency—providing detailed explanations—was not seen in the New Zealand data. This probably means that the demand for the degree of detail of explanation was not present among the New Zealand participants.

5.6.3 Cultural influences underpinning the use of lies

To interpret the findings in terms of cultural communication, I discuss how invitation-refusal conversations were structured. The structure of the conversations and the cultural perception of refusals that people have in mind need to be examined as these are the key to the understanding of cultural influences underpinning lies used to manage undesirable communicative situations such as refusals. Thus, in this section, I reexamine the responses to the excuse, the conversational development patterns observed in the data, and then interpret what went on the conversation in terms of the use of lies.

5.6.3.1 Responses to excuses

The responses to the excuses differed between the Japanese and the New Zealand data. This section examines the findings of the preferred types of responses to the excuses. Analysis of this preference is required to clarify what was going on in refusal conversations and understand how the excuses functioned and what the participants tried to achieve in invitation-refusal conversations.

I discuss the tendencies of the responses in each data and try to make sense them. First, I discuss the findings from the Japanese data in this section.

5.6.3.1.1 Japanese inviters' responses

In the Japanese data, the "giving up", "seeking more information", and "dismissal" types of responses were popular.

The "giving up" and "dismissal" types might be owing to the Japanese participants' preference for negotiation-avoidance and their desire for harmony maintenance (Hofstede, 2001; Jones, 1993, 1995; Wierzbicka, 1991b). When the inviter participants give up inviting, the conversation obviously ended and no negotiation or conflict could occur between the participants.

Dismissal could be another sign of negotiation-avoidance as well. Although dismissal sounds a little aggressive and completely different from the "giving up" type of response, both of them could serve the common communication goal of negotiation-avoidance. Both types allowed the Role A and B participants to maintain a superficial conversation as neither of them addresses the issues preventing Role B from going to the pub. The "giving up" type cannot possibly create any further negotiation and the "dismissal" does not address the obstacles: the conversation would still continue but would not develop into discussion or negotiation to solve the problems between the participants. The "seeking more information" response, mentioned above, could be described as another way of avoiding further negotiation. Asking questions in itself would not address the problem regarding the invitation and not solve the problem immediately. In other words, the Japanese participants tried to meet their preference for detailed information and at the same time they practiced negotiation-avoidance.

The interpretation about the tendency for superficial conversations seems consistent with the choices the Japanese decliners made for their excuses. As reported above, nobody could contest their lying about physical problems. The strength of rejection in such excuses would also serve to make this pattern—superficial conversation—happen. Consequently, negotiation did not take place which was advantages in terms of avoiding conflict or uncertainty in the conversation.

If the excuses were expected to be untrue, superficial conversation would also be convenient in sparing the participants potential embarrassment. As no discussion or negotiation seems to be the first priority for the Japanese, the decliners would possibly lie to make up a convenient excuse for this purpose. Thus, superficial conversation would avoid any possibility of the inviters' examining the excuses they received from the decliners.

The superficial conversation would be also good in terms of information sharing. As mentioned in Chapters Two and Four, Japanese people in general prefer not to share personal information (Kimura, 1977; Barnlund, 1973; Nisbett, 2003). From this perspective, dismissal, for example, could be even considered as a courtesy since it would not put the decliners into the position of having to re-think their situation or reveal more information which might expose their personal life. Even so, the inviters could still show enthusiasm for inviting the decliners to the pub until, without hope of persuading the decliners any further, they would simply give up altogether. This would be another explanation for why quite a few Japanese participants strived to dismiss the excuse or gave up immediately after the initial refusal.

From the perspective of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, "giving up" can be described as a negative politeness strategy and "seeking more information" and "dismissal" as positive politeness strategies. "Dismissal" could be taken as an FTA when only the literal meaning of the expressions is considered. However, I interpreted this as a positive politeness strategy as it showed the strength of their friendship (which allowed such strong expressions). It was noted that the participants did not show any signs of distress when they received such a strong response.

In summary, all popular types of Japanese responses consistently indicate the Japanese preference for not encouraging negotiation. This trend serves, as discussed above, various communication purposes.

5.6.3.1.2 New Zealand inviters' responses

The New Zealand data also showed persistent as well as "giving up" types of responses, but in a different way from the Japanese data. The popular responses among the New Zealand participants were the "giving up", the "seeking more information", and "amending the plan" types.

The "giving up" type of response was commonly used by the New Zealand as well as the Japanese participants. But the New Zealand participants added a phrase like "if you change your mind, please come along" at the end of the conversation. This type of phrase was notable because it was used only by the New Zealand participants.

A phrase like "if you change your mind, …" would be well-received by the New Zealand participants but not by the Japanese participants because the Japanese participants did not like to negotiate. This type of encouraging phrase would perhaps not encourage, but pressure the Japanese to reconsider the situation (C. Funck, a German geographer who had lived in Japan for more than 20 years, personal communication, September 16, 2010). In contrast, such a phrase could be interpreted as a politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987) for the New Zealanders in terms of providing freedom to the decliners to change their mind.

If the inviters use a phrase like "if you change your mind, …", the situation would remain uncertain in regard to the decliner's attendance until the last minute. However, this would be acceptable for New Zealand people as New Zealand people are tolerant towards uncertainty (Hofstede, 2001). On the other hand, Hofstede's study found that Japanese people disliked uncertainty; thus, only New Zealand participants of the study used phrases that encouraged the decliners to change their mind.

The "amending the plan" type was another notable response in the New Zealand data because only the New Zealand participants used this type of response. This is also a positive politeness strategy. This clearly indicates that the New Zealand participants were prepared to negotiate based on the situations of

both inviters and decliners. This interpretation could well explain the finding that there were few cases in the New Zealand data where the decliners' excuses were dismissed. These were the conversational patterns that appeared in the New Zealand data.

The New Zealand participants were not expected to be afraid of negotiation or conflict (Hofstede, 2001). They are from an individualistic nation and therefore expect and respect difference among individuals (Triandis, 1994, 2006). When the decliners said, for example, they had to do an assignment; the inviters acknowledged and respected the decliners' wish. The inviters would still be able to negotiate the invitation; for example, the inviters could establish the time the decliners might finish their prior engagement and then change the time, and perhaps even the venue, of the proposed event to fit in with the decliners' schedule. This interpretation would explain why few New Zealand inviters dismissed the decliners' excuses.

5.6.3.2 Conversational development patterns

In regard to conversational development patterns, there were dominant patterns in the choice of lies observed in the data. In both data, two thirds of the participants chose two particular types of lies: the "prior engagement" and the "physical condition" excuses. In particular, almost half of the New Zealand participants lied about a prior engagement. This type of excuse would be the preferred and perhaps ideal reason to decline the type of invitation set for the study for the New Zealanders.

Another finding I note here was that fewer patterns of conversational development were observed in the Japanese than the New Zealand data. This possibly indicates that the Japanese participants share a cultural protocol to manage undesirable situations like the situation given in this study; in other words, they had a common idea of what a refusal conversation as a whole should be. The Japanese participants followed the idea and then consequently, the data did not show various conversational patterns. People with a collectivist background, including Japanese, tend to follow rules and regulations. Following patterns would also be a good way to avoid uncertainty. The finding in terms of the number of

conversational patterns would probably a result of the participants' cultural preference.

On the other hand, the New Zealand participants did not appear to have a cultural protocol on how refusal conversations should proceed although they did have a protocol for an excuse to decline the invitation, which was to mention a prior engagement.

I now discuss common patterns of conversational development in each of the data: first, the patterns observed in the Japanese data and second, those in the New Zealand data.

5.6.3.2.1 Conversational patterns in the Japanese data
To present the structure of Japanese refusal conversation, the findings on the preferred types of excuses and responses to them needs to be recalled.

One of the findings was that the most popular type of excuse for the Japanese participants was mentioning a physical problem. Mentioning a physical problem such as a headache and stomach ache is an inflexible excuse that nobody can challenge. Therefore, it delivers a strong refusal message. Combining this previous finding with the findings about responses described above, the typical Japanese conversation of this study would proceed as follows:

Role A: "Come."
↓
Role B: "I have a headache."
↓
Role A: "Let's drink and forget about it."
↓
Role B: "No!"

OR

Role A: "Come."
↓
Role B: "I have a headache."
↓
Role A: "All right then."

The participants, Role A and Role B, conflict with each other and Role B's response in the first pattern of the conversation in particular might sound rude.

Neither pattern, however, addresses the issue raised. Therefore, the conversations look "superficial", which demonstrates what I call "the preference for negotiation-avoidance". This also shows the Japanese preference for conflict avoidance (Kondo, 2007; Nisbett, 2003). Any negotiation is likely to contain unpredictable elements and could possibly introduce further conflict into that conversation. If Japanese people give priority to maintenance of harmony, conflict has to be avoided and this was what happened in the Japanese data of the present study.

Another explanation for the findings from the Japanese data concerns the preference for avoiding self-disclosure, namely that the Japanese participants avoided delving into other people's personal information. To have negotiation based on the schedule of the decliner's engagement, they would have to talk about the details of the prior engagement. This type of talk might force the decliner to expose personal information, for example, with whom the person was scheduled to spend time.

To meet several communication goals referred to above, the Japanese participants had better not discuss obstacles that arise in conversation or negotiate with each other. The data of the present study possibly have reflected that preference.

5.6.3.2.2 Conversational patterns in the New Zealand data
The findings from the New Zealand data could be typified in the two conversational structures shown below:

Role A: "Come."
↓
Role B: "I have already arranged something."
↓
Role A: "What time will it end? You can join us later."
↓
Role B: "That's a bit awkward."
↓
Role A: "All right then."

OR

>   **Role A**: "Come."
>   ↓
>   **Role B**: "I have already arranged something."
>   ↓
>   **Role A**: "All right then. If you change your mind, please come along."

What I reported earlier was that lies used in the New Zealand data seemed to send a refusal message and function as a platform for further negotiation. The New Zealand data did not appear to show any avoidance of negotiation.

Half of the New Zealand participants lied about a prior engagement, which suited their cultural protocol. The New Zealand participants most likely made this choice of lies to reflect the cultural protocol in accordance with a contract-society. After receiving those excuses, the New Zealand inviters gave the "giving-up", "amending the plan" or "seeking more information" types of responses. A third of the participants chose the "giving up" type, but as mentioned in the pattern above, they often left the decliners room to change their mind later by adding a phrase: "if you change your mind…".

Information provided by the decliners would receive respect on each occasion and negotiation would develop from there. These aspects would have to be borne in their mind for appropriate lies to be chosen in each situation.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter examined role-play data from invitation-refusal conversations. The participants were instructed to make a conversation based on a given scenario: one was to invite the other to go to the pub together that night and the other had to decline the invitation by giving untruthful excuses. In this scenario, the invitation to go to the pub that night was identified as a casual non-organised one.

Several differences were observed between the Japanese and the New Zealand data in the use of lies. These differences were interpreted as the result of different cultural values as well as different preferences in communication. What follows provide answers to the research questions.

First, many Japanese participants lied about their physical condition while half of the New Zealand participants lied about a prior engagement. Those types of lies were popular among Japanese and New Zealanders.

Second, the Japanese participants gave more detailed lies than the New Zealand participants. For example, in cases of lies about their physical condition, the Japanese participants tended to give specific information such as a headache whereas the New Zealand participants simply mentioned tiredness. This indicated that the Japanese and New Zealand participants had different standard of Grice's (1975) cooperative principle.

Third, the differences between the two data sets were affected by their different cultural values and communication styles (or conversational protocols).

The Japanese choice of lies was influenced by a preference for conversational topics such as their physical condition. This lie also fitted well in the context where a person had to give a clear—and irrefutable—refusal message. The detailed explanations in the Japanese data served the purpose making the lies uncontestable as well. In other words, they delivered a clear "no" message which allowed the inviters no opportunity for further negotiation. The Japanese data were interpreted as a result of unwillingness to negotiate. Their attempts were made mindful of the values of harmony and avoidance of conflict. This interpretation derived not only from the findings related to the use of lies by the decliner participants, but also from the reactions of the inviter participants. All of the strategies for inviting as well as declining seemed to be used for maintaining harmony. Although some of the strategies looked contradictory, they were not (e.g. utterances which sounded like an FTA but indeed worked as a positive politeness strategy to acknowledge their friendship). They were consistent in terms of the maintenance of harmony.

On the other hand, the New Zealand participants used lies following their social protocol for refusals; many of them lied about a prior engagement. I demonstrated that these interpretations seemed highly plausible in terms of not only the lies the decliner participants used, but also the responses to the excuses offered by the inviter participants. The New Zealand participants seemed to base their behaviour on the conversation protocol that requires people to take what the other says at face value and to show respect for what is said. They did not have to avoid negotiation; rather they willingly took the opportunity to negotiate with each other as they were not afraid of uncertainty or conflict.

The findings from the data in this chapter can also be presented as a result of the perception of refusal situations. For the Japanese, a refusal situation was something to be avoided. When they could not avoid refusals altogether, the next best strategy for the Japanese was to use excuses, which functioned as a mere vehicle to deliver a clear refusal message and avoid further negotiation. In this sense, those Japanese ways of refusals could be described as negative politeness strategies as they aimed to avoid conflict and end such undesirable situations hopefully as quickly as possible.

On the other hand, the New Zealanders addressed the issues raised and used them as a platform to develop the conversation. They started negotiation based on what was said in the conversation. They acknowledged each other's wants and continued the conversation. This could be described as a positive politeness strategy.

Because of the cultural perception of refusals, the Japanese participants possibly chose lies in terms of their capability to deliver a clear refusal message. If the strength of the lies resulted only from the participants' preference for sending a clear "no" message, there would be no point in dealing with the issues that arose from the excuse. Whatever the decliners said was intended only to convey a "no" message to the inviters. This could be the reason why the Japanese inviters did not offer an amended plan—there is no point in offering an amendment if the content of the excuses does not carry any practical meaning. In this case, the inviters would have no other choice than to be blindly persistent and to keep pushing the decliners until they, the inviters, lost hope and gave up. This interpretation could also explain why many Japanese inviters simply gave up—if the decliners delivered a "no" message, the reason given would have no significance. The answer was "no" allowing the inviters no hope at all.

In contrast, the New Zealand participants would take what the other person said at face value because the other person had no reason for telling a lie to deliver a strong and clear refusal message. In other words, the New Zealand participants did not share the presumption concerning the use of lies and excuses in refusals— excuses in refusals are likely to be lies—that Japanese have. This explains why many New Zealand participants offered an amended plan after receiving a refusal.

I showed that a single, simple explanation would not work to describe the findings reported in this chapter. The data suggested that lying was a complicated practice particularly in an awkward situation such as those involving refusals.

The next chapter will present the findings from the analysis of the other data of invitation-refusal conversation. The nature of the invitation in the next chapter is more serious. Therefore, I will examine the data to see if there are any similarities to and/or differences from those presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER SIX
ROLE-PLAY CONVERSATION:
EXCUSES IN REFUSALS TO A SERIOUS
INVITATION

This chapter aims to reveal how people in Japan and New Zealand use lies to turn down an invitation to an organised party. For this purpose, role-play conversations were collected and analysed focusing on what types of untruthful excuses participants in the decliner's role use; how participants in the inviter's role receive the excuses; and how the refusal conversations develop.[22]

The above analytical focuses are shared with the previous chapters. Moreover, the previous chapter and this chapter are both about invitation-refusal conversations. However, the characteristics of the scenario set for this chapter are different from those of Chapter Five.

In this chapter, the inviter role participants were *urged* to invite one more person to their party and they tried very hard to get their partner-participants to their party. This meant that the decliner role participants were expected to experience a forceful invitation which was hard to refuse. I examine their strategies to manage such force from their inviters. In this respect, the situation set for this chapter is more complex than that of the previous chapter in terms of the seriousness of the invitation.

The scenario here is complex also from the decliners' viewpoint: I set the situation to give the decliners stronger motivation for not disclosing the true reason for declining the invitation. Because of these conditions, both inviters and

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[22] An earlier version of the findings of the data reported here was presented at the 16th Meeting of the Japanese Association of Sociolinguistic Science held at Ryukoku University, Kyoto, Japan, October 1-2, 2005.

decliners were expected to strongly try to invite their friend and to refuse the invitation respectively. These differences in emphasis would possibly shed light on the different features of the use of lies and/or reveal common aspects to manage an invitation-refusal situation. Any similar findings to those of the previous chapter would strengthen the interpretation of the use of lies which I presented there.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I present the basic information from the data: the instructions given to the participants prior to the conversation session, and the number of data collected. Next, I present the findings from the analysis of the data. Then, I discuss findings from the data and finally draw conclusions from there.

6.1 Basic information: Refusal to an invitation to a singles party

The role-play conversational data were collected in the following order. The participants were given the information of the situation written on a card. They were given as much time as they wanted to read the card before starting the conversation.

The participants who received a card for Role A were instructed to invite their conversational partner to a singles party, which they had been organising. The other participants who received a card for Role B, had to decline Role A's invitation. The following information was what the participants were given prior to their role-play:

The scenario for Role A
- You are planning a "boys meet girls" singles party next week. You need one more person for this.
- You don't think your friend has a girl/boyfriend now and s/he must be interested in this party.
- You definitely need one more person; otherwise, you cannot make the number even. You want to get the friend involved and sort it out today.
- Let's talk to her/him now!

The scenario for Role B

- You started going out with somebody about a month ago. Most of your friends have not noticed this yet and of course your friend does not know about this.
- You **are now happy to keep quiet about this relationship** for some reasons. Your girl/boyfriend feels the same way.
- In the past, you occasionally joined a sort of singleton's party and had a good time. However, after you met her/him, you are not interested in that kind of party any more.

This situation was chosen as it is a feasible activity that young people might do. Even if people had never attended this type of party, they should still be familiar with it because of its prevalence in society, particularly for the Japanese participants. For New Zealanders, this type of theme party is perhaps not as common as in Japan. However, young New Zealanders would not find this type of party uncommon: to gather at a pub, a hall, or somebody's house to have a good time together would be a regular activity for New Zealanders as well. Thus, I believe that it was not difficult for either Japanese or New Zealanders to put themselves in the situation given and to make up a conversation.

As with Chapter Five, the situation dealt with in this chapter has an invitation-refusal setting. Although both invitations were about going out, to meet somebody somewhere, and to have a good time together, the nature of the events was different.

The invitation in Chapter Five was casual and low-key as the inviters who felt like going out chanced on potential invitees whom they asked to the pub that night. On the other hand, the situation presented in this chapter is more serious because the inviters have planned and prepared for the party in advance. Consequently, the invitation is more organised than for the setting in the previous chapter. Also, the inviters have a stronger desire for their invitation to gain acceptance because they want to urgently organise one more guest for the party.

Moreover, the situation in this chapter is more serious from the decliner's viewpoint. The decliners do not want to reveal the reason why they want to decline the invitation. The true reason set in the instruction was that the decliners

started going out with somebody a month ago. According to the instruction, both decliners and their boy/girlfriend did not want to reveal that they were seeing each other; thus, this factor would make the decliners take not revealing their real reason seriously. However, the decliners would also understand the desire of their friend—the inviters—to have them come to the party. The invitation was expected to be more awkward for the decliners to refuse than that of the previous chapter.

Because of all of these conditions set, it can be said that the situation of Chapter Six is more complex than that of Chapter Five. The difference in the conversational situation between Chapters Five and Six was shown in the duration of the conversation. As reported in Chapter Three, the average duration of the conversation of this chapter is almost twice as long as that of the situation analysed in the previous chapter.

Conversational data were collected from 32 Japanese pairs and 31 New Zealand pairs. The number of pairs differed from the numbers given in Chapter Four because faults in the audio recording equipment recurred. The collected conversational data from each pair averaged 1 minute 59 seconds and 1 minute 48 seconds respectively.

Findings from the data are reported in the following sections: first, in section 6.2, I present preferences in the choice of particular types of excuses. Second, in section 6.3, I examine how those excuses were presented in conversation. Third, in section 6.4, I investigate the responses to the excuses to find out how those excuses were received and functioned in conversation. Fourth, in section 6.5, I report a further stage of conversation, which involved responses from the decliners to the inviters' responses. These four sections are followed by the discussion of the findings from the data analysis and the conclusions (sections 6.6 and 6.7).

6.2 Preferred types of excuses

As explained in the previous two chapters, the excuses used for refusals are the main focus of this study. I extracted all excuses, as with the previous chapters, classifying them according to the reasons cited in them. The following five types of excuses emerged:

- ▪ "No interest":   Saying they are not interested
- ▪ "Prior engagement": Mentioning something they had already arranged
- ▪ "Busyness":   Mentioning they were busy
- ▪ "Tiredness":   Mentioning they were tired
- ▪ "Hedging/no refusal": Just hedging or giving no refusal

Each type of excuse is explained with examples below.

"No interest"

Some participants indicated that they were uninterested in this type of party or that they were not interested in finding somebody special. This "no interest" type also includes excuses that raised the negative aspects of this type of party, such as the bad atmosphere or possible unwanted outcomes from attending. This type of excuse strongly shows rejection because it denies the whole purpose of holding this type of party and excludes the possibility of the inviters gaining the decliners' acceptance.

The participants sometimes hesitated to deliver their excuses, which consequently would make them sound less harsh. Nevertheless, the contents of this type of excuse counteracted the inviters' belief that people they invited would like the party and the invitation would be welcomed by them—this is a normal presupposition that any inviters would have beforehand (Searle, 1969). This is a condition when an invitation is offered under normal circumstances; therefore, the decliners should be aware of this condition. Thus, the "no interest" type of excuse is considered to show strong rejection. The following two are examples of this type of excuse.

EXAMPLE 6.1:

I'm not sure if I really, I don't know. It's not my scene.   (NZ pair 5)

EXAMPLE 6.2:

Um, somehow, lately, I do not want to go to a singles party so much.
< a chotto saikin gookon ni wa anmari ikitakunai n da yo ne>
                                   (JPN pair 4)

"Prior engagement"

Some participants, as with the finding reported in the previous chapter, said that they had already arranged something on the day of the party. This type of excuse does not resist the inviters' presupposition, that the invitation would be a good idea. The inviters do not know if the other person has a prior engagement until they ask. This means that the inviters cannot have that information at the time the invitation takes place. Therefore, the "prior engagement" type of excuse does not oppose the inviters' presupposition. On this ground, the "prior engagement" is quite different from the "no interest" type as the "no interest" type destroys the inviters' assumption that the invitation would be welcomed by the decliners. The "prior engagement" does not share this nature. Therefore, this type of excuse does not deliver such strong rejection.

> EXAMPLE 6.3:
>
> Yeah, no. I, I, yeah, I do have some other stuff happening on Saturday.
> (NZ pair 17)

> EXAMPLE 6.4:
>
> Oh, next Sunday. I have something and cannot come.
> <a raishuu nichiyoobi ne chotto yooji ga ate ikeren no yo>
> (JPN pair 23)

As with the previous chapter, this "prior engagement" category includes cases where participants mentioned their assignment. These examples were counted as the "prior engagement" type since the study schedule was set *prior* to this invitation.

> EXAMPLE 6.5:
>
> Um. Well, I, I don't know. I've got quite a few assignments due and yeah, really.
> (NZ pair 12)

> EXAMPLE 6.6:
>
> Next week I think I will probably have a presentation.
> < raishuu deshoo tabun ne happyoo toka atta yoona ki ga suru na>
> (JPN pair 3)

"Busyness"

Some participants said they were busy. This is similar to the "prior engagement" as it means the decliner participants have something else which makes them busy.

This type also presents the information which the inviter did not know of at the time of the invitation.

EXAMPLE 6.7:

I might be a bit busy eh?   (NZ pair 30)

EXAMPLE 6.8:

Ah, somehow I have lately been busy, so I will pass this time.
<un chotto ne ma saikin isogashi ken ne ma konkai wa chotto
yameto ku wa>   (JPN pair 16)

"Tiredness"

This excuse was found only in the New Zealand data; thus there is no Japanese example given here. This type of excuse clearly represented a refusal message but the force of the message did not seem as strong as, for example, the "no interest" or "prior engagement" types. This type could be named "physical condition" as with the previous chapter. But I call this type "tiredness" in this chapter because all examples observed in this chapter were specifically about tiredness and none of them mentioned headaches or stomach aches.

EXAMPLE 6.9:

I just, no, been feeling quite tired lately.   (NZ pair 30)

"Hedging/no refusal"

I found cases of "hedging/no refusal" only in the New Zealand data.

Despite the instruction given, three New Zealand participants did not give a refusal message clearly. Two out of these three New Zealand participants did not clarify their answers and kept hedging. The two said that they were not sure and the conversation ended unresolved. In these two cases, it was not clear from the conversation whether the person had actually accepted or refused the invitation.

In another New Zealand case, although the participants talked for more than two minutes, there was no refusal. During that period of time, the Role B participant (the decliner) questioned the Role A participant (the inviter) about the party and Role A answered Role B's questions.

"Others"

One Japanese and one New Zealand case did not fall into any of the above categories. The one Japanese case was that the participant could not afford to go out. One New Zealand case was that Role B said "that's scary". These two appear in the "other" category in the following table: it is because there was only one case observed in the entire data.

To assess the trends in the choice of particular types of excuses arising from the Japanese and New Zealand data, I counted the number of each type. Table 11 shows the trends.

Table 11 The first excuse that appeared in the data

	No interest	Prior engagement	Busy-ness	Tired-ness	Hedging / no refusal	Other	Total
Japan	17	10	4	0	0	1	32
NZ	9	14	1	3	3	1	31

Table 11 shows that "no interest" and a "prior engagement" were the top two excuses in both data sets. More than half the Japanese participants, 17 out of 32 in total, chose the "no interest" type to turn down the invitation. The second most popular excuse for the Japanese participants was the "prior engagement" type. The combination of those two types of excuse comprises over 80 % of the Japanese participants. On the other hand, the New Zealand data show that the "prior engagement" type was the most popular excuse as it was chosen by 45% of participants. This was followed by the "no interest" type (29%).

Another notable finding is that three New Zealanders chose not to decline the invitation. They did not accept the invitation either, but somehow maintained hedging and did not deliver a clear refusal message. None of Japanese participants chose this way to reply to the invitation. As mentioned above, this type definitely functioned as a refusal message as it did not accept the invitation, but the refusal did not sound so strong. There was another type of excuse like this: the "tiredness" type of excuse was used by some New Zealand participants while none of Japanese chose this. The "tiredness" excuse does not sound like a strong rejection; particularly for refusing an invitation to an event which would not take

place immediately. Role B might be tired now, but he or she could possibly be revitalised later and be ready to go to the event. In this respect, this type of excuse would be weak in the given situation. The choice of "weak" excuses might have been a preference among the New Zealand participants.

There is another worthy finding from Table 11: the "busyness" type was chosen by more Japanese than New Zealand participants. As Nishimura (2007b) mentioned, Japanese people seem to like to talk about their busyness; thus, the figure that appeared in Table 11 might reflect this preference of Japanese people.

This section has so far examined the excuses used as the initial refusal. I proposed that the Japanese and the New Zealand participants had different preference in their choice of particular types of excuses. As with the other invitation-refusal conversational data, almost all of the Japanese and New Zealand participants persisted with their excuses in the conversational data of this chapter. The next section examines how the excuses were presented.

6.3 Ways of presenting excuses

In this section, I examine how excuses were presented in conversation. As described before, the scenario set for the study of this chapter is complex. Both inviter and decliner participants had a strong desire to pursue their communication goals: the former, to gain an acceptance to the invitation; the latter, to decline the invitation. Consequently, longer conversations than the other two studies presented in the previous two chapters were collected and the conversational data of this chapter contained a lot of excuses. To examine how many of those excuses were offered to manage the interpersonal communicative situation, I investigate the ways of presenting them.

The general tendency was that the Japanese participants offered more varied and detailed excuses. In this section, I cite one Japanese example and then focus on one of the most commonly used excuses in both data, which was the "no interest" type of excuse, to see how the structure of refusal was organised in detail.

The following example, Example 6.10, exemplifies the tendencies of the Japanese participants well. The three excuses that appear in Example 6.10 below are indicated with →.

EXAMPLE **6.10:**

Excuse 1➜B: Oh that's immediately after my part-time work, so…
                   What kind of people will be there?
       A: From (xxx)[23].
Excuse 2➜B: People from (xxx). I cannot think of any common
                   topics to talk about with them.
       A: There are quite a few interesting people coming.
                   Some of them are actually looking for their future
                   girlfriends, but some others just want to be friends
                   with people.
Excuse 3➜B: Well, if I go and will be attracted by somebody in that
                   sort of occasion that would not be so good.

< B: anoo baito ga owatte sugu dakara un don'na hito ga kuru no
A: ano ne (xxx) no hito
B: (xxx) ka hanashi ga awanasasoo
A: kekko omoshiroi hito ga sorottete ne un ma kanojo toka
    sagashitaitte iu hito mo irunda kedo tada shiriai ga hoshitte iu
    hito mo kekkoo iru kara
B: soo nano ka nan ka itte nan ka hikareru no mo ya ka na>

                                           (JPN Pair 32)

In the above example, Role B gave three different reasons for not wanting to go to the party. First, it could be inconvenient to her to attend because she had part-time work which finished right before the party began. Second, Role B made a negative comment about the people coming to the party after she had heard the name of their company; this was another reason for not attending the party. Role A did not give up easily and persisted by providing more information about the attendees of the party. She also introduced the possibility that some guests were not necessarily serious about finding future girlfriend there; Role A mentioned this probably because she wanted Role B to take the invitation more light-heartedly. Role B then said she did not like a possible outcome of the party that she might be attracted to somebody at the party. It is not easy to tell exactly which the prime reason was for Role B not to go to the party. However, she produced three different negative reasons thus making it clear that she was not interested in going.

      Generally, many Japanese conversations were like Example 6.10. The New Zealand excuses seemed to be less detailed and did not show much variation.

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[23] I substituted (xxx) for the real name of the company for the privacy reason.

I now examine this aspect in more detail—how much information was delivered in what way. For this purpose, I focus on the data which contain the "no interest" type of excuse. The reason why I focus on this particular type is that this was the most commonly used type of excuse by both Japanese and New Zealand participants.

Table 11 on p. 214 showed that more than half of the Japanese participants and nearly one third of the New Zealand participants chose this type for their initial excuses. After conducting further examination, I found that 22 Japanese and 15 New Zealand participants also used the "no interest" type of excuse somewhere else in the conversation. Therefore, having "no interest" was the most highly used type of excuse in both data sets. This section focuses on this most popular type to assess how the excuses were delivered in conversation, namely, whether the participants simply kept saying they had "no interest" or used other variations, and how much information the participants provided.

I start with Example 6.11 below which shows four "no interest" types of excuses provided by JPN pair 29. The first excuse shown as "Excuse 1" described Role B's personal problem, which was that he was not good at dealing with strangers. Role B repeated this twice more, shown as Excuses 2 and 4. Excuse 3, on the other hand, directly expressed his unwillingness to attend by stating his dislike of this type of party. All four excuses were directly or indirectly saying he was not interested in attending the party.

EXAMPLE 6.11:

Excuse 1→	B:	No, I am shy in front of strangers, so I will pass. Ask somebody else.
	A:	No, I cannot think of anybody else. So I would be very happy if you would come along.
Excuse 2→	B:	You know, I am shy in front of strangers and
Excuse 3→		I do not like, I do not like the party, so find somebody else.
	A:	You've got to get used to this thing. Just come for getting used to it.
	B:	But I have been to several times.
	A:	Okay, then. Let's have a good time this time again.
Excuse 4→	B:	No, as I said it is hard; even if I go, I would be shy.

<B: iya ore kekkoo hitomishiri suru kee sa yappa enryo shito ku wa
     dare ka ta no hito sasotte

> A: iya ta ni ate ga oran no yo ne chotto sasou yoona hito ga dakara B
> ga kite kuretara uresii n ya kedo
> B: yappa ne hitomishiri suru kee ne kitsui shi ne anmari anmari suki ja
> nai shi ne ta no hito sagashite
> A: yappa banare sena ikkai banare no tsumori de oide ya
> B: iya kedo ne ore nankai ka itto ru yo
> A: o ja konkai mo tanoshinde ikoo ya
> B: iya yakee moo yappa kitsui kee ne ittemo maji hitomishiri suru
> ken>   (JPN pair 29)

Other data, as in Example 6.12 below, also showed the "no interest" type of excuse several times. While Role B in Example 6.11 used the same refusal (being shy) repeatedly, Role B in Example 6.12 used several different variations of "no interest".

EXAMPLE 6.12:

> **Excuse 1➔**B: Well, I basically do not go to such a party.
>   A: You know, you could find a girlfriend.
> **Excuse 2➔**B: But I do not want to go to the party for that purpose.
>   A: Okay, okay. Why don't you just come? Just for
>   drinking as usual.
> **Excuse 3➔**B: No. Well, I am not used to that sort of atmosphere.
>   A: So you should change that, you come now and you
>   will change. You should come.
> **Excuse 4➔**B: Well, it is good to meet new people. But I am shy
>   in front of strangers; so even if I go, I probably could
>   not talk well there.

> <B: ya ore kihonteki ni soo iu no ikan hito ya kara
>   A: are yo kanojo getto dekiru yo kore
>   B: betsu ni datte sore ga mokuteki de ikitai wake ja nai shi
>   A: ma ma demo are ja n ma ikeba ma toriaezu hutsuu ni nomi ni iku
>   kanji de
>   B: iya nan ka anma ano hun'iki ni naren shi ne ore
>   A: dakara sore wo kaerunda tte ima koko de itte itte kaeru n da tte
>   iya itta hoo ga ii yo kore iya itta hoo ga ii tte
>   B: yappa aite ma shiran hito to shiriai ni nareru tte iu no mo aru
>   kedo ore kekkoo yappa hitomishiri suru kara ittemo tabun
>   hanasen yaroo shi>   (JPN Pair 9)

Excuse 1 gave the ultimate reason for Role B to turn down the invitation; he has a policy for not attending such parties. Excuses 2, 3, and 4 contributed to that ultimate reason. Excuse 2 says he would not attend a party to look for girls. Excuse 3 mentions the bad atmosphere of the party and Excuse 4 is about his own

personal problem with such a party. All excuses, while not the same, were similar referring to the different aspects of the party which were all negative thus giving Role B reasons for turning down Role A's invitation.

When I explored the reason given in all of the "no interest" type of excuses, such as the above examples, I found that they fell into eight subcategories. All were observed in both the Japanese and the New Zealand data.

- Expressing no interest literally
- Expressing no desire to go to those kinds of parties lately
- Saying they are not young anymore (in other words, they are too old to attend the party)
- Mentioning a particular reason for the lack of interest
- Mentioning a reason for not wanting to go to this particular party this time
- Mentioning a possible negative outcome from attending the party
- Mentioning a reason for disliking the party itself
- Saying they are not looking for girl/boyfriends at the moment

The reason at the top of the list was the simplest as it expressed their feelings towards the party by literally saying they had "no interest". The rest offered more information explaining why the participants were not interested in the party. Overall, the Japanese more than the New Zealand participants used these informative types of excuses.

One of the New Zealand participant pairs, NZ pair 34, however, used the informative type extensively; their conversation was exceptional in that it contained many excuses and lasted 6 minutes and 31 seconds. The second longest one was 5 minutes 50 seconds provided by NZ pair 24 and the third longest one was 4 minutes 2 seconds given by JPN pair 4. As mentioned before, the average conversation time of the New Zealand data of this role-play session was 1 minute 48 seconds and that of the Japanese data was 1 minute 59 seconds. These figures show how exceptionally long the data of NZ pair 34 was. Some might imagine that such a long conversation contained a lot of information. But even this exceptionally long conversation did not contain as much information as many Japanese conversations did. Overall, the New Zealand participants did not offer as much information in their excuses as the Japanese participants did.

I started by looking at the data of NZ pair 34, shown as Example 6.13 below. All excuses that appeared there are indicated with → and particular refusals involving very direct expressions such as "I do not want to go" are marked with →→ to show the development of the conversation clearly.

EXAMPLE 6.13:

Excuse 1→B: Singles party. I don't know, eh, I got a (tssk), um, really big, um, assignment, eh, and sort of

A: Can't be that important.

Excuse 2→B: No, single parties are just like, oh, hey guess guess what I'm here for so and I'm really like that so, um. That's just not my kind of thing. I just feel, um, if, if it wasn't a singles party as, as, as such and it was just a party you know, probably go but as a singles party it sort of implied about the atmosphere. So I don't, no, it doesn't really sound like me, eh, sounds sort of fifth form [Year 11, so for 15-16 years olds].

A: Ha. But you'd enjoy yourself. You'd make good conversation and

Excuse 3→B: No. I stuck at conversation, eh? I can't talk to chicks [female], do sort of talking for me. But, um, no, it'

Excuse 4→   not about my scene, eh? Cause everyone's just probably going to be drinking and drinking doing drunk things and you know.

A: But just before, you were saying how you wanted to go out and get drunk.

Excuse 5→B: Yeah, I know. But it's a difference. It's a, it's a different scene and it's different scene and different atmosphere. So I mean

A: Come on; everyone's going to have fun and loosen up once in a while. Just come and enjoy yourself.

Excuse 6→B: Maybe in maybe another time? Because I'm sort of busy with stuff. But, um. Nah.

A: But no. I, I just, I can't let you get away with it. You're just going to have to come cause there's nobody else. You can't let me down

→→   B: Well, I don't want to go. I don't want to go.

A: Well, this is me, your friend. You can't let me down. I'm organising this just

→→   B: I don't wanna go.

A: Come on and give me just an hour.

Excuse 7→B: I don't wanna meet anyone at the moment. I don't want to meet anyone at the moment.

A: You don't have to go there to meet anyone. You could go there and just

Excuse 8→B: But it's implied that I go because it's a singles party. I want to be in a couples party cause then there will just

be a party and I'll get, it's like saying, it's sort of cocktail party. You're going to go to the party and drink cocktails so it's like singles party you're going up there a party. Anyone can be single and what happens at single parties?

A: (Laughter)

Excuse 9→B: Because that's not me.

A: (tssk) Ah. Would you come along even for just five or ten minutes?   (NZ pair 34)

Role A participant in this example was very persistent and Role B participant consequently kept giving a lot of reasons why he did not want to go to the party. Excuses 1 and 6 above are actually not the "no interest" type of excuse, but a "prior engagement (assignment)" and "busyness". These are included in the above example to show the flow of this conversation. The remaining Excuses 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are the "no interest" type; Excuses 2 and 5 contained different expressions, but basically mentioned the bad atmosphere of the party whereas Excuse 9 stated the occasion was not his scene. Thus, these three, Excuses 2, 5, and 9 were all based on disliking the party. Excuse 3 referred to Role B's personal problem that he was not good at talking to girls. Excuse 7 said that Role B was not interested in meeting anybody at the moment and Example 8 hinted at possible unwanted outcomes. Although Example 6.13 is a very long conversation showing several different subcategories of the "no interest" type of excuse, none of the excuses gives any depth of information. What I mean by *no depth of information* is that for example, Role B mentioned why he disliked the idea of the party three times (Excuses 2, 5, and 9) but for simple reasons such as the bad atmosphere or its not being his scene. It did not explain how bad it would be or why the participant thought the atmosphere would be bad.

The following New Zealand example offered three excuses. Role B first, expressed that he was no longer interested in going out in Excuse 1. Next, he referred to the party as being skanky in Excuse 2. This expression appeared to reflect Role B's belief that this type of party was somehow dubious and not a worthwhile occasion to attend. In Excuse 3, Role B stated that he had grown up.

EXAMPLE 6.14:

Excuse 1→B: Oh, that sounds pretty good, but ah, I really was thinking that I don't feel like going out as much these

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>days anyway.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>A:</td><td>Well, there is some like, ah, all my friends are going to be there, I think. It will be really fun.</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Excuse 2→**</td><td>B:</td><td>Ah. No, I've had a change of heart lately and I just don't feel like doing that skanky [dodgy] business anymore.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>A:</td><td>But I don't think it's going to be like that. Are you saying that my friends are skanky?</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Excuse 3→**</td><td>B:</td><td>Well, I was saying we all were at times but I think we've grown up a bit now.   (NZ pair 22)</td></tr>
</table>

In this example, Role B offered reasons why he disliked the idea of the party and conveyed Role B's refusal, but not in much detail.

The following, Example 6.15, is another New Zealand example like Example 6.14 above. Excuses 1 and 2 in Example 6.15 both simply said that Role B was not looking for anyone at the moment. Excuse 3 mentioned that Role B sometimes felt awkward at that kind of party. These three were the reasons why Role B was not interested in the party:

EXAMPLE 6.15:

<table>
<tr><td>**Excuse 1→**</td><td>B:</td><td>I'm not sort of really looking for anyone at the moment. You know, sort of, ah, a set up singles party. Um.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>A:</td><td>Yeah, it is a bit that way actually.</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Excuse 2→**</td><td>B:</td><td>(laughter) Yeah, yeah. Now it just, no, sort of not really looking for anything sort of new at the moment.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>A:</td><td>Okay. If you know of anyone else that might be Interested, let me know. Yeah. I got one or two other people in mind so it's not a big deal.</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Excuse 3→**</td><td>B:</td><td>Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Just I know with these single parties happen to be a bit sort of, a bit awkward at times at, um. You sort of feel like, you know.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>(NZ pair 23)</td></tr>
</table>

Role B here mentioned awkwardness of the party. However, the excuses did not contain further details like why it would be awkward for him. These New Zealand examples show several excuses but the excuses as not as informative as those of the Japanese data.

I now examine "informative" Japanese data. The following four examples, Examples 6.16, 6.17, 6.18, and 6.19 gave more detailed reasons for the lack of interest. Role B in Example 6.16 said she had been to that sort of party before and

did not enjoy it; Role B in Example 6.17 said she disliked people persuading her to stay longer. Role B in Example 6.18 mentioned his bad experiences attending that type of party as well as Role A's bad taste in girls, and Role B in Example 6.19 expressed an unwillingness to play around or go to parties and also a lack of interest in meeting new people.

First, in Example 6.16, Role B explained in Excuse 2 that she did not want to go because of her recent bad experience.

EXAMPLE 6.16:

Excuse 1→B:	Um, somehow I haven't wanted to go to a singles party recently.
	A:	You do not want to because you're focusing on the theme too much. Why don't you come just to make new friends? You don't have to think about girlfriend and boyfriends stuff. You have to start meeting someone.
Excuse 2→B:	Yeah, yeah. I want [a boyfriend]. You are right. But you know, I went to a singles party before and I did not enjoy it. So I do not have a good impression of that sort of party.

<B: a chotto saikin gookon ni wa anmari ikitakunai n da yo ne
  A: gookon tte omou kara ikitakunai n da tte koo tomodachi wo
     tukuru mitaina kanji de ittara son'na ni kanojo in no kareshi inai
     no toka soo iu kanji de nakute moo ii kara mazu wa deai ne
  B: un un un hoshi to omou yo un un soo yo ne ma un demo mae itta
     gookon toka tanoshikunakatta ken ne chitto ima watashi gookon
     ni ii ime-ji nainda yo ne>   (JPN pair 4)

In Example 6.17, Excuse 1 described the unwanted behaviour of other attendees at the party. Excuse 2 mentioned her disliking alcohol, which would almost certainly be offered at that kind of party. These were the two reasons Role B in this example was not interested in the party.

EXAMPLE 6.17:

Excuse 1→B:	You know, people around you often persuade you to stay long and that sort of thing is…
	A:	Oh, no. But it would be okay, you know. I am not such a keen attendee but since we are now uni students and just have a go once or something like that.
Excuse 2→B:	But I do not like a scene involving alcohol.

<B: nan ka sa ikkai ittara sa kekkoo mawari no hito toka ga sa koo
    zutto oraso tte gambaru yan yappa soo iu no ga nan ka
 A: e demo iin ja nai watashi mo anmari son'na ni nani
    sekkyokutekini sanka suru hoo ja nakatta ken are dakedo
    daigakusei ni natta n da shi ikkai kurai itte miyoo yo tte kanji de
    ii ken sa
  B: a watashi demo osake hairu toko kirai dakara sa>   (JPN pair 19)

Example 6.18 below mentioned Role B's bad experience with this type of party and Role A's bad taste for women. The expression that Role B used in Excuse 2 below literally means "extraordinary". But it actually meant "bad" in this context. Thus, this worked as an excuse to refuse the invitation.

EXAMPLE 6.18:

Excuse 1→B: Well, you may be right. But you know, I have been to that sort of party recently and they were not so good.

        A: No, no. This time is different. This time is special. Trust me.

        B: I cannot trust you.

        A: (Laughter) Why?

Excuse 2→B: Because you bring extraordinary ones [girls] every time.

<B: ya ma tashika ni soo kamo shiren kedo chotto ne koko n toko itte
    mitemo shippai ookatta shi ne
 A: iya kondo kuru yo kondo no wa sugoi tte maji de ore shin'yoo
    shite
 B: iya kimi ga shin'yoo dekin kara
 A: (laughter) nan de
 B: kimi ga tsurete kuru no wa maikai sugoi kara>   (JPN pair 16)

Example 6.19 also offered the reasons why Role B was not interested in the party that she wanted to stop playing around and also she was not interested in meeting anybody at that moment. This example was also notable for Role B's detailed explanation. It did not only explain why she would not want to go to the party, but also described about what a singles party should be like (this part of explanation was italicised below). Role B presumably felt obliged to support in this way her reasons for not going to the party. This explanation was part of her excuse making it strong and persuasive. Because of this, her excuses sounded longer and more detailed.

EXAMPLE 6.19:

Excuse 1→B: But recently I have started thinking of stopping playing around. I have been to that sort of party too much. It's not good goofing off any longer, I reckon these days. A singles party… I will pass this time.

A: But you know, people coming to the party this time are not such playing, goofing off type of people. They are sort of proper…

B: I bet they are. But you know *a singles party is set up for, you know, for a purpose of finding a boyfriend or how can I say… it should be an occasion for meeting people.* It is important but

Excuse 2→ I do not particularly feel like going out with somebody so much now, you know.

<B: a demo ne sorosoro anobu no mo chotto yameyoo ka nan ka anmari gookon ikisugitete anmari chotto son'na charachara shita no wa dame da na to saikin omoihajimete ya chotto gookon konkai wa chotto ii yo un un

A: ii e demo nan ka kekkoo sugoi charachara shite iru hun'iki no hito de wa nai yo min'na chanto nan ka

B: a iya soo da kedo yappa gookon wa ne koo nan ka nan ka yappari koo nan ka u yappari sa tsukiau mokuteki tte iu ka nan ka yappa koo deai no ba to shite yaru wake de sa ma sore mo daiji dakedo betsu ni ima son'na dare ka to koo tsukiaitai toka son'na n nai shi> (JPN pair 15)

The italicised part above provided background information prior to the main explanation. In a sense it seems bizarre for Role B to explain to Role A what the party would be like when Role B must have realised that, as the organiser, Role A definitely knew what a singles party was about. To discuss this explanation, Nakatsu's (1978) reference to a question from her American friend, Christina, would be useful.

Christina experienced a lot of "foreign" incidents during her one-year stay in Japan. A quotation from Christina, translating from Japanese, is cited below to show what Japanese explanation is often like:

Christina often asks me why Japanese people deliberately make things difficult. Christina says "when I ask why they like apples rather than pears, they list all sorts of difficult things. They might simply say that they are sweet and a little bit tangy or something. But their answer begins with something like 'apples mean, to the Japanese nation, that…' and so on." (Nakatsu, 1978, pp. 111-112)

> Christina continues, "… When they could simply say 'it is particularly cold today', they start with 'the average temperature in winter since the Meiji era is…'". (Nakatsu, 1978, p. 113)[24]

Christina claimed that the Japanese people whom she met provided a lot of marginal information around topics that could have been given in one simple sentence. Nakatsu explained that Japanese people deliberately avoid getting to the point straightaway. Japanese tend to start from the marginal area and then gradually and eventually reach the conclusion—this was the preferred pattern of Japanese communication, Nakatsu said. The pattern of explanation in Example 6.19 appears to follow this Japanese cultural protocol. In general, as referred to before, Japanese people have a preference for giving detailed information (S. Watanabe, 1993) and do not go to the point straightaway.

Excuses should help the inviters understand and then accept the decliners' refusal. The data indicated that the Japanese participants tried to build up the structure of their reasoning by giving a sort of "prelude" of reasons in order for the inviters to understand the decliners' situation. The decliners even mentioned something that the inviters had already known for this purpose; the decliners drew the relevant information for the sake of their excuses into the conversation, established it as the mutual information. The details will follow in the discussion section, later in this chapter.

All of the examples above, from 6.13 to 6.19, expressed Role B's lack of interest in going to the party and gave reasons for that. But the Japanese data, Examples 6.16 to 6.19, tended to give more detailed information on why they were uninterested and/or what kinds of aspects of the party discouraged them from attending. These details were often related to background information; sometimes they were about the nature of the party and at other times they were about Role B's previous experience. Those pieces of information were certainly relevant to the party invitation and refusal, even if only remotely. Example 6.13, which was from the New Zealand data and the longest conversational data ever in this study, promised a lot of information, but each excuse did not necessarily deliver those types of detailed explanations evident in the Japanese data.

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[24] The Meiji era lasted between 1868 and 1912.

Next I examine how Role A participants, the inviters, reacted to these excuses.

6.4 Types of responses to the excuses

In this section, I investigate Role A's responses after receiving the initial excuse from Role B. To understand the tendencies for particular types of responses to the excuses in each data set, I counted the number of each type. Table 12 shows the result.

Table 12 Role A's responses to Role B's refusals

	Japan	NZ
Dismissing B's excuse	8	4
Seeking more information	7	6
Mentioning positive aspects of the party	5	7
Mentioning the reason of inviting	5	5
Referring to drinking or meeting people	2	2
Others	3	2
Giving up	2	2
Total	32	28[25]

In the Japanese data, the "dismissing Role B's excuse" and "seeking more information" types were the top two popular choices. In the New Zealand data, the "mentioning positive aspects of the party" and "seeking more information" types were the two most used ways. The "mentioning the reason for the invitation" type was also highly chosen by both Japanese and New Zealand the participants.

The different responses from the Japanese and the New Zealand participants could be influenced by the different excuses chosen prior to these responses. However, consistent with the findings of the previous chapters, I found

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[25] The total number of the New Zealand data in this table is 28 (the total number of the New Zealand participants was 31) as three of them were non-refusing cases in the data.

no strong connection between the types of excuses and the responses. For example, the "no interest" type of excuses, the most popular choice of the Japanese participants, was responded to in eight different ways. In the New Zealand data, the most popular excuse was the "prior engagement" type, which elicited seven different types of responses. Thus, those responses were used regardless of the types of excuses that preceded them. In other words, the types of excuses chosen did not determine the preferred responses shown in Table 12.

In the following sections, I examine the popular types of responses first, and then summarise the differences between the Japanese and the New Zealand participants' choices.

6.4.1 "Dismissing Role B's excuse" type

The following example shows rejection from Role A, which is indicated with →
in the example.

EXAMPLE 6.20:

    B: Saturday… I cannot go [to the party]. I have part-time work.
→A: Oh, cancel it.

    <B: doyoo ne ikaren no n yo ne baito haitto tte sa
    A: e kotowari na yo>   (JPN pair 30)

In this example, Role A clearly said that Role B should cancel her scheduled work in order to come to the party. This suggestion sounds unreasonable and some people might even think outrageous. But Role B participant in this conversation did not show any sign of anger or distress, which means this "unreasonable" suggestion, was acceptable in this context. This type of response was the most often chosen type in the Japanese data. Such cases also appeared in the New Zealand data, but more Japanese participants used this type (eight Japanese versus four New Zealand participants). The popularity of this response also indicates that this response was not unreasonable.

Role B in Example 6.20 actually laughed after receiving such a response from Role A. Example 6.21 below shows how the conversation continued after the seemingly unreasonable suggestion:

EXAMPLE 6.21:

    B: Saturday… I cannot go [to the party]. I have part-time work.
    A: Oh, cancel it.
    B: (Laughter)
    A: Well it's next Saturday. You can still cancel it
    B: You are right. Only if I could find a substitute, I could ask the
           person to take it over for me.

    <B: doyoo ne ikaren no n yo ne baito haitto tte sa
     A: e kotowari na yo
     B: (Laughter)
     A: e raishuu no doyoobi dattara mada kotowareru yo
     B: soo na n ja kedo sa kawari ga mitsukereba ne kawareru n ja kedo
       sa>   (JPN pair 30)

I note that the laughter in this example did not suggest that what Role A said was taken as a joke. Japanese people often use laughter as a strategy to manage awkward situations and this example is one of such cases (Hayakawa, 1997). The subsequent exchanges between Roles A and B also indicate that the dismissal in this example was not a joke. Role A kept talking this line—Role B should cancel her part-time work: Role A explained why she thought Role B could cancel the work. Role B responded to Role A's dismissal by expressing her agreement. These interactions support the interpretation that what Role A said was not taken as a joke in this conversation.

    Dismissal of excuses can be described as an acceptable way for the inviters to respond to the decliners' refusal in a given context.

6.4.2 "Seeking more information" type

The "seeking more information" type was the second most popular response in the Japanese as well as the New Zealand data. The following example represents this type.

EXAMPLE 6.22:

     B: Yeah, well, I somehow do not feel like it, you know. It is tiring,
         that sort of thing.
 →A: Why? Why is it so tiring?

    <B: so ya na ma demo nan ka taitei soo iu ki ni naran chuu ka ne
       tsukareru n yo ne soo iu no

A: nan de nan son'na na nan de tsukareru n>   (JPN pair 12)

This type of response was used by a similar number of participants in the two data sets: seven Japanese and six New Zealand participants. Basically, Role A questioned what Role B had just said. These seven Japanese and six New Zealand cases set a question, but the tone of some of those questions sounded more than just a question.

For example, "why, why is it so tiring" in Example 6.22 is indeed a question but put one with elements of frustration and accusation. Four cases including the above example presented accusation-like questions in the Japanese data. This accusation-like question would not sound as if it were encouraging Role B to come to the party. The New Zealand inviters did not use this type of question. The New Zealand inviters who used this type of response asked a question to ensure that the decliners were really sure about their refusal, as in the following example:

EXAMPLE 6.23:

> B: Oh true. Oh no. I've got a lot to catch up on eh?
> →A: Are you sure? You really don't want to meet someone?
>   (NZ pair 32)

A similar number of participants chose the "seeking more information" type of responses among the Japanese and New Zealand participants, but the tone of those questions sounded different.

6.4.3 "Mentioning positive aspects of the party" type

Example 6.24 below, which mentioned a positive aspect of the party, was the most popular type of response among the New Zealand participants.

EXAMPLE 6.24:

> B: Ah um I'm not sure if I really. I don't know. It's not really my
>   scene.
> →A: It'll be fun.   (NZ pair 5)

This type of response was more popular with the New Zealand participants than with the Japanese participants; Seven New Zealand and Five Japanese participants chose this type.

6.4.4 "Mentioning the reason for the invitation" type

The second most popular type in the New Zealand data was the type shown in Example 6.25.

> **EXAMPLE 6.25:**
>
>   B: Yeah, no. I, I, yeah, I do have some other stuff happening on
>   Saturday.
> →A: Ohhh B, you're my last hope.   (NZ pair 17)

This one, "mentioning the reason for the invitation", was almost equally popular with both Japanese and New Zealand participants: five participants each from the data sets responded in this way. However, while five out of five New Zealand participants mentioned that they needed one more person, only two Japanese participants mentioned this reason. The other three said something different from these examples: two Japanese participants said they thought Role B would be likely to come and one Japanese participant said she was asked by a friend to organise the party. I cite these two different cases below.

> **EXAMPLE 6.26:**
>
>   B: Wednesday. Sorry, um, I have something… I have already got
>   a part-time job [on that day].
>   →A: A part-time job. [The next day] Thursday is a public holiday,
>   so I thought it should be all right.
>
>   <B: suiyoobi gomen chotto nan ka ima yooji ga atte ikeren non yo ne
>   ano baito ireteshimatta
>   A: a baito ka mokuyoobi renkyuu jakee choodo ii ka na to omotta n
>   da kedo>   (JPN pair 20)

> **EXAMPLE 6.27:**
>
>   B: Well, I have not been to a singles party yet [I am not such a
>   good candidate to attend to the party].
>   →A: I have been to [such a party] only twice but a friend of mine at
>   my work place wanted to go to that sort of thing and I was
>   asked [to find people to hold a party]. [Many] people cannot

make it, so I was asked if I could find anybody [from my
friend's circle].

<B: e gookon ka son'na gookon itta koto nai n da tte mada
A: e demo watashi mo nikai kurai shika nai kedo sa nan ka baito saki
no hito no tomodachi ga sa soo iu no yaritakute sa tanomarete sa
chotto nan ka tsugoo ga tsukan shi sa tomodachi ga inai ka tte
tanomarete sa>   (JPN pair 32)

These two examples show the entire response created by the participants. In
particular, the response in Example 6.27 provided the reason why the inviter
participant invited the decliner participant here with detailed explanations in a
convoluted manner.

Either example did not sound that Role A was trying hard or addressing
the problem which prevented the decliners from attending the party. By contrast,
the response in Example 6.25 showed the inviter's attempt to gain the decliner's
understanding of the situation in the hope that the inviter would gain an
acceptance from the decliner.

The participants who chose the "mentioning the reason for the invitation"
type did not all necessarily use this in the same way. All of the New Zealand
participants who mentioned this response seemed to try to gain the decliners'
understanding; therefore, hopefully an acceptance of the invitation eventually. On
the other hand, some of the Japanese participants used this to respond to the
decliners' refusal in an indirect manner: they explained their own situation which
did not directly encourage the decliners to change their mind. In a sense, their
response sounded avoiding confrontation with the decliners.

6.4.5 Differences between the data sets in the response to the excuse

Table 12 on p. 234 showed that all types of responses appeared in both data, but
the tendency to choose particular types of responses was different between the
Japanese and New Zealand data. As Table 12 showed, dismissal of the excuses
was the most popular reaction with the Japanese participants while mentioning
positive aspects of the party was the most frequently used response for the New
Zealand participants.

These two responses sound quite different—"dismissal" seems confrontational and even threatening while "mentioning positive aspects" sounds encouraging to the decliners. At first glance, the former sounds rude and inconsiderate and the latter sounds nice and polite. These findings should be carefully interpreted because the Japanese, who dismissed the decliners' excuse more often, could easily be branded as intolerant. I will discuss this point later in this chapter.

The following section looks at one further turn in each conversational data set, that is, the decliners' second attempt at refusal.

6.5 Preferred types of second refusals

This section examines a further turn, which was Role B's second attempt at refusal, prompted by Role A's responses to Role B' first attempt. "Giving the same type of excuse" and "answering Role A's question" were the main choices in both data sets. Table 13 shows how Role B reacted.

Table 13 Role Bs' responses to Role As' second attempt

	Japan	NZ
Giving the same type of excuse	7	11
Answering A's question	7	6
Giving a different excuse	3	3
Dismissing A's claim	4	1
Asking a question	3	1
Recommending somebody else	1	2
Agreeing with A	2	0
Giving a vague response	1	1
Digressing from the main topics	1	0
Giving simple refusal	1	0
Explaining in detail	0	1
Total	30	26

The Japanese more than the New Zealand participants chose "dismissing Role A's claim", which coincides with the tendency reported in the previous section. The "giving the same type of excuse" was more popular with the New Zealand than with the Japanese participants.

Another notable response is the "recommending somebody else" type. This strategy has the potential to resolve the situation for both Role A and B participants. Role A fulfils the requirement of the role play conversation by gaining one more guest while Role B is released from the pressure to accept the invitation to the party. This type of utterance could be taken as a positive politeness strategy as it would satisfy what Role A wanted. But, at the same time, this type of response may also sound disappointing to Role A as Role A *personally* invited Role B to the party. For Role A, Role B should not be just a *somebody*. This is an interesting way to respond to the invitation.

Since Table 13 shows only the second attempt of refusal presented by the Role B participants, it does not explain how many participants in total used this strategy to refuse the invitation somewhere across the conversation. I found that nearly half of Japanese participants, 14 out of total 32, made this kind of suggestion while only two New Zealand participants did so.

The following example contains this type of suggestion; the utterances indicated with → are the type of suggestion mentioned above. In this example, Role B's first excuse, that he would be busy on the day, did not work; Role A continued asking Role B to come to the party by expressing the need for one more person. Then Role B suggested inviting *Yoko-chan*. When this did not work, Role B then suggested trying another friend named *Mitch*.

EXAMPLE 6.28:

    B: I will be busy all the time.
    A: We need one more person.
→B: Well, don't you think Yoko-chan will come?
    A: Um he said he disliked [this type of party] and I don't think he will come probably.
→B: How about Mitch?

< B: zutto isogashii n yo ne
  A: ha iya hitori tarin no yo ne
  B: ha yoko-chan toka kuru n ja nai n
  A: iya ano ko wa kirai ja tte iyo tta ke tabun kon ne

B: a micchi toka >   (JPN pair 25)

These utterances were, again, used by more Japanese than New Zealand participants. This finding, alongside the popularity of the "no interest" type of excuse, could be interpreted as the Japanese determination to deliver a "no" message without leaving any room for persuasion. This could be another way of protecting themselves from the strength of prospective Role A's possible reaction.

Overall, Table 13 indicates a difference between the Japanese and New Zealand participants in terms of the way they turn down the inviter's second attempt.

6.6 Discussion

I have reported the findings from analysis of the data so far. In this section, I discuss these findings to answer the research questions posed before. For this purpose, I first briefly recall the scenario set for the study and summarise the findings from the data analysis. Discussion then follows.

In the scenario, Role A participants were to invite Role B participants to a singles party which Role A participants had organised. Role B participants had met somebody recently and were not interested in such a party. Role B participants wanted to keep quiet about their relationship and so did their dates. Therefore, Role B participants had to make up excuses to decline the invitation.

I give a summary of the findings below, as I have reported in this chapter so far:

1. Preferred types of excuses
    a. The most popular excuse for the Japanese participants was the "no interest" type in which they expressed a disliking for that kind of party, or mentioned the negative features of the party which discouraged them from attending, or referred to the personal problems that prevented them from going. The second most popular excuse for Japanese was the "prior engagement" type.

    b. The most popular excuse for the New Zealand participants was the "prior engagement" type and the second most popular one was the "no interest" type.

    c. More than half of the Japanese participants (17 cases out of 32 in total) chose the "no interest" type of excuse. Nearly half of the New Zealand participants (14 cases out of 31) chose the "prior engagement" type.

2. Preferred ways to present excuses

    a. The Japanese participants more than the New Zealand participants repeated excuses.

    b. The Japanese participants more than the New Zealand participants gave detailed reasons for turning down the invitation.

3. Preferred ways to respond to the excuses

    a. The "dismissing what Role B said" type was the most popular type of response by Role A among the Japanese participants and the "mentioning positive aspects of the party" was the most popular one among the New Zealand participants.

    b. The "seeking more information" and the "mentioning the reason for the invitation" types were popular with both the Japanese and New Zealand participants.

    c. There seemed to be no strong connection observed between the types of excuses and the types of response to them across both groups. The participants had preferred ways of responding to the excuses regardless of the types of the excuses offered beforehand.

4. The overall tendency

    a. The Japanese participants more than the New Zealand participants described their situations in detail.

    b. More Japanese participants suggested inviting somebody else.

I now discuss these findings in relation to the issues of lying and strategies to manage undesirable communicative situations. First, I examine the types of lies

the participants tended to use (section 6.6.1) and patterns of and strategies in lying (section 6.6.2). I then discuss how culture influences the preferred ways of communicating (section 6.6.3).

6.6.1 Types of lies

If they mentioned their dates in order to decline the invitation, the participants were telling the truth instead of lying; other than that, any reasons provided to decline the invitation were taken as cases of lying.

In this section, I discuss lie-telling cases first. A participant mentioned her date to the inviter, which is a truth-telling case. As well as "lie-telling" cases, there were also "*partial* truth-telling" cases. I discuss each case respectively.

6.6.1.1 Lie-telling cases

Almost all participants lied about why they declined the invitation. I examine those lie-telling cases; first, the Japanese lies, and second, the New Zealanders lies.

6.6.1.1.1 Japanese lies

The Japanese participants lied about their interest in the party. This "no interest" type of excuse denied the inviters' assumption that the invitation would be welcomed; this is a normal expectation when people invite somebody to their party. Lying about interest in the party negated the whole point of having that kind of party.

The participants who lied about their interest also tended to denigrate the party with detailed negative comments. These comments also could eliminate any likelihood of the inviters changing the decliners' mind.

The Japanese participants used lies which would work for dashing Role A's hopes of inviting Role B at an early stage. Therefore, those lies functioned as a flat refusal.

6.6.1.1.2 New Zealanders' lies

Many New Zealand participants lied about a prior engagement. As mentioned in the previous chapters, a prior engagement is the acceptable excuse to decline an invitation in English-speaking societies. People in those societies share a social protocol where they are obliged to accept an invitation from friends (Neustupny, 1982). Once people accept an invitation, it has to be regarded highly: any engagement prior to any other invitation has to be respected as a contract as I argued in the previous chapter (see the discussion on p. 195). Thus, lies about a prior engagement are a good choice to decline such invitations. As discussed before, contracts are highly valued in English-speaking societies and New Zealand, being English-speaking, is presumably one of them.

These social protocols help to explain why many New Zealand participants used this type of lie to turn down the invitation. The interpretation from this finding could be that the New Zealand participants chose to follow their social/cultural protocol when they need to come up with a lie to manage an invitation-refusal situation.

6.6.1.2 Truth-telling cases

Initially, none of the Role B participants, neither Japanese nor New Zealand, revealed the real reason for turning down the invitation. However, one New Zealand participant mentioned that she had met somebody lately, at the end of the conversation after Role A had attempted to gain her acceptance of the invitation many times. Once Role B revealed her real situation, Role A accepted Role B's refusal.

Another type of truth-telling case was one where the participants gave the partial truth.

The *partial* truth was actually given by many participants in this study. More than half of the Japanese and around one third of the New Zealand participants expressed "no interest" in going to the party. This was not a complete lie because the role-play card for Role B participants read "*you are not interested in that kind of party anymore*". The "no interest" type of excuse indeed revealed the truth in a sense, but did not reflect the whole truth.

None of the participants who chose the "no interest" type of excuse revealed the complete truth about their lack of interest in the party. As reported above, many participants provided detailed reasoning. They often came up with untruthful reasons for not attending such as the bad atmosphere of the party and a bad experience they had had in the past. But none of them revealed that they met somebody; *therefore*, they were not interested in a singles party.

The details the participants provided were additions that they had made up on their own initiative; those kinds of details were not part of the instruction given to them. These cases, in which the participants did not reveal the whole truth, can be defined as examples of deviation from the maxim of quantity of the cooperative principle (Grice, 1975). Meibauer (2005) also argued about cases of deviation from the maxim. Such utterances do not provide the whole truth and consequently implicate something different from the truth. From a practical point of view, such cases should be considered as lies. Therefore, the cases I reported in the present study were categorised as lies.

Another notable issue here is about the cases in which the participants kept hedging; these cases did not offer either the truth or lies; therefore, these cases have to be discussed here.

Only three New Zealanders chose this and none of the Japanese participants used this type of excuse for refusing the invitation. This case could be interpreted as a sign of reflecting the social protocol of English speaking societies, in which acceptance of an invitation from a friend is considered a social obligation (Neustupny, 1982). An acceptable excuse for declining such an invitation is, as mentioned above, a prior engagement. In other words, if people in English societies who receive an invitation, do not have a prior engagement, but do not want to accept it for some other reason, they would have difficulties. The three New Zealand participants in this study perhaps tried to manage the given situation by avoiding violating the protocol in a subtle way—that is, by hedging.

6.6.1.3 Summary

Overall, the majority of Role B participants lied to Role A participants about their reason for turning down the invitations. The important finding here in terms of

cross-cultural studies was that the preferred choice of particular types of lies differed between the Japanese and the New Zealand participants. The difference appeared to derive from different communication goals to be fulfilled.

6.6.2 Patterns and strategies of lies

In relation to patterns and strategies of lies, the Japanese and New Zealand participants, as reported before, presented lies in different ways. In this section, I examine those patterns and strategies from the following two perspectives: (1) Grice's (1975) cooperative principle and (2) self-disclosure.

6.6.2.1 Application of Grice's cooperative principle

The data analysis revealed that the Japanese more than the New Zealand participants tended to explain the reasons why they did not want to/could not go to the party in detail. The Japanese decliner participants sometimes supplied information which the inviter participants were supposed to know. The finding seems to counter two maxims of Grice's cooperative principle: the maxims of quantity and manner.

The maxims of quantity and manner respectively say: do not make your contribution more informative than is required; and be perspicuous. Previous studies found that these two maxims applied to Chinese and Japanese communication differently from the way they applied to English communication (Murai, 1998; Yeung et al., 1999). In other words, Asian language speakers had different notions in terms of application of the maxims from those of English speakers.

Detailed information observed in the Japanese data of the study was perhaps more than that was required from eyes of English speakers. The delivery of the description also was not necessarily made in a perspicuous manner. However, referring to the previous studies, it could be described that the Japanese participants of the present study adhered to the maxims in their own way. That is, Japanese people would supply abundant information because that is what

"required" meant to them. The structures observed in the Japanese dialogues were also perspicuous enough for the native speakers.

In contrast, the New Zealand participants tended to deliver simple excuses in a straightforward manner. Their excuses might seem insufficient from the Japanese perspective. However, again, the New Zealand participants also followed the maxims in their own New Zealand way. Their ways are literally what Grice (1975) described: make your contribution as informative as is required and be perspicuous.

In summary, the participants in both groups provided information to achieve their communication goal—to turn down the invitation—in accordance with their *own* cultural protocol of application of Grice's cooperative principle. The definition of "required" amount of information and perspicuity seemed to vary among different cultures and this could potentially cause intercultural miscommunication.

6.6.2.2 Self-disclosure

The choice of lies by the Japanese participants—lying about their interest in the party and giving detailed information—could be connected to the issue of self-disclosure: the Japanese used those lies to avoid possible self-disclosure. This self-disclosure issue could also be related to the issue of uncertainty avoidance because the imminent requirement for self-disclosure would be likely to build uncertainty among people.

Previous studies showed that Japanese people dislike self-disclosure. Even between friends, Japanese people do not disclose personal information as much as American people do (Barnlund, 1973; Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983). Hofstede's study (2001) about uncertainty avoidance also reinforced the report from these studies: the Japanese more than the New Zealand informants preferred to avoid self-disclosure and uncertainty. The findings from the Japanese and the New Zealand data in the present study could be explained in regard to these issues.

When people discuss a social gathering such as going to a party, they might need to reveal information about their personal lives in order to find the

best solution for enabling everybody to participate. If somebody says he or she has a prior engagement and declines the invitation, the inviter might require the decliner to disclose when and where the engagement would take place in order to see if there would be any possibility of negotiating the time and venue of the targeted event of the invitation. Japanese people may not want to meet such requirements as they prefer not to reveal their personal information. Moreover, nobody can predict exactly what comes next in such negotiation and this would create uncertainty.

Nishimura (2008) reported an example relevant to this type of lie. In her study of self-reported lies, one Japanese informant reported that she lied to her friend about her plan for the night. The plan itself was nothing she needed to hide but she did not want to tell the truth to her friend; otherwise, the friend might ask her to get together that night, which the informant did not want. Shibuya and Shibuya (1993) also reported that their Japanese informants told a lie to prevent a possible unwanted outcome.

To avoid uncertainty in the imminent future, people would want to prevent any possibility of further negotiation occurring. Therefore, to provide a clear refusal message and disallow any room for possible negotiation would be a good strategy for people such as Japanese who do not like uncertainty or self-disclosure. Since New Zealanders were not driven by a desire to avoid uncertainty or self-disclosure, they had no need to use strategies to prevent them.

6.6.3 Cultural influences underpinning the use of lies

In this section, I discuss the conversational data of this study from cross-cultural perspectives and provide a rationale to explain the use of lies observed.

I have found several differences between the Japanese and the New Zealand data so far. These different findings need to be examined and interpreted in order to explain what the participants actually achieve through those types of behaviour and to answer the research questions. Studies have shown that different cultures tend to have different styles of communication (Tannen, 2007; Yim & Ide, 2004). The data shown above would represent different interpersonal strategies in different cultures (Takiura, 2005).

Briefly speaking I have reported the following findings in this chapter. From the Japanese data, I found that the Japanese participants' lies contained (1) stronger types of excuses and (2) longer, more detailed excuses. Another notable finding was that the Japanese decliner participants often suggested the inviters invite somebody else. A notable finding from the inviters' behaviour was that some of them dismissed the decliners' explanations, which was not a response often seen in the New Zealand data. All findings indicated that the Japanese participants tried to avoid further negotiation.

In contrast, the New Zealand participants' lies (1) involved a prior engagement and (2) gave a "single-account" type of explanation of their situation. The inviter participants often mentioned positive aspects of the party to encourage the decliners to change their mind, which was not often a strategy employed by the Japanese participants. None of the tendencies observed in the New Zealand data indicated inclination for avoidance of further negotiation. The choice of the New Zealand participants seemed to result from following the social protocol (Neustupny, 1982; M. Watanabe, 2001; S. Watanabe, 1993) which was to tell a lie about a prior engagement to manage the situation assigned.

As mentioned above, these differences could be related to their different application of the maxims from Grice's cooperative principle (e.g., Japanese tended to give "too much" information and held different attitudes on self-disclosure, while New Zealanders were not as concerned about self-disclosure or uncertainty as Japanese).

Here I discuss a cultural rationale to explain what the participants were trying to achieve in the conversation; I examine the Japanese data first, and then the New Zealand data.

6.6.3.1 Cultural influences for the Japanese data

One of the key findings was that confrontational and direct utterances were often observed in the Japanese data. I examined the findings in the context of the study and interpreted those utterances as a strategy to avoid negotiation and maintain harmony. The interactions often looked superficial because issues raised there were not properly addressed. To explain how the participants' performance was

constructed, the following three concepts are useful: communication as a play, communication for in-group people, and culturally preferred communication styles. The interpretation presented here is based on the utterances performed by the inviter as well as the decliner participants.

6.6.3.1.1 Play between friends as positive politeness
In this section, I revisit the inviter participants' behaviour first to clarify the preference among the Japanese participants.

One of the popular ways for the Japanese inviter participants to handle the given situation was to dismiss the decliners' excuses. Another was to seek more information. The "seeking more information" type of response took the form of questions which sounded as if they were accusing the decliners for their excuses; thus, this response also sometimes sounded as forceful as the dismissal one. Similar to this study, Szatrowski (2004b) and Kuramoto and Ohama (2008) also reported strong expressions used among Japanese to invite a friend.

Szatrowski's data were, as mentioned before, real telephone conversations provided by Japanese people. Szatrowski reported that the Japanese inviter used strong expressions to press the decliner to accept an invitation to come to lunch. For instance, the decliner declined saying that he was in asleep and his body and mind were not up to lunch with other people when he received the phone call. The inviter said "there is still 30 minutes left [till lunch appointment], so you will be alright, I tell you" (Szatrowski, 2004b, p. 244). The inviter also later said "if it's ordinary talk, isn't it that you can do it?" to the decliner who repeated that his brain did not work because of lack of sleep (p. 250). Basically the inviter dismissed what the decliner claimed.

Kuramoto and Ohama (2008) also reported similar examples. They investigated Japanese university students' behaviour in invitation-refusal situations and found that their research participants expressed invitations strongly, even after refusals were given. Kuramoto and Ohama assumed that this was a positive politeness strategy to express close friendship. They claimed that the Japanese participants might even be expected to use direct and forceful expressions. If such strong expressions were not used, the decliners might have

been disappointed because the lack of a strong invitation has meant the absence of a strong intention to invite them after all.

For example, one inviter in Kuramoto and Ohama's study said "you must come" after her friend turned down the invitation; this directness clarifies the "in-group" (Nisbett, 2003) status of the conversational partners, emphasising a sense of belonging (Kuramoto & Ohama, 2008, p. 62). In another example, one participant declined the invitation by mentioning her shortage of money. The inviter then insisted that the friend could come to the party by borrowing money from somebody else (Kuramoto & Ohama, 2008, pp. 59-60). This inviter's suggestion might sound too forceful, but Kuramoto and Ohama had a different explanation for these examples.

These strong expressions could be interpreted as a "play": those expressions were not intended to deliver a denotative message but served as an acknowledgement of the friendship between the conversational participants (R. Ohama, personal communication, November 7, 2009). Bateson (1972) used the word "play" in his study to describe this type of communication.

> Human verbal communication can operate and always does operate at many contrasting levels of abstraction. These range in two directions from the seemingly simple denotative level. One range or set of these more abstract levels include those explicit or implicit messages where the subject of discourse is the language. We will call these metalinguistic. The other set of levels of abstraction we will call metacommunicative. In these, the subject of discourse is the relationship between the speakers. (Bateson, 1972, p. 178)

Bateson used the sentence "the cat is on the mat" as an example to explain the quotation above. The metalinguistic message of "the cat is on the mat", for example, is that "the verbal sound 'cat' stands for any member of such and such class of objects" and the metacommunicative message is "my telling you where to find the cat is friendly". The simple phrase "the cat is on the mat" not only conveys information about the cat's whereabouts (at a denotative level) but also expresses the friendship between the speaker and the hearer by sharing such heart-warming information (at a metacommunicative level).

Direct expressions reported in Kuramoto and Ohama (2008) and my study were not meant to convey the denotative information. The metacommunicative

message of such direct expressions could be phrased something like "we are so close to each other that it is okay to communicate directly like this". By giving and accepting such strong and forceful expressions, Japanese people redefine their friendship. The use of such strong expressions functions an evidence of their psychological closeness that they believe in. The use could also contribute to further establishment of rapport between the speaker and the hearer.

The dismissal type of responses observed in the data appeared to function as a positive politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987). By using acceptable positive strategies, the Japanese participants managed undesirable communicative situations by avoiding further negotiation.

The data of this study and previous studies indicated that the dismissal from the inviter participants I observed was an accepted interpersonal communication style among Japanese. This would then explain why the Japanese decliner participants lied about their interest in the party and gave strong excuses with detailed information. Those excuses were their best defence against forthcoming strong forceful dismissal. The inviter and decliner participants expected to exchange strong messages and to cooperate in conversing superficially. The important finding here is that the speakers on both sides of the conversation—the inviters as well as the decliners—seemed to conspire in avoidance of negotiation.

6.6.3.1.2 In-group and out-group differentiation

As described above, strong utterances were accepted among the Japanese even though they could potentially be considered impolite. A theory of in-group and out-group differentiation could explain the reason: basically the pairs who participated in this study were friends; thus, they were in-group people and allowed such strong expressions (Barnlund, 1973; Nisbett, 2003).

In Japan, in-group people are expected to show closeness in their communication and thus distinguish themselves from out-group people. A clear, non-negotiable refusal message from the decliner participants as well as dismissal from the inviter participants seemed to work as an in-group inclined communication style and restated their friendship (as in-group members).

6.6.3.1.3 Preferred communication style

As mentioned before, Japanese people prefer detailed explanation in general. Using detailed explanation in their lies followed this cultural preference. At the same time, it worked well for the decliner participants to show the inviter participants that there would not be any room for negotiation.

What the Japanese participants tried to do was neatly captured by one of the Japanese participants of the present study: he commented after a conversational session, "I (the inviter) did not really understand what he (the decliner) was saying, but did understand he just did not want to come to the party". This is a good description of what went on in the conversation examined in this chapter. The decliner participants gave a lot of reasoning which was probably meant to reach a mutual understanding of the situation, which was that there was no hope of the decliners accepting the invitation. This was the important metamessage the Japanese participants wanted to deliver among themselves.

6.6.3.1.4 Summary

The Japanese conversations were characterised by the decliner participants' strong untruthful excuses and the inviter participants' dismissal or questions; both inviter and decliner participants did not really confront the issues between them for any possible solution. As a result, the conversations tended to be superficial.

As mentioned before, inharmonious situations such as refusals are basically undesirable in Japanese culture. In consequence, they might want to handle the situations in a superficial or non-committing manner if they could not avoid such situations altogether. Then, they would use lies which are likely to send a clear "no" message. An obviously "playful" mode of communication would also be suitable to manage this type of situation. In a sense, this type of communication may appear to lack sincerity from a non-Japanese viewpoint.

The use by the Japanese of complicated strategies such as being direct and supplying a surfeit of information aimed to avoid offending group harmony. Buller and Burgoon (1994) claimed that deception had three types of motivation, namely; instrumental, interpersonal and identity. Each lie does not necessarily include all of these motivations but lies are possibly told to meet several requirements such as conveying a message, being polite, being appropriate (in the

case of Japanese), being friendly (in the case of English) (Ide, 2006; Ide et al., 1992) and so on.

6.6.3.2 Cultural influences for the New Zealand data

The New Zealand participants tended to lie about a prior engagement. Their popular response to the excuses was to mention positive aspects of the party. Next in popularity were the responses of "seeking more information" and "mentioning the reason for invitation", neither of which seems threatening.

Their excuses, as mentioned before, seemed to be a result of their cultural protocol. The above three types of responses were also referred to in Szatrowski (1993) as typical of American people's behaviour in invitation-refusal conversation. Szatrowski reported that Americans in invitational conversations often mentioned the positive side of the event concerned and asked questions to prompt the possibility of gaining acceptance of the invitation from their friends. For example, if the decliners mentioned a prior engagement, the inviters often sought more information about it such as the finishing time and the venue and then offered a compromise based on the information just gained. English speaking people would often choose this type of strategy (Szatrowski, 1993).

The responses popular among the New Zealand participants of this study did not constitute dismissal—the participants did not dismiss what the decliners said or try to change the decliners' minds. But the New Zealand inviters persevered: they encouraged their friends to reconsider the invitation by emphasising the positive aspects of the party and so on. Their choices of responses showed respect for the decliners' wishes while still pursuing their (inviters') aims. The New Zealanders undoubtedly used positive polite strategies to communicate with the decliners in order to surmount the obstacle between them.

In the choices of lies they made to excuse themselves as well as the choices of the responses to those excuses, the New Zealand participants seemed to manage undesirable communicative situations such as an invitation-refusal setting by stating what they wanted and accepting what others wanted. Tanaka (2010) explained this type of behaviour: "People [in American culture] prefer low-context communication and respect the independence of each individual. They

express themselves in their own right and respect others' wishes at the same time" (p. 71). Although it targeted American English, Tanaka's description described well what the New Zealand data of the present study showed.

Overall, the New Zealand participants tended not to repeat the excuses or give many different detailed reasons why they turned down the invitation. As mentioned before, the ideal response to any invitation is acceptance (Leech, 1983). If people have to turn it down, they need to be careful not to offend the inviters and should ideally carry out the act indirectly (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The data in this chapter did not show any evidence that the New Zealand participants used expressions particularly targeted towards in-group people. Previous studies claimed that Western people, and New Zealanders are considered as part of this "Western" category, do not have a tendency to distinguish in-group from out-group people (Nisbett, 2003). Therefore, an interpretation of the finding from this study could be that the New Zealand participants did not try to use certain types of expressions because of their friendship. The New Zealand participants perhaps turned down invitations politely according to their cultural protocol of politeness. Haugh (2004) defined politeness in English: "It involves showing consideration towards the feelings and position of others, and being well-mannered in one's demeanour"(p. 105). The New Zealand participants possibly exercised politeness in the way that Haugh described.

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the second of the invitation-refusal conversational data sets, presented the findings from the analysis, and discussed the findings. The situation organised for the study here was for one person to invite the other to a singles party. The decliners had to turn down the invitation without mentioning their interest in someone they had met recently. Since the situation involved more issues than did previous settings, longer and more detailed data resulted from this chapter than from Chapters Four and Five.

Almost all participants from the Japanese and the New Zealand groups used lies to turn down the invitation. But the types of lies and the way of presenting the lies were different between the groups. The responses to those

excuses from the inviters also differed between the groups. Overall, the data examined in this chapter showed that lies seemed to be told with concern for the participants' cultural values, communication styles, and protocol.

The following provides answers to the research questions. First, many Japanese participants lied about their interest in the party. On the other hand, the New Zealand participants tended to lie about a prior engagement. Some Japanese also used a lie about a prior engagement and some New Zealanders lied about their interest as well. Although these two types were common lies that Japanese and New Zealanders used in order to manage the given undesirable situation, their first preference was different.

Second, the Japanese participants gave detailed and specific explanations why they were not interested in the party. Saying "no interest" in itself was not a lie in the given situation but giving it as a reason for turning down the invitation did constitute lying. Therefore, although the detailed and specific explanations themselves might also be true (e.g., the participant was indeed shy), all the detailed reasoning formed the falsehood. The New Zealand participants did not give so much detail as the Japanese did. They tended to give simple explanations for their refusal.

Third, the choices made by the Japanese and New Zealand participants seemed to reflect their cultural values and preferred communication style. For the Japanese, harmony was highly valued and detailed explanation was required. They preferred direct and forceful expressions between friends. For the New Zealanders, a contract and respect for the wishes of each individual was highly valued. They preferred simple explanations.

The data of the present study has shown that both Japanese and New Zealand participants used politeness strategies, but different kinds. This difference occurred because of their different attitude in terms of in-group and out-group differentiation: the Japanese were expected to show a type of positive politeness to indicate their close friendship, particularly to in-group members while the New Zealanders were required to be polite to anybody in general and literally show their respect for others' wishes.

The difference in the use of politeness strategies was also observed in strategies that Role B used. Many Japanese Role B participants suggested that

Role A participants invite somebody else while few New Zealander Role B participants did so. This type of suggestion could be interpreted as a positive politeness strategy to respect what Role A wanted: having one more guest at his/her party. However, this could be taken as an FTA threatening Role A's positive face since Role A specifically wanted *Role B* to come to his or her party. I note one more interpretation here: the suggestion would have worked as a strategy to protect Role B's, (i.e., the speaker's own) negative face (the invitation would infringe up on Role B's freedom). Perhaps the Japanese participants used this strategy as a win-win strategy: respecting Role A's wants as well as protecting Role B's face. On the other hand, the New Zealand participants might not have shared such an interpretation in the use of the suggestion of inviting somebody else. The differences between the Japanese and the New Zealand participants in terms of the use of politeness strategies could potentially cause friction in intercultural settings.

Lies are not told only in order to tell a lie. There must be certain reasons and purposes which underpin lying. The lies that appeared in the situation organised for this study were told as an interpersonal communication strategy (DePaulo et al., 1996) to survive an awkward situation.

This means giving a culturally acceptable lie is a complicated process which requires awareness of various important issues in the concerned culture. A consideration of several communication issues is required to interpret lies, particularly the lies told to handle refusals, which involve awkward and tricky situations. I demonstrated that the data were influenced by several cultural protocols such as being polite, differentiating in-group and out-group people and so on.

The next chapter will conclude this research report—lying: strategies to manage undesirable communicative situations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

In this concluding chapter, I will briefly summarise the study and review its major findings in the light of the research questions. Then, the implications of the findings are offered and the limitations of the study are described. Finally, suggestions for further research are provided.

7.1 Summary of the study

This study was designed to reveal how Japanese and New Zealand people may use lies to manage undesirable communicative situations, particularly refusals. This is a significant research topic as lying plays an important part in our lives (Ekman, 1985) and especially in how we manage interpersonal communication. Although people are taught by their teachers and parents that lying is bad (Kameyama, 1997), lying is often used as a communication strategy (DePaulo et al., 1996). Researchers in many fields have studied the definitions of *lie*, the reality of lies in our everyday communication, and cultural issues related to the motivation and acceptability of lies. However, they have not much studied the use of lies in conversation. There is little knowledge of how people lie, what type of lies they use to manage undesirable communicative situations and how those lies function in conversation. Therefore, the aim of this study was to fill this gap and to find out not only what types of lies were told but also how and why these types of lies were told in interpersonal communicative situations. This type of information is needed, particularly when people are communicating with those from another culture and thus in potentially delicate situations.

      To investigate these aspects of lies, I set refusal situations as a context where lies may be used as a communication strategy to manage given situations.

A reason for having chosen refusals is that refusal situations are considered to be one of the common undesirable situations that people face in their everyday lives (Moriyama, 1990): people often make requests of and invite others in daily life but the requests or invitations cannot be met every single time. Needless to say, nobody likes to turn down a request or invitation, especially one that comes from a friend, as a refusal could possibly disappoint and upset the friend (Goffman, 1971). Thus, refusals were investigated in this study as an undesirable communicative situation where lies might be used. I posed the following three research questions:

1. What kinds of lies do people tell in conversation, particularly in refusal situations in Japan and New Zealand?
2. What are the cultural differences in the lying patterns and strategies between speakers of Japanese and New Zealand English?
3. What culture-specific rules and values may affect those differences?

To answer these questions, I collected conversational data from Japanese and New Zealand people. By comparing these two data sets, I clearly established what characterised the lies of the participants from each group. For the data collection, a role-play technique was employed. This technique enabled me to gain conversational data under similar contexts from two different cultural groups. Employing the same role-play created similar conditions necessary to make a good comparison between the groups.

The data in Japanese and English were obtained from 64 pairs of friends (32 pairs of Japanese and 32 pairs of New Zealanders respectively) by using a role-play data collection technique. Three refusal scenarios were used for the data collection. In all scenarios, the participants who were given the decliner role were instructed to use untruthful excuses to turn down a request or invitation. The first scenario contained a request for a friend to buy the requester's microwave oven. The other two scenarios were invitation-refusal scenarios: the first contained an invitation to go to the pub that night, and the second, an invitation to a singles party.

All role-plays were audio-recorded and data were transcribed. The transcription was analysed focusing on the excuses as well as the responses to the excuses in order to understand the functions of the excuses and the refusal conversations. Other strategies employed for refusals were also examined to establish how refusal conversations were composed by the participants. I analysed lies, responses, and the strategies within the framework of interactional sociolinguistics as this research aimed to reveal what lies in conversation meant— in other words, the situated meaning of utterances of lies in undesirable communicative situations.

7.2 Major conclusions emerging from this study

From the analysis of the data, I found that the Japanese and the New Zealand participants tended to use different types of lies in a different manner. These differences derived from differences in cultural values, cultural perception of lies, and cultural protocols of interpersonal communication. In other words, these multiple differences in interpersonal communicative perspectives resulted in different uses of lies between these two different cultural groups. The findings from this study have indicated areas that have the potential to cause interpersonal miscommunication between Japanese and New Zealand people.

7.2.1 Lies used for refusals

The first research question was to establish the types of lies people would use in undesirable communicative situations. The extensive analysis of the three different role-play data revealed two major types of lies among the Japanese participants: lies about their physical condition and lies to deny the "presumption" for the request/invitation. The presumption here refers to the expectation that the requesters/inviters would normally have prior to making a request or offering an invitation. For example, people invite others when they presume the invitation will please the invitees. However, the Japanese decliner participants often said they were not interested in the situation to which they were invited.

The common feature of the Japanese participants' lies was found in the strength of refusals. Their lies sounded more forceful and less negotiable than those of the New Zealand participants. As Japanese communication is generally described as indirect compared with English communication (Haugh, 2003), these findings make a significant contribution to the research area.

For example, the Japanese participants lied about their physical condition. Such lies are hard to contest as nobody can do anything about somebody else's physical problems. Another type of lie, a statement of "no interest" in the party, dashes the inviters' hopes. These excuses were interpreted as a sign of determination to refuse and a desire for no negotiation. In other words, the Japanese participants chose lies which would convey a clear refusal message.

On the other hand, the New Zealand data did not show such strong rejection. The New Zealand decliners tended to lie about a prior arrangement. This tendency was strong: it was clearly observed across the three different scenarios. The New Zealanders' lies, unlike those of the Japanese, tended not to deny the presumption for the request/invitation; thus, their lies did not put pressure on the requester/inviter participants, as did the Japanese.

The New Zealand decliners sometimes even used lies to give "non-committal" types of excuses. For example, some participants lied that they were not sure about the purchasing of the microwave oven. Some other decliners did not give a direct refusal message but, because of the instructions they were given, they did not give a "yes" answer either. These examples indicated the preference for indirect refusals among the New Zealand participants. This is also new knowledge offered by this study, which is against a typical dichotomised view of Japanese (indirect) and English (direct) communication (Haugh, 2003).

7.2.2 Patterns and strategies of lying

The second research question of this study concerned the patterns and strategies of lying the participants used.

First, the Japanese participants tended to deliver detailed and specific information about their reasoning, often in convoluted ways. The Japanese excuses sometimes sounded diffuse because of their chronological order: excuses

tended to begin with marginal information. The participants seemed keen to depict the entire situation from the very beginning. The information was not necessarily relevant to the main point but was nevertheless included in the excuse.

On the other hand, causal connections in the reasons—providing one reason first and giving explanations for that next—were often seen in the excuses offered by the New Zealand participants. In the data, New Zealanders' excuses were based on logic and were simple without any irrelevant information.

Another notable finding in regard to communication patterns and strategies concerned strategies to turn down invitations. In addition to offering excuses to turn down an invitation, the Japanese decliners also suggested inviting somebody else. This was to ease the pressure on them to accept. This type of suggestion clearly delivered a strong message that the decliners really did not want to accept the invitation, which was consistent with their preferred types of excuse. This strategy was hardly used by the New Zealand participants.

I also noted the strategies that appeared in the inviters' utterances, which showed an interesting contrast between the Japanese and New Zealand ways to handle the given situation. The inviters' strategies indicated the Japanese participants' reluctance to engage in further negotiation (e.g., dismissal of the excuse) and the New Zealand participants' willingness to participate in negotiation (e.g., an offer of the amended plan). In terms of communication patterns, the data also showed a great contrast between the Japanese and the New Zealand data: the Japanese requesters sometimes responded in an evasive and unengaged way, a characteristic which was not observed in the New Zealand data.

7.2.3 Cultural influences in the choice of lies

This section addresses the third research question, which was about cultural influences on the participants' choice of lies. In this section, I provide conclusions about the lies of, first, the Japanese participants, and then the New Zealand participants.

7.2.3.1 Cultural influences seen in the Japanese data

The data analysis revealed that the Japanese participants chose certain types of lies primarily aiming to convey a clear "no" message which left no room for negotiation. These types often categorically denied the presumption of the requesters/inviters. The Japanese participants tended to offer this type of lie—forceful and detailed—across the three different settings. These findings implied that there was a tendency among the Japanese participants to deliver a clear "no" message. This interpretation in regard to the Japanese decliners' preference was supported by the behaviour of the Japanese requesters/inviters. The Japanese requesters/inviters did not often try to negotiate with their decliners.

The no-negotiation approach was interpreted as an action influenced by the value of harmony. The Japanese tried several different strategies to avoid negotiation, which would bring uncertainty and conflict. Uncertainty and conflict is taken as a potential threat to harmony which is one of the most important cultural values in Japanese culture (Jones, 1995; Wierzbicka, 1991b). The use of lies for maintaining harmony seemed to be the standard strategy of the Japanese participants in undesirable communicative situations such as refusals.

This study also contributed knowledge of how their cultural protocols or preference (e.g., in-group and out-group differentiation, culturally defined ways of application of Grice's maxims) influenced the ways of lying when lies were employed as a strategy to manage undesirable communicative situations.

With the theoretical frameworks related to the cultural protocols and preference (e.g., uncertainty avoidance) this study made sense of "inconsistent" or "bizarre" tendencies among the Japanese participants. For example, the Japanese participants used strong and direct expressions or provided a surfeit of possibly unnecessary information. All such expressions were acceptable in certain contexts among Japanese. The theoretical argument in this study with plentiful examples from the data offered an interpretation of how Japanese people used lies in conversation and achieved their communication goals.

7.2.3.2 Cultural influences seen in the New Zealand data

The New Zealand data also showed certain tendencies in terms of the types of lies and the ways of delivering them.

The participants often lied about a "prior arrangement". In English, it is customary to use this device to decline an invitation (Neustupny, 1982). This tendency was consistently observed even in the *request*-refusal conversations of the present study. This is possibly linked to the characteristics of individualistic cultures where individuals have a right to express their desire, opinion and so on and that any expression of desire—in this study it is a request/invitation—should receive respect. If one arrangement has been made before another, the first should take priority.

In accordance with the argument above, refusal situations become unavoidable. Since it is impossible for everyone in society to have the same desires or opinions, people regularly have to deal with differences among individuals. The differences could result in refusals. In other words, refusals become a natural consequence of participating in society and not necessarily something to be avoided. People readily accept this concept as a basis for their communication. These assumptions make sense of the choice of particular types of lies among the New Zealand participants.

A tendency towards low avoidance of uncertainty also seemed to influence the New Zealand participants' behaviour. The data did not indicate a particular desire to avoid uncertainty among the participants and this situation allowed them flexibility. Some New Zealand participants (but no Japanese) added an utterance such as "if you change your mind, please come along" at the end of the conversation. This type of utterance creates an uncertain future, but is acceptable if people are not afraid of uncertainty. The desirable response from the decliners in such a situation would be acceptance of the offer. This implies that the decliners would not have to send a firm "no" message.

In the New Zealand data, lies were generally delivered in a simple manner. To support their excuses the participants gave one reason followed by another in a logical sequence (rather than presenting diffuse information, as the Japanese participants did). Their explanations suggested that they endeavoured to make the

requesters/inviters understand their difficult situation. This accords with their preferred communication style. They tried to establish a rationalised interpersonal discourse rather than deliver a "no" message with a surfeit of information as many Japanese participants did.

These findings enabled me to conclude that the New Zealand participants delivered lies which were influenced by the value that everybody is different, and difference merits respect. Negotiation is necessary to deal with other people. The New Zealand participants' choice of lies appeared to be influenced by this notion.

The above argument does not, however, suggest that Japanese people believe that everybody is the same. It is simply that, since Japanese highly value harmony and are keen to prevent potential conflict, they do not necessarily regard differences among people positively. They thus use various communicative strategies to avoid conflict caused by different opinions among people. This inclination is not shared among New Zealanders: the New Zealand data did not appear to have a high avoidance tendency.

7.2.3.3 Summary of the choice of lies

The Japanese and New Zealand participants used different types of lies in a different manner because of different cultural influences.

The Japanese participants tried to manage refusal situations by using lies which sent a clear refusal message. For this purpose, the Japanese used direct expressions with detailed explanations. Such expressions were consistent with their preferred communication protocols (e.g., in-group and out-group differentiation).

The New Zealand participants lied about a prior engagement. This inclination to lie among the New Zealand participants seemed to be related to the nature of their individualistic culture. Their ways of delivering lies reflected their preferred communication style. Their culturally determined approach to each situation showed that the New Zealand participants appeared to be open for negotiation.

The conclusions on lies used by the Japanese and New Zealand participants can be summarised in terms of what refusals meant to them.

Refusal situations that I used as a context in which to collect data on lies for this study are undesirable situations for both Japanese and New Zealand people. Nobody likes to turn down a request or an invitation received from a friend. However, this type of situation had a different meaning for each group; that is, it was perceived as a threat to group harmony for Japanese. For New Zealand people, it means a natural consequence of communication owing to differences among people they have to deal with in society. As a result, the Japanese and New Zealand participants employed different strategies and lies for managing the situations in accordance with their cultural perception of the given contexts.

The important finding reported in the study was that Japanese and New Zealanders were mindful of different culturally-informed communication goals. Both Japanese and New Zealand participants aimed to achieve the same outcome—turning down a request/invitation in this study. However, they had different interpersonal communicative goals in mind (e.g., being polite; being direct to show closeness) to achieve the desired outcome. These differences elicited different types of lies, different ways of delivering lies, and different conversational patterns in refusals.

7.3 Implications of this study

The study has a number of implications—theoretical, methodological, and practical. I discuss these next.

7.3.1 Theoretical implications

In this study, I have demonstrated that the use of lies in conversation is a very complex issue requiring multiple theoretical frameworks and perspectives to understand and explain this complexity, particularly in cross-cultural studies.

This interpretation had four important aspects: (1) cultural values in communication, (2) politeness theory, (3) communication styles, and (4) perceptions of lies.

7.3.1.1 Cultural values

The data analysis of this study demonstrated that not only being evasive but also being direct and forceful could serve group harmony, which is one of the important Japanese cultural values.

Japanese society values harmony often at the cost of differences amongst individuals (Wierzbicka, 1991a). Having a different opinion from others may be taken personally in Japan and thus lead to disharmony. Therefore, Japanese people often make an effort to avoid conflict and use ambiguous expressions as strategies to maintain harmony (Kondo, 2007). Such conflict-avoidance strategies are perceived positively in Japanese society as "non-assertive, timid and tentative behaviour which could be regarded as a sign of sensitivity toward others as well as the overall social context" (Miyahara, 2000, p. 7). I presented examples from my data representing such cases.

However, this study also revealed that a strategy which looked aggressive on the denotative level could in its own way promote harmony in a group. The data analysis of this study demonstrated that being harmonious did not always mean being indirect. Strategies which seemed to oppose harmony also promoted it. While a flat refusal might sound impolite to non-Japanese, for Japanese, it is acceptable because of their culturally determined protocols. A flat refusal may be used among Japanese as a strategy to serve an important interpersonal communicative function—preserving harmony and saving face.

Another issue in regard to cultural values is about information sharing. Compared with New Zealanders, Japanese people prefer not to share their personal information (Barnlund, 1973; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1983; Kinjo, 1987; Miyahara, 2000; Nishimura, 2002). As mentioned before, previous studies reported that Japanese people use lies to prevent unwanted outcomes (e.g., Shibuya & Shibuya, 1993). These studies also made observations on information sharing, but have not provided empirical evidence. The present study enhances these earlier observations by providing plentiful conversational data which showed how certain types of lies could be a preventative strategy for unwanted information sharing.

The data indicated that the New Zealand participants behaved in accordance with cultural protocols which seemed to be related to the concept of individualism. A value within the concept of individualism is that people are different; therefore, each individual's goals and wishes should receive respect from others.

One of the ways to realise such a cultural value is to use indirect expressions. The use of such a strategy—declining a request/invitation indirectly—was found in the New Zealand data. As mentioned before, English communication is often depicted as direct and clear; indirectness in English has rarely been mentioned in extant literature from cross-cultural perspective. In this respect, this finding—the use of indirect refusals by New Zealanders—is significant.

7.3.1.2 Politeness theory

Refusals set for this study were face-threatening acts (FTAs), and people normally apply politeness strategies to lessen the possible consequences of such acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The Japanese and New Zealand participants employed different strategies for telling lies while being mindful of FTAs because they had to consider different aspects of interpersonal communication.

In regard to politeness issues, this study is particularly concerned with the strong and direct expressions used by the Japanese participants and the polite and encouraging approaches taken by the New Zealand participants.

The Japanese participants' use of strong expressions in lying indicates the application of the protocol of differentiation between in-group and out-group people. The usage of direct, strong or forceful expressions works as a positive politeness strategy among in-group people (Takiura, 2005). This type of expression clearly achieves this differentiation as such expressions cannot normally be applied to out-group people. Direct expression as an indication of the psychological closeness of a group has been remarked on by previous studies on Japanese communication (Kuramoto & Ohama, 2008). Kuramoto and Ohama suggested that the Japanese people might even be obliged to use such strong

expressions for expressing closeness. Otherwise, their friendship might be impaired.

By contrast, New Zealanders might be expected to be reasonably polite to others because New Zealanders do not tend to distinguish between in-group and out-group members. Thus, direct and face-threatening expressions are not normally employed. The use of such direct expressions as a politeness strategy could potentially fail in the New Zealand case because they would be likely to sound rude. Mentioning a "fake" prior arrangement would, therefore, be a polite and socially accepted way for New Zealanders to make a refusal.

The finding related to this politeness issue cannot be explained in previous frameworks such as those offered by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Ide (2006). Brown and Levinson listed an offer of an excuse as a politeness strategy, but did not determine exactly what types of excuses could be given. Ide mentioned that Japanese politeness was more or less a social obligation in any given situation, but again did not specify what types of utterances could be provided as an excuse.

As refusals are such common and important acts in daily life, they have been studied from perspectives other than politeness such as cross-cultural perspective (e.g., Beebe et al., 1990; Nelson et al., 2002). The importance of excuses has been remarked upon by these studies, but they did not look into the details of the utterances used as excuses for refusals. Therefore, they did not show exactly what we might say and why.

Aiming to fill the gap, this study focused on the detail of excuses and found that direct expressions in excuses for refusals worked as a positive politeness strategy; such expressions within a Japanese context were acceptable if used with the right people in appropriate situations, and functioned to show closeness to in-group people. This type of refusal was rarely observed in the New Zealand data. These findings revealed that the Japanese and New Zealand participants apply different perspectives to select suitable politeness strategies in these request/invitation-refusal situations.

Politeness is not a one-dimensional matter but needs to be considered from several different perspectives. The data of this study added depth of understanding of how people use multiple politeness strategies; those strategies sometimes

seemed to contradict each other at the denotative level but the data showed they did not.

7.3.1.3 Communication style

An analysis within the framework of interactional sociolinguistics provided the situational meaning of untruthful excuses, that is, how utterances of lies functioned as communication strategies in refusal conversations and how participants delivered them in conversation.

When people choose to lie, they need to conceal the fact that they are telling a lie; otherwise, the act of lying would fail (Searle, 1969). For lying to succeed, people are required to behave according to their communication protocol and pretend that everything is normal. The data indicated that when the participants lied, they adopted an appropriate communication style which included culturally acceptable communication topics.

Although cultural protocols and styles have already been remarked upon (Kinjo, 1987; Kondo, 2007; Szatrowski, 1993; Taira, 2008; M. Watanabe, 2001; S. Watanabe, 1993), these studies did not focus on the protocols involved in excuses used in request/invitation-refusal situations. This study, on the other hand, has focused on types of untruthful excuses and the ways of delivering them, and revealed how people exercise cultural protocols and how these protocols serve to achieve several communication goals in the use of lies to manage undesirable interpersonal situations.

A detailed, even convoluted, method of explanation among the Japanese participants functioned as an effective means of delivering a clear "no" message. By contrast, the preferred style of the New Zealand participants was a simpler, more analytic explanation. This served to establish polite and understandable dialogue among the participants.

These cultural differences were explained in terms of the culturally different application of Grice's (1975) cooperative principle. Previous studies have already mentioned such cultural differences (McCornack, 1992; Murai, 1998; Yeung et al., 1999). This study provided empirical examples and strengthened their findings. Furthermore, the different ways of applying the

cooperative principle between people from different cultures were presented. This addition by the present study clarified how these cultural tendencies were exercised in conversation.

7.3.1.4 Cultural perceptions of lies

As previous studies revealed, lies are perceived differently among different cultures (Coleman & Kay, 1981; Kim et al., 2008; Nishimura, 2005; Yoshimura, 1995). The data of this study demonstrated how such differences were possibly reflected in the *use* of lies in conversation.

I have shown through the extensive literature review that lies for the greater good are widely accepted in Japan but possibly less so in New Zealand. I then analysed the conversational data focusing on the falsehood in excuses and the related interactions. The findings from the analysis lend strong support to the cultural perception that lies seemed to be more or less expected in certain situations for certain purposes in Japan: an example of one such situation is turning down friends' requests and invitations.

Two important findings in regard to the cultural perception of lies were presented in this study. First, the Japanese participants tended to use forceful lies, which sometimes totally contradicted the "fact" given to them (e.g., they said that they did not need a microwave oven even though they believed it would be useful to have one). The New Zealand participants seemed to just adhere to their "prior arrangement" protocol.

Second, the Japanese requesters/inviters seemed to disregard the information offered in excuses. The excuses contained untruthful information but the requesters/inviters did not know that for sure. On the other hand, the New Zealand participants treated excuses as a genuine source of information.

These two findings are particularly important because these showed that liars as well as those lied to "cooperatively" followed a pattern of culturally determined behaviour. This leads to the implication that the Japanese implicitly understood that lies were likely to be used, whereas the New Zealand participants acted without this presumption.

The Japanese have a famous proverb regarding lies, which is "lying is expedient". This suggests that, at some level, a lie, even a total fabrication is not necessarily repulsive to the Japanese, especially if it serves a greater good. The data of this study supported this perception of lies. Another famous Japanese phrase, "*Hon'ne* and *Tatemae*" also reflects this aspect. This means that Japanese people are more likely to say whatever the situation demands (*Tatemae*) than to express their true feelings or thoughts (*Hon'ne*). Although it could be argued that the English equivalent is the "white lie", its use is not openly encouraged, as reflected in the saying, "honesty is the best policy".

This study has shown how the use of lies reflects these cultural perceptions related to lying in interpersonal communicative situations.

7.3.2 Methodological implications

This study employed a role-play technique for collecting conversational data. This method has not been used in previous studies of lies. Understanding the complexity in the use of lies was achievable only by analysing conversational data.

The study has shown that analysis of role-play conversational data was an appropriate and effective means to investigate certain features of communication, in particular, those which are not easy to examine through firsthand data. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the nature of lying prevented researchers from collecting firsthand data. An alternative data collection technique, the discourse completion test, could retrieve utterances of lies but not what followed from them. The role-play data collection technique provided interactions consisting of the liar's lies as well as the reactions from the recipients of lies.

Conversational data enabled me to examine the influence of cultural values not only in the use of lies but also in the reactions of the recipients of lies in conversation. That is, liars lied mindful of cultural values and the recipients of those lies behaved accordingly. This interpretation could only be derived from conversational data. Through the data, I found out what culturally underpinned the different types of strategies used to achieve the participants' communication goals. Some strategies seemed to contradict each other. However, since it was possible to examine together all the strategies that appeared in conversation, I was able to

interpret them using several theories and thus deliver a deeper and more plausible interpretation.

For example, I reported that the Japanese participants tended to express strong rejection in their lies to forestall further negotiation. Particular cultural preference was also seen in the utterances of the recipients of lies, in not attempting discussion or negotiation. Indeed, such tendencies were found in the data provided by participants on both sides. Therefore, I determined that, in general, those patterns were culturally preferred ones. This interpretation was achieved only by examining interactions from the perspectives of both decliners and requesters/inviters.

Through this study, I have demonstrated that role-play technique is one of the best possible approaches for collecting conversational data for studying lying in conversation.

7.3.3 Practical implications for intercultural communication

The study has clearly indicated that conflicts and misunderstandings can easily arise in intercultural meetings, such as a situation where a Japanese person declines an invitation offered by a New Zealander.

The possibility of miscommunication between Japanese and New Zealand people is also supported by previous studies which report that application of Grice's maxims differs between Japanese and English speaking people (Grice, 1975; McCornack, 1992; Murai, 2000; Yeung et al., 1999). For example, "unnecessarily" detailed explanations observed in the Japanese data could sound dubious and deceptive from an English viewpoint. The "simple manner" of New Zealanders' expression could appear from the Japanese point of view to be lacking in information. The data have clearly shown the Japanese participants' preference for detailed explanation. If information sufficient to a Japanese standard is not provided, Japanese people might think that information is being deliberately withheld.

These differences strongly suggest that intercultural miscommunication could occur. For example, if a Japanese person invites his or her New Zealand friend to a party, the New Zealander may mention an assignment, the submission

deadline of which is close to the day of the party. Then the Japanese person could possibly urge him or her to abandon the assignment and come to the party. The New Zealander could be upset by the perceived lack of respect in the Japanese response. If, on the other hand, the inviter is a New Zealander and the decliner is a Japanese person, the Japanese decliner might mention a prior engagement. The Japanese decliner is likely to provide a detailed excuse with such a surfeit of information that the New Zealand inviter would be overwhelmed. But the New Zealand inviter might encourage the Japanese decliner to attend the party, whilst still showing a respect for the prior engagement. For instance, the New Zealand inviter might possibly suggest coming over after the prior engagement. The Japanese decliner could be confused and feel s/he had been driven into a corner because this is not the sort of reaction that the Japanese decliner would expect from the inviter: the decliner intended only to send a firm "no" message. Further negotiation is only likely to compound the problems.

Another type of miscommunication could occur when lies are exposed because of culturally different protocols. When people tell a lie and the truth is revealed later, miscommunication is likely to occur between Japanese and New Zealanders. It is because, as I demonstrated in this study, certain types of motivation to lie are not necessarily shared between Japanese and New Zealanders. It is also because certain types of communication style may not work for people from different cultures.

For example, some Japanese participants in this study categorically denied the need to have a microwave oven in the request-refusal situation. If this type of lie was used in real life and the truth emerged later, a New Zealander would not understand why the Japanese person had lied in this way.

The Japanese person gave a statement which completely contradicted the fact that he or she actually wanted a microwave oven. Giving a strong reason for refusals would be convenient for the Japanese because of the desire to avoid negotiation. However, this aim would not be shared by New Zealand people. Moreover, the Japanese person would be likely to give detailed explanations of why he or she did not need a microwave oven. Again if all the facts in such an explanation were revealed to be untruthful, the New Zealand person might even be stunned because giving such detailed explanation is not the custom of New

Zealanders and moreover, in this case, all details would be considered to be the decliner's fabrication.

This study revealed that Japanese and New Zealanders would apply different cultural protocols in choosing the type of lie. Moreover, as previous studies claimed, lies are built on multiple motivations (Knapp & Comadena, 1979) and those motivations are not necessarily shared with people of different cultural backgrounds. Because of the difference, they would most likely misunderstand each other in terms of the ways of lying and the motivation behind lies. They might be puzzled and possibly even disgusted particularly when the recipient of a lie is a New Zealander—New Zealanders do not generally believe in lying for the greater good (Kim et al., 2008).

As previous intercultural communication studies have indicated (Davis & Henze, 1998; House, 2003; Tannen, 2007; Turner & Hiraga, 2003), all sorts of conflict and misunderstandings can occur among people from different cultural backgrounds. The researchers of communication should continue to reveal cultural differences and intercultural problems in order to promote awareness of these issues. In particular, because lying involves moral issues, any miscommunication arising from lying could deeply affect judgments about on people who use lying (Bok, 1978; Kameyama, 1997).

To acknowledge how and why people use lying is important for understanding each other. This has become even more important these days: people move around at the global level and our community is now culturally diverse. People in the 21st century have to face intercultural situations more often than ever (Tokui, 2011). In these respects, the present study has made a significant contribution.

For the practical application of the findings of this study, conversational exercises can assist people to understand cultural norms and protocols: for instance, watching real conversations or fictional drama and analysing relevant dialogues with communication experts. These exercises would be a good first approach towards an awareness of the protocols and the rationale underpinning communicative behaviour. Performance of role-plays in several different languages (e.g., the mother tongue as well as the learning languages) would be another good way to experience the protocols. Tanaka (2010) mentioned the

possibility of training in social skills for sojourners who are unfamiliar with interpersonal behavior in their target language. She defined "social skills" as "a psychological term which indicates techniques for the formation, maintenance and development of interpersonal relationships" (p. 75). Enacting conversations would help the awareness and/or acquisition of such techniques.

Needless to say, more studies are required in order to transfer the research outcomes into practical training for the realisation of fruitful interpersonal communication.

7.4 Limitations of this study

This study has limitations because of the nature of the research topic, the analyses I applied, and the lack of relevant previous studies.

Lies are an awkward research topic; it is not easy to collect data on lying because of its duplicitous nature. As mentioned before, I employed a role-play data collection technique for the study because of its nature. Although previous studies supported the quality of such data (e.g., Gass & Houck, 1999), the situations set for data collection are still artificial ones (Walkinshaw, 2007). I cannot completely rule out the possibility that the fact that the conversations were not in real-life situations affected the participants' behaviour.

Another limitation arising from the nature of the topic (and then from the data collection technique) is the narrowness of the context of the data. I had to select particular contexts for data collection and chose three specific refusal situations. Needless to say, all sorts of different refusals occur and this study did not cover all of them. Moreover, people lie in many situations other than refusals. As FitzGerald (2003) says, to make context-free generalisations requires examination "across a range of situational contexts or, perhaps, in quite different ones" (p. 206). The conclusions from and implications of this study are limited to the situations I set up for the study.

Another limitation became evident in the process of analysis of the data. The data analysis of the study required my "empirical knowledge". As described, "[this analytical approach] addresses itself to very specific phenomena that can be captured empirically—though in an indirect way—and it is conceptual because

these phenomena are situated in the world of concepts" (Verschueren, 1985, p. 14). The success of the analysis with this approach relies on the quality of the researchers' analytical skills. My qualification—as a native Japanese speaker living in New Zealand for several years—is useful. However, I am not a native English speaker in New Zealand and I might have delivered fewer profound insights on the New Zealand data.

Another possible limitation may have arisen from the analyses I carried out. I might have sacrificed unique examples of individuality in order to make some generalisations. Being Japanese does not necessarily mean that one always behaves in the "Japanese" way. Notwithstanding, I believe that I have managed to identify some culturally common patterns in each data set and make plausible conclusions from the findings.

Lastly, another limitation should be noted, that is the lack of studies on New Zealanders' communication. I was unable to refer to as many relevant studies of communication among New Zealand people as I would have wished. Because of the lack of relevant New Zealand studies, I had to refer to previous studies on American people (as well as a small number of English (U.K.) studies) to make a theoretical argument. American and New Zealand people are both native English speakers and data from American and New Zealand respondents showed similar tendencies (Hofstede, 2001). However, the fact that Americans and New Zealanders share a language does not guarantee that they will behave in a similar way in refusal situations. This should be addressed in future research.

7.5 Further research

Further research should be carried out with different types of participants and in different types of situations.

The present study used data collected from pairs of friends. The findings from the data would possibly be different if the data were collected from different types of pairs, for example, pairs of acquaintances (not friends) or pairs comprising a student and a teacher. In these cases, people might apply different types of politeness strategies to manage undesirable situations. For example, Walkinshaw (2009), who examined Japanese students' communication, reported

that power distance between a speaker and a hearer strongly influenced the speaker's behaviour in terms of the use of politeness strategies, particularly when Japanese students spoke to their teachers. An analysis based on different types of participants would be helpful to expand and deepen understanding of how cultural protocols are applied.

To extend this work, it would also be useful to obtain data from an intercultural setting, involving direct dialogue between, for example, Japanese and New Zealand people. This study was a cross-cultural study and revealed certain characteristics of Japanese communication and New Zealand communication. The differences observed between the data sets, as mentioned above, indicated possible interpersonal miscommunication between people with different cultural backgrounds; therefore, determining such miscommunication in an intercultural setting would be a natural next step.

Lastly, lies are used in all kinds of communicative situations, not just refusals. Lies used in different contexts should be examined in order to capture a more generalised picture of the use of lies.

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Appendix A: Poster to call for participants

WANTED!
Research Participants

Would you mind role-playing based on some scenarios?

Research Topic: How to handle an awkward situation

Our research group is interested in conversational patterns under certain circumstances – awkward situations. We are now conducting a research project that each uses a small role-play to look at these. We need research participants to role-play a few simple scenarios, none of which will be distressing, but ones in which you might have to lie or pretend.

We set up several 'awkward' situations such as declining your friend's invite and so on here, and now would like to see how people would behave in these situations. We plan to ask New Zealanders and Japanese people to help us to find it out. Hopefully the results will enable us to understand our communication mechanisms better and bring better communication between these two nations.

If you would like to take part, please do the following;

❖ Find a partner. Each session needs two people (because you will be asked to make conversations), who are friends with each other (do not have to be real close).
❖ E mail me (fumiko@waikato.ac.nz) for more information, and to arrange a meeting if you would agree to join the survey.
❖ Come to K3.10 on the meeting time.

◆◆◆

This survey will roughly take a half hour. I regret I cannot pay you for this participation, but we will present you with a book voucher in appreciation. Please do not hesitate to contact us just for more information!

Fumiko Nishimura   **Bernard Guerin**
East Asian Studies/PhD student   Associate Professor in Psychology

Appendix B: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Research project: <u>How to handle an awkward situation</u>

Name of researcher: <u>Fumiko Nishimura</u>

Name of supervisor (if applicable): <u>Bernard Guerin</u>

I have received an information sheet about this research project or the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participatiuon with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participante in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee.

Participant's Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Questionnaire for participant's background information

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill in the blanks.

1. Name: _____   2. Age: _____   3. Sex: Male   Female

<small>It is okay not to write your name here if you do not want to.</small>   <small>Please circle the one you are</small>

4. Your first language: _____   5. Year and Major: _____

6. Please describe what kind of friends you are and do not write just "friend". Please write for example;

     1. My very best friend

     2. A friend I occasionally get together with to have lunch, a cup of coffee and so forth

     3. A classmate taking the same courses

     4. A friend from high school who I have known for a long time