

Interpersonal Relationships in Japanese and Australian Women's Magazines: A Case Study

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1. Introduction

Women's magazines have been a focus of research in various disciplines, and such research has made use of different methodologies as well as taking diverse approaches. This paper analyzes texts selected from a Japanese women's magazine *With* and its Australian equivalent *Cleo* by using Systemic Functional Linguistics as a core methodology. The texts were chosen from topic areas common in both magazines such as love relationships, finance and diet/exercises, and all take forms of advice giving. The lexico-grammatical analysis of the texts focused on investigation of the ways these texts construct the relationship between the writer and the reader, which has revealed interesting features in the Japanese texts that did not appear in the English texts.

2. Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theorizes language as a tri-stratal semiotic system, the use of which can be illustrated by describing the choices made from sets of oppositional options at its discourse-semantic, lexico-grammatical and phonological/graphological levels. Since language is a social system, its use is a process that can only be understood in relation to the wider socio-cultural context in which it takes place.

There are two main variables of context that influence every text. Firstly, language use occurs within a context of culture, which determines which genres are permissible within a given society. Secondly, it is dependent on the context of situation, also known as register, comprising three critical contextual variables which both determine and are influenced by the meanings realized in texts. Field, Tenor and Mode¹ comprise the register of a text, and each register variable correlates with a metafunction of a language.

This paper focuses on the text and its interpersonal meaning which correlates to Tenor, due to its interest in linguistic construction of relationships between the writer and reader.

2.1. Tenor

Tenor refers to "the negotiation of social relationships among participants" (Martin 1992: 523). It is the register variable most directly relevant to the present study because a main focus

¹ Following the convention of SFL, functional labels are capitalized in this paper.

of this paper is the comparison of the ways in which writer-reader relations construct female identity in the texts of a Japanese women's magazine and an Australian equivalent. In order to construct a relationship with the reader, the writer needs to construct the reader as a particular kind of person. The construction is concerned with the social relations between interactants, and is reflected by the use of interpersonal metafunction in a text.

Tenor can be characterised by using the three-dimensional model proposed by Poynton (1985). The three dimensions of Tenor are; power: contact: and affective involvement. Each dimension is described below.

2.1.1 Power

There are several parameters that determine power. The first is the degree of equality and inequality in the power relation between the participants. If the relation is one of inequality, it can be further defined as one characterised by dominance or deference. At the same time, the nature of power relations may be affected by other parameters such as: authority, status, and expertise. Authority can be the basis of an unequal power relationship such as the one between employee and the employer. Status, in turn, refers to socio-economic variables such as wealth, occupation, education, and socially desired experiences (e.g. overseas travel). Expertise refers to a person's level of knowledge and/or skills in a particular area.

2.1.2. Contact

Contact refers to the amount of distance between participants, and encompasses the largest number of choices to be made in texts in terms of interpersonal meaning. These are: frequency and extent. Frequency refers to how often the participants interact, and the choices vary from seldom to daily. Extent refers to the length of the relationship. These two parameters need to be textually created by the writer because in the material sense, the writer-reader relationship is largely imagined.

2.1.3. Affective Involvement

Affective involvement refers to the attitude or emotion expressed by the writer towards the addressee or the field of the text. Its presence is, unlike the other two dimensions of tenor, not compulsory because it is possible for a text to present an emotionally neutral relationship between writer and reader. Affective involvement can be described in terms of a continuum with its two ends being high (i.e. strong affective involvement) and low (i.e. weak affective involvement). Either pole can be positive (e.g. between lovers) or negative (e.g. between divorcees).

The three dimensions of tenor discussed above can be illustrated by three continua because of their gradable nature (see Figure 1).

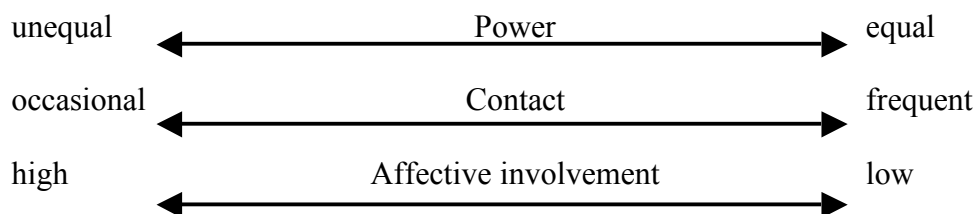


Figure 1. Continua of the three dimensions of Tenor (based on Poynton 1985, modified following Eggins 1994)

2.2 Interpersonal meaning

Interpersonal meaning is a representation of “the speaker’s meaning potential as an intruder” (Halliday 1978: 112). In essence, the interpersonal function governs the interaction and participation of writer and reader, and thus semiotically construes a relationship between them. Among the three meanings simultaneously present in all texts – ideational, textual and interpersonal - the present paper focuses on the interpersonal meaning as it investigates how and what kinds of the writer-reader relationship are presented in the selected texts from the magazines in question. Examining the writer’s position will throw some light on the subject construction of the ‘ideal reader’.

2.3 Mood and Modality

Interpersonal meaning is expressed by particular linguistic resources such as the systems of MOOD and modality, among others. Example sentences used in the following sections for illustrative purposes were taken from the texts selected for analysis.

2.3.1. Mood

The Mood element of a clause defines the MOOD option. There are three MOOD options: **declarative**, **interrogative** and **imperative**.²

In Japanese, the basic MOOD options and speech functions are the same as in English³. However, unlike that of English which is expressed at the beginning of the clause and contains the Subject and Finite of the clause, the Japanese clause structure is generally the same regardless of the MOOD type. The Mood element of a clause contains a Predicator and a Negotiatory marker but not a Subject and is typically realized at the end of the clause. In English, only the verbal group can function as a Predicator, whereas in Japanese a verbal, adjectival or nominal group can also function as the Predicator. The Predicator expresses a number of elements such as Polarity (positive/negative), Politeness (formal/informal), Honorification⁴, Modal Operators (e.g. elements expressing the equivalent meanings of the English *might*, *should* and *could*) and tense (past/non-past). Negotiatory markers realize the systems of negotiation such as question (e.g. *ka*, *no*), confirmation (e.g. *ne*) and assertion (e.g.

² Acknowledging the argument of Halliday (1994) and Eggins (1994), exclamative is not treated as the fourth MOOD type in this thesis.

³ The suggestive form of the imperative (and of the interrogative, for that matter) can be classified as the fourth MOOD type, oblique (Fukui, unpublished paper b). However, modifying the model proposed by Teruya (2004), this thesis follows the same classification as the English system of classifying speech functions.

⁴ Not found in the data analyzed for this thesis.

yo). Negotiatory markers are generally optional, although in interrogative MOOD types, especially in written texts, they are obligatory.⁵ Declarative clauses can also be elliptical, and there are two types; the omission of a Predicator and of a copula Predicator .

The interrogative MOOD type, like declaratives, is realized by a verbal, adjectival and nominal Predicator, and adding the Negotiatory marker *ka* to a declarative clause turns it into a polar interrogative clause. A further addition of a Wh-word equivalent makes the polar interrogative into a Wh-interrogative.

Imperatives are only realized by a verbal group functioning as the Predicator. The suspensive form (1) ends with *te* and compared to ‘imperative’ and ‘prohibitive’ forms⁶, it makes the imperative sound considerably softer and somewhat in between a command and a request. In English, such a distinction in the nature of the speech function does not exist in the realization of imperatives per se, but occurs by other means such as the addition of ‘please’ to the imperative or by encoding a suggestion as a toned down command. The suggestive form (2) can be similar in meaning to the ‘let’s-imperative’ in English, but due to the absence of the Subject, the suggestive form conveys less of a sense of ‘us’. In this way these two forms of the imperative are able to make a command sound much softer by conveying a sense of ‘inviting/encouraging to do things’.

(1) Imperative realized by a suspensive form

<i>Jibun-ni atta hoken-wo</i>	<i>sagashite!</i>
Oneself-NI suitable insurance-WO	look for-suspensive form
	Predicator (verbal)
	Mood
‘Look for the insurance that is suitable for you!’	

(2) Imperative realized by a Suggestive form

<i>Surimuna onna-ni</i>	<i>narou!</i>
Slim woman-NI	become-volitional-informal
	Predicator (verbal)
	Mood
‘Let’s become a slim woman!/ Become a slim woman!’	

As can be seen from (1) and (2), both forms are used to realize Commands, but the difference between the two forms lies in whether the action commanded includes the speaker/writer. The suspensive form clearly excludes the speaker/writer so that, in the case above, it is only the addressee who is meant to look for an insurance package. The suggestive form, in contrast, can be interpreted both as including and excluding the speaker/writer, depending on the

⁵ In informal spoken texts, rising intonation can substitute a Negotiatory marker.

⁶ The imperative form can be unmarked or marked with politeness and is the most ‘straight forward’ way of issuing a command. The prohibitive form occurs with unmarked politeness, and issues the most straightforward command prohibiting certain actions (as in ‘Don’t’ in English). Both these forms only realize Commands. These forms of imperative were not found in the data analyzed for this thesis. The reason for their absence may be related to the fact that the context in which they can be used is limited; they are only used by superiors to inferiors and convey a strong sense of power imbalance.

context. In fact, as is the case in (1), it is often ambiguous whether the command issued is only directed to the addressee or, as in ‘let’s’ in English, also includes the speaker/writer. The ambiguity of the suggestive form contrasts with the suspensive form, and it may function to soften the command even further by alluding to the possibility that obeying the command is a joint activity including the speaker/writer and listener/reader.

Unlike English, the Japanese language can have elliptical imperatives with ellipsed Finite and Predicator. In such a case, it is not possible to determine the form of the imperative. Being elliptical, this form of the imperative seems to have the effect of softening the command as the two forms of the imperative do. As the softening effect is often great, it is common for the elliptical imperative to also realize a Suggestion unlike the other two forms, which only realize a Command.

2.3.1.1. MOOD and Grammatical Metaphor

As in English, there are two ways of realizing meaning in Japanese: congruent and incongruent. All the examples above from the two languages are congruent realizations of speech functions, which means that a Statement is realized by a declarative, a Question by an interrogative and a Command by an imperative. Conversely, a speech function is incongruently realized when MOOD types other than the usual are used. For instance, Commands and Suggestions can be realized by declaratives as follows:

Command: *You must learn how to avoid him.*

Suggestion: *Psychologist Judith Kennedy suggests approaching the small problems in a different way and modifying how you react to them.*

Incongruent realizations of interpersonal meaning are considered examples of what Halliday calls ‘**interpersonal grammatical metaphor**’. Grammatical metaphor is a “variation in the expression of a given meaning” which is “metaphorical by reference to something else” (Halliday 1994: 342). An incongruent realization is less straightforward and therefore is generally more marked and often signifies a deliberate decision on the writer’s side. It is worth noting that since the difference between Commands and Suggestions is a matter of degree of the strength of a proposal made, the indirectness of incongruent realization often contributes to making the proposals more like Suggestions, rather than Commands. As will become clear in the following section, Suggestions are frequently found in *With*.

2.3.2. Modality

In addition to MOOD, interpersonal meaning is also realized by **modality**, a system which enables the text producer to express more ambiguous attitudes or opinions than “it is so” or “it isn’t so” (Halliday 1994: 88-89). This is achieved through representing reality in terms of degrees of **modalisation**, which is associated with propositions and consists of **probability** and **usuality**, and of **modulation**, which is associated with proposals and consists of **obligation and readiness** (the latter can be subcategorized as **inclination** and **ability**⁷).

⁷ In this study, the sub-category of readiness ability was analyzed, not inclination. The reason why ability is specifically focused on is not only that ability is encoded in the texts more often than inclination but also that encoding ability contributes to constructing the reader as insecure and approval-seeking. These attributes are

Modality can be encoded not only by a Modal Operator in the Finite (e.g. may, must, should, would) in which case the **orientation** is **subjective**, but also in Modal Adjuncts (e.g. maybe, definitely, usually) in which case the orientation is **objective**. Modality is always expressed with a degree called **value**, which can roughly be determined as: **high**, **median**, or **low**.

2.3.2.1. Modality and Grammatical Metaphor

The examples of lexico-grammatical expressions of modality have been given with the assumption that modality is realized congruently. However, as discussed earlier, there are also incongruent ways to encode meanings of modality. When modality is expressed with grammatical metaphor, it comes in a different clause organisation and its orientation becomes **explicit** as opposed to the orientation of congruent realization which is **implicit**. For example, if a straightforward instance of probability *Maybe she can change him* is expressed incongruently/metaphorically, the result will be a grammatical metaphor of modality whereby the meaning is encoded in a clause complex as in *I think (that) she can change him* or *It is probable (that) she can change him*. The first instance is called **explicitly subjective** because the probability is expressed explicitly as ‘my subjective opinion (i.e. I think)’. The second instance is called **explicitly objective** for the probability is expressed as an objective ‘truth’ in an explicit way (i.e. it is probable). Modality of the modulation type can also be expressed incongruently through adjectives or nouns. An example of this would be the congruent realization of readiness *He willingly washed the dishes* being expressed metaphorically as in *He had the desire to wash the dishes* or *He was willing to wash the dishes*. These types of ‘non-standard’ (i.e. not in a form such as *it is probable*) are called ‘backgrounded grammatical metaphor’ in this paper.

2.3.2.2. Backgrounded Grammatical Metaphor

Explicitly objective forms are, as mentioned before, metaphoric expressions of modality. At the same time, however, they can be themselves realized metaphorically in a backgrounded way. For example, the standard explicitly objective form *It is...that...* as in *It is usual that Australian wine has 13 to 14 percent of alcohol*, can also be realized through nominalization as in *Want something with less alcohol than the usual 13 to 14 percent in Australian wine?* (See Martin 1992: 412-413 for an outline of more grammatical resources for realizing modality). The expression of usuality is hidden away from the surface, thus it is more backgrounded. This is also an instance where experiential and interpersonal meanings can clearly be seen to influence each other; nominalizations, in Halliday’s terms, are examples of ‘experiential grammatical metaphor’ due to the fact that a noun is used to express the meaning of a process type, a meaning congruently expressed through using a verb.⁸

The main difference between the Japanese and English modality is that explicitly objective orientation ‘*It is probable...etc.*’ does not seem to be expressed in Japanese. Instead, what is often observed is the equivalent of what is called backgrounded grammatical metaphor of modality as shown in the following two examples below.

stereotypically associated with women and it is therefore important to investigate if, and how these stereotypes are perpetuated by analyzing ability.

⁸ This example also involves a presupposition that 13 to 14 percent of alcohol containment in Australian wine is indeed usual.

(3) Modality with backgrounded metaphorical expression

<i>Jitsu-wa</i>	<i>yaserutame-niwa</i>	<i>abura-ga</i>	<i>hitsuyou (noun)+desu</i>
In fact	to lose weight - NI WA	oil-GA	<u>necessity</u> +nonpast-pos-

polite

Predicator (Nominal)
Modality

‘In fact oil is a necessity to weight loss’

(3) Modality with backgrounded explicitly objective orientation

<i>Dansei-niwa</i>	<i>rikaidekinaikoto-ga</i>	<i>ooi (adj) +ndesu</i>
Man-NIWA	things that cannot be understood-GA	<u>many</u> -pos-semiformal-nonpast

Predicator (Adjectival)
Mood

‘There are many things men can’t understand’

While the principles of SFL are applicable to any language since as a theory of language SFL focuses on the fundamental functions of language, each language has developed different resources for fulfilling these functions (Halliday 1994). Japanese SFL is still in its infancy, and the interpersonal metafunction in Japanese has been explored even less than the ideational and textual metafunctions.⁹ Thus, research into this area has been a great challenge for the present study.

3. Findings of With Tenor Analysis

In this section, the texts in *With* will be examined in relation to the MOOD types, modality, and other features such as Politeness markers and Negotiatory markers. Before discussing the findings of the lexico-grammatical analysis, however, the process of text selection needs to be mentioned.

Three issues from *With* and *Cleo* were selected: the August to October issues of *Cleo* and the September to November issues of *With*, all published in 2001. Texts were selected from topic areas of love relationships, finance and diet/exercises in each issue. While articles in many other common fields such as fashion and makeup were dominated with visual images and separate units of writing with a couple of clauses to explain each photo, both magazines had regular articles in the selected three fields. This provided longer and more conventionally organised texts for linguistics analysis.

⁹Arguably, Australia is at the frontier of SFL and the case of the Japanese version is not an exception. The work which is often referred to as the most extensive study on SFL, especially in the area of the ideational meaning, was undertaken by Kazuhiro Teruya. On the textual organisation of the clause in relation to the rhetorical organisation of text, see Thomson 1998.

3.1 MOOD Analysis

This section focuses on the distribution of MOOD types and their speech functions in the *With* texts. Firstly, the overall distribution of MOOD types is introduced, followed by discussions on the occurrence of each type and its speech functions.

The following discussion covers the overall proportion of each MOOD type across the examined *With* texts with a total of 283 clauses analyzed, followed by more detailed comments on each type and the speech functions it realizes.

Table 1. Proportion of MOOD types in *With*

	Declarative		Imperative		Interrogative	
	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%
Total (283)	(255)	90.1	(11)	3.9	(17)	6

The declarative is the most dominant MOOD type in *With* texts (90.1%) compared to the interrogative (6%) and the imperative (only 3.9%). Very frequent use of the declarative as the default MOOD type in *With* suggests that its texts are rather ‘static’ and monotonous because, when congruently realized, declaratives are used to provide information rather than actively engage with the reader by setting up an imagined dialogue. The information flow is designed to be one-way in this sense.

3.1.1. Declarative

Table 2. Declarative MOOD and its speech functions in *With*

	Statement		Command		Suggestion		Question	
	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%
Total (256)	(214)	83.6	(10)	3.9	(29)	11.3	(3)	1.2

Most declarative clauses congruently realize Statements (83.6%). The rest (16.4%) is incongruently used declaratives. The most popular speech function incongruently realized by the declarative is Suggestion, which is encoded in more than one in ten cases of declarative use (11.3%). Commands are realized by declarative clauses less than Suggestions (3.9%).

With’s preference for incongruently realized Suggestions and Commands implies the writer’s avoidance of directness. The congruent realization of Commands is common in language employed either by people in a close and informal situation or by people with more power when addressing those with less power. Then, the *With* writer’s preference for incongruently realized Commands may be evidence of a more polite and thus distant social relationship between writer and reader. It is also possible to interpret the preference as evidence of the *With* writer’s lack of authority. However, this interpretation is in contradiction to other analyses (presented in following sections) evidencing that the *With* texts do indeed construct the writer as an authority.

The relatively large number of Suggestions encoded in the texts indicates the *With* writer's choice to attenuate the impact of Commands by turning them into Suggestions, which again implies wider social distance from the reader. Preference of the *With* writer to suggest, rather than to directly tell, seems to be typical of Japanese magazines (Inoue 1989: 207).

In addition, the frequent display of preference for Suggestion over Command may be read, somewhat paradoxically at first glance, as a signal of the writer's greater authority. As van Dijk (1997a: 18-19) argues, powerful people often only need to 'ask' or 'suggest' in order to get others to do certain things. In other words, there is no need to issue commands when the writer has more authority and therefore power over the reader.

A Question is another type of speech function incongruently realized by declarative. There are three such cases (1.2%) found in all the texts, and they all voice questions that are constructed as though asked by the reader. The interesting point is that all these 'reader's' questions are framed as 'wonder'. The example clause is presented below:

(4) Question incongruently realized by declarative

Demo, tabetara yappari futotteshimaunjyanaikashira...

'But, I wonder if I eat, after all I will get fat ...'

These questions are framed as 'wonderings' and serve to construct the reader as having less knowledge of the topic under discussion and therefore less power than the writer. The fact that the reader is constructed as avoiding congruently realized Questions highlights the greater authority of the writer who cannot be asked questions directly. Besides the different degrees of authority, such an indirect way of asking questions also realizes wider social distance between the writer and reader. Thus, in *With* questions voiced as though coming from the reader function to construe the writer-reader relationship as more distant and unequal in power.

Also observed in all *With* texts are elliptical declaratives of both types – copula and non copula Predicate ellipsis. In both cases, the use of ellipsis at times gives the impression of a more casual tenor, especially when the ellipsed part is a non-copula Predicate. Unlike in English, however, the presence of ellipsis does not automatically signify casualness in Japanese because silence or incompleteness of clauses has a different cultural connotation. Determining the function of ellipsis as encoding casualness and informality depends on the context, but more systematic research focusing on Japanese ellipsis is needed to determine its functions.

3.1.2 Imperative

As mentioned briefly above, *With* texts use the imperative least often of all three MOOD types. When used, imperative clauses all realize Commands. All the relevant instances take the form of either the suggestive or the suspense form of the imperative, both of which, as explained previously, serve to softly encourage the reader to take a certain action rather than directly tell her what to do.

A closer investigation reveals that the suggestive form of the imperative occurs about 40% of the time the imperative MOOD is used. The suspense form of the imperative is even more

widely used (about half of the imperative take this form) and it serves to encode advice presented as milder than a Command and more straightforward than a Request. By ‘asking’ the reader to do certain things, the writer is simultaneously displaying, both a greater social distance from the reader and higher expertise-based power.

Measures are taken to encode the ‘conversational’ sense of casualness and they include the use of exclamation marks. Another such strategy is the use of ellipsis. The elliptical imperative helps reinforce the casual and friendly feel created by other means and softens the impact of Commands.

3.1.3. Interrogative

Table 3. Interrogative MOOD and its speech functions in *With*

	Question		Statement	
	(n)	%	(n)	%
Total (17)	(16)	94.1	(1)	5.9

Interrogative clauses often function to involve the reader in the text by setting up a dialogue in which the reader is constructed as taking part. The question can be voiced as both demanding information from the reader (e.g. *Anata wa kurejittokaado wo nanmai motteimasuka?* ‘How many credit cards do you have?’) or the reader’s addressing a question to the writer. For example, the question *Daiichi, seikaku wa kaerarerumononano...?* ‘Can personal traits be changed in the first place ...?’ brings the immediate ‘response’ of the editorial team *Sokode, With henshuubudewa, dokushaya danseino koewo motoni, ‘deai’ to seikakuno kankeiwo saguttemimashita* ‘So, (we) at With editorial investigated the correlation between ‘encounters’ and personal traits based on the voices of the readers and men’. A question such as the one reproduced in the previous clause serves not only to justify the need for giving more information in the form of a discussion on a given problem and its possible solutions, but also to open an exchange of information in the form of a dialogue, thus aiding the text in establishing a two-way, conversational feel.

In *With*, there is only one instance of an interrogative incongruently realizing a Statement. The interrogative clause represents an expert’s opinion disguised as a rhetorical question:

(5) An expert’s opinion as a rhetorical question

Shiawasena renaitoiunowa, jibunno hontouno sugatawo misetekurete, jibundemo kizukanakatta jibunno miryokuni kizukasetekureruyouna hitoto deai, otagaini rikaishiaerukoto dewanaideshouka.

‘Doesn’t a ‘happy love relationship’ mean that meeting a person who shows his true self and makes you realize the charm that you didn’t know you had, and that you can understand one another?’

The avoidance of straightforwardly realizing this Statement through a declarative indicates the expert’s unwillingness to impose her opinion on the reader, as this would be a clear sign of the expert’s authority over her. Simultaneously, however, it also functions to reduce the expert’s

authority by using a rhetorical question which has the effect of ‘suggesting’ (but not imposing) a certain world view. In line with the general trend of lexico-grammatical choices in *With* then, the function of this question is more plausibly interpreted as that of marking apparently ‘reducing’ distance between the expert (and/or the writer who is quoting her) and the reader.

The source of question in some interrogative clauses is ambiguous. Its effect seems to generalize certain concerns as ‘feminine women’s issues’ and thus establish the legitimacy of the topic under discussion as well as some sense of solidarity between writer and reader.

The proportion of elliptical interrogative clauses is extremely high in the analyzed *With* texts. The difficulty of determining the function of elliptical clauses has already been discussed. What is clear is that asking a question involves the reader more closely with the text by positioning her as having to reply; it is designed to evoke interest in what is to follow.

As a final point in the discussion of MOOD types, let us consider how and to what effect MOOD types are combined in *With*. Certain combinations of MOOD types create a conversation-like flow, which is designed to attract the reader’s attention. For example, Questions are often placed at the beginning of articles or paragraphs in order to draw the reader into the texts. Such Questions are answered either by a directly following writer’s ‘response’ or by the information provided later in the article. The information given in response to the Question typically leads to imperative clauses at the end of a section with an exclamation mark. Hence, the flow of the texts is constructed to take the reader into a journey the endpoint of which is the handing down of behavioural instructions on a cheerful note.

3.2. Modality Analysis

As previously stated, modality analysis focuses on three factors: type, value and orientation. The results from the analysis of each modality variable in *With* are discussed below.

3.2.1. Modality Type

Table 4. Proportion of modality types in *With*

	Modalisation				Modulation			
	Probability		Usuality		Obligation		Ability	
	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%
Total (93)	(25)	26.9	(22)	23.7	(17)	18.3	(29)	31.2

Table 4 indicates that all four types of modality in the *With* texts are used with relatively equal frequency. Within such similar proportions of the four types, the most commonly used is ability (31.2%). This suggests that the writer is more concerned about assessing what is and is not possible and who has what kind of ability. The lack of degrees in the expression of ability is likely to contribute to the relative non-negotiability of the writer’s judgement. The encoding of ability often construes the reader as uncertain in her abilities. The impact of such negative attitudes remains strong because, despite the sense of encouragement superficially expressed through the positive assessment of the reader’s abilities, the writer relies on the lack of confidence in the reader for the advice given to be deemed necessary. Therefore, however

paradoxical in terms of the aim of giving advice, which is supposed to make women feel better, it can be said that advice giving texts construct the reader as being in a perpetual state of wanting, needing and lacking.

The second most commonly occurring modality is probability. When expressed with lesser degrees, probability can encode a sense of uncertainty thus working for the writer's necessity to keep the advice more or less probabilistic to suit the different readers of whom the magazine's audience is comprised. The writer needs to avoid giving advice with absolute certainty as the audience is hardly a homogenous group, despite the fact that the magazines often imply that it is.

The third commonly occurring modality type in *With* is usuality, constituting 23.7% of all modality expressions. Expressions of usuality with lower values suggest that the advice given is intended to be general and allow the writer to avoid bearing total responsibility for giving the 'wrong' advice to certain people. At the same time, as discussed earlier, the use of usuality of any value can display the writer's expertise manifested in the ability to judge how often certain things happen. The higher the writer's expertise, the higher the value of advice given in an article.

Another function of expressing probability is to soften the effect of the authoritative tone of the advice conveyed in the frequent use of modulation. *With* encodes modulation (obligation: 18.3% and ability: 31.2%) about half the time, as seen in Table 4 above. Expression of ability occurs in an 'either-or' fashion (i.e. what you can or cannot do). Expression of obligation, the third most frequent modality type, is about what you should and should not do. The authoritative nature of advice is exposed in a more obvious manner when expressing modulation, so encoding probability in the same text helps tone down the definite and sometimes harsh impression given as it lessens, at least to a certain extent, the power inequality between the writer and the reader.

The proportion of expressions of usuality, obligation and ability in *With* is quite high (their total use is 73.2%). This implies that the writer in *With* displays authority with less reservation but by the same token, advice in *With* is expressed with more certainty. This effect is reinforced also through the relatively low use of modality in the *With* texts (found in only 29.5% of all clauses analyzed). The less modality is encoded, the more 'factual' the text appears¹⁰, indicating that *With* treats the issues discussed as something less negotiable and the authority of the writer as less challengeable.

3.2.2 Value

Among the three degrees of value, modality use in *With* manifests a preference for the Median degree (53.1% of all modality expressions). This indicates the writer's desire to position themselves as neither too assertive nor too committed in relation to the issues discussed. This interpretation is confirmed by the low proportion of Low value modality (18.8%). It was discussed earlier that the Low value points to an uncommitted attitude towards the modality expressed, therefore, by featuring high-value modality (28.1% of all modality expressions) or

¹⁰ The factuality of the text in this sense is *not* related to how true or false the propositions made in the text are (Eggins 1994: 191). But rather, it is a use of the grammar to present the information 'as if' it is factual.

no modality at all (70.5% of all clauses), the *With* texts appear more engaged with the reader and more confident in their propositions.

The authoritative attitude of the writer in *With* may be explained by the fact that in Japanese culture, writers and experts, especially those in the academic or more technical fields, have a highly regarded social status, similar to that of teachers in Japan (Lee *et. al.* 1998: 164, DeCoker 1998: 75-74).¹¹

3.2.3 Orientation

Let us now consider the orientation of modality encoded in the *With* texts.

Table 5. Proportion of modality orientation in *With*

	Sub. Exp.		Sub. Imp.		Obj. Imp.		Obj. Exp.	
	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%
Total (91)	(8)	8.8	(47)	51.6	(14)	15.4	(22)	24.2

Table 5 clearly shows that the *With* writer prefers to use implicit modality. Of the two kinds of implicit realization, the subjective type is preferred. The subjective implicit form is used at the rate of 54.4%, which allows the writer to express a judgement as subjective in slightly more than half the total instances of modality use.

The metaphorical expression of the implicitly subjective form is the explicitly subjective form, which in *With* characterises only 8.8% of all modality expressions. The writer use it in the form of ‘I think’, expressing median probability, thus, drawing attention to the fact that the judgement about the probability of the proposition comes from the experts themselves.

Instances of explicitly objective modality are relatively frequent in *With* (21.4%). As previously discussed, the use of explicitly objective modality is motivated by the writer’s preference for validating their judgement by making it sound as if the judgement is not their own but ‘objective’. The *With* writer’s use of this type of modality suggests that they feel a need to refer to an external authority to support their own judgements.

Except for two instances, all objective explicit modality used is metaphorically realized. This technique helps the writer background modality by expressing it as ideational ‘facts through employing nominalization (e.g. necessity). Backgrounded modality is harder to detect, which renders the judgement it imparts more difficult to challenge. The use of nominalization (or ‘experiential grammatical metaphor’ in SFG terms) in backgrounded grammatical metaphor also makes the text more ‘monologic’ because the reader is set up as a passive receiver of the ‘information’ given (Martin 1995a: 59-60).

¹¹ People in many of these positions are often called *sensei* (teacher) even when they are not ‘teachers’.

3.3 Lexis and Other Features with Interpersonal Meaning Potential

This section discusses language features of *With* other than MOOD and modality in order to provide additional supporting evidence for the previously presented interpretations about the writer-reader relationship constructed in this magazine.

3.3.1. Politeness Markers

In Japanese, the verb ending is either unmarked or marked for Politeness. The decision is compulsory so the writer has to decide whether to encode Politeness every time a verb is used. When the Predicator is omitted and made implicit, the omission itself signifies casualness in the case of written texts so it is seen as unmarked politeness. A close examination of the choices made in the texts reveals that about 70% of the total clauses are marked for Politeness. Experts, in particular, tend to mark the verbs most of the time, which indicates that they maintain greater interpersonal distance from the reader. The kind of distance is horizontal, due to a low level of contact. It is *not* a vertical kind of distance because Politeness does not function in the same way as Honorification, which is a means of encoding power inequality in verbs.

An attempt to decrease the interpersonal distance between writer and reader is sometimes observed in *With*, as the degree of the politeness encoded in the verbs is moderate. This can be done by using the ending *-ndesu* as opposed to *-nodesu*. The former is a shorter version of the latter, and its tone is lighter because it is often used in spoken texts. The use of the conversational verb ending *ndesu* to realize politeness is limited to only some of the texts analyzed, thus its impact is not strong enough to counterbalance the overall impression of social distance and lower level of contact between writer and reader.

In addition, both *-ndesu* and *-nodesu* function to involve the reader in the writer's comments and/or to emphasise the writer's idea emotively, and may sometimes function to impose the writer's idea on the reader (Makino and Tsutsui 1986: 327). The common use of this strategy illustrates that despite its relatively distant and more formal atmosphere, *With* does attempt to increase the level of involvement with the reader.

3.3.2. Negotiatory Markers

Negotiatory markers, realized by sentence-final particles, are often used in conversations and function to "add the negotiatory or attitudinal value of the clause" (Teruya 2004). They are optional¹², and there are two kinds of such particles found in the texts, *ne* and *yo*. *Ne* is used when the writer asks for confirmation of understanding from the reader (Makino and Tsutsui 1986: 286)¹³. For example, when the expert is reported to have said *Dakara aitega iyanakotobakari ittekurutoiunoha, jibunga sou saseteirutoiu kanouseimo arimasu ne* 'that's why, if your partner only says unpleasant things to you, there is a possibility that you are

¹² There are exceptions in cases such as interrogative clauses in which Negotiatory markers express the value of 'question'. However, the use of the markers is not compulsory even in these cases when they occur in speech, because the tone can be raised at the end of the clause to signify a question.

¹³ *Ne* is also used to ask for an agreement about shared knowledge, in which case its function is similar to that of a tag question (e.g. It is a nice day, *isn't it?*). However, such use of *ne* was not observed in the data.

making him do so', she is (constructed by the writer as) expecting confirmation from the reader that she has understood and agrees with the point made by the expert.

The use of *ne* is common in conversation and similarly expresses the speaker's anticipation of back-channelling signals from the listener. These function to show that the listener follows what is being said and understands and/or agrees with the propositions being made. The likely back-channelling signals required by *ne* are *un* 'yeah' and *soo* 'right' which are acknowledgment tokens from the addressee (Hayashi 1997: 366). By using *ne*, the writer sets up a casual dialogue with the reader.

Yo is used to encode assertions about knowledge which are not shared by the reader (Makino and Tsutsui 1986: 543). By using *yo*, the writer asserts the truth of the proposition. *Yone* is a combination of *yo* and *ne* and functions to express confirmation and assertion simultaneously. So when a psychologist is quoted by the writer as saying *kanashiiomoio simasuyone*, '(a woman in such a situation) feels sad', she means 'I assert that a woman in such a situation feels sad, don't you agree?' (Makino and Tsutsui 1986: 288).

All these markers are expected to affect the interpersonal relationship by negotiating the meaning of the clause and expressing emotions to the reader. Therefore, the use of Negotiatory markers is expected to reduce the interpersonal distance by increasing the level of involvement with the reader. Their use is, however, rather rare in the texts examined, and as a result has a limited effect on the texts on the whole.

4. Three dimensions of Tenor in *With*

The findings of the lexico-grammatical analysis of selected texts from *With* are reflected in relation to the concept of Tenor.

On the power continuum, the writer-reader relationship in *With* is best defined by giving it a value much closer to the unequal end of the power continuum due to the high level of expertise and authority of the writer which is clearly expressed throughout the texts.

On the continuum of contact, The *With* writer-reader relationship leans towards the occasional contact end because of the wider social distance maintained through visibly encoded politeness and the linguistic construction of the writer as 'different' from the reader.

On the affective involvement continuum, the relationship between writer and reader in *With* is situated near the low end of the affective involvement cline, influenced by the lack of features similar in function to those just listed above. There are measures taken to encode positive affective involvement and reduce the distance between writer and reader. These include the use of some cases of ellipsis, exclamation marks, and Negotiatory markers. Ultimately, however, the use does not seem extensive enough to sufficiently change the affective involvement value of the writer-reader relationship in *With*.

5. Three dimensions of Tenor in Cleo

Selected texts from *Cleo* were analyzed in the same fashion as those from *With*. The results of the analysis indicate different characteristics of Tenor in *Cleo*. The writer-reader relationship in *Cleo* is characterised by a tension between the higher expertise and authority of the writer (signified in the modality of the texts) and the semiotic construal of the status of the writer as similar to that of the reader (due to the fact that both parties are constructed as belonging to the same ‘in-group’). In other words, there is a tension between equal and unequal power.

On the continuum of contact, the writer-reader relationship is construed in the *Cleo* texts as being very close to the frequent end, thus the unequal power relationship between the *Cleo* writer and reader is compensated for. Generally, the strong sense of solidarity encoded in *Cleo*’s language is seen as an indicator that the writer-reader relationship is presented as one of frequent contact.

On the affective involvement continuum, the writer-reader relationship in *Cleo* is much closer to the high end because of factors such as frequent expressions of humour, intensification, Median modality, and the high frequency of attempts to involve the reader in the texts by the use of a combination of MOOD types, and extremely frequent use of casual lexis in general.

6. Conclusion and Discussion: Teacher-Talk and Sister-Talk

This paper has investigated the Japanese woman’s magazine *With* focusing on the interpersonal relationship each establishes with its audience through the use of language. The results of the linguistic analysis using SFL tools revealed that, relatively speaking, the tenor of the *With* texts features a more unequal power relationship, lower contact and low or no affective involvement. This was contrasted with the findings of similar analysis conducted on selected texts from *Cleo*. The tenor of the *Cleo* texts is characterised with a close-to-equal power relationship, higher contact and high affective involvement between writer and reader.

From these observations, the writer-reader relationship in *With* is seen as closely resembling the teacher-student relationship in a Japanese adult school.¹⁴ Being a teacher with knowledge and expertise, the writer is in a position of authority. The writer’s role is to teach the reader what the rules are, how she should behave, and what she needs to do to ‘pass’ as a successful ‘student’. When instructing her, the teacher is polite, friendly enough, sometimes even cheerful, and her talk often conversational. At the same time, because of the clear difference in the social status and power, the teacher makes it clear that she does not belong to the same group as the student. The reader, as the student, is constructed as in need of lessons to ‘get it right’. The writer, as the teacher, knows what the reader *needs* in order to act within commonsense and be a ‘good’, socially acceptable woman.

¹⁴ Tanaka (1998) characterises the writer-reader relationship in young adult Japanese women’s magazines as that of a teacher-pupil in a cram school (an examination preparation school). I use a broader label ‘adult school’ because there are cram schools for primary school students, in which case the language use is significantly different from the one used in those for older students. Since the reader of *With* is typically in her 20’s, the metaphor ‘adult school’ seems more suitable.

In *Cleo*, the writer is ‘the older sister’¹⁵ who has more expertise and certain authority due to her richer experience. She knows what it means to be a woman in society and advises the reader, the younger sister, how to get by with various tips. Being a sister, she has a high level of contact with the reader, and their relationship is extended in nature. She would express affection towards her ‘younger sister’ by cracking jokes and maintains a casual and frank relationship by establishing a firm sense of solidarity. The reader as the younger sister is an independent-minded woman with her own desires, but at the same time constructed as in need of and having appreciation for some advice so she can satisfy ‘her desire’ better. She is to enjoy her older sister’s company and, through casual and fun talks, she is to learn essential skills for solving the problems she encounters as a woman, in order to better survive the world. What she *wants* will be satisfied if she follows the sister’s advice.

There are a number of ways to explore research into discursive construction of the writer-reader relationship in women’s magazines. One of the avenues of further exploration is visual analysis. To see women’s magazines as a multi-modal text will enable investigation of correlations between verbal and visual messages. A brief look at visual images in *Cleo* and *With* shows some interesting differences. For instance, the facial expressions of models (various in *Cleo* and mostly smiling in *With*), the presentations of photos of the editor (*Cleo*) and of experts (*With*), and the limited (*Cleo*) and extensive (*With*) range of products presented in their articles. An analysis of the visual messages conveyed in such images would reveal more details of how the two magazines function and whether the visual messages support or contradict the meanings identified in this study.

In terms of verbal messages, use of an analytical tool such as SFL’s Appraisal will give more insights into the interpersonal meaning created in texts by covering nuances of evaluative meaning which MOOD analysis and modality cannot explain in sufficient detail. For example, the *With* writer often states what is ‘good to do’ or the ‘best’, and while classifying such cases as Suggestions certainly illustrates the point, use of Appraisal would better highlight what sort of moral judgements have been made in women’s magazines and how such judgements are used to instruct the reader.

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¹⁵ Some editors of women’s magazines are explicit about the magazines’ role as the reader’s older sister: “*Cosmopolitan* is every girl’s sophisticated older sister...” (quoted in Ferguson 1983: 37). There are also researchers who characterize women’s magazines as older sisters (e.g. Talbot 1992).

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