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<cat>Research article

<pt>Caregivers' strategies for eliciting storytelling from toddlers in Japanese caregiver–child picture book reading activities

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<ab>Although storytelling is a central practice in everyday interaction, it is not an easy task for young children, because it requires extended turns-at-talk. To tell a story successfully, a child requires considerable support from the recipient. In this article, we examine how storytelling is facilitated in Japanese caregiver–child interactions, focusing on the strategies employed by caregivers to elicit storytelling from 2- to 3-year-old children during picture book reading activities. Our analysis indicates that caregivers employ various multimodal strategies in encouraging children to launch, develop, and end a story, and that these strategies are themselves effectively implemented through the application of several grammatical features, conventional expressions, and formulaic words. Hence, storytelling functions as a valuable device in orchestrating attention, affect, and morality in caregiver–child interactions.

<ab>Keywords: storytelling; Japanese; language socialization; grammar; culture

<ha>Introduction

<p1>One of the most impressive traits of early child development is that a seemingly vulnerable newborn becomes a fluent speaker of language(s) in his or her given community within a few years. Research increasingly reveals that, to nurture the child's innate competencies for learning language, people in the infant's immediate environment must actively influence and promote these competencies. Accordingly, recent scholarship in the developmental sciences has emphasized that mothers or other primary caregivers work upon what Vygotsky ([1934]1962) called the 'zone of proximal development' of their children. That is to say, these caregivers are keen about what the children are close to be able to do and often scaffold them through extending context sensitive help. From this perspective, language acquisition functions as both a vehicle and by-product of cultural transmission, as observed by Bruner (1983, p. 103). The legacy of this perspective is discernible in studies of language socialization, which examine socialization *through the use of language* and

socialization *to use language* (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986, p. 163). Research in this area has examined how children in various societies apprehend and enact the ‘context of situation’ in relation to the ‘context of culture’, thereby demonstrating how children are socialized into a socio-culturally structured universe (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2012, p. 1).

Storytelling constitutes a type of extended telling, one that suspends the normal turn-taking arrangement – the most basic and fundamental rule of conversation – between the speaker and the addressee(s), while the speaker produces a multi-unit turn (Schegloff, 2007; Stivers, 2013). Moreover, storytelling allows the speaker to narrate events that are removed from the here-and-now situation and to introduce cultural knowledge associated with broader contexts over the course of talk-in-interactions (Reese, 1995; Ochs & Capps, 2001). Storytelling thus constitutes an important language genre that provides effective tools for bridging both the ‘context of situation’ and the ‘context of culture’.

For the reasons outlined above, it is challenging for verbally inexperienced young children to successfully participate in storytelling practices. While storytelling demands extended turns-at-talk on the part of the teller (Mandelbaum, 2013, p. 492), the recipient must, for their part, correctly perceive the story’s beginning and ending, and react appropriately throughout. Previous studies indicate that, whether speaking or listening, children require considerable support from the caregiver for successful participation in storytelling practices (e.g. Filipi, 2017). In this sense, ‘stories are interactive productions, co-constructed by teller and recipient and tailored to the occasions of their production’ (Mandelbaum, 2013, p. 492). It is thus particularly pertinent to examine the ways in which caregivers and young children engage in storytelling practices involving the perception, introduction, and deployment of the ‘context of culture’ in everyday interactions.

This study constitutes part of a broader examination of the cultural formation of responsibility, focusing on the developmental transition wherein children’s responses begin to meet with their caregivers’ expectations (Takada, 2012). Our dataset includes several naturally occurring instances in which toddlers engaged in storytelling while they were reading a picture book with their caregivers. This scenario is to be expected, as picture books provide visual cues that are accessible to both toddler and caregiver, allowing them to develop the story together.¹ Moreover, the use of picture books associates storytelling practices with literacy, and so caregivers often use picture books for early-childhood literacy education. Research attests to the importance of picture books in early storytelling practices and literacy development, in various cultural settings, including a range of communities in the US (e.g. Heath, 1982, 1983; Reese, 1995; Sterponi, 2012; Johnson, 2017; Kyratzis, 2017), Sweden (e.g. Andrén & Cekaite, 2016; Cekaite & Björk-Willén, 2018), Japan (e.g. Minami, 2002), and also among Indigenous Australian communities (e.g. Disbray, 2008). In this article, we will focus on Japanese caregivers’ strategies for eliciting and shaping storytelling in toddlers via a process that requires the children to launch a story, sustain the body of the story, and end the story, using picture books as a tool.

This paper will elucidate how Japanese linguistic and cultural idiosyncrasies are (re)generated. We

will focus, particularly, on how the grammatical features of the Japanese language, such as the frequent use of interactional particles (Morita, 2005), the *te-ageru* ('to give X [action/object] [to/for a third party]') construction (Endo, 2015), grammaticalization of middle voice (Nieda, 2009; Elberfeld, 2011; Kokubun, 2017), the complex system of honorifics, or *keigo* (Cook, 2006; Pizziconi, 2011; Burdelski, 2013), and culturally distinctive formulaic words and idiomatic phrases are effectively incorporated into picture book reading activities among Japanese caregivers and toddlers. We aim, thereby, to demonstrate that everyday interactions constitute the primary locus of socio-cultural production and reproduction, perpetuating and transforming the particular 'habitus' of their cultural actors (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990) and to contribute to the discussion regarding various issues in Japanese language socialization (Cook & Burdelski, 2017).

<h2>Method

<p1>The data used in this study were collected as part of a longitudinal research project titled 'Cultural Formation of Responsibility in Caregiver–Child Interaction', which focuses on the developmental transition wherein children's innate behavioural patterns become mutually coordinated patterns of interaction that meet the expectations of both the caregivers and the children (Takada, 2012). The primary author directed the project from 2007 to 2012, and also directed the follow-up project, which has been ongoing since 2012. The data were collected in the Kansai area of Japan. Commencing in 2007, the research team visited 18 middle-class families with children aged 0–5 years. Some mothers who participated in this study were pregnant at the time the data were collected. This is relevant to the present analysis, since the unborn baby may become both the subject of conversation and/or a participant in the interaction. The families were chosen from among those who expressed interest in the Kyoto University Child Development Research Group.² All families used the Kansai dialect for daily communication. This is relevant to the present analysis, since some grammatical items of the Kansai dialect are difficult to be translated into the standard Japanese which is based on the Tokyo dialect. A researcher and a videographer visited each family at home for approximately 2 hours per month to record interactions between child(ren) and caregiver(s) in their natural settings. Most families consisted of caregivers and more than one child, as one of the project's objectives was to elucidate how older siblings developed a sense of responsibility in relation to younger siblings. In total, approximately 410 hours of video were recorded, and all basic verbal and non-verbal behaviours were transcribed to yield the dataset. This paper offers a report on the preliminary analysis of that dataset and uses examples from two families, indicated as 'KT' and 'FS' in the extract titles. In the transcribed extracts below, each line includes the original Japanese utterance,³ word glosses (see Appendix) and an English translation.

The extracts under analysis constitute an extended sequence, which permits the analysis of the orderly features of one sequence of talk (Psathas, 1992; Filipi, 2017). A few additional extracts are analysed in support of the discussion. The following four picture books appear in these extracts:

<l>• *What is He Doing?* (Tsunoda, 1973). This picture book is aimed at infants or toddlers. It describes a boy's day. He wakes up at home. He then goes to a park with his cat friend and plays with him. After returning home, he spends the rest of the day with his mother and the cat friend (Extract 2).

<l>• *Pebble Tale* (Marék, 2008). This is a story about pebbles on a beach. Children come and pick up big and colourful pebbles to make something with them. A small black pebble feels lonely because the children do not seem interested in him. Later, the children return and excitedly pick him up. They are looking for a pebble to use as the eye of a bird that they have made, and the black pebble fits the purpose perfectly (Extract 3).

<l>• *The Hole of the Navel* (Hasegawa, 2006). This is a story of a soon-to-be-born baby. Outside the mother's tummy, family members including the baby's older brother, older sister, father and grandparents are preparing for his birth. The unborn baby is looking at, smelling and listening to the world around him through the mother's navel (Extracts 4–6).

<l>• *Let's Play in the Sandpit* (Funabashi, 1997). This is a picture book aimed at infants or toddlers. Various toys invite a young child to the sandpit. A shovel wishes to scoop sand with the child; a bucket wants him/her to fill it with sand; a sieve starts filtering sand with him/her; and so on (Extract 7).

<p1>We applied interaction analysis to these extracts using analytical concepts derived from conversation analysis (Schegloff, 2007; Sidnell & Stivers, 2013) and language socialization (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Duranti et al., 2012). This approach allowed us to empirically determine why a given action is selected at a specific place and time, by deconstructing the micro-sequential context of the interaction (i.e. clarifying the relevance of the adjacent actions: Nishizaka, 1997; Schegloff, 2007). It facilitated our analysis of the sequential organization of interactions, incorporating not only the results of actions taken under certain situations but also the cultural contexts in which those actions are embedded.

<ha>Co-constructing the frame of storytelling

<p1>Our analysis is divided into three sections, corresponding to the launching, sustaining and ending of storytelling as deployed in Japanese caregiver–child interactions.

<hb>Launching a story

<p1>The first section will examine how storytelling is initiated, including moments of negotiation in terms of the content of the telling and physical positioning of participants and picture book, and the performative quality of storytelling. In Extract 1, 32-month-old Chika (C) and the mother (M), who was 9 months pregnant at the time of recording, are sitting on the floor (Figure 1). C is playing with toy scissors, while facing the mother.

<hd>Extract 1

<p1>Choki (KT_A080222_1: 270)

<p1>C (2:8), M (mother: 9 months pregnant)

<!There are seven extracts in this paper. The longest line is 76 characters, so we will need to fit that to the measure and use that point size consistently for all extracts. The 76-character line is in Extract 6, line 185 (the line that includes the text ‘((C leaves her hands from the picture book’)!>

<tr>

- 1 M: *ehon yon-de-age-tara?*
picture book read-TE-CAU-COND
How about reading a picture book ((to the baby in my tummy))?
- 2 C: *choki*
SSW
- 3 M: *.hh #bikkuri shi-ta#*
surprise do-PST
.hh #((I)) was surprised#
- 4 M: *nai-te-haru wa, sonnan shi-te.*
cry-TE-HON PP such thing do-TE
((The baby is)) crying about ((your)) doing such a thing.
- 5 C: *u:n*
IJ
- 6 M: *yon-de-age-te:*
read-TE-CAU-TE
Read ((a picture book to the baby in tummy)), please

</tr>

<fig>*Figure 1* 32-month-old C and her mother, who was 9 months pregnant at the time of recording, are seated on the floor.

<p1>At the beginning of the extract, the mother suggests that the child should begin reading a picture book for the baby in her tummy (line 1). This utterance is equipped with two Japanese grammatical features.

The first is a modal marker that modulates the directive’s intensity. A directive is broadly defined as ‘an utterance intended to get the listener to do something’ (Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Goodwin, 2006, p. 107). Japanese grammatical features permit modulation of the directive’s intensity through various modal markers placed at the end of verb constructions (Takada, 2013). Takada (ibid.) identified several modal markers that set up sub-categories of directive, including command (*‘yonde agenasai’*), request (*‘yonde agete’*), suggestion (*‘yonde agetara’*, which was used here) and invitation (*‘yonde ageyou’*). At the end of the above utterance, *‘tara’*, a modal marker that constructs a conditional form, is used.

The conditional form weakens the directive by acknowledging the possibility that other actions may be performed, and thus functioning as a suggestion.

Second, the construction includes ‘*ageru*’, an auxiliary verb that invokes the benefactive or causative form of the verb. Caregivers often use this form (i.e. *te-ageru* construction) to entice the children in their care to do something for their younger siblings (Endo, 2015; Takada & Endo, 2015). In this case, the use of the *te-ageru* (‘to give X [action/object] [to/for a third party]’) construction indicates that the target of the suggested action (i.e. the prospective recipient of storytelling in this case) is not the speaker (i.e. the mother) but a third party: the unborn baby. By way of this utterance, therefore, the baby is positioned as an ‘addressed recipient’ (Goffman, 1981) of the storytelling during the course of the interaction. In this case, although the mother refers to the unborn baby, she also establishes the unborn baby as the primary recipient of the story. This facilitates the mother’s participation as a co-teller of the story (see Extract 3). In directive sequences in Japanese caregiver–child interaction, a caregiver often introduces a third party, adopting a triadic format to create a playful and theatrical situation and to make it easier for the child to respond to the caregiver’s directive, which can be intrinsically face-threatening to the addressee. The third party can be an inanimate object (e.g. a book or flower) or an imagined figure, such as an as-yet-unborn infant (Takada, 2013; Burdelski, 2012, 2015; Takada & Kawashima, 2016). Furthermore, the mother’s question in line 1, utilizing the *te-ageru* construction, also invokes a social role in relation to the baby, namely as an ‘older sister’. This lays the foundation for her ensuing appeal to C’s sense of responsibility, aimed at encouraging C to behave appropriately as an older sister (e.g. exhibiting a cooperative stance with her mother, kindly telling a story to her younger sibling).

However, the child does not immediately accept her mother’s suggestion. Instead, she pretends to cut the mother’s abdomen with toy scissors, using onomatopoeic utterances that imitate the sound of cutting with scissors (line 2). Although the child may have sought to redirect her mother’s attention to her through this action, this action elicits the mother’s expression of surprise (line 3). When the mother expressed the surprise, she was looking at C while putting her left hand on the belly like protecting the baby in tummy. She then responds to the child’s behavior (line 4) by describing the communicative action of the baby in her womb, saying ‘*nai-te-haru wa*’ (‘the baby is crying’). By means of this ‘descriptive mode’ of reported speech (Hickmann, 1993), the mother evokes the vicarious response of the unborn baby to C’s problematic behaviour. Although this utterance can be heard as a complaint, it is conveyed in a rather soft voice. Moreover, her direct reaction to C’s pretend action in itself indicates that they are still in the frame of theatrical play, in which the unborn baby is involved. The utterance is thus characterized as social action *within* social action (Burdelski, 2015). That is to say, ‘*nai-te-haru wa*’ (‘the baby is crying’) describes the baby’s negative affective reaction to the child’s actions within the mother’s complaint in the frame of theatrical play. The child then concedes and, looking at the bookshelf stands up, murmuring (line 5). This physical orientation indicates that the action of selecting a book, preceding the action of reading the picture book for the unborn baby, is initiated. At this juncture, the mother repeats her request that the child reads a picture

book for the baby in her tummy (line 6). As is evident from this extract, a toddler does not always readily comply with a caregiver's directive to tell a story to another. In response, the caregiver often issues a modified directive or directives, while monitoring the toddler's behaviour.

When a story is launched, the participants often exhibit a strong orientation toward a particular physical location. In Extract 2, which was recorded with another family, the mother situates her baby Hiro (H) in a nesting position facing his sister Ari (A), who is about to read a picture book to them.

<hd>Extract 2

<p1>Ari (FS_F080930_2: 659)

<p1>H (0;11), A (3;11), M (mother)

<tr>

- 1 M: *ja: hiro-chan oide: hiro-chan (.)*
okay NAME-DIM come NAME-DIM
Okay, Hiro come here Hiro.
ari-chan ni yon-de mora-ou.
NAME-DIM DAT read-TE receive-VOL
Let Ari read ((a book for you)).
- 2 H: *baab*
IJ
- 3 M: *kore yon-de kure-hannen-te (0.4) ari-chan ga*
this read-TE receive-HON-QT NAME-DIM NOM
Ari will read this ((book for you)).
4 *nde, mito-ko. ((clapping))*
So, look-VOL
so let's see.
- 5 (3.0)
- 6 A: *et- ((handing another book to the mother))*
well
Wel-
- 7 M: *ha::i. (1.5) chotto ko- kocchi ki-te ari.*
yes. little he- here come-TE NAME
Yeah. Come a little closer here, Ari.
- 8 H: *[[A::::::::::::::::::]]*
IJ
- 9 A: *[[kore nan no-]]*
this what LK
What is-

10 M: *nani* (.) *nani shi-teru-tte >kai-te-aru. ari-chan kocchi kite.<*
 what what do-ASP-TE write-TE-be NAME-DIM here come.
It says ((in the book)) what is ((he)) doing. Ari, come here.

11 A: *nani shiteru?* ((moving toward the baby and mother))
 what do-ASP
What is ((he)) doing?

12 A: *nani shiteru:*
 what do-ASP
What is ((he)) doing

</tr>

Figure 2 The mother moved away from 47-month-old A (upper right), who was about to read a picture book, and sat in front of 11-month-old H.

<p1>In line 1, the mother moves away from child A, who is about to read a picture book, while announcing A's intention to read the picture book for her younger brother (Figure 2). When her mother starts clapping (line 4), A is sitting on a chair slightly away from the baby and the mother. The mother then instructs A to come closer (line 7). Child A does not reply to the mother's instruction, however, because she is preparing another picture book titled *What is He Doing?* As she is just about to read it (line 9), the mother reads the title of the picture book and re-issues the instruction to the child to come closer (line 10). The child eventually displays her realization that she should sit closer to them so that they can see the picture book by moving toward them while repeating the title twice (lines 11 and 12).

As is evident from Extract 2, the participants (the mother and children) are keen to set up an appropriate participation framework (Goffman, 1981) by adjusting their physical configuration so that it not only allows all participants to access an artefact (i.e. the picture book) but also to be fully engaged in the main activity, the storytelling. Moreover, the current speaker's deployment of talk and bodily conduct progressively projects the emerging trajectory of storytelling, and how recipients utilize the visual resources during the activity (Hayashi, 2003; Kyratzis, 2017).

To summarize, our dataset indicates that when a toddler engages in storytelling it is often in response to suggestions or requests on the part of the caregiver. However, the toddler will not always readily accept the suggestion or request for storytelling. As such, various levels of negotiation between toddlers and caregivers often ensue.

<hb>Sustaining the body of a story: Three communicative strategies

<p1>Following the commencement of the story, the child is tasked with sustaining the body of the story. During this phase, caregivers often assist the child through various interventions (e.g. Theobald, this issue), which are situationally and culturally specific. Our analysis reveals Japanese caregivers'

use of three different strategies in picture book reading with young children (collaborative construction of an utterance, echoing and associating the story with the here-and-now situation), which we will explain below.

<hc>Collaborative construction of an utterance

<p1>The first strategy involves the collaborative construction of an utterance among participants. Japanese conversation has developed various means of negotiating and achieving joint utterance constructions (Hayashi, 2003, 2005). Our dataset contributes some insights with regard to how children may be involved in conversations of this nature. In Extract 3 (which involves the same family as that in Extract 1 and follows on from Extract 1), the caregiver took several opportunities to take over the child's utterance while the child was telling a story from a picture book titled *Pebble Tale*. In the transcription of the extract, a single arrow (→) indicates the adult's take-over of the child's turn, while a double arrow (⇒) indicates the child's completion of the turn. Note that this child was not quite capable of reading the script in the picture book. Instead, she half-remembered some lines from the picture book since she had read that book several times with the caregiver.

<hd>Extract 3

<p1>Beach (KT_A080222_1: 270) (Cont.)

<p1>C (2;8), M (mother: 9 months pregnant)

<tr>

28 C: *aruhi, kodomotati, yatteki-te i-masu.*
one day children come-TE say-HON

One day, children come and say.

[*sono shi-*
the

[The whi-

→ 29 M: [*sunahama ichimen ni kuroi ishi ga [[ari-mashi-ta.*
beach all over DAT black pebble NOM be-HON-PST

All over the beach, a black pebble [[was there

⇒ 30 C: [*ga ari-mashi-ta.*
NOM be-HON-PST

[[was there

31 C: *konna tokoro ni:*
like this place DAT

in such a place,

32 M: °*un*°
yes

Yes.

33 C: .hh *shiroi no*
white thing
white one ((pebble))

34 M: °un°
yes
Yes.

35 C: *a, okashi, to omotte, ii-mashu. iti-washu, .h pokochan mo*
IJ strange CP think-TE say-HON (say-HON) NAME-DIM too
He says, oh it's strange ((that a small pebble like me is here)). He says, Poko-chan also

36 M: *uuuuun*
IJ
mhm

37 C: *tsiisaishi, .hh naaa to ii-mashi:*
small pebble PP CP say-HON
says ((it's)) a small pebble

38 M: *uuuuuun*
IJ
mhm

39 C: *uuuuuun, ishi ga, achuma-tte [iyu-to::↑*
IJ pebble NOM gather-TE say-CP
well, pebbles gather [and say

40 M: [uuuuuun
IJ
[mhm

→ 41 M: *makkuro da mon[[↑na::tte.*
deep black COP PP PP QT
((The colour is)) deep black, it [[is, saying.

⇒ 42 C: [[*mon na::*
COP PP
[[it is

</tr>

<p1>In line 28, C starts telling the story by saying, ‘One day ...’, which is an idiomatic phrase used to launch a story by introducing a time frame for the story. After she delivers the initial part, ‘One day children come and say’, and begins the next phrase, ‘The whi-’, the mother interjects her utterance of the next phrase in the picture book, ‘All over the beach, a black stone was there’ (line 29). A take-over

of a turn of this nature has also been frequently observed in Japanese adult interaction (Hayashi, 2003). Note that here the mother refers to a black rather than a white pebble, which the child has been about to mention (i.e. the mother displayed an understanding of the child's *shi-* in line 28 as the first sound of *shiroi*, meaning 'white'). That is, the mother, who is already acquainted with the text of the story, takes over C's utterance, corrects the erroneous recollection, and makes that part of the story available for the child to continue. This mother's assistance is well received by the child and she co-completes the latter part of the sentence by overlapping 'was there' (lines 30 and 31). Lerner (1992) described the various ways in which multiple participants co-produce story beginnings, and through which they negotiate the problem of having different states of knowledge concerning the story that is being told. He suggested that co-production of story beginnings could facilitate assisted storytelling or co-telling in the subsequent talk.

Accordingly, from lines 31 to 37, the child adopts a more active role in continuing the story. While the child is narrating, the mother repeatedly interjects continuers, encouraging the child to produce a multi-unit turn (lines 32, 34, 36 and 38). The mother thereby aligns with the child as a recipient of the ongoing storytelling, although this progress of the telling is somewhat incomplete, since some parts of the utterances are textually and grammatically inaccurate. For example, although the main character is the black pebble, the child keeps talking about the white pebble, which is visually more salient in the picture book (line 33). The boy's name and utterance is not indicated in the text (lines 35 and 37). The locative verb *imasyu* 'to be' in line 35 should be pronounced as *imasu*. Then, as the child approaches the end of the phrase, 'well, pebbles gather and say', the utterance's prosody becomes markedly high (line 39).

At this juncture, the mother takes over the latter part of the sentence by saying, '((The colour is)) deep black, it is, saying', (line 41). This transition is facilitated by the peak in pitch and by the stretching of the sounds toward the end of the child's utterance at line 39, which, taken together, project a possible completion point (Schegloff, 2007), inviting the mother's involvement in the delivery of the story. Here again, the mother makes that part of story available for the child to continue. The child's utterance '*mon na:.*' (line 42) overlaps with the final part of her mother's utterance. By way of co-completing the turn with her mother, she demonstrates affiliation with the mother's affective stance (Stivers, 2008; Goodwin et al., 2012). This customary expression ('*mon na:.*') functions as the utterance-final, which includes the prolonged pragmatic particle or interactional particle (Morita, 2005) '*na:.*' and provides high projectability of a possible completion point. In this extract, it not only finalizes the turn but also demonstrates cooperation between the participants. The cooperative stance observed here is in accordance with storybook reading between slightly older Japanese children (4 and 5 years old) and their mothers at home, during which they often use short and grammatically incomplete utterances (Minami, 2002).

<hc>Echoing

<p1>The second strategy is the formulation of utterances that include echoing among participants.

Strauss and Kawanishi (1996) argued that assessment in Japanese conversation is often achieved by echoing, a process by which one speaker repeats the word or phrase of the prior speaker. Echoing is similar to the overlapping of the utterance-final observed in the first strategy (e.g. ‘*mon na::*’ in Extract 3) in that both underscore the degree of mutual awareness experienced by the participants. In the second strategy, however, the caregiver carefully chooses the word or phrase for echoing to demonstrate cooperation among the participants. In Extract 4 (which follows on from Extract 3), echoing is achieved through the use of terms that indicate a middle voice (a voice that is neither active nor passive; see below; Nieda, 2009; Elberfeld, 2011; Kokubun, 2017). In this extract, the child and mother are reading a picture book titled *The Hole of the Navel*, in which an as-yet-unborn baby is looking at the world around him through the mother’s navel. Single arrow (→) indicates the turn in which echoing takes place.

<hd>Extract 4

<p1>Navel (KT_A080222_1: 270) (Cont.)

<p1>C (2;8), M (mother: 9 months pregnant)

<tr>

68 C: *oshesho ga me:ru me:ru.*
 navel NOM see/seen see/seen

The navel can be seen, can be seen.

→ 69 M: *un. mieru, mieru*
 yes see/seen see/seen

Yea, ((it)) can be seen, can be seen.

→ 70 C: *osheso ga mie:ru mie:ru.*
 navel NOM see/seen see/seen

The navel can be seen, can be seen.

71 M: *un, oheso no a: [na.*
 yes navel LK hole

Yea, of navel, the [hole.

72 C: [a:na.
 hole

the hole.

</tr>

<p1>In the beginning of this extract, the child says, ‘The navel can be seen, can be seen’, (line 68). Here, the pronunciation of the original phrase in the book,⁴ namely ‘*mieru* (can be seen)’ is slightly modified to ‘*me:ru*’, which is a tongue-tied pronunciation and sounds childish. Following the affirmation, the mother rephrases it with the correct pronunciation ‘*mieru* (can see / be seen)’ (line 69).

This correction is successful (Schegloff, 2007), and the child repeats ‘*mie:ru* (can see / be seen)’ twice, using pronunciation that is closer to the mother’s (line 70).

In the above example, the intransitive verb ‘*mieru* (can see / be seen)’ is used as a spontaneous expression. Mori (2014) identified several subcategories of the spontaneous expression from the perspective of Japanese grammar. Such spontaneous expression of sense verbs, such as ‘*mieru*’, ‘*kikoeru* (can hear / be heard)’ and ‘*niou* (can smell / be smelled)’, can also be characterized in Japanese as a form of the ‘middle voice’ (Nieda, 2009; Elberfeld, 2011; Kokubun, 2017).⁵ In this middle voice form, the object is sensed as a natural consequence of the situation and thus the subject of the verb cannot be classified as either categorically active or passive, having elements of both. In this case the utterance is glossed as, ‘The navel can be seen, can be seen’, in lines 68–70. In this picture book, the author repeatedly uses the middle voice for various intransitive sense verbs, such as ‘*mieru*’, ‘*niou*’ and ‘*kikoeru*’, with occurrences on almost every page.

It is also noteworthy that the semantic subject and/or actor of the verb ‘*mieru*’ is simply dropped in these utterances (lines 68–70). It is therefore not explicitly specified who is actually seeing the navel: it seems as though either the baby in the tummy (as the figure in the picture book), the teller, or the recipient can be the subject. It is not obligatory in Japanese to mark the semantic subject and/or actor of a verb, when it may be inferred from the semantic or pragmatic context (e.g. Kobayashi, 2005, 2006). In the text of this picture book, the author rarely specifies or marks the semantic subject and/or actor of the intransitive sense verbs mentioned above. Therefore, these lines use dramatic effect to blur the footing distinctions (Goffman, 1981) among the participants of the interaction.

In the above extract, then, both the use of intransitive verb ‘*mieru*’ and the subject drop in these utterances permit the storyteller and audience to identify themselves with the figure in the picture book (i.e. the baby in the tummy). Through repetition of these utterances, the child and her mother obscure and fuse the tellership, enhance collaborative telling, and exhibit an empathetic stance. Subsequently, having acknowledged the child’s prior utterance, the mother utters, ‘*oheso no a: na* (of navel, the hole)’ (line 71). This is a key phrase in these exchanges and is also used in the title of the picture book. The utterance is thus highly projectable. Additionally, the final part of the utterance is prolonged and rhymes with the previous co-completion of utterances in lines 41 and 42. These features invite the child to co-complete the utterance again, creating the impression that the mother and child are speaking in chorus (line 72).

<hc>Associating the story with the here-and-now situation

<p1>The third strategy employed by caregivers to help the child to sustain a storytelling is the association of the story with the here-and-now, or a real-life situation. This strategy is relevant to one of the most important functions of everyday storytelling, namely, bringing a past event up to the present and relating it to the future (Ochs & Capps, 2001). In Extract 5 (which follows on from Extract 4), having read a passage from the picture book *The Hole of the Navel*, the mother applied the content of the telling to their current situation by incorporating the baby in her own womb into the

participation framework. This example occurred several lines after the previous example (Extract 4).

<hd>Extract 5

<p1>It can be seen (KT_A080222_1: 270) (Cont.)

<p1>C (2;8), M (mother: 9 months pregnant)

<tr>

80 M: *oheso no naka kara- ana kara mieru mieru.*
navel LK inside from hole from see/seen see/seen
((I)) can see it from the hole of the navel.
>*mi-te-hann-de.*<
look-TE-HON-PP
((The baby)) is looking at you. ((mother points to her belly
with her left hand forefinger.))

81 M: °*mi-te-haru*°
look-TE-HON
((She)) is looking at you.

82 C: ((C looks at the mother's belly, and then pulls her sweatshirt
a little and looks at her own belly.))

83 M: *chika, huhaha hhh*
name SSW
Chika, ((Sounds of laughing)).

84 C: *u: u:*
IJ IJ

85 M: >*chika hora(.) chika no hou ni hai-tte-n no?*<
name IJ name LK direction DAT enter-TE-be Q
Chika, look(.) is the baby inside of you?

86 C: *u: u:*
IJ IJ

87 M: *mieru mieru*
see/seen see/seen
It can be seen, can be seen.

88 C: *A, isshoni(.)mi-shite=*
IJ together look CAU
Oh, show it to me together.

</tr>

<p1>Having just read a line from the picture book, the mother produces an utterance referring to the

here-and-now ‘*mi-te-hann-de* (((she)) is looking at you)’ while pointing to her abdomen with the forefinger of her left hand (line 80). It should be noted that the utterance is equipped with an honorific ‘*haru*’, which is used in a distinctive manner in Japan’s Kyoto area (see also line 4 of Extract 1). A characteristic that Japanese shares with other Asian languages, such as Korean, Javanese and Vietnamese, is its rich system of honorifics, which consists of a range of lexical and grammaticalized forms (Cook, 2006; Pizziconi, 2011; Burdelski, 2013). The above use of ‘*haru*’ lends deference and formality to the description of the referent’s action, in this case ‘looking’. It results in the affective distancing of the speaker from the subject and/or actor of the action (in this case the baby in the tummy) who is commonly thought to have an intimate relationship with the speaker. By displaying a greater affective distance than the recipient would expect, it indicates humility on the part of the speaker and thereby shows respect to the recipient and/or hearer of the utterance. Moreover, this part of the utterance at line 80 is pronounced in a compressed manner. It is also important to note that this utterance from the mother is delivered in tandem with a pointing gesture toward her abdomen. Subsequently, their gazes converge on the mother’s abdomen. In these ways the pregnant mother’s body (e.g. the foetus, her abdomen) is used as a resource for communication (Takada & Kawashima, 2016). Taking these features together, the function of this utterance is to mark a change in the speaker’s footing (Goffman, 1981; Johnson, 2017). The mother associates the story with the here-and-now situation and the baby in her tummy is treated as a legitimate participant, who is observing the situation through the navel, in a similar manner to the figure described in the picture book.

The mother immediately repeats the phrase ‘*mi-te-haru* (The baby is looking at you)’ in a slightly lower voice (line 81) as though they are secretly talking about the baby in the mother’s tummy. The child then begins to examine her own abdomen by raising her sweatshirt a little and looking at her own belly (line 82). With these utterances, the mother evokes the child’s real-life situation. At line 83, upon observing C’s behaviour together with C, the mother summons the child by her name, and exhibits signs of laughter, thereby communicating her assessment of the child’s reaction as positive and amusing. Through such an assessment, the caregiver can associate the playful story with the child’s lived experience and embody her moral stances in conversation (cf. Ochs & Capps, 2001). The child then looks up toward her mother with a smiling face while interjecting (line 84). In response, the mother asks the question, ‘is the baby inside of you?’ (line 85). This confirms that the child’s behaviour associates the action of ‘looking’ with her here-and-now situation. Thus, the mother considers the child’s amusing reaction to be relevant to the story itself. Here again, the use of the middle voice and the subject drop at line 87 contributes greatly to the establishment of an empathetic attitude between them. Accordingly, the child utters, ‘Oh, show it to me together’ (line 88), requesting cooperative action.

In this section, we have seen that even after a child has successfully launched a storytelling, it is often difficult for him or her to construct and sustain the body of the story itself throughout the extended turns-at-talk. In such situations, the caregiver employs various strategies. We discussed three of these

strategies: collaborative construction of an utterance, echoing and association of the story with the here-and-now situation. Using these strategies, caregivers enhance and maintain the child's telling as the main activity.

<hb>Ending a story

<p1>In this section, we will consider how storytelling ends, focusing on the initiatives taken by the child to bring the story to a conclusion. In Extract 6 (which continues the events of Extract 5), upon observing that the child's attention is distracted from the picture book (*The Hole of the Navel*), the mother asks whether the child will continue reading it (line 1).

<hd>Extract 6

<p1>Oshimai (KT_A080222_1: 270) (Cont.)

<p1>C (2;8), M (mother: 9 months pregnant)

<tr>

185 M: *soshite(.) yoku zaisan no hanashi wo omoidashi-mashi-ta-tte*
then often Mr.Zai LK story ACC remember-HON-PST-TE

Saying then he often remembered the story of Mr. Zai.

mou yoma-nai no?

any more read-NEG Q

((You)) are not going to read it anymore?

((C leaves her hands from the picture book (The hole of the navel) while M is still holding it. C then starts searching another picture book in the bookshelf.))

186 C: *mo(.)u yoma(.)nai(.)no, oshi↑mai.*

any more read NEG PP finish

((I)) won't read ((it)) anymore. It's finished. ((C reiterates the gesture of clapping.))

187 M: *oshimai. pachipachi pachipachi:*

finish SSW SSW

It's finished; pachipachi pachipachi: ((M brings back the picture book to the bookshelf.))

</tr>

<p1>While the mother is reading some page of the picture book (*The hole of the navel*) in the former part of line 185, C takes her hands off the picture book and then starts searching for another picture book in the bookshelf. The latter part 'mou yoma-nai no? (((You)) are not going to read it anymore?)' indicates that the mother has analysed the child's current actions and provides a verbal 'gloss' of

those actions (Burdelski, 2015), which is against the mother's expectation. The child replies that she will not read the picture book any more by slowly repeating the last part of the prior utterance in a weak voice (line 186). The difference of action is marked by the intonation of the final particle 'no'. That is, the mother's use of 'no' in line 185 is pronounced using a rising intonation, which designates questioning, while the child's use of 'no' as uttered in line 186 using a normal pitch contour indicates her intention or decision. The child then says '*oshi* ↑ *mai* (it's finished)', a formulaic word that announces the completion of the story, together with the gesture of clapping. Even though this takes place rather abruptly before the story has reached its upshot or climax, the mother acknowledges the completion of the story by repeating the formulaic word and then utters onomatopoeic sounds that imitate the sound of clapping (line 187), which works as a positive assessment. Subsequently the child re-engages in the usual turn-by-turn talk (omitted).

As demonstrated in this case, caregivers sometimes acknowledge the end of the child's storytelling when it follows the conventional format. That is, when the mother repeats '*oshimai* (It's finished)' at line 187, this utterance transforms the child's abrupt completion of the storytelling into a conclusion that is more mutually accepted. Moreover, when the mother makes the sound of clapping (i.e. '*pachipachi pachipachi*:'), it also explicitly displays her positive assessment, not only toward the contents of the picture book but also toward their collaborative performative reading of the picture book. The use of a formulaic word to mark the completion of the storytelling reflects the socio-historically developed norms of the culture. Caregivers often acknowledge the child's use of such conventional formats in the practices of storytelling, even when they wish the child to continue storytelling. As such, the storytelling's conclusion must be reached interactionally.

When a toddler sustains a story through to its upshot, the storytelling ends rather naturally. In Extract 7 (which is taken from the same family as Extract 2, from which it follows), the child is reading a picture book titled *Let's Play in the Sandpit* for her young brother B, who is 11 months old. However, when C is about to read through the picture book, B loses interest in the picture book and moves away behind C. The mother has observed all these details. C continues reading the picture book to the mother.

<hd>Extract 7

<p1>Boat (FS_F080930_2: 659) (Cont.)

<p1>B (0;11), C (3;11), M (mother)

<tr>

111 C: *ofune. gattan gotton suttonton*

boat SSW SSW SSW

It's a boat. *gattan gotton suttonton* ((C repeatedly sways the picture book back and forth and then closes the picture book))

112 M: *a ha*[i. *oshimai*.
 IJ yes finish
Oh, yeah. It's finished.

113 C: [*oshi* ↑ *mai*:
 finish
It's finished.

</tr>

<p1>At the beginning of this extract, C shows her mother the last page of the picture book, on which there is an illustration of a boat. She then iterates that it is a boat and utters symbolic words that mimic the movements of the boat floating on the sea (line 111). While delivering this utterance, C repeatedly sways the picture book back and forth. Her mother observes C's telling and nods several times along with C's swaying movements. C then closes the picture book. Simultaneously, the mother makes an interjection to demonstrate that she has noticed, and then says '*oshimai* (It's finished)', the formulaic word that signals the completion of the story (line 112). Overlapping with this utterance, C also delivers the formulaic word '*oshi* ↑ *mai*: (It's finished)', of which the last part is pronounced using a slightly rising and prolonged pitch contour (line 113).

Regarding these utterance exchanges, the fact that C is reading the last page of the picture book in tandem with her action of closing the picture book provides visual cues that signal the impending conclusion of the activity. This enables C and her mother to closely coordinate their actions with one another and to accomplish the co-completion of the storytelling by using the same formulaic word. To summarize, our dataset indicates that young children often become distracted from their telling prior to reaching the story's upshot. Participants interacting with young children are then tasked with clearly marking the stories' endings. In such cases, children often use a formulaic word that indicates the completion of the story, and caregivers often acknowledge this when it follows the conventional format. The interplay gives opportunities to socialize children into the socio-historically developed cultural norms.

<ha>Concluding remarks

<p1>In this article, we have highlighted several strategies employed by caregivers to encourage toddlers to launch, sustain and end a story using picture books. Our analysis indicates that toddlers are fond of stories long before they can tell stories on their own. Therefore, when they are provided with appropriate communicative assistance, they frequently engage actively in storytelling. Meanwhile, caregivers are eager to shape toddlers' utterances according to the socio-culturally structured script of the story. To conclude, we will reconsider three key features of storytelling in everyday interaction. First, early storytelling constitutes shared, collaborative practices on the parts of both tellers and recipients (cf. Mandelbaum, 2010; Filipi, 2017; Cekaite & Björk-Willén, 2018). Our examples

demonstrated that the caregivers and toddlers cooperatively co-authored the beginning, body and ending of storytelling. Throughout the process, they flexibly and frequently switched roles of teller and recipient, as well as fluctuated between passive and active engagement with the activity. Therefore, as Lerner (1992, p. 247) observed, ‘Assisted storytelling is a systematic elaboration of storytelling organization with opportunities for a story consociate to participate in both the delivery and reception of the story from the story preface, throughout the story, and into the final reception by story recipients’, even when the storytellers or consociates are toddlers.

Second, various bodily behaviours, including gaze, facial expression and body orientation, on the part of both teller and recipient, constitute an integral aspect of storytelling (cf. Goodwin, 2006). For instance, analysis of Extract 5 revealed that, from a very young age, children are keenly aware of their caregivers’ gaze. Contingent not only on whether the caregivers look at them but also on how they look at them, toddlers may continue, revise, or cease their activities. The caregivers’ gaze can thus function as a means of social control for children (Kidwell, 2005; Sidnell, 2006; Cekaite & Björk-Willén, 2018). In this vein, linking stories with here-and-now situations generates more nuanced and less scripted utterances in association with their bodily resources during picture book reading activities.

Third, by voicing and animating the picture book texts, children are encouraged to experience the embodiment and self-reflection associated with rich cultural knowledge. Associating the picture book text with real-life situations also reinforces the link between personal experience and textual knowledge. Storytelling practices thus provide children with effective tools for bridging the ‘context of situation’ and the ‘context of culture’. As Sacks (1978) has previously observed, the story-like structure of telling is often designed to transmit norms and concerns about their everyday social world to the intended audience – in this case, toddlers. Several grammatical features (e.g. modality markers, interactional particles, *te-ageru* construction, middle voice, subject drop, honorifics), conventional expressions and formulaic words of the Japanese language were effectively used to structure the storytelling’s progress and to ensure that storytelling emerged as a distinctive and identifiable form of talk. Moreover, reference to picture books during storytelling practices provides young children with a micro-habitat that could nurture their literacy habitus, as a set of historically contingent and culturally situated organizing principles that shape individual involvement with text (Sterponi, 2012, p. 227), even before those children begin reading and comprehending text.

Hence, by exposing children to linguistic and interactional intricacies, and using the picture book as a set of environmental clues, storytelling functions as a valuable device in orchestrating attention, affect, convention and morality, and accomplishing language socialization in caregiver–child interactions.

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<ha>Appendix: Interlinear gloss abbreviations

<end>ACC: accusative; ASP: aspect marker; CAU: causative suffix; COND: conditional form; COP: copula; CP: conjunctive particle; DAT: dative; DIM: diminutive marker; HON: honorific marker; IJ: interjection; LK: linker; NAME: proper name; NEG: negative; NOM: nominative; PP: pragmatic particle; PST: past; Q: question marker; QT: quotative particle; SSW: sound-symbolic word; TE: conjunctive (-te form); VOL: volitional suffix.

<ha>Notes

1 It should be noted that many analyses of storytelling in conversation have based their findings primarily on the activity of recounting personal experiences. The reading or re-telling of written/depicted stories, as analysed in this article, entails a different interactional setting. For example, in picture book reading activities, the interactive roles of teller and listener may not be as distinct as they would be in the recounting of personal experiences, wherein the teller usually has the epistemic primacy required to access the story. A picture book, however, is often accessible to both participants in the interaction and may thus invite them to co-tell the story. For this very reason, the picture book-based storytelling often appears in early caregiver–child interaction and its sequential organization merits detailed analysis.

2 See www.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/~sitakura/infant_scientist.html.

3 In the extracts, utterances are transcribed according to a modified version of the conventions developed in conversation analysis research (for details, see Jefferson, 2004). To indicate a rasping or ‘creaky’ voice quality, we use two number signs (# #) enclosed, instead of the two asterisks (* *) enclosed, that were used by Jefferson (ibid.). Jefferson’s transcription symbols can be found at the end of this issue.

<!The following note is in four lines, and the last three of them should be in Courier. Please adjust the size of the Courier lines to scale them proportionately relative to the standard note lines!>

4 The original phrase in the book (Hasegawa, 2006) is as follows.

okaasan no oheso no ana kara mieru mieru.
mother LK navel LK hole from see/seen see/seen

It can be seen from the hole of the mother’s navel.

5 Active and passive voices of the same verb are expressed as ‘miru’ (see) and ‘mirareru’ (be seen), respectively.

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