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PDF issue: 2024-04-29

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(Citation)
神戸大学国際コミュニケーションセンター論集,4:17-38

(Issue Date)
2007

(Resource Type)
departmental bulletin paper

(Version)
Version of Record

(JaLCDOI)
https://doi.org/10.24546/81000965

(URL)
https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14094/81000965

I don't trust you, but could you put it like this?

Accomplishing (non)nativeness in bilingual interaction

Tim Greer[1]

1. An introduction to situated identity

The ability to competently switch between languages has long been a marker of bilingualism, at least for many laypeople. Conversely, a display of hesitancy may cause co-participants to call a speaker's bilingual proficiency into question. By applying Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (Sacks, 1992), this study will investigate how the relational pairs of genuineness/artifice and authority/deligitimacy can work in conjunction to challenge the widely held view that so-called native-speakers hold positions of power in mixed-proficiency conversations. A secondary aim is to draw attention to the hazards of assuming that visible aspects of social identity (such as "race"/ethnicity) are the most pertinent explanation for any particular instance of medium repair (Gafaranga, 2000).

The analysis in this paper tracks the emergent nature of identities in interaction by focusing on a sequence of bilingual talk in which a novice speaker of Japanese (Max) challenges the linguistic authority of an expert Japanese-speaking peer (Mick), due in part to Mick's failure to provide a timely English explanation of a Japanese lexical item. In addition we will consider the role of other co-present participants in accomplishing their own bilingual authenticity in relation to the dispute. Finally, the paper reflects on the way the participants linguistically index co-membership in the identity category "multi-ethnic Japanese" by using phonologically Japanese English among each other and repairing it to standard forms of English when addressing the novice participant.

2. Theoretical background

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) view identity as "the social positioning of self and other" (p. 586), noting that "identities encompass macro-level demographic categories, temporary and interactionally specific stances and participant roles, and local, ethnographically emergent cultural positions" (p. 585).

In Zimmerman's terms such interactionally sensitive identities can be viewed as *discourse*, *situated* and *transportable* identities (Zimmerman, 1998). At the most micro end of the scale, are discourse identities—those ways that participants understand their turn-by-turn role at any particular moment in the conversation. These are typified by such interactionally occasioned

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categories as "current speaker", "recipient" or "repair initiator". On the other end of the scale are transportable identities, or what are often referred to in a somewhat over-generalized manner as "social identities". Visibly (or audibly[i]) available features of a speaker's identity, such as gender, "race" or age are potentially assignable or claimable as relevant to a participant's identity at any particular time. Somewhere between these two come *situated* identities; context-related, fluid understandings of self such as "student", "customer" or "opponent".

A commonsense account of *novice* and *expert* identities in second language usage might presuppose that an expert "native speaker"[ii] should possess some claim to linguistic authority and that expert bilingual users of two languages in particular would receive deference from novices in relation to matters of linguistic knowledge. While this undoubtedly turns out to be the situation in many cases, this paper aims to document a case in which just the opposite occurs.

A non-native speaker of Japanese asks a bilingual Japanese-English speaker for help in decoding some kanji[iii] characters. As we shall see in the analysis, the non-native speaker doubts the honesty of the native-speaker's response, making instead the situated identity "liar" procedurally consequential at a point in the interaction when other transportable identities such as "bilingual", "Japanese" or "native" could also be ascribed. Interestingly, the analysis will show how the novice later invokes other co-present speaker's bilingual proficiencies in the pursuit of "the truth".

3. A counter-chronological single case analysis

In the movie *Memento*, the main character Leonard (Guy Pearce) suffers from short-term memory loss. The film begins at a certain key event (a murder) and, referencing the protagonist's mental condition, the narrative is told in a series of flashbacks that gradually reveals (to both Leonard and the audience) the events that lead up to the critical incident.

As fate would have it, a similar sort of situation occurred when I began to look at the data that are analyzed in this paper. I began by noticing a key incident that related to my broader study, an episode of identity-related bilingual interaction. I was intrigued by the way a pair of bilingual multi-ethnic Japanese teenagers used phonologically-Japanese English with each other and then immediately repaired it to standard American English to deliver it to a third American participant.

In order to better understand this incident I began to look at what had happened immediately before it. There I found that the American had questioned the authenticity of what one of the bilinguals had said, and so sought a second opinion from others. Initially I had assumed that this was related to their transportable identities (Zimmerman, 1998), in this case, ethno-linguistic identities, meaning that the judgment of a balanced bilingual would have greater credibility than that of someone who was clearly a "non-native" .

However, by returning even further to an earlier point in the sequence I was able to discover that "the relevant thing" (Edwards, 1998) was in fact a situated identity, and one that was indeed procedurally consequential for the ongoing talk.

While this process was undoubtedly a convoluted way to get at the data, it did serendipitously allow me to achieve a deeper understanding of how the participant identities were being made relevant in this interaction. A typical CA approach would demand that I present these data strictly in the order that the participants themselves experienced them, but since much was learned by analyzing them in counter-chronological segments I decided to conduct a single case analysis of the sequence in the way that I as the analyst first looked at it. This is not to disregard the importance of sequence in the interactional occasioning of identity. Indeed, by arranging the analysis in a series of "flashbacks", I aim to advocate the need for an awareness of the way that identities are indexed as local, temporary and interactionally specific stances (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; 2005).

At the same time, it is hoped that presenting the data in a counter-chronological *Memento* style will serve as a warning to analysts not to assume *a priori* that any external identity is the one that is most relevant to the participants at a particular point in time.

4. Background to the sequence

The sequence of talk that will be analyzed in this paper was recorded at an international school in Japan in 2002 as part of a broader study of codeswitching and multiethnic Japanese identity (Greer, 2001, 2003, 2005). The participants are twelfth graders who all speak both Japanese and English to varying degrees. A summary of their ethnolinguistic backgrounds can be found in table 1.

Table 1 A summary of participant backgrounds

Pseudonym	**Age**	**Grade**	**Nationalities**	**First language**	**Second language**	**Years in Japan**
Mick	17	12th	American-Japanese	Japanese	English	17
Max	17	12th	American	English	Japanese	5
Ryan	17	12th	American	English	Japanese	14
Ashley	16	11th	American	English	Japanese	15
Kate	17	12th	American-Japanese	Japanese	English	17
Nina	17	12th	British-Japanese	Japanese	English	16

The conversation in question was recorded at lunchtime around a table that was part of the unspoken territory that belonged to this group of teenagers. The recording happened relatively early on in my fieldwork at the school so although the participants had become used to my observations, this is one of the first times I had left the camera running at their lunch table *in absentia*. The students had positioned themselves according to the diagram in Figure 1 and the

framegrab in Figure 2 provides a further indication of where the key participants in the sequence were seated in relation to each other.

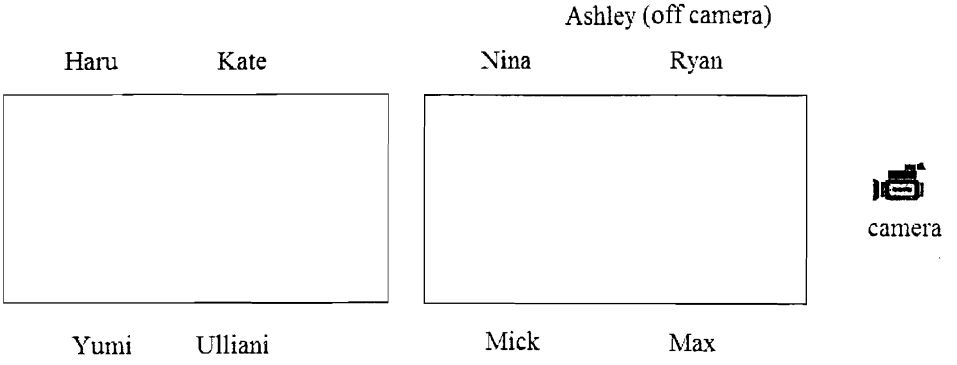


Figure 1: Seating arrangement during the sequence

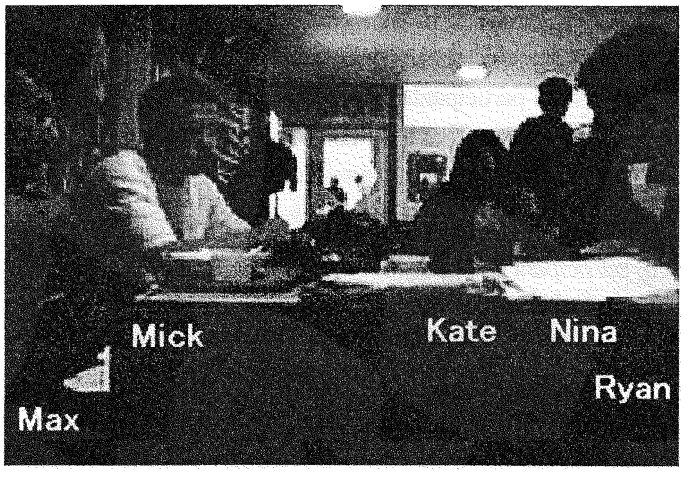


Figure 2: Some of the key participants in this sequence

This instance of multi-party multilingual talk actually involves three separate conversations that are occurring simultaneously and a complicated web of side sequences and schismings (Egbert, 1997), however the present analysis will focus particularly on the interaction between Mick and Max. Max is completing a homework assignment for his Japanese class that involves writing the pronunciation for a list of kanji characters and he enlists Mick's aid in pronouncing these words. Across the table from them, Ashley and Ryan are discussing a physics problem and partway through the sequence Nina talks to Ryan about some other homework assignment. Yumi, Ulliani, Haru and Kate are seated at the far table and their conversation is largely inaudible,

although Kate appears to be attending to the talk at both ends of the table, at least for some of the time. Most of the peripheral conversations have been omitted from the transcript for the sake of clarity.

5. Discussion

As outlined above, this analysis will document six segments from the conversation in counter-chronological sequence. In other words, the simplified version in the segment below actually occurred towards the end of the conversation, but will be examined first because it contains the instance of bilingual interaction that originally drew my attention[iv]. After that we will consider the way talk that led up to this key event.

Goh sru: A key event

We will begin the analysis by looking at the key event through a series of framegrabs[v] taken from the video (Figures 3-7) in order to note the way that the focal participant, Mick, uses gaze shift in conjunction with codeswitching to involve other co-present multiethnic Japanese participants in his search for a translation of the word *tooru* ("go through").

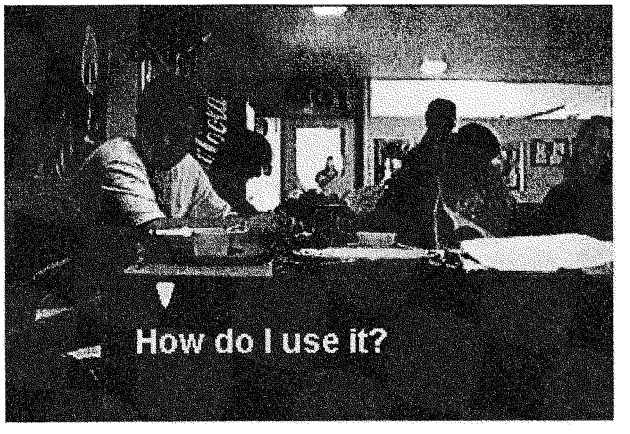


Figure 3: Max asks Mick the meaning of the Japanese word "tooru" (line 130)

Figure 4 Max disengages eye contact and repeats the target Japanese word (line 134)

Figure 5 Mick invites Kate and Ninas' participation in the word search (line 135)

Figure 6: Nina gives a phonologically-Japanese English translation of *tooru* (line 141)

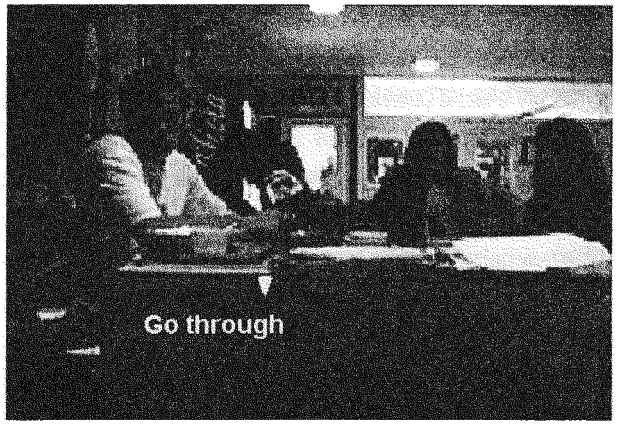


Figure 7: Mick returns gaze to Max's page and repeats the phrase with standard American English pronunciation (line 142)

The transcript of the conversation from which these framegrabs were taken is as follows:

Excerpt 1 Tooru goh sru

```
120 Max:    'n this?
121 Mick:   tooru
            pass through
            (( 通る ))
122 Max:    ((looks up at Mick))
```

```
123 Mick:   it means to go:
124         [((moves hand up and down in a cutting motion))]
125         [                (1.3)                          ]
126         (in a nice and str-) (along the way/only)
127 Max:    no stops?=
128 Mick:   =there's there's the kanji for Odori
                                            Main Street
                                            ((大踊り a place in this town))
129         (2.3)
130 Max:    how do I use it?
131         (1.7) ((Mick averts his gaze))
132 Mick:   [    ((coughs))  ]
133 Max:    [It doesn't mean](odori)
134 Mick:→  tooru ((turns to face Kate and Nina))
            pass through
135 Mick:   tooru tte [nan*  tsara * * ii ]  n  daro:
            tooru QT  what QT-say-COND good  PT  wonder
            How would you say tooru?
136 Nina:             [((coughs on each *))]
137         (1.1)
138 Kate:   [huh-]
139 Ryan?:  [to: ]ru
140         (1.5)
141 Nina:→  tooru? goh sru:.
            tooru? Go through.
142 Mick:→  go through mm
143         ((nods and returns gaze to Max's page))
144         [                (3.2)                 ]
145 Max:    [((writes 'Go through' on his paper))]
```

Max, an American novice speaker of Japanese, requests Mick to provide him with an English equivalent of the Japanese word *tooru*. Very simply, in line 135 Mick asks Nina and Kate in Japanese to assist in formulating the translation for Max. Nina responds first by repeating the word *tooru* and then by supplying a candidate equivalent in phonologically-Japanese English. In line 141, Nina pronounces "go through" as "*goh sru*:", a rendering that adheres to Japanese phonological constraints while still delivering the semantic equivalent of *tooru* in English. In other words, Nina's response seems to be stylistically indexing Japanese even though it is ostensibly English.

Based on the wider corpus of video recordings and a year of ethnographic observations, I can be confident that Nina is not pronouncing *go through* in this way due to some kind of L1 transfer. She is proficient in standard forms of British English and could quite easily have said "go through" if she had so wished. One possible explanation is that she produces a form of the utterance that is designed with a particular recipient in mind, namely Mick, a fluent speaker of Japanese. Another reason might be that she is implicitly acknowledging the preference for same-medium (Auer, 1984, 1995; Gafaranga, 2000; Li Wei, 1998), by completing the action sequence initiated by Mick in Japanese in the same code, at least with respect to pronunciation.

Either way, by saying *goh sru* instead of *go through*, Nina seems to be demonstrating that although Mick has requested an English lexical item, it is acceptable to deliver it in a Japanese voice. If Nina had been addressing Max directly, she might have used standard English pronunciation as she did in several other places in the corpus[vi].

In the next turn (line 142), Mick ratifies Nina's response by repeating it as he nods and shifts his gaze to Max's paper, where Max writes down "go through". The striking thing about this short segment is that Mick's rendition of "go through" is delivered with relatively standard English pronunciation, especially in comparison to Nina's version in prior turn. In short, the two versions of the phrase are hearably designed for different recipients, Nina's for Mick and Mick's for Max. By repeating the phrase Mick is first and foremost acknowledging receipt (Greer et al, forthcoming) to Nina, but by doing so in standard English pronunciation as he turns to Max, Mick is also enacting medium repair and signaling a shift back to standard English.

So at first glance it would seem that the participants' relative transportable identities are being made relevant to the ongoing talk in this instance and that language choice is being used as a membership categorization device (Cashman, 2005; Gafaranga, 1999). In line 135, Mick is commonsensibly addressing other expert Japanese speakers at the table and the fact that Kate and Nina demonstrate their recipiency in subsequent turns shows this to be true. A logical conclusion would be that Nina and Mick are speaking to each other as native speakers of Japanese, and in line 142 Mick reconstitutes the participant constellation to include Max, making relevant their relative identities as English speakers.

At the same time, in verifying Nina's translation as acceptable, Mick's rendition of *goh sru* as *go through* may also somehow seek to reestablish himself as a proficient speaker of English, given that he has been asked for an English translation and was unable to arrive at a timely response. By calling on others for assistance with the English equivalent of *tooru*, Mick has indexed Kate and Nina's superior linguistic expertise, and therefore cast himself in the category novice, by means of the standardized relational pair (Sacks, 1992:327) that is invoked. In this sense, switching to standard forms of English is hearable as a bid by Mick to reestablish his linguistic authority.

In order to discover further evidence that Mick is deferring to Nina in terms of bilingual proficiency, we must go back and examine what led up to the *goh sru* incident. Returning to the

beginning of the conversation, we find that the American, Max, initially asked Mick about the reading of another kanji character, 分. The most basic reading for this kanji is *fun*, but it can also be pronounced *bun*, *pun*, *wakaru* or *wakeru*, depending on its combination with other characters. It has a variety of meanings based around the notion of *division*, including *minute*, *separate* and *understand*.

Excerpt 2 You wanna' help me?

```
01 Max:   Hey Mickey you wanna' help me with my
02        Japanese homework?
03        (0.4)
04 Mick:  yeah.
05 Max:   (th- the first one)  wakannai. ((points at page))
                               understand-NEG
                               I don't get the first one.
06 Mick:  ((sits))
07 Mick:  jibun. ((points to chest)) yourself.
          one's self ((自分))
08 Max:   jibun?
09 Mick:  jibun.
10 Max:   (2.3) ((writes on page))
11 Max:   which means?
12 Mick:  (   )
13        (1.9)
14 Max:   this one?
15        (2.3)   ((peripheral talk from Ryan and Ashley))
16 Mick:  what's a two (       )s?
17 Max:   two (        )
18 Mick:  okay then just one.
19        (0.3)
20 Max:   this one's wi:th, this one.
21        [(     .)]
22 Mick:  [  yeah  ] that's it. (.) cool.
23        (0.7)
24 Max:   °(hiragana is bun)°
25 Mick:  fun:. it m:means to separate. ((“seperet”))
26        (1.1) ((Max point to page and turns to Mick))
27 Mick:  fun.
```

```
28          (0.2)
29 Max:     fun?
30 Mick:    or wakeru.
31 Max:     fun.
```

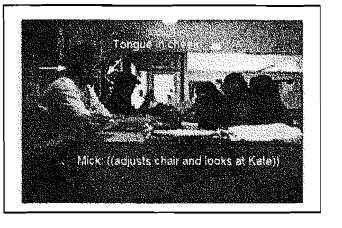
Just as Mick arrives at the table Max uses a summons to request assistance in reading the kanji on his page (lines 1-5). Max has been reading his homework page alone, and there has been no assistance from the others up until this point. He is able to call upon Mick due to both availability and proximity. Having just arrived at the table, Mick is not engaged in conversation as the other participants are at this point. In addition, Mick is standing right next to Max, and then later sits next to him (line 6), which makes him the participant who is physically closest to Max.

In addition, Mick is known to Max to be an expert speaker of Japanese and therefore someone who should know the readings for the characters he is attempting to decode. Throughout this section of the sequence Max acknowledges Mick's superior Japanese proficiency by requesting clarification on pronunciation (lines 8, 29) and meaning (line 5, 11) of the words on his page. This asymmetry in the talk, in which one person asks the questions and the other answers them, helps accomplish their respective situated identities according to the standard relational pair *novice/expert*. It is clear from the transcript that Max does not know the answer to the questions he is asking, as evidenced by the fact that he writes down Mick's response (line 10) and that he repeats what Mick says for clarification (line 24, 29).

In other words, at this point in the conversation there does not seem to be any dispute about the speakers' respective identities. However, in the next excerpt there is a critical misunderstanding that leads Max to question what the native Japanese speaker is telling him.

Excerpt 3 Doubting the reading

```
25 Mick:  fun:. it m:means to separate. ((“seperet”))
26        (1.1) ((Max point to page and turns to Mick))
27 Mick:  fun.
28        (0.2)
29 Max:   fun?
30 Mick:  or wakeru.
31 Max:   fun.
32        [                (2.5)                ]
33 Mick:→[((adjusts chair and looks at Kate))]
34 Ryan?: fun [(wake.)]
35 Max:       [ hh hh ] [wa:it wai- wait.
36                      [((looks at Mick))
```



```
37          (1.0) ((Mick looks at Max))
38 Max:     fun wakeru? hh
39          (1.0)
40 Mick:    uhuh.
41          (0.3)
42 Mick:    wakeru just means like separate.
43 Max:     ((turns to Ryan)) he tellin' the truth?
44 Ryan:    what kanji man.=
45 Max:     =[          fun        or          wakeru.      ]
46 Mick:→   [((leans forward, smiles directly at camera))]
47          (0.4)
48 Max:     ((to Ryan)) [            °which.°          ]
49 Mick:→               [((gives peace sign to camera))]
50          °haha°
51 Max:     ( nedan.) (.) then [this fun or wakeru.]
52 Mick:                       >[HEy HEy hey hey. yo]<=
53 Mick:      =yo yo yo yo. Ryan Ryan.
54          (0.9)
55 Mick:    Ryan. move that camera (would ya)?
56          (0.5)
57 Mick:    [  (yeah  )]
58 Max:     [I said I'd] pay him five bucks.
59          (0.6)
60 Mick:    eh?
61 Max:     I'd do it for five bucks.
62 Mick:    [              (2.6)              ]
63          [((Mick nods and looks at Kate))]
64 Mick:    put your hand out I'll let you have
65          five hundred yen (right here)
66          ((reaches into pocket))
67 Max:     why don't you slap* it on the table
68                          ((*slaps table))
69          (    ) walk by and (smoke) that camera
70          (3.8) ((Mick looks at Kate))
```

As noted earlier, through the interactional practices he has used, Max has cast Mick into the membership category of "expert", which makes his own identity as "novice" consequential for the ongoing talk, at least until line 33. Up until that point, Mick has accepted that the kanji he

is looking at (分) is to be read *fun*. When Mick suggests that the kanji can also be read as *wakeru* (line 29) Max seems to doubt his word and eventually turns to Ryan for a second opinion (line 41), with an other-initiated repair sequence that questions the integrity of what Mick has said- "he tellin' the truth?"

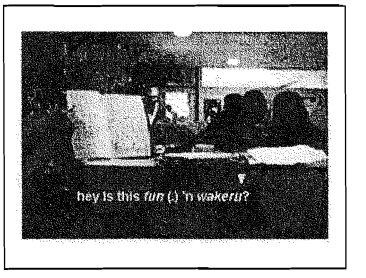
That is to say, at this point Max is not questioning Mick's Japanese proficiency, but the truth-value of his utterance. The incumbent identity category that is now being made relevant for Mick is *liar*. This seems to have been occasioned by Mick's embodied action in line 31. Moving in one's chair and looking at something else can both be viewed as signals of a lie in progress. But this alone is insufficient justification. It must be considered in combination with something that can be viewed as worthy of doubt. In this case it seems that, to Max at least, the alternative reading *wakeru* is the trouble source.

Mick does not do anything to defend himself at this point. While Max is appealing to Ryan for a second opinion (lines 41-49), Mick performs a hyper-stylized display of attending to the camera, which serves to make him unavailable to the talk between Max and Ryan. He then attempts to involve Ryan in the business of noticing the camera through a summons in overlap with Max at a point where he is negotiating the two lexical items (lines 49-51). This is successful in postponing Max's line of inquiry, at least momentarily, but it is unclear whether this is an intentional move or just an outcome of the fact that Mick is disattending to the talk.

At this moment in the conversation, Max's belief that Mick is giving him a false reading for the kanji is as yet unresolved. Mick has not adequately defended himself and Max is not sure whether he is telling the truth or not. Note that Mick's identity as a native-speaker is not in question. It is not that he doesn't know the correct reading but, in Max's mind at least, that he has given false information. As a result Max seeks further clarification from others at the table.

Excerpt 2 Getting a second opinion

```
71 Max:   Ryan is this fun. [ (.)    'n      wakeru?          ]
72                          [((holds book to Ryan, pointing))]
73 Ryan:  I don't know if it's fun.
74 Max:   what is it?
75 Ryan:  isn't it ban?
76        (1.3)
77 Mick:  bun. as in a:h. (juubun)
78 Ryan:  [like in ippun   or    juubun. ]
                   one minute   enough
79 Mick:  [     ((looks at Ulliani))     ]
80 Max:   (Or/Oi) Ashley? Ashley you know what this kanji is.
81        (1.4)
```



```
82 Ryan:  Ashley's busy Max.
```

Max returns to his pursuit of the validity of the two readings *fun* and *wakeru* in line 71, by again asking Ryan for adjudication. However, Ryan's response is non-committal, disclaiming knowledge of the first reading Mick proffered (line 73) and suggesting an alternative reading that proves to be inaccurate (line 75). It is not only the fact that Ryan doesn't know the appropriate readings, but also the way that he makes these facts available that casts him as a member of the novice category along with Max. By framing his alternative reading as a negative question in line 75, Ryan initiates repair in a way that is doing uncertainty. This turn is designed in itself to be ratified by some other speaker, and though the direction of his gaze is not clear from the video, it is significant that it is Mick who chooses to respond to this question in line 77 to repair Ryan's pronunciation of the word *bun*, again demonstrating that he is the expert speaker in this conversation.

In line 79, Mick again disattends to Max's line of questioning by looking at another co-participant. Although he is the most proficient Japanese speaker of these four teenagers, Mick at this point does not appear to be too concerned about justifying his assertion that the kanji has several readings. It is likely that for Mick, at this moment in time the situated identity that he is attempting to establish is *joker* or *prankster*. He is more concerned with noticing the camera than he is with pursuing Max's inquiries about kanji. Unfortunately his bids at joking are being misinterpreted by Max, who seems to believe they are somehow related to his questions rather than the camera. In line 80, Max makes an appeal to yet another participant, Ashley, but gets no response[vii].

Although Ryan and Ashley are clearly not native speakers of Japanese, by initiating repair and selecting them as the co-participants to complete the repair, Max is designating them as at least better at Japanese than he is. Moreover, by asking specifically for repair on the truth-value of a statement made by a known expert speaker of Japanese, he is putting them in a position whereby they must verify the legitimacy of a native-speaker's statement based on their own knowledge. Ryan has made public that he does not have sufficient knowledge on this kanji (line 73), and Ashley is not available for comment. Having not arrived at a satisfactory solution, Max then appeals to Kate, who is not in immediate physically proximity, but who is known to Max as an expert speaker of Japanese.

Excerpt 5 Getting further opinions

```
83        (1.9)
84 Max:   OR KATE.
85        [              (0.6)            ]
86        [((Kate and Nina look at Max))]
```

```
87 Max:   Kate
88          [                (0.5)                ]
89          [((Kate and Nina turn gaze to Max))   ]
90          [        ((Mick looks at Kate))       ]
91 Max:     ((holds up book)) kore fun   desho?
                              This  minute right
                              This is fun right?
92 Kate:    dotchi?
            which
            Which one?
93 Max:     bun or fun    ((both bun and fun are written 分))
94          (0.6)
95 Max:     Mick's telling me it's bun or wakeru.
96          (1.0)                          ((分ける))
97 Max:     what is it?
98          (0.6)
99 Mick:    fun da  tte  datte
            fun COP QT   because
100         ippun toka  ichi toka kuttsuke
            one minute or oneor join
101         ttara [fun toka iwanaku naru    desho
            COND  fun   etc  say-NEG become TAG
            I said it was fun. But when you put it with
            ichi or ippun you can't say fun, right?
102 Nina:         [fun to bun to wakeru (.) zembu
                   fun and bun and wakeru   all
                   fun and bun and wakeru. All (of them).
103         (0.6)
104 Kate:   it's both.
105         (1.8)
```

In his continuing effort to clarify the reading of a Japanese kanji character, Max summons Kate by name (line 84), which again adjusts the participant constellation. Having established recipiency, in line 86 he holds up his page and produces a confirmation check that asserts his current understanding of the pictograph in question; "this is *fun* (ふん) right?" Note that Max formulates his request for clarification in line 91 in Japanese, in contrast to the English he used to initiate the same action with Ryan and Ashley earlier in the sequence. This choice of medium accomplishes identity for both the speaker and the recipient, associating Kate with Japanese and making an

implicit claim that Max, the speaker, is able to design a simple assertion in the language which he is disputing with Mick.

Kate then requests a specification: *dotchi*: "which one?" Max responds with a clarification that specifies two alternative readings, indicating that he believes these to be correct. After a 0.6 second pause during which Kate is yet to offer any further acknowledgement, Max self-selects to do an informing "Mick's telling me it's *bun* or *wakeru*". Given that Max is appealing to Kate for adjudication, we can assume that at this point he doesn't believe *wakeru* to be an accurate reading. In other words, the novice Max is doubting the validity of what the expert Mick has told him. In so doing it is possible to hear this turn not only as simple informing, but also as an accusation—"Mick is telling me something that is inaccurate or untrue". Evidence to show that Mick has also heard this as an accusation comes in line 95 when he switches to Japanese and provides a defense; "I said it was *fun.*" Since a defense is a preferred second pair part to an accusation, according to the next-turn proof we can say that the participants themselves have heard it that way. Mick immediately follows this with the connective expression *datte* to provide an account for the disagreement. In line 98, Nina self-selects in overlap to produce a rather strong adjudication which ratifies all three readings. Kate then provides an English medium gloss that likewise performs an assessment on the accuracy of the readings. On the surface, then it is possible to hear this as a further example where relative novice/expert identities become consequential in the talk. A casual analyst might be tempted to blame Max's appeal to the girls on Mick's inability to express himself in English in a timely manner.

However there was one turn in the next segment that led me to believe that there was more than simply expert/novice identities at work in this sequence.

Excerpt 6 I don't trust you but...

```
106 Mick:    ((looks at Max)) (°awri:ght°)=
107 Max:     =I don't trust you but
108          could you put it [like this?]
109 Mick:                     [  °yeah°   ]
110         (0.4) ((Max starts writing))
111 Mick:   °un?hm.°
112         (2.2) ((Max stops writing))
113 Max:    which means?
114         (2.2)
115 Mick:   't's s::eparate
116 Max:    (wakeru)
            (seperate)
117         ((Mick nods))
```

```
118          (0.8)
119 Mick:  yeah it's separate
```

In line 107-108, having accepted the adjudication from Nina and Kate, and as he is writing the word *wakeru* on his page, Max again seeks Mick's advice in a way that this is heavily laden with moral work: "I don't trust you but could you put it like this?" In effect, he designs his request for clarification with a precursor that illegitimates the authority of the recipient. When I initially listened to this data, I was confused. Why doesn't the American trust the Japanese speaker? He is a native, isn't he? It was only by going right back to the start of the conversation and analyzing it all in detail that I realized that Max is referring here to the possibility that Mick's response might not be truthful. In other words, he is indexing the situated identities *liar* or *prankster* that have already been made relevant in the proceeding talk.

6. Discussion

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) point out that identities "are never autonomous or independent, but always acquire social meaning in relation to other available identity positions and other social actors" (p. 598). Bucholtz and Hall contest the prevalent but over-simplified view of identity relations as revolving around a single axis: sameness and difference. While clearly one of the ways that members establish their identity in conversation is by adequating and distinguishing themselves with respect to those around them, identities are also relationally constructed through several often overlapping aspects of the relationship between self and other, including similarity/difference, genuineness/artifice, and authority/delegitimacy (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

Max, the non-native, accomplishes illegitimation by rejecting Mick's candidate other-repair, appealing to other co-present bilinguals for adjudication and mitigating bids for repair with dismissive turns, such as "I don't trust you but could you put it like this?" On the other hand, Mick seeks to establish his authority by appealing to other Japanese speakers in fluent Japanese and switching from phonologically-Japanese English to American English when he addresses Max. For her part Nina accomplishes her authority by self-selecting with a succinct translation.

Not all multi-ethnic Japanese are afforded the same level of authenticity and authority. The act of requesting repair with a third party delegitimates the preferred next speaker. Even though Mick's understanding of Japanese is accurate, his inability to provide a real-time translation into English throws his authority into doubt, at least in the eyes of the novice who doubts the truth of what he is saying. Bilingual proficiency, in particular the ability to provide prompt other-repair in the form of translation, can be invoked as a means of delegitimizing an interactant's bilingual identity.

At the same time identity can be in part habitual and less than fully conscious. Japanese may orient to a co-participant's NNS status by repeating a Katakana word with English pronunciation (Hosoda, 2001:30), but when Mick enacts other-repair by changing Nina's "Go sru" to "go

through" to deliver it to Max, it is not neccessarilly in order to make it comprehensible to the non-native, since Max is already writing it at that point, which demonstrates that he already understood it.

7. Conclusion

In any specific context, multi-ethnic Japanese people may be considered—by themselves or those around them—to be either Japanese or non-Japanese. There will also be moments at the intermingled edges of ethnicity, in which their multi-ethnic '*haafu*' identity is the "relevant thing" (Edwards, 1998) about them. Applying a microscope to specific interactional sequences can help reveal the interplay between ethnicities that goes to make up the multi-ethnic experience. Adding this multitude of experiences together ultimately results in an individual ethnic identity which is simultaneously Japanese and non-Japanese, a seemingly paradoxical existence which suggests a third worldview that is unique to multi-ethnic people (Greer, 2005). Being multi-ethnic is not an either/or choice but a both/and experience.

Just as aspects of Japanese or non-Japanese identities can be foregrounded and backgrounded in interaction, so too the socially constructed category of 'native' is anything but constant. Mick's appeal to Nina and Kate for confirmation may well be orienting to their relative linguistic proficiencies, and therefore indexing identity category pairs like novice and expert. However these have only been accomplished in a sequential environment in which other situated identities such as liar or prankster have already been in play. Since Max, the non-native, has called Mick's response into question by appealing to others for mediation, this makes it easier for Mick himself to call on them for assistance immediately after, when he needs help with the translation of another lexical item.

Through its detailed examination of identity-in-interaction, it is hoped this analysis has drawn attention to the danger that lies in assuming that nativeness or ethnicity is an omnirelevant category. There is a need for a deeper awareness of novice and expert identities in relation to other situated and discourse identities that may be at play in talk.

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Appendix 1: Transcription Conventions

Data in this paper have been transcribed based on the following conventions developed by Gail Jefferson, as outlined in Hutchby and Woofit (1998), ten Have (1999) and Markee and Kasper (2004). Where Japanese occurs, I have adopted the translation conventions used by Mori (1999) and Tanaka (1999).

SIMULTANEOUS UTTERANCES

`huh [ oh ] I see`	Left square brackets mark the start of overlapping talk
`[what]`	Right square brackets mark the end of an overlap

CONTIGUOUS UTTERANCES

=	Equal signs indicate that: a) Turn continues at the next identical symbol on the next line b) Talk is latched; that is, there is no interval between the end of prior turn and the start of next turn

INTERVALS WITHIN AND BETWEEN UTTERANCES

`(0.4)`	Numerals in parentheses mark silence, in tenths of a second
`(.)`	A period in parentheses indicates a micro-pause (less than 0.1 sec)

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPEECH DELIVERY

`hhh hee hah`	indicate laughter or breathiness.
`.hh`	indicates audible inhalation.
`hh`	indicates audible exhalation.
<u>dog</u>	Underlining indicates marked stress.
`yes?`	A question mark indicates rising intonation.
`yes.`	A period indicates falling intonation.
`so,`	A comma indicates low-rising intonation, suggesting continuation.
`HUH`	Capitals indicate increased loudness.
`°thanks°`	Degree signs indicate decreased volume.

`$No way$`	Dollar signs indicate utterance is delivered in a "laughing voice".
`><`	Inward indents embed talk that is faster than surrounding talk.
`<>`	Outward indents embed talk that is slower than surrounding talk.
`go:::d`	One or more colons indicate lengthening of the preceding sound. Each additional colon represents a lengthening of one beat.
`no bu-`	A single hyphen indicates an abrupt cut-off, with level pitch.

COMMENTARY IN THE TRANSCRIPT

`((hand clap))`	Double parentheses indicate transcriber's comments, including description of non-verbal behaviour.
`the (park)`	Single parentheses indicate an uncertain transcription.
`the (  )`	Empty parentheses indicate an inaudible transcription.

OTHER TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS

→	An arrow draws attention to some phenomenon the analyst wishes to discuss.

TRANSLATION

`ore ja nee`	Italics indicate talk is in Japanese.
`me COP NEG`	Second line gives a literal English gloss of each item.
It's not me.	Third line gives a vernacular English translation in Times New Roman. Where the turn has only one Japanese word, the third tier is omitted.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN LITERAL GLOSS

IP	Interactional particle (e.g. *ne*, *sa*, *no*, *yo*, *na*)
QT	Quotation marker (*-to*, *-tte*)
TAG	Tag-like expression
ACK	Acknowledgement marker

Verbs and Adjectival forms

COP	Copulative verb, variations of the verb *to be*
NEG	Negative morpheme
CONT	Continuing (non-final) form
PAS	Passive form
POL	Polite form
POT	Potential form

Endnotes

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[i] See Miller (2003) for a more detailed discussion of audible difference in non-native speaker conversation.

[ii] While the terms *native speaker* and *non-native speaker* have undoubtedly become ideologically loaded (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Rampton, 1999), recent efforts to replace them with *novice* and *expert* (Carroll, 2000, 2004; Hosoda, 2001) are equally contentious. In this paper I will make use of both sets of descriptors, but with the proviso that each is controversial in some respect.

[iii]The written Japanese language is made up, in part, of thousands of *kanji* characters. These symbols are based on Chinese pictographs but each *kanji* can have multiple readings and is not usually phonetically decodable in the way that English and other European words are.

[iv] Transcriptions are based on the conventions devised by Jefferson, as outlined in Psathas (1995), Hutchby and Woofit (1998), ten Have (1999) and Markee and Kasper (2004). Japanese talk is glossed literally in the second tier and translated vernacularly in the third tier, based on the principles used by Tanaka (1999) and Mori (1999).

[v] In these framegrabs, the inverted triangle indicates the exact point in the utterance at which the shot was taken.

[vi] The transcript below documents one such case in which Nina enacts other-initiated other-repair on a Japanese word usage initially uttered by Max. In line 80 Nina gives a Japanese word with Japanese pronunciation and its equivalent in English ("bamboo") with standard English pronunciation.

```
76 Max:   takebue   (.) alright
          bamboo flute
77 Nina:  it's made out [of ] bamboo (you must mention that)
78 Max:                 [hai]
                         yes
79          (1.1)
80 Nina:→   take (.) take means bamboo=
            bamboo   bamboo
```

[vii] Ashley has earlier been talking to Ryan about some physics homework and appears to be absorbed in a textbook at this stage. He is seated off camera between Ryan and Nina.