

JAPANESE CONJUNCTIVE *GA*: ITS DISCOURSE
FUNCTIONS AND VARIATION

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I: INTRODUCTION

The objective of this paper is to explore the discourse functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*, whose primary dictionary meaning is “but; however” (Kondo & Takano, 1986, p. 263; “Merriam-Webster,” 1992, pp. 181-2; etc.).

While countless studies on Japanese linguistics focus on the nominative NP marker *ga* in contrast to the so-called topic marker *wa* (e.g., Mikami, 1960; Kuno, 1973; Kuno, 1976; Li & Thompson, 1976; etc.),¹ this study investigates a different type of *ga*. To illustrate this point, we will discuss the following examples:

(1.1) (a) Dare *ga* kachi mashita ka?
 who NOM win PAST Q
 “Who won (the game)?”

(b) Kinô denwa shimashita *ga*, dare mo imasen deshita.
 yesterday call did but who at-all not-there PAST
 “I called (a place) yesterday, *but* no one was there.”

Ga (1.1a) is the nominative marker for the preceding word *dare* “who”.

Meanwhile, *ga* (1.1b) is the conjunctive between the sentences *Kinô denwa shimashita* “I called yesterday” and *dare mo imasen deshita* “no one was there”.

Since these two sentences in (1.1b) have a conflictive logical relationship, the

conflictive conjunctive *ga* “but” is used. Our discussions on *ga* throughout this study will focus exclusively on the Japanese conjunctive *ga* instead of the nominative marker.

It was not until the 19th Century that prescriptive rules came to recognize the Japanese conjunctive *ga* as a conflictive marker. Historical documents provide evidence that classical Japanese used *ga* as an optional subject NP marker.² The following examples illustrate this point:³

(1.2) (a) *Kawa ni ochi shi ga oyogi e zu.*
 river into fall PAST NOM swim could NEG
 “(The person,) who fell into the river [*ga*], couldn’t swim.”
 (Sansom, 1928, p. 278)

(b) *Kawa ni ochi shi mono oyogi e zu.*
 river into fall PAST person swim could NEG
 “The person who fell into the river couldn’t swim.”

In (1.2a), the head noun *mono* “a person” is ellipted from the relativized NP *kawa ni ochi shi mono* “the person who fell into the river,” and the nominative NP marker *ga* is retained. In (1.2b), on the other hand, the NP *kawa ni ochishi mono* retains the head noun *mono* and the *ga* is ellipted. These examples do not intend to suggest that classical Japanese resisted the co-occurrence of the nominative marker *ga* with a head noun of a relativized NP. Instead, they intend to indicate that the absence of *ga* from (1.2a) would obscure the structural function of the relative clause *kawa ni ochishi*. As Sansom (1928, p. 278) argues, it is the physical

appearance of (1.2a) as though *ga* were connecting two clauses that has later developed it into a conjunctive marker.

While the conjunctive use of *ga* seems to have developed as early as the Heian Period (794-1192 A.D.), *ga* initially did not describe any logical relationship between the two clauses. The following well-known opening sentence of *The Tale of Genji*, the world's oldest novel known to date, illustrates this point:

(1.3) Izure no on-toki ni ka, nyôgo kôï amata saburai-sôraikeru
which GEN era at Q woman nobleman many there-was

→ naka ni, ito yangotonaki kiwa ni wa aranu *ga*,
inside at very noble top at TOP NEG

sugurete tokimeki-tamau ari keru.
very attractive exist PAST

Lit. "At a certain era, among many noblemen and women, there was one, not highest ranked [*ga*], who was loved very much by the emperor."

= "In a certain reign there was a lady not of the first rank whom the emperor loved more than any of the others."

(Original Japanese version from YMCA, 1990b, p. 25; English translation from Murasaki-shikibu, 1976, p. 3)

In (1.3), the relative clauses *ito yangotonaki kiwa ni wa aranu* "(who is) not ranked highest" and *sugurete tokimeki-tamau* "(who is) loved very much (by the emperor)" are combined with the conjunctive *ga*, and a head noun *kata* "a person" is ellipted. While *but* seems to be a natural interpretation of *ga* (1.3), Sansom (1928, p. 278), YMCA (1990b, p. 25) and others resist such interpretation,

engagement in official duties. According to Hoffmann (1876, p. 333), *ga* as an abbreviation of *nagara* was observed in the spoken language only. Later, however, the so-called *gembun-itchi* (i.e., the vernacular movement in the Japanese literary circle in the late 19th Century)⁴ granted the abbreviation *ga* the status of a fully established lexical item which “as a rule stand(s) for ‘but’” (Sansom, 1928, p. 279). It is this dual origin (i.e., *ga* as a mere structural connector of two clauses, and *ga* as an abbreviation of *nagara* which has become a fully established lexical item) that has developed *ga* into a polysemous conjunctive in present-day Japanese.

Numerous studies since the 1950s have investigated the Japanese conjunctive *ga* in an attempt to identify its functions. While their studies are indeed based on authentic language data, they have failed to find *ga* functions that are specific to spoken texts because they are almost exclusively based on the data from written texts (see Chapter 2). Additionally, since these studies are essentially oriented to a syntactic approach, they have failed to identify discourse (as opposed to grammatical) functions of *ga*. Under these circumstances, identifying all observable *ga* functions requires different approaches.

This paper aims to achieve the following goals: a) To group all instances of *ga* in a spoken text of substantial length into separate functional categories in our own terms; and b) To compare occurrence patterns of the functional categories in different discourse settings in an attempt to identify the discourse functions of each category. In order to accomplish these two goals, we will employ two of

Schiffrin's (1994) approaches to discourse,⁵ each of which aims to accomplish one of the goals described above. First, in light of potential limitations in the functions that the previous studies have identified, we will conduct a pragmatic analysis (i.e., grouping by functional categories) of *ga* in a text from an interactive setting in an attempt to find all observable functional categories (see Schiffrin, 1994, pp. 190-231 for detailed explanation of the pragmatic analysis). Second, upon identifying the functional categories through the pragmatic analysis, we will conduct a variation analysis of the *ga* categories (i.e., comparing the *ga* distributions) in different discourse settings in an attempt to find the characteristics and discourse functions of each *ga* type (see Schiffrin, 1994, pp. 282-334 for detailed explanation of the variation analysis). While our study provides numerical data (which will be described in detail in Chapters 3-6), it is essentially oriented to qualitative analysis.

This paper reports results and discusses findings of both pragmatic and variation analyses of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*. Chapter 2 reviews the previous studies of *ga*. This chapter shows that these earlier studies have strong tendencies to emphasize the prescriptive value of *ga* as a conflictive marker, and their findings based on limited data sources have impeded sufficient description of *ga* functions. Chapter 3 reports results of the pragmatic analysis, which groups all instances of *ga* in a two-hour live TV talk show into separate functional categories. Especially in light of limited findings in the previous studies that were based almost exclusively on data from written texts, it was our expectation of this

analysis that the live TV talk show, as a spoken setting, would yield more functional categories than previously found.

Upon identification of the functional categories in Chapter 3, we will then conduct the variation analysis of *ga* using data from different discourse settings. Especially, in addition to written and spoken settings, our variation analysis includes data from the Bulletin Board System (BBS), one form of the Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) where the BBS members will electronically post their opinions on a variety of topics for release in the form of a Web page. First, Chapter 4 discusses the method of the variation analysis based on the frequency analysis. In this chapter, we report the discourse settings selected for the analysis, and define a full clause, a unit for measuring *ga* frequency. Second, Chapter 5 reports the results of the variation analysis in all selected discourse settings. Although this study does not analyze the statistical significance of *ga* frequencies based on the numerical data, the substantially different distributions would provide sufficient grounds for our discussions in the following chapter.⁶ Third, based on the data obtained, Chapter 6 offers explanations for the results in the previous chapter. As a conclusion of this study, Chapter 7 summarizes the contributions and discusses limitations of this study. Based on these discussions, we will make suggestions for future studies that will contribute to a further understanding of the functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*.

Notes

¹ A typical Japanese NP consists of a noun followed by a particle, or a marker of the noun's role within a given sentence/utterance. Mikami (1960), Kuno (1973), Kuno (1976), Li et al. (1976) and numerous other studies focus on the nominative marker *ga* in contrast to the so-called topic marker *wa*.

² A case marker, especially the nominative NP marker, was frequently ellipted from sentences in classical Japanese (Inoue, 1984, pp.25-26).

³ Except Conflictive *ga* (also called Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* in this study), which is indicated by the italicized *but*, all *ga* occurrences are indicated in the English translation by [*ga*] throughout this paper.

⁴ *Gembun-itchi* literally means the unification of the written and spoken styles of language. Until the late 19th Century, *kôgo* (the colloquial style) and *bungo* (the classical literary style) were vastly different in their style-specific grammar and vocabulary. Since Shimei Futabatei's (1864-1909) *Ukigumo* (*Drifting Clouds*, 1889; English translation in Futabatei, 1967), a group of renowned novelists led by Koyo Ozaki (1867-1903) and Mibyo Yamada (1868-1910) wrote their works with the ultimate purpose to promote the vernacular style in Japanese literary works (YMCA, 1990a, p. 113; Fogel, 1993). While the two styles have not been fully unified, this literary movement has had a considerable impact on the modernization of written Japanese not only in literature but government documents. As a result of this movement, the form of VPs is virtually the only markedly distinguishable element between the spoken and written styles in present-day Japanese.

⁵ Approaches to discourse identified in Schiffrin (1994) include: Speech Acts Theory; Interactional Sociolinguistics; Ethnography of Communication; Pragmatics; Conversational Analysis; and Variation Analysis.

⁶ While variation analyses are frequently based on the statistical significance of numerical data, a number of studies utilize readily observable differences in the results as the basis for analysis (e.g., Kiesler, Siegel & McGuire, 1984; Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Schiffrin, 1994).

II: REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

The previous chapter pointed out that the linguistic merger of *ga* as a structural connector and the one as an abbreviation of *nagara* resulted in the development of the polysemous conjunctive *ga* in present-day Japanese. As we will mention in detail in this chapter, it is this polysemy that has not only confused the addressees but led prescriptivists to resist *ga*. More specifically, while the *ga* that means *but* has been mostly considered legitimate, other types of *ga* have been constantly criticized by prescriptivists. Prior to discussing the procedures and findings of our analysis, we will discuss previous studies on functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga* as a way to establish the objectives of our studies by identifying the limitations in the previous findings.

A. Previous Studies on *ga* Functions

The Japanese conjunctive *ga* has been roughly divided into two categories in terms of its functions: the conflictive *ga*, which carries the lexical meaning *but*; and non-conflictive *ga*, which does not carry the meaning *but*. While the function

of the conflictive *ga* is straightforward, those of the non-conflictive *ga* will vary.

The following examples will illustrate this point:

- (2.1) (a) Hashiri mashita *ga*, maniai masen deshita.
 run PAST but be-in-time NEG PAST
 “I ran, *but* I didn’t make it in time.”
- (b) Tenki desu *ga*, kyô ichi-nichi wa daijôbu deshô.
 weather COPULA today whole-day TOP okay will-be
 “As for weather [*ga*], it will probably hold all day today.”
- (c) Kinô wa ensoku deshita *ga*, taihen omoshiro katta.
 yesterday TOP picnic was very enjoyable was
 “We went on a picnic yesterday [*ga*], (we) had a very good time.”

(Kondo & Takano, 1986, p. 263)

Ga (2.1a) is a conflictive marker since it indicates a contrast between the speaker’s attempt and failure to be punctual. *Ga* (2.1b), on the other hand, is a non-conflictive marker since it does not establish a mutually conflictive logical connection between the speaker’s intention to discuss the weather and his/her prediction of good weather. Also, *ga* (2.1c) is a non-conflictive marker since there is no mutually conflictive logical relationship between the fact that there was a picnic and the enjoyment that it brought to the speaker. Examples (2.1b,c) show that there are several different types of non-conflictive *ga*. However, as shown in the subsequent discussion, previous researchers have disagreed over the functional categories of the non-conflictive *ga*. At the same time, these researchers have not made extensive investigation of the non-conflictive *ga* for identifying the common functional categories.

There are two possible explanations for the researchers' limited attention to the non-conflictive *ga* in their studies. First, the Japanese conjunctive *ga* has been studied predominantly for the purpose of teaching Japanese as a second/foreign language (JSL/JFL) (e.g., Alfonso, 1992). While the conflictive *ga* is straightforward for use in beginning-level JSL/JFL, the non-conflictive *ga* is not introduced to JSL/JFL learners until an intermediate level.¹ Second, many studies on the conjunctive *ga* aim to promote the use of the so-called *correct* Japanese rather than to describe the actual use of the conjunctive *ga*. Such studies, which we will discuss below (e.g., Shimizu, 1959; Takahashi, 1960; Honda, 1991; Ono, 1999), generally denounce the use of the non-conflictive *ga*.

There have been several studies since the 1950s which aimed to identify the functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*. First, we will discuss the *ga* functions identified by Nagano (1951) in the following examples:

(2.2) (a) Connecting two separate events (equivalent for “and then”)

Sono nochi, jikken no bun-ya ni oite mo,
that after experiment GEN field at also

chûkanshi no kenkyû ga sekai no shuryû to nari,
neutron GEN study NOM world GEN trend at become

iroiro no jûyoô na kekka ga
various important result NOM

→ aitsuide hôkoku sare ta ga,
one-after-another report-PASS-PAST

sono uchi ni futatabi riron to jikken no aida ni
that while at again theory and experiment between

ôkina mujun ga mebaete kita no de aru.
big contradiction NOM occur came-to the-fact-is

“After that, studies on neutrons have become the world’s trend in empirical fields and various important results have been reported [*ga*], after a while indeed arose a major contradiction between theories and experiments.”

(b) Referential (to introduce a discourse topic)

→ Tsugi ni nôchi no kôsaku no koto desu *ga*,
next at farmland GEN cultivation GEN issue COP

kore mo nana-nen-mae to wa jijô ga kotonatte imasu
this also 7-years-ago from TOP circumstance NOM different is

node, nôchi no henkan o ukeru no ni wa,
because farmland GEN return ACC receive in-order-to TOP

nôchi-iinkai no shônin ga hitsuyô desu.
Farmland-Committee GEN approval ACC needed COPULA

“Next, regarding the issue of farmland cultivation [*ga*]; due to differences of circumstances today from those 7 years ago, getting one’s farmland returned requires the Farmland Committee’s approval.”

(c) Insertive (used at the endpoint of supplementary information)

Fubuki ya fûjin – kore wa Kantô-Chihô de
blizzard and wind-dust this TOP Kanto-Region at

→ haru no hajime ni yoku okoru mono de aru *ga* – mo
spring GEN beginning at often occur thing COPULA also

denka o motsu biryûshi ga
electric-charge ACC have corpuscule NOM

undô-suru mono dakara,
move-do thing because

“Because a blizzard and wind dust — which often occurs in the Kanto Region at the beginning of spring [*ga*] — also is a result of the electric charge by corpuscles, ……”

(d) Conflictive (equivalent for “however”)

Haya-meshi haya nantoka (sic) to iu oshie no moto ni
fast-eating fast something that say lesson GEN under

→ sodatta watashi de aru *ga*,
raised I COPULA but

dekiru dake yukkuri kami-shimeru.
can as-much-as slowly chew

“I grew up being told ‘Those eating and xxx-ing fast (will benefit.)’, but I (usually) munch as slowly as I can.”²

(Examples from Takahashi, 1960,
p. 112)

In (2.2a), utterances separated by *ga* present not two conflicting ideas but two successive actions, and Nagano (1951) recognizes this *ga* as something to connect two separate events rather than to connect two conflicting notions. In (2.2b), *ga* functions as referential connector in the sense that it is used to introduce *Tsugi ni nôchi no kôsaku no koto desu* “Next, regarding the issue of farmland cultivation” as a discourse topic. In (2.2c), *kore wa Kantô-Chihô de haru no hajime ni yoku okoru mono de aru* “which often occurs in the Kanto Region at the beginning of spring” provides supplementary information on the blizzard and wind dust. Therefore, *ga* functions as insertive marker since it indicates the end of this supplementary clause. Finally, in (2.2d), *Haya-meshi haya nantoka to iu oshie no*

moto ni sodatta “[I] grew up being told ‘Those eating and xxx-ing fast [will benefit.]’” and *dekiru dake yukkuri kami-shimeru* “[I] munch as slowly as I can” present two opposing ideas, and therefore *ga* functions as a connector of mutually conflicting notions.

Shimizu (1959) categorizes the meanings of the conjunctive *ga* differently from Nagano (1951). While Nagano (1951) recognizes the four functions discussed in detail above, Shimizu (1959) recognizes three: 1) Conflictive (meaning “however, but”); 2) To connect two clauses (meaning “and”); and 3) A mere physical connector of two clauses (with no identifiable meaning) (p. 53).

While Shimizu (1959) did not provide examples, we will look into the following examples to discuss the functions he identified:

(2.3) (a) Kare wa ôi ni benkyô shita *ga*, gôkaku shita.
 he TOP hard study PAST and pass PAST
 “He studied hard [*ga*], passed (the exam).”

(b) Kare wa ôi ni benkyô shita *ga*, rakudai shita.
 he TOP hard study PAST but fail PAST
 “He studied hard, *but* failed (the exam).”

(from Shimizu, 1959, p. 53)

(c) Kono kiji o yomi tai n desu *ga*,
 this article ACC read want COPULA

kopii shitemo ii desu ka.
 copy do good COPULA Q

“I’d like to read this article [*ga*]; may I photocopy it?”

All sentences in (2.3) are equally acceptable. In (2.3a), *gôkaku shita* “[he] passed [the exam]” is not a contradictory result of *kare wa ôi ni benkyô shita* “he studied hard”, and *ga* in (2.3a) is a non-conflictive marker. On the other hand, *ga* in (2.3a) is a conflictive marker since failure in an exam is logically a contradictory result of studying hard. Finally, *ga* (2.3c) is a non-conflictive marker since the speaker’s wish to read an article and request for permission to photocopy it do not logically contradict each other. As is apparent from his evaluation of *ga* with no specific examples, Shimizu’s (1959) explanations above do not intend to describe the functions of *ga*. Instead, Shimizu (1959) raises the issue of its multiple functionality in an attempt to denounce the use of *ga* (see later in this chapter for details of his critical comments on *ga*).

Cited frequently by JSL/JFL researchers, Alfonso (1992) is a recent attempt to categorize the uses of the conjunctive *ga*. While Nagano (1951) divides the conjunctive *ga* into four categories, Alfonso (1992) recognizes the following three functions:

- (2.4) (a) *Ga* equivalent for “but”, “yet”, “however”, etc.
 (i.e. equivalent for the conflictive *ga*)
 “Hamuretto” o yomi-mashita *ga*, zenzen wakari-masen deshita.
 Hamlet ACC read-(past) but at-all understand-not (past)
 “I read ‘Hamlet’, *but* I didn’t understand it at all.”
- (b) *Ga* as a marker of a prefatory clause
 (i.e. subordinate to the subsequent remarks)
 Kore o motte-kimashita *ga*, doko ni oki-mashô ka.
 this ACC brought where at place-we’ll Q
 “I brought this [*ga*]; where shall we place it?”

(c) Turn-final *ga* as assertion-softener

Kyô wa isogashiin desu ga ...
 today TOP busy is you-know
 “Today I’m busy [*ga*] ...”

(Alfonso, 1992, p. 517)

Ga (2.4a) is a conflictive marker since it signals a contradiction between the speaker’s intention and failure to comprehend *Hamlet*. According to Alfonso (1992), the conflictive *ga* (2.4a) indicates that “this clause [i.e. the second clause] does not express a natural conclusion or a logical consequence of the first statement, but a conclusion which is to a certain extent UNEXPECTED” (p. 517; capital letters original). In the sense that the clauses before and after *ga* present mutually contradicting ideas, Alfonso’s (1992) *ga* (2.4a) and Nagano’s (1951) *ga* (2.2d) function the same way.

The prefatory marker *ga* (2.4b), which is not identified in Nagano (1951), indicates that the clause preceding *ga* “is psychologically SUBORDINATE to the following remarks” (Alfonso, 1992, p. 518). In other words, the clause *kore o motte-kimashita* “[I] brought this” provides the introductory information that would lead to the speaker’s question *doko ni oki-mashô ka* “where shall [I] place [it]?”

Finally, *ga* in (2.4c) is added at the end of a turn to soften the tone of the statement. Statements of this kind are common in spoken discourse when the speaker declines someone else’s request to do something for him/her. In this case, the speaker indicates that the hearer’s request is inconvenient, but, by virtue of

inserting *ga* at the end of his turn, the speaker implies that he would still consider accepting the request if the hearer insists further, thereby softening the tone of the decline. Omitting the assertion-softener *ga* would make sentence (2.4c) sound “almost dogmatically assertive” (Alfonso, 1992, p. 518), especially in Japanese communication, where avoiding confrontation is of the utmost importance.

(Chapter 6 will discuss further the relation between *ga* and avoiding confrontation.

See Watanabe, 1993; Tsujimura, 1987; Okabe, 1987; Nippon Steel Human Resources Development, 1997; for detailed cultural discussion.)

These studies seem to provide the basis for dictionary definitions of the conjunctive *ga*. For example, one dictionary which is designed specifically for JSL/JFL learners (“Merriam-Webster,” 1993) lists the following *ga* functions:

- (2.5) (a) Used to link two clauses, the second of which is unexpected outcome or result of the first
 Zuibun hanashi mashita *ga*, ketsuron wa dema sen deshita.
 considerably speak PAST but conclusion TOP come NEG PAST
 “We talked a great deal *but* in the end came to no conclusion.”
- (b) Used in a non-contrastive way to link two clauses, the first of which is a preliminary to the second
 Sumimasen *ga*, eki e wa dô ikeba ii de shô ka.
 sorry station to TOP how if-go good would-be Q
 “Excuse me [*ga*]; what would be the best way of going to the station?”
- (c) “and also” (Used to link two clauses, the second of which supplements the first)
 Kanojo wa kiryô mo ii *ga*, atama mo ii.
 she TOP appearance also good intelligence also good
 “She is good-looking [*ga*]; what is more, clever.”

- (d) Used at the end of an unfinished sentence to politely express modesty or reserve, or to avoid making an overly direct statement

Kyô wa chotto tsugô ga warui n desu *ga*
 today TOP little convenience NOM bad is
 “Today is a bit inconvenient [*ga*], ”

(“Merriam-Webster,” 1993, pp. 181-2)

(2.5a) is another example of Conflictive *ga*, equivalent to (2.2d), (2.3b) and (2.4a). In this example sentence, the second clause *ketsuron wa dema sen deshita* “[we] came to no conclusion” is the unexpected outcome of the first clause *zuibun hanashi mashita* “[we] talked a great deal”, and therefore *ga* in (2.5a) functions as a Conflictive marker.

The function of *ga* in (2.5b) is equivalent to Alfonso’s (1992, p. 517) prefatory clause marker in (2.4b). Since dictionaries provide “but” as the translation for this *ga* (“Merriam-Webster,” 1993, p. 181), detailed explanation will be necessary in order to clarify its difference from *ga* (2.5a). In (2.5b), the question utterance *eki e wa dô ikeba ii de shô ka* “what is the best way of going to the station?” is not the unexpected result of the addresser’s apology *sumimasen* “excuse me”. Instead, *sumimasen* “excuse me” in (2.5b) is what Schiffrin (1987) calls a discourse marker to initiate communication. *Ga* indicates that *sumimasen* draws the addressee’s attention and then addresses the central question *eki e wa dô ikeba ii de shô ka* “what is the best way of going to the station?”

In (2.5c), *ga* makes a contrast between *kiryô mo ii* “good-looking” and *atama mo ii* “smart”. However, unlike in (2.5a), these two clauses both describe

positive qualities about the referent *kanojo* “she” and therefore do not make mutually contradicting statements. On the contrary, *atama mo ii* adds more information about *kanojo*’s positive character, and thus *ga* in (2.5c) is interpreted as the coordinating conjunctive “and” (“Merriam-Webster,” 1993, p. 182).

Finally, (2.5d) is equivalent for Alfonso’s (1992, p. 517) assertion softener (2.4c). In this example, the addresser is trying to decline the addressee’s invitation to, say, watch a movie or have dinner together. Meanwhile, flatly saying that he/she cannot come with the addressee is considered blunt or even rude in Japanese society with “a tradition of avoiding unnecessary friction” (Nippon Steel Human Resources Development, 1993, p. 403). Therefore, the addresser uses *ga* instead to imply his/her intended conclusion that would be inferred from his/her unavailability.

Ga functions identified in the three aforementioned studies and one dictionary (“Merriam-Webster,” 1993) are summarized in Table 2-1 below. As shown in this table, there are considerable discrepancies in the *ga* functions identified, and none of them list all observed *ga* functions. Especially, no two dictionary/studies identify exactly the same *ga* functions. Nagano (1951) and Merriam-Webster Japanese-English Learner’s Dictionary (1993) identify four

Table 2-1: Summary of previous studies on the Japanese conjunctive *ga*

	Conflictive	Referential	Insertive	Connotative	Indirect
Nagano (1951)	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Shimizu (1959)	yes	yes		yes	
Alfonso (1992)	yes			yes	yes
Merriam-Webster (1993)	yes	yes		yes	yes

functions, but the former failed to identify Indirect *ga* and the latter Insertive *ga*. On the other hand, Shimizu (1959) and Alfonso (1992) each identify three functions. Shimizu (1959) identifies only Conflictive, Referential, and Connotative *ga*, while Alfonso (1992) identifies only Conflictive, Connotative, and Indirect *ga*.

These results are attributable to the different purposes that the dictionary/studies intend to serve. For example, Nagano (1951) includes four *ga* functions as a way to provide a detailed description of *ga* functions. However, since his data were based exclusively on written texts, they do not include Indirect *ga*, which is specific to spoken settings. Shimizu's (1959) *ga* categorization is more limited than that of Nagano (1951) by virtue of the absence of Insertive *ga*. While Shimizu (1959) does not explain the basis for his categorization, his critical remarks on the non-conflictive *ga* (on which we will elaborate later in this chapter) would lead to an assumption that Shimizu's (1959) prescriptivist account impeded a sufficient description of observable *ga* functions.

While the first two discuss *ga* from an L1 speaker's perspective, Alfonso (1992) and Merriam-Webster's Japanese-English Learner's Dictionary (1993) intend to benefit JSL/JFL learners. Alfonso (1992) includes the functions that are expected to appear in both written and spoken settings, and avoids Referential and Insertive *ga*, which would be perceived as advanced or infrequent uses. Finally, Merriam-Webster's Japanese-English Learner's Dictionary (1993) covers four *ga* functions from the perspective of both spoken and written Japanese, but Insertive

ga is excluded presumably based on the ground that this use may be advanced for prospective users of this dictionary.

B. Criticisms of the Use of *ga*

As the examples above suggest, the Japanese conjunctive *ga* would be seen by the addressers as a convenient tool for connecting two clauses of almost any logical interrelationship. However, this variety of functions would suggest that there is a burden on the addressees to interpret the logical connection between the two clauses carefully for each *ga* occurrence. Perhaps because of this burden on the addressees, there has been repeated criticism of the non-conflictive *ga*. Because of the ambiguity in functions, prescriptivists in Japanese have made critical remarks on the use of the non-conflictive *ga*, or even the use of *ga* altogether in extreme cases since Shimizu (1959).

Shimizu (1959) makes extensive critical remarks on the Japanese conjunctive *ga*. Upon identifying the functions of *ga* (see 2.3 for details), he points out that *ga* can be used “whether the logical connection of the two clauses would be positive, negative, or even neutral” (Shimizu, 1959, p. 53). Based on this observation, Shimizu (1959) characterizes the role of *ga* as “direct but undefined” (p. 54). In other words, *ga* helps the logical connection between the two clauses appear direct and straightforward. The problem, however, is that the meanings of

ga are not clearly defined and the logical connection between the clauses will remain ambiguous. For this reason, Shimizu (1959) recommends that sentences (2.3a) and (2.3b) be revised into the following:

- (2.6) (a) *Kare wa ôi ni benkyô shita no de, gôkaku shita.*
 he TOP hard study PAST because pass PAST
 “Because he studied hard, (he) passed (the exam).”
- (b) *Kare wa ôi ni benkyô shita no ni, rakudai shita.*
 he TOP hard study PAST although fail PAST
 “Although he studied hard, (he) failed (the exam).”

(Shimizu, 1959, p. 54)

Kare wa ôi ni benkyô shita “he studied hard” in (2.6a) describes the reason for the person’s success in the exam, and *no de* is an appropriate logical connector which specifically means “because.” In (2.6b), (*kare wa*) *rakudai shita* “[he] failed [the exam]” is a conflictive result of the person’s hard work, and the use of *no ni*, which specifically means “although,” would leave no room for ambiguity in the logical connection between the two clauses.

Takahashi (1960) cites the use of *ga* as one factor in producing “bad sentences” (p. 99). Citing Nagano’s (1951) study on the uses of *ga* (see examples in 2.2 for details), Takahashi (1960) points out that *ga* fails to establish the logical connection between the two clauses in clear terms due to its multiple functions. Additionally, Takahashi (1960) suggests that the mono-syllabic *ga* would be less likely to stay in the reader’s memory compared to multi-syllabic logical connectors such as *no de* “because,” *sore yue ni* “for this reason,” *no ni*

“although,” and *sore ni mo kakawarazu* “despite the fact (that).” To illustrate these points, Takahashi (1960) cites the following example, which he claims is an excerpt from a newspaper editorial:³

(2.7) Kyûba no mondai wa, yagate Kokuren de
Cuba GEN problem TOP soon U.N. at

→ toriage-rare yô *ga*_(a),
raise-PASS would

kono mondai ni wa Kyûba-jin jishin ga kettei su beki
this problem in TOP Cuban self NOM decide-do should

ôku no yôso ga fukuma rete iru.
many elements NOM include-PASS PROG

Ampo-ri wa kono mondai o tori-agete,
Security-Council TOP this problem ACC raise

funsô-kaiketsu no ito-guchi o
conflict-solution GEN clue ACC

→ sagashi-dasu koto ga mottomo nozomashii *ga*_(b),
search thing NOM most desirable

sukunakutomo, jitai o dekiru-dake
at-least problem ACC the-best-one-can

hayaku ochitsukasete hoshii to omou.
early calm want that think

Sekai-keizai no taisei ga han'ei shi, Nihon keizai mo
world-economy GEN overall NOM prosper Japan economy also

taishite mondai ga nai to sureba,
particularly problem NOM there-isn't that if-assumed

→ kore ni sugiru yorokobi wa nai wake de aru *ga*_(c), ...
this than exceed pleasure TOP there-isn't fact is

kuwashiku mire ba, sekai-keizai ni wa ôkina mondai ga
carefully see if world-economy in TOP big problem NOM

harama rete iru shi,
include PASS PROG and

“The Cuba problem, which the United Nations would soon raise [ga](a), includes many issues that must be solved by the Cubans themselves. It is most desirable that the U.N. Security Council raise this issue in order to search ways to end the conflict [ga](b), we are hopeful that the conflict will be calmed as soon as possible.

“It would be ideal for the world economy to prosper and Japanese economy to be relatively problem-free, *but* (c)... a careful insight reveals many problems in the world economy, and ...”

(Takahashi, 1960, p. 114)

In (2.7), the three instances of *ga* all function in different ways. *Ga* (2.7a) is an example of an Insertive marker, where *yagate Kokuren de toriage-rare yô* “the United Nations would soon raise” provides supplementary information on the Cuban problem. Meanwhile, *ga* (2.7b) functions as a device to connect two separate clauses. *Funsô-kaiketsu no ito-guchi o sagashi-dasu koto ga mottomo nozomashii* “it is most desirable to search ways to end the conflict” and *jitai o dekiru-dake hayaku ochitsukasete hoshii* “[we] hope that the conflict will be calmed as soon as possible” are logically non-conflictive. Therefore, the *ga* that connects them does not function as the conflictive conjunctive. Instead, just like (2.2a), this *ga* should be interpreted as simply a device to physically connect two separate clauses. Finally, *ga* (2.7c) is the conflictive *ga* because of the logical contrast between the ideal situation where world economy prospers and Japanese

economy is problem-free and the reality where world economy has several problems. It is a sentence like (2.7) that provides “a typical example of bad sentences” (Takahashi, 1960, p. 115) because including multiple *ga* types would cause confusion among the readers.

Shimizu (1959) and Takahashi (1960), both of which were designed to train prospective professional writers, are especially critical of nationally circulating newspapers for using *ga* frequently. For instance, Shimizu (1959) cites the following to show a practical example:

(2.8) Kishi shushô wa han-shuryû-ha san-kakuryô ga
P.M. TOP anti-mainstream-faction 3-minister NOM

jihyô o teishutsu-shita toki wa, “Himen” made
resignation ACC submit-did time TOP firing as-much-as

→ kôryô-shita to iwa-re-ta *ga*_(a),
consider-did that say-PASS-PAST

kore de wa Kishi-seiken no iji sura mo muzukashiku naru
this with TOP adm. GEN keeping even difficult become

to no shinkyô ni nari, zenji-han-shuryû-ha no
that GEN feeling to become semi-anti-mainstream-faction GEN

→ shuchô e ayumi-yotta katachi da *ga*_(b),
opinion to approached form is

sanjû-ichi-nichi no Ô-misoka o hikaete
31-day GEN New-Year's-Eve ACC await

Lit. “Prime Minister Kishi reportedly considered firing the three anti-mainstream Cabinet members who submitted their resignation, *but* (a), thinking that firing them will make it even impossible to sustain his administration, has compromised on the semi-anti-mainstream faction’s position [*ga*](b); with New Year’s Eve awaiting, ”

(from *Mainichi Shimbun* December 30, 1958, as cited in Shimizu, 1959, p. 57)

Ga (2.8a) is a Conflictive marker since this conjunctive makes a contrast between then Prime Minister Kishi's consideration of firing three Cabinet members and his compromise with political opponents. *Ga* (2.8b), on the other hand, is a Connotative marker, where it simply connects the previous clause with the subsequent one.

Shimizu (1959) raises two things as possible explanations for newspapers' frequent use of *ga*. First, *ga* is a convenient lexical item for newspaper writers because it takes up only one character space compared to other conjunctives such as *sore yue ni* "for this reason" (5 characters), and *shikashi* "however" (3 characters) (Shimizu, 1959, p. 58). Considering the small space allocated for newspaper articles,⁴ *ga* serves to save space for content words.⁵ Second, Shimizu (1959) says, *ga* is a convenient lexical item for the writers because of its multi-functionality (p. 58). Instead of a burdensome task on the addressee's part of selecting words like *shikashi* and *sore yue ni* (each of which is mono-functional), *ga* would effectively leave such burden to the addressees by the use of this multi-functional conjunctive.⁶

Meanwhile, Takahashi (1960) gives seemingly self-contradicting accounts of the frequent use of *ga* in different functions. Initially, Takahashi (1960) comments on Nagano's (1951) *ga* functional categories by pointing out that *ga*

obscures the logical interrelation between the two clauses (p. 113). Additionally, the monosyllabic (single-character)⁷ nature makes the word *ga* less conspicuous compared to other (mostly multi-syllabic) words (Takahashi, 1960, p. 113).

Therefore, Takahashi (1960) states, the multi-functionality of *ga* causes the kind of ambiguity that would impose a heavy burden on the reader. He continues,

“[i]f the reader accepts this ambiguity as it is, Then the text would be extremely easy to read, while the reader would hardly learn anything from such document. Texts of this kind are often not difficult to comprehend on the surface. However, they cause the reader to misunderstand the contents, and tend to slip out of the reader’s memory. At the same time, careful readers would be led to a confusion upon close attention to *ga*.”

(Takahashi, 1960, p. 115)

One explanation for Takahashi’s (1960) analysis lies in the role of the conjunction *ga* as a function word. Unlike content words, function words (e.g., case markers, conjunctives, etc.) only serve to connect utterances into a well-formed and logical form and do not deliver the central information (Crystal, 1992, p. 160). Thus, the conjunctive *ga*, as a function word, generally does not constitute a central informational content. Additionally, the monosyllabic nature renders *ga* an even less conspicuous lexical item. At the same time, close attention would reveal the multi-functional feature of *ga* (Nagano, 1952; Shimizu, 1959; Alfonso, 1992), which will end up causing confusion to the readers.

Despite their support of claims with a practical example, there are two problems in the arguments by Shimizu (1959) and Takahashi (1960). First, while

instances of mixed *ga* functions in a short stream of sentences would be plausible evidence, they failed to substantiate their claims with numerical data. Without such quantitative data, their arguments would be inevitably subject to a counter-argument that their examples represent nothing but the extreme cases where the writers may have happened to use *ga* repeatedly. Also, it would be possible to give rebuttals to their claims by stating that these potentially extreme cases may represent nothing more than a writer's personal style. Second, they failed to provide any comparative data as a basis for their claims. Since they do not provide examples or numerical data indicating the frequent use of *ga* in other settings, it is unclear whether they object to its frequency in newspaper editorials compared to other settings or its frequent occurrences within the articles themselves. In view of the absence of the comparative data or numerical figures, it seems that their criticism of frequent *ga* in newspaper editorials would be based solely on their prescriptivist intuition.

Honda (1991) and Ono (1999) are among the recent critics of the conjunctive *ga*. Citing the functions identified by Nagano (1951), Honda (1991) criticizes the use of *ga* in multiple functions as a cause of confusion to readers of Japanese. Honda (1991) argues that *ga* prompts a reader into its interpretation as a conflictive conjunctive at first sight, but its multiple functionality would keep the reader wondering about its appropriate interpretation all the way until the end of the sentence. Especially in cases like (2.7), where it is used in three different ways in a stream of three sentences, *ga* will become confusing and burdensome for the

readers to interpret. Therefore, in order to avoid any confusion on the part of the reader, Honda (1991) suggests that a Japanese writer minimize the use of the non-conflictive *ga* (p. 184).

On the other hand, Ono (1999) objects to the use of *ga* as a potential source of lengthy sentences in writing. While Takahashi (1960) simply comments on the use of the conjunctive *ga* as “one cause of lengthy sentences” (p. 111), Ono (1999) gives detailed discussion on frequent *ga* occurrences by citing the following example sentence:

- (2.9) [Watashi wa] mottomo shizen ni wa zuibun fukaku kanjiru
 I TOP originally nature to TOP very deeply feel
- hô de atta *ga*_(a), shizen no bi to ka iu, yama de mo,
 tendency was nature GEN beauty that called mountain and
- iwa de mo, taki de mo, nan demo ii *ga*_(b), arifureta mono de nai
 rock and fall and what and good ordinary thing is not
- mono wa, hito ni tsuki-matotte nodoka ni wa sashite okanu yô na
 thing TOP person to follow peaceful TOP keep will-not such
- tokoro ga aru no de, sore de suki masen deshita.
 element NOM there-is because this due-to like not PAST
- lit. “I originally had deep affections for Nature, *but* (a) the so-called beauty of Nature, say, of mountains, rocks, falls, or whatever [*ga*](b), has extraordinary and unpeaceful elements that I did not like.”
- = “Although I originally had deep affections to Nature, the so-called beauty of Nature – whether it is of mountains, rocks, or falls – has extraordinary and unpeaceful elements that I did not like.”

(Ono, 1999, p. 100)⁸

Ga (2.9a) is a Conflictive marker since it establishes a contrast between the author's affection for nature and his mixed feelings about "the so-called beauty of Nature." On the other hand, *ga* (2.9b) is an Insertive marker since it comes at the end of the embedded clause *yama de mo, iwa de mo, taki de mo, nan demo ii* "whether it is of mountains, rocks, or falls." Ono (1999) considers sentence (2.9) problematic because of two *ga* occurrences in the 100-Japanese-character sentence.⁹ In recognition of *ga* as a marker for redirecting the flow of logic, Ono (1999) states that sentence (2.9) lacks clarity because this long sentence redirects its logical flow twice as indicated by the use of two *ga* (pp. 100-101).

While Honda (1991) and Ono (1999) do not make any reference to any discourse setting in which *ga* appears frequently, they are generally as critical as Shimizu (1959) and Takahashi (1960) of the frequent use of *ga* in writing. In awareness of his own use of four non-conflictive *ga* occurrences in the 326-page publication, Honda (1991) admits that a lack of adequate caution would intuitively drive him to use *ga*. While Tadao Umesao, a nationally well-known ethnologist, commented in Honda (1991) that the limited use of the non-conflictive *ga* as a form of implicature would be justifiable, Honda (1991) calls for the severe limitation of the non-conflictive *ga*, which he considers "a frequent cause of ambiguous sentences (in writing)" (p. 183). Meanwhile, Ono (1999) proposes that *ga* be avoided in academic writings and editorials for clarity (p. 102). Especially, Ono's (1999) criticism of *ga* extends to its conflictive use. For optimal clarity, Ono (1999) recommends that the conflictive *ga* be replaced with the mono-

functional conjunctive *shikashi* “however.” To demonstrate the logical clarity as a result of using *shikashi*, Ono (1999) uses the following examples:

(2.10) (a) Nihongo de sodatta hito naraba, *wa to ga o*
 Japanese in grew person if and ACC

→ machigaete tsukau hito wa mazu arimasen *ga*,
 mistakenly use person TOP virtually non-existent

fukuzatsuna hyôgen no bunshô o yomi-konasu
 complex expression GEN sentence ACC read-accustomed-to

tameni wa, *wa to ga no chigai o*
 in-order-to TOP and GEN difference ACC

hakkiri ninshiki shiteiru koto ga hitsuyô desu.
 clearly recognition doing INF NOM necessary is

(b) Nihongo de sodatta hito naraba, *wa to ga o* machigaete tsukau
 Japanese in grew person if and ACC mistakenly use

hito wa mazu arimasen.
 person TOP virtually non-existent

Shikashi, fukuzatsuna hyôgen no bunshô o
 however complex expression GEN sentence ACC

yomi-konasu tameni wa, *wa to ga no chigai o*
 read-accustomed-to in-order-to TOP and GEN difference ACC

hakkiri ninshiki shiteiru koto ga hitsuyô desu.
 clearly recognition doing INF NOM necessary is

“It is rare that those who grew up speaking Japanese would use *wa* and *ga* wrongly; *but* in order to read complex comfortably, a clear distinction between *wa* and *ga* is necessary.”

(Cited in Ono, 1999, p. 110-1)

Ga in (2.10a) is a Conflictive marker, where the writer contrasts Japanese native speakers' implicit distinction between *wa* and *ga* with their need for the explicit knowledge of the difference as a tool for fluent reading. On the other hand, *shikashi* "however" in (2.10b) functions as a cross-sentential, conflictive conjunctive only ("Merriam-Webster," 1993, p. 804-805). Ono (1999) suggests that, while *ga* inevitably leaves room for ambiguity because of its multi-functionality, *shikashi* eliminates such ambiguity because of its mono-functionality.

Moreover, our review of Honda (1991) and Ono (1999) yields two levels of prescriptivism on the use of *ga*. The first, which is the extreme form of prescriptivism, flatly denounces the use of *ga* altogether, and calls for the use of alternate word/expressions such as *shikashi* and *daga*, the mono-functional conflictive markers meaning "but; however" (e.g., Ono, 1999). The second, on the other hand, criticizes only the non-conflictive *ga* and calls for the exclusive use of the conflictive *ga* because "but" is *the* meaning of the word (e.g., Honda, 1991).¹⁰

In view of the findings and criticisms in the previous studies, there are two observations that would be noteworthy. First, *ga* does not seem to be associated with social stigma among L1 speakers of Japanese. Our prescriptivists' criticism of the use of *ga* is based solely on the potential confusion in writing caused by the mixture of conflictive and non-conflictive *ga*, and it does not make any reference to the kind of stigma with which social-class or regional variations of the language are associated (see Trudgill, 1983; Crystal, 1984). Second, the prescriptivists'

criticism is not directed to *ga* in spoken settings. About the Indirect *ga*, the speaking-specific function that is identified in Alfonso (1992) and Merriam-Webster's Japanese-English Learner's Dictionary (1993) (see Table 2-1), the prescriptivists do not make any comment on it. In fact, none of the aforementioned studies recommend *ga* suppression in speaking as a way to avoid confusion on the addressee's part.

From the perspective of a descriptive account of *ga* functions, the previous studies have three weaknesses. First, while these studies criticized the *ga* frequency, they failed to define in clear terms what constitutes the frequent use of *ga*. Due to the absence of numerical data that would substantiate their claims, their criticism of the frequent use of *ga* seems to be based solely on intuition. Second, data of these studies are predominantly oriented to written texts, while Alfonso (1992) and Merriam-Webster's Japanese-English Learner's Dictionary (1993) refer to the *ga* functions used in spoken settings. Their limited data from spoken texts may have overlooked some of the *ga* functions that are specific to spoken settings, thereby impeding sufficiently detailed analysis of these *ga* functions. Third, analysis in the previous studies focused exclusively on sentence-level functions of *ga*. While some example sentences in this chapter would be relatively long, none of the previous studies examine the documents in their entirety. Therefore, they may have failed to identify not only some structural *ga* functions but also discourse functions of *ga*.

In light of the findings and limitations in the previous studies we have discussed throughout this chapter, we will take three things into consideration in conducting our study of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*. First, since the previous studies may have overlooked some *ga* functions as a result of their predominant emphasis on written Japanese, our study should first conduct a separate pragmatic analysis of *ga* prior to the subsequent variation analysis in different settings. Second, since the absence of critical remarks on *ga* in spoken settings would be an indication of the prescriptivists' tolerance for it, it is our expectation that *ga* would occur more frequently and in wider functional variations in spoken settings than in written settings. Especially in interactive settings (as opposed to public speeches), previously unobserved *ga* functions may emerge. Third, examining all *ga* occurrences within an entire text would reveal not only structural but discourse functions that have not been observed. Since the previous studies were based on analysis of utterances with *ga* in isolation from a discourse environment, they may have overlooked features of the existing functions in addition to the previously unknown functions.

Our pragmatic analysis, which we will discuss in Chapter 3, aims to identify all observable functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga* in an interactive spoken setting. Based on the aforementioned considerations, the pragmatic analysis selected as its data source a nationally televised live talk show. Due to discrepancies in the *ga* functions observed in the previous studies, our pragmatic analysis will categorize all *ga* occurrences into separate functions essentially in

isolation from the previous findings, while our discussions in the next chapter will include comparison between our categories and those in the previous studies. After identifying all *ga* categories, we will then use our categories for the subsequent variation analysis across different discourse settings, which we will discuss in Chapters 4-6.

Notes

¹ 3A Corporation (1998a, b), a two-volume JSL/JFL textbook that consists of the total 50 lessons, introduces the conflictive *ga* in Lesson 8 while it does not refer to the non-conflictive *ga* until Lesson 26.

² Due to concerns for potential offense to readers of this paper, we will refrain from providing the full version of this proverb, which does not appear in (2.2d).

³ Takahashi (1960) fails to identify the source of this excerpt.

⁴ Honda (1991) states that a regular headliner would be approximately 1,500 characters long, and an article on a high-profile case approximately 3,000 characters at most. Especially, a small column would be only 200-400 characters long. Within these restrictions, newspaper article writers would use virtually every possible means to condense as much information as possible, including the selection of words with the fewest characters (p. 277).

⁵ Content words (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.) carry “a storable lexical meaning (e.g. *book, red, run*)” (Crystal, 1992, p. 160), while function words (e.g., case markers, conjunctions, etc., in the case of Japanese) solely indicate a grammatical relationship.

⁶ This phenomenon provides evidence of Hinds’ (1987) typology of Japanese as a reader responsible language. See Chapter 6 for detailed account of his language typology.

⁷ In the Japanese syllabary writing system, characters such as あ (a), う (u), か (ka) and こ (ko) each represent one (C)V syllable (The Japan Foundation 1978; Crystal 1992: 203-4).

⁸ According to Ono (1999), this excerpt comes from Shimei Futabatei’s 1896 Japanese translation of *First Love*, an 1860 Russian novel by Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev (1818-1883).

⁹ The standard Japanese manuscript paper for publication consists of 20 x 20 (= 400) character spaces per page (Honda, 1991, p. 304). This means that the

example sentence would occupy a quarter of one manuscript paper. As an extreme case of example, Ono (1999) goes so far as to cite a 360-character example sentence from an authentic language source (p. 101). This, however, would not be relevant to the issue discussed here since the primary contributing factor to the length is two quotations within the sentence rather than *ga*, which is used only once in the sentence.

¹⁰ While Ono (1999) and Honda (1991) each support one of the two levels of prescriptivism in clear terms, Shimizu (1959) and Takahashi (1960) do not state clearly which level of prescriptivism they would advocate.

III: FUNCTIONS OF *GA* – PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

The review of previous studies on the Japanese conjunctive *ga* in Chapter 2 led to a prediction that spoken settings would yield *ga* with higher frequency and wider functional variation than written settings largely due to the presence of the strong prescriptive force toward writing and its absence toward speaking. On the other hand, due to their virtually exclusive focus on *ga* functions on a sentence/utterance level, these studies might have overlooked *ga* functions beyond this level. Disagreements between these studies on the identified functional categories are such that unification of the functions are necessary for adequate analysis of their variations. While the studies in written Japanese (Nagano, 1951; Shimizu, 1959) identified a good variety of *ga* functions, their account of each function was limited to sentence-level analysis. Also, while recent findings (Alfonso, 1992; “Merriam-Webster,” 1993) referred to a function in spoken Japanese (i.e., Indirect *ga*; see Chapter 2 for details), their analysis did not extend beyond the utterance level. Additionally, because of their focus on sentence/utterance-level functions, these studies overlooked functions of *ga* in reciprocal discourse settings. Thus, in an attempt to identify all observable

discourse functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*, it would be more appropriate to conduct pragmatic analysis in a multi-participant setting with spontaneous speech.

This chapter reports the *ga* frequency/distribution in a nationally televised live talk show and discusses in detail each *ga* functional category that is observed in the interactive spoken setting. This pragmatic study has selected a live TV talk show since it meets the criteria as a multi-participant setting that would elicit spontaneous speech. Unlike written Japanese, where the substantial prescriptive force would likely suppress *ga*, our spoken setting is expected to yield a wide variety of *ga* functions. Additionally, the reciprocal setting would elicit the kind of *ga* functions that would not be observed in non-interactive settings.

A. Method

For this study, we have collected all instances of the conjunctive *ga* occurring in real-life spoken discourse. Instances of *ga* used in *tokoroga* (however) are not collected as part of our data since *tokoroga* is recognized in language dictionaries (Kondo & Takano, 1986; “Merriam-Webster,” 1993) as an independent word rather than a sequence of two components *tokoro* (place) and *ga* (but).

The text used for this study is the June 14, 1998, edition of the Japanese weekly television program *Sekiguchi Hiroshi no shin Sandê mōningu* (*New Sunday Morning with Hiroshi Sekiguchi*), a 2-hour live talk show. This episode of the live talk show has as participants famous actor Hiroshi Sekiguchi as host, one female assistant, two sports commentators, one actress-turned newscaster, one weather reporter joining by satellite, and one newscaster reporting events from France live by satellite.

Unlike a typical show, where the guests mostly discuss domestic sociopolitical issues, this edition focuses mostly on the upcoming World Cup qualifying soccer game between Japan and Argentina. At the beginning of each segment, host Sekiguchi, along with his assistant, introduces the discussion topic, provides background information using figures and videotapes, and then opens the discussion with guests. In some segments of the day's show, special guests are invited to discuss their issues. Generally, each segment begins with the introductory remarks by the host or his assistant followed by the discussions by the guest participants. At the middle of the segment, the host/assistant would occasionally insert relevant video clips and/or present statistical figures as background information. While the video clips, introductory remarks, and some informational comments by the host/assistant appear to have been prepared in advance in light of reference to the notes provided on the desk, their other utterances and comments by the guests seem to be spontaneous. Nevertheless,

since analysis of the *ga* frequency/distribution pattern is not the essential purpose of the study in this chapter, our pragmatic analysis included all occurrences of *ga* regardless of whether they occurred as part of the scripted or truly spontaneous speech.

The following are the contents of *Sunday Morning with Hiroshi Sekiguchi*, June 14, 1998, edition (There were 1-2-minute commercial breaks between segments.):

World Cup 1 (9 minutes): Reporting live from France on Japanese soccer fans lining up overnight at the stadium to get seats for the upcoming game between Japan and Argentina.

World Cup 2 (6 minutes): The guests discuss practice sessions by both teams and analyze key Argentinean players.

World Cup 3 (9 minutes): The segment focuses on a recent controversy involving a former Paraguayan goalkeeper who revealed Argentinean players' weaknesses. The former goalkeeper, who was then a pro player in Argentina, has since become such a controversial figure in Argentina that some people call for his immediate deportation.

World Cup 4 (14 minutes): Controversy over the revelation only a few days before the World Cup opening ceremony that Japanese travel agencies failed to reserve the World Cup tickets that Japanese aficionados had already paid for. This blunder caused outrage among the fans who were informed of the blunder at the airport.

Domestic news of the week 1 (10 minutes): The host reports the week's news stories that are not related to the World Cup soccer. News stories include political reforms, a serial stalker, etc.

Domestic news of the week 2 (7 minutes): The news report followed by the discussion on increasing suicides in Japan by middle-age Japanese businesspeople. Presumably as a result of the ongoing recession, as many as 24,000 people (or approximately 65 people per day) committed suicide in 1997.

Local report (8 minutes): A small Japanese city with an increasing number of Brazilian immigrants. This segment focuses on the immigrants' soccer fever, and especially one former Brazilian national team player who is now coaching teenage Japanese soccer players.

World Cup 5 (8 minutes): Continued discussion on the controversial Paraguayan soccer player who disclosed the Argentinean team's weaknesses. The Japanese guests say that his information is largely reliable especially from the active player's perspective. Meanwhile, the commentators agree that a tie would be Japan's best hope in the face of Argentina's world-class offense.

History of World Cup (10 minutes): Videotape presentation of the history of soccer and the World Cup tournament.

Weather report; wrap-up (10 minutes): The weather reporter forecasts Japan's weather of the day. He also forecasts the weather of the game day in France.

B. Findings and Discussion

Since the functional categories identified in this pragmatic analysis are based exclusively on one discourse setting, they would require subsequent variation analysis (see Chapters 4-6) in order to confirm the validity of our functional categories. However, to the extent that each of our categories has two or more examples from our data, our categorization for the conjunctive *ga* would be considered valid while there would possibly be several more exclusive categories whose examples do not appear in our text.

Throughout the 2-hour talk show, there were a total of forty-eight (48) instances of the conjunctive *ga*. The pragmatic functions of *ga* identified in this

study include: Conflictive/Contrastive; Referential; Insertive; Implicative; and Continuative (see Table; details of each function will be discussed below). In terms of the segment-by-segment distribution, there are 8 instances of *ga* in the second round of the News of the Week segment, and the fourth round of the World Cup segment and the first round of the News of the Week segment each include 7 instances of *ga*. There were, on the other hand, no instances of *ga* in the History of the World Cup segment. Meanwhile, our results in terms of the functions revealed that the Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* was used with the highest frequency (15 instances), and the Insertive and Implicative *ga* each with the second highest frequency (10 instances). On the lowest side, there were only 6 instances of the Implicative *ga*.

While findings in the previous studies of the *ga* functions were limited to the structural functions due to their predominant focus on utterances immediately preceding/following *ga*, our pragmatic analysis revealed details of each *ga* function because of its insight into the surrounding utterances in a wider scope.

Table: *Ga* occurrences in the live TV talk show (C/C = Conflictive/Contrastive)

	C/C	Referential	Insertive	Implicative	Continuative	Total
World Cup 1	2	0	0	0	2	4
World Cup 2	1	0	2	2	0	5
World Cup 3	0	1	2	1	1	5
World Cup 4	3	0	1	3	0	7
News 1	2	1	1	2	1	7
News 2	3	3	1	0	1	8
Local Report	3	2	1	0	0	6
World Cup 5	0	0	1	1	0	2
History	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weather	1	0	1	1	1	4
Total	15/48	7/48	10/48	10/48	6/48	48
%	31.25	14.58	20.83	20.83	12.50	

Below we discuss each of the five *ga* functions identified in our pragmatic analysis (All example sentences below come from *Sunday morning with Hiroshi Sekiguchi*, June 14, 1998, edition.):

(3.1) Conflictive/Contrastive *ga*

→ Make-tôshu ni wa nari masen deshita *ga*,
losing-pitcher into TOP become not PAST

nandaka hakkiri-shinai debyû deshita
somehow outstanding-not debut was

“(New York Mets pitcher Nomo) didn’t become a losing pitcher, *but* this was certainly not an impressive debut.”

Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* (3.1b) is equivalent to the Conflictive *ga* as mentioned by Nagano (1951) and *ga* equivalent for “but”, “yet”, “however”, etc. (Alfonso, 1992). *Ga* (3.1) signals a contrast between a Japanese New York Mets pitcher escaping a loss and his performance which was not impressive. Studies in conjunctive ties seem to categorize conflictive and contrastive functions as essentially nondistinguishable. Functions of conflictive and contrastive conjunctives are often categorized simply as contrastive markers (e.g., Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1983).¹

(3.2) Referential *ga*

→ Getsuyôbi ni mairimasu *ga*, kono hi,
Monday to move this day

renzoku bôkô-ma ni taiho-jô ga dete orimasu
 serial (sexual)-assaulter against arrest-warrant NOM issue be

“We’ll move to Monday [*ga*]: On that day, an arrest warrant has been issued to a serial sexual assault suspect”

Like Nagano’s (1951) Referential *ga* (2.2d), Referential *ga* in this study is identified as a device to mark a new discourse topic. Instead of indicating a logical interrelation between the clauses immediately before/after *ga*, Referential *ga* (3.2) indicates that *Getsuyôbi ni mairimasu ga* “We’ll move to (news on) Monday” introduces a new topic, which in this particular example is a news story on serial sexual assaults. Since Referential *ga* does not function within the scope of utterances immediately before/after it, its absence would not cause the utterances to be odd. However, Referential *ga* is an important topic shift indicator to the addressees in speaking, where there is no visible indicator of topic shift such as an indent.

(3.3) Insertive *ga*

→ Kono gôru-kîpâ wa, kochira o mite itadaki-tai n desu *ga*,
 this goalkeeper TOP this ACC see want-you-to COPULA

bôru o hajiku kuse ga arimasu.
 ball ACC punch habit NOM he-has

“This goalkeeper, as you see on this (video recording) [*ga*], has a habit to punch the ball out to the field (instead of catching it).”

Insertive *ga* (3.3), equivalent for Nagano's (1951) Insertive *ga* (2.2c), would merit elaboration for the subsequent variation analysis. In terms of its discourse function, the clause ending with the insertive *ga* functions in a similar way to the English nonrestrictive relative clause (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1983, pp. 376-79). This clause-final *ga* indicates the end of the inserted clause that describes peripheral information on the preceding NP. It is noteworthy that the Insertive *ga* clause was produced in a lower pitch relative to the surrounding utterance. Another observation is that the Insertive *ga* clause was spoken faster than the main utterance. These facts seem to suggest that an Insertive *ga* clause denotes peripheral information within the context. The clause-final Insertive *ga* is an important lexical indicator of the marginality of information in spoken settings, which do not provide such visible indicators of information marginality as parentheses or hyphens.

(3.4) Implicative *ga*

name rare cha, komatta na to iu kanji ga
underrate PASS if troubled INTERJ that say feeling NOM

→ shimasu *ga*,
there-is

sâ, Aruzenchin wa ima yoru 8-ji da sô desu, ...
okay Argentina TOP now night 8-o'clock is I-hear COPULA

"I feel troubled if Argentines indeed underrate Japan (so much) [*ga*] ...
Okay, I understand that Argentina is now 8 o'clock in the evening ..."

Implicative *ga* (3.4) is a generalization of Alfonso's (1992) assertion-softening *ga* (2.4c) and Merriam-Webster's Japanese-English Learner's Dictionary's (1993) *ga* at the end of an unfinished sentence (2.5d). While the previous three functions (Conflictive/Contrastive; Referential; Insertive) all deliver explicit function and meaning, Implicative *ga* seems to be used to make inferences⁴ about the utterances. Since Implicative *ga* does not express the actual intended meaning in explicit terms, its interpretations would hinge upon the context in which it is used.

The clue to interpreting Implicative *ga* (3.4) lies in the brief pause after it, which functions as a negotiation cue. In (3.4), host Sekiguchi paused to see if his guest commentators would want to take their turn. Since they did not take their turn, host Sekiguchi continued his turn while he shifted the discussion topic. On the other hand, it would be possible for the commentators to take their turns after Implicative *ga*. While the June 14, 1998, edition of the talk show included no such instance, the March 23, 1997, edition included an instance of this kind of turn-taking as the following example illustrates:

(3.5) Guest commentator:

... haigo-kankei o kichitto kaimei dekina katta koto ga
background ACC clearly reveal can't PAST fact NOM

konkai no shiji-sha to iwa reru hito no
this-time GEN mastermind that call PASS person GEN

→ muzai hanketsu ni natta n darô to omoimasu *ga*,
 acquittal verdict to became might that think

“ (the prosecutors’) failure to discover the background (of this case) resulted in the acquittal this time of the alleged mastermind, in my opinion [*ga*] ”

Host Sekiguchi:

Sô desu ka
 So COPULA Q

“I see”

In (3.5), the guest commentator expressed his views on what might have happened during the criminal case trial. Just like (3.4), the commentator used Implicative *ga* as a negotiation cue. The difference from (3.4) is that host Sekiguchi inserted the back-channel cue *Sô desu ka*. “I see.” in response to the commentator’s remarks.

In addition to indicating a negotiation cue, Implicative *ga* seems to deliver an implicit, context-bound meaning. In (3.4), while Implicative *ga* sends a negotiation cue to the addressees for a possible turn-taking, this *ga* implicitly indicates the addresser’s intention to maintain his turn for a topic shift if the addressees do not take their turn. Meanwhile, Implicative *ga* (3.5) sends a negotiation cue to the addressees just like in (3.4), but *ga* (3.5) implies that the opinion that the commentator just expressed was strictly his, with which the addressees may not agree. These facts do not mean that these are the standard lexical meanings of Implicative *ga*. Instead, at each occurrence of Implicative *ga*, its implicit meaning is contextually assigned, and it is the responsibility of the

addressee(s) to interpret the meaning that the addresser intends.

(3.6) Continuative *ga*

Wârudo-Kappu, hajimatta no wa zuibun mae desu *ga*,
World-Cup began that TOP considerably before is

kono hen o furikaette mitai to omoimasu.
this aspect ACC look-back want that think

“The World Cup already has begun days ago [*ga*]; we would like to look back the related events.”

Continuative *ga* (3.6), the last of our five categories, requires detailed explanation because of the vagueness of its meaning. In fact, it seems as though the Continuative *ga* carries no overt lexical meaning, and a simple look at the structure would reveal little of its functional features. Structurally, Continuative *ga* would be equivalent for the conjunctive *soshite* “and” or the *te*-form (a nontensed verb form that is used to connect a sequence of two events),² which are both used to establish a logical interrelation between the two clauses. To illustrate the critical difference between *ga* and *soshite/te*-form, we recall (3.6) to examine the following examples:

(3.7) (a) hajimatta no wa zuibun mae desu *ga*, kono hen o
began that TOP considerably before is this aspect ACC

(b) hajimatta no wa zuibun mae desu. Kono hen o
began that TOP considerably before is this aspect ACC

(c) ??hajimatta no wa zuibun mae desu.
began that TOP considerably before is

Soshite, kono hen o
and this aspect ACC

(d) ??hajimatta no wa zuibun mae *de*, kono hen o
began that TOP considerably before is this aspect ACC

“[The World Cup] already has begun days ago, *and* we would like to ...”

In these instances, there is no compelling logical interrelation between how long ago the World Cup began and the speaker (i.e., host Sekiguchi’s assistant) reviewing the surrounding events at the World Cup opening. *Ga* in (3.7a) indicates that the two ideas are mutually unrelated. In (3.7b), the absence of a connector correctly blocks the establishment of the logical interrelation between the two clauses. (3.7c), on the other hand, is odd, because the conjunctive *soshite* wrongly establishes the logical interrelation between the two clauses and the flow of utterances sounds as though reviewing the surrounding events at the World Cup opening were an inevitable result of the fact that this event had opened a long time ago. (3.7d) is also odd since the use of the *te*-form in *de* “is, and” wrongly indicates that the reporting of the World Cup opening would be possible only after days have passed since its beginning.

While the analysis in (3.7) would account for the differences between Continuative *ga* and other additives, it falls short of accounting for its *raison d’être* in a given discourse setting. Continuative *ga* does not seem to deliver an overt lexical meaning in the sense that it does not denote cause-effect or contrastive

logical relation, or chronological sequence. This fact would mean that Continuative *ga* is not used to establish a logical interrelation between clauses immediately before/after it. Therefore, we need different explanations for the use of it at all. Since little information is available for identifying the function of Continuative *ga*, examination of its frequency/distribution patterns in different settings, which we will investigate in the subsequent variation analysis, would play a crucial role in identifying its functional characteristics.

Findings in this pragmatic analysis would be considered beneficial in several respects. First, this study unified all previously identified functions of *ga* into five separate categories as a result of the descriptive investigation of all *ga* occurrences in a reciprocal spoken setting. In addition to confirming the presence of Referential, Conflictive/Contrastive, Implicative, and Continuative *ga*, this pragmatic analysis unified Alfonso's (1992) assertion-softening *ga* and Merriam-Webster's Japanese-English Learner's Dictionary's (1993) unfinished-sentence final *ga* into Implicative *ga* based on the two common features that we have observed. The very fact that this pilot study has identified these functions is an indication that the nonconflictive *ga* is not a sheer meaningless insertion.

Second, while addressing frequencies is not the primary purpose of this pragmatic analysis, one finding on the *ga* frequency would merit discussion. Although utterances in the live TV talk show are spontaneous speech, its setting as a nationally televised program would impose on all participating speakers

numerous behavioral restrictions including the controlled form of language. Nevertheless, our results indicate that the Conflictive/Contrastive function constitutes the minority of all *ga* occurrences, with 15 (31.25%) of the total 48 occurrences. This result would serve as an indication that the impact of the prescriptive rules on the use of *ga* does not extend to spoken settings.

While the previous studies disputed over the variations in the observable *ga* functions, our pragmatic analysis was successful in dividing all *ga* occurrences into meaningful functional categories. Although our categorization was initially conducted in isolation from the findings in the previous studies, a detailed insight into each of our functional categories revealed combinations of the previously identified *ga* functions into our functional categories. In light of the previous studies' predominant focus on the immediately preceding/following clauses, findings of this pragmatic analysis would be considered beneficial for their revelation of greater detail of the *ga* functions. This in-depth analysis will render our *ga* functional categories beneficial for use in the subsequent variation analysis of *ga* frequency/distribution patterns in different settings.

In the subsequent analysis of the frequency/distribution patterns, we will use the five functional categories identified in our pragmatic analysis. While our categories are valid because of their separate functions, they also include all the functions that were identified in the previous studies. Additionally, these categories include functional features that were not addressed in the previous

studies due to their predominant focus on the written texts. While the essential objective of the variation analysis is to reveal the functional features of *ga* in detail, this study also serves as confirmation of the validity of our functional categories. If all *ga* occurrences in our variation analysis fall into the five categories identified in the pragmatic analysis, then the variation analysis will confirm the validity of the categories. In the meantime, the variation analysis will also investigate features of each discourse setting that *ga* frequency/distribution patterns would reveal. Before discussing our findings of the variation analysis, we will first address in Chapter 4 the method of the analysis and discourse settings selected for the study. Also, Chapter 4 will define a full clause, a measurement unit for *ga* frequency in each selected text.

Notes

¹Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1983) admit that some studies treat conflictive and contrastive connectors as two separate categories. However, they state, “We do not feel the criteria for distinguishing them are sufficiently clear-cut at this time to justify two separate categories” (p. 326).

²*Te*-form is a non-tensed verb form that is used to string together a sequence of two clauses or to signal an auxiliary following it. As the name suggests, verbs with this form end with *-te* (e.g. *kaite* “to write”; *tabete* “to eat”; *mite* “to see”; etc.), but a phonological environment changes *-te* to *-de* (e.g. *nonde* “to drink”; *yonde* “to read”; *isoide* “to hurry”; etc.) (see Tsukuba Language Group, 1991, p. 121, for *-te/-de* rules.). The following examples show different uses of *te*-form:

Continuative (*[V]-te* “to do, and ...”; to string two clauses together)

Tegami o *kaite*, nemashita.

letter ACC write-and slept

“I wrote a letter and went to bed.”

Explaining reason (*[V]-te* “because [one does], ...”)

tegami o *moratte*, ureshikatta desu.

letter ACC receive-and happy-was (end)

“Because I received the letter, I was happy.”

= “I was happy to receive the letter.”

Progressive (along with *imasu* “-ing”)

Ima repôto o *kaite* imasu.

Now report ACC write -ing

“I’m writing a report now.”

Request (along with *kudasai* “please”)

Ashita *kite* kudasai.

Tomorrow come please

“Please come tomorrow.”

Permission (*mo iidesu* “It is okay if [one] does”)

Mado o akete mo iidesu ka.

Window ACC open if good Q

“May I open the window?”

One important rule in the *te*-form is that the event introduced by this verb form must occur before the event introduced by the subsequent sentence:

- (a) ??Konban pâti ga atte, ima heya o sôji-shimasu.
 tonight party NOM there-is now room ACC clean
- (b) Konban pâti ga aru node, ima heya o sôji-shimasu.
 tonight party NOM there-is because now room ACC clean

“Because there is a party tonight, I’ll clean the room now.”

In both sentences, the cleaning of the speaker’s room occurs before a party, and using the *te*-form *atte* as in (a) is odd because the event described by the *te*-form verb *atte* occurs later than the one in the subsequent clause *ima heya o sôji-shimasu* “I’ll clean the room now.”

IV: METHOD OF VARIATION ANALYSIS

The previous chapter illustrates the design, results, and analysis of the pragmatic analysis that we conducted as a first step to identify the functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*. Since the purpose of the study in Chapter 3 was only to identify all observable functions of *ga*, it did not address the *ga* frequency/distribution patterns across discourse settings. As far as the frequencies are concerned, this study revealed that the Conflictive-Contrastive *ga*, which prescriptivists recognize as the only acceptable function, was used in less than 50% of all *ga* occurrences throughout the two-hour TV talk show. This fact leaves open a possibility that different frequency/distribution patterns across discourse settings may reveal the kind of function that sentence-level analysis would not. In addition to the frequencies themselves, the distribution patterns may reveal detailed elements of its functions. This chapter will discuss the procedure of the variation analysis that utilizes the five functions of *ga* identified in Chapter 3. In addition to the spoken/written settings, this variation analysis will include messages on a Bulletin Board System (BBS) as one of the groundbreaking

attempts to explore linguistic characteristics of the Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) in Japanese.

A. Purpose of Study

This variation analysis primarily aims to investigate the frequency/distributions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga* in an attempt to reveal characteristics of its functions on a discourse level. In order to achieve this goal, this study examines all instances of *ga* in selected texts in their entirety. Based on the availability of texts and transcripts in the public domain (i.e., publications in print and on the World Wide Web [WWW]), our data will include two spoken settings, two written settings, and one Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) setting (see Section B of this chapter for details of these settings).

Among various forms of the written language, our variation analysis has selected newspaper article/editorials. In expectation of optimal differences from the editorials in *ga* frequency/distribution patterns, this study has selected breaking news stories that were posted on the newspaper Web site. As mentioned in Chapter 2, earlier prescriptivists such as Shimizu (1959) and Takahashi (1960) were critical of the use of *ga* in newspaper article/editorials. However, recent *ga* critics such as Honda (1991) and Ono (1999) make no reference to a particular setting in which *ga* appears frequently. Especially in light of the duration of time

since Shimizu (1959) and Takahashi (1960), it is possible to predict that *ga* may not be used as frequently in recent newspaper article/editorials as it was in the 1950s. While the absence of numerical data in the earlier studies makes diachronic comparison impossible, it was our prediction prior to the actual investigation that the frequency of *ga* in newspaper article/editorials would be extremely low as a result of the impact of prescriptive rules. On the other hand, we anticipated different *ga* frequency/distribution patterns between the breaking news stories and editorials due to different production processes. While the editorials are group products with tedious scrutiny of the contents (Editorial Board, 1998; see Chapter 6 for detailed discussions), the news stories are generally individual works that are released within rigid time constraints. Additionally, breaking news stories on the WWW are primarily concerned with the timely release of information. Therefore, it is possible that the difference between the breaking news stories and editorials would translate into different *ga* frequency/distribution patterns.

From the spoken language, this study has selected press conferences and TV interviews with prominent elected officials from two opposing political parties for several reasons. Various properties of personal conversations (e.g., discourse markers, false starts, etc.) would make it virtually impossible to count non-modifying clauses (which we will discuss below) for adequate comparison of *ga* frequencies between discourse settings. Moreover, attempts to tape-record personal conversations have failed because the prospective informants could not overcome concerns for potentially disclosing any private aspect of the contents.

On the other hand, transcripts of a number of formal interviews are available on the Web. The World Wide Web falls within the public domain, and therefore accessing any information on it would not require an exhaustive process for its use. More importantly, similarities in linguistic characteristics between formal interviews and written texts would draw an adequate comparison. In addition to the physical settings, utterances by two political rivals would present the kind of contrast in linguistic properties (including *ga* frequency/distributions) that would characterize their roles in Japan's political scenes.

In addition to the spoken/written language, our investigation has added data from the BBS. Due to rapid growth in its civilian use in recent years, there have been limited empirical studies to date on CMC linguistic properties. While numerous recent studies have addressed issues of CMC in task-oriented settings (e.g., Hiltz, Johnson & Turoff, 1986; George, Easton, Nunamaker & Northcraft, 1990; Baym, 1995) and inflammatory remarks in CMC (e.g., Lea, O'Shea, Fung & Spears, 1992), few CMC studies focus on linguistic properties. Furthermore, in light of limited CMC participation until the July 1995 release of Windows 95,¹ empirical data prior to Windows 95 would not represent the truly popular participant form of CMC.² Moreover, there has been little CMC research in non-English languages to date.³ Therefore, as one of the groundbreaking studies in post-Windows 95 CMC, the variation analysis will explore the extent to which our findings would be relevant to those in the previous CMC studies. As much as we expect our CMC analysis to reveal some characteristics of *ga*, it is also our

anticipation that our results of *ga* frequency/distribution patterns would reveal features of the discourse settings.

On the basis of discussions in the previous (mostly prescriptive) accounts of the Japanese conjunctive *ga* and the findings in our pragmatic analysis (see Chapter 3), we propose several predictions about our findings in the variation analysis for each selected discourse setting. First, we predict that *ga* would appear with higher frequency and wider functional variations in breaking news stories on a newspaper Web site than in newspaper editorials. As mentioned above, earlier prescriptivists criticized the repetitive use of *ga* in newspaper article/editorials while recent prescriptivists do not refer to settings with frequent *ga* occurrences. These facts seem to suggest that Shimizu (1959) and Takahashi (1960) may have been influential enough to inhibit *ga* in recent professional writing. Especially, newspaper editorials may yield a notably low *ga* frequency because of their recognition as opinions of the news organization as opposed to those of individual writers (Editorial Board, 1998). On the other hand, because of their emphasis on the prompt release of information, the time constraints would elicit *ga* with higher frequency in the breaking news stories as a result of what prescriptivists would perceive as a compromise in the language quality.

Second, the prescriptivists' tolerance for frequent *ga* occurrences in speaking would lead to a prediction that *ga* would appear with higher frequency and wider functional variations in spoken settings than in written settings. While the two spoken settings selected for the variation analysis (i.e., press conferences

with the incumbent prime minister and TV interviews with an opposition party leader; see the subsequent section for details) would yield formal speech, utterances in these settings are inherently spontaneous. Another prediction on the spoken settings is that the press conferences would yield *ga* with lower frequency and narrower functional variations than the TV interviews. Since the press conferences include utterances of the prime minister, who theoretically represents the nation, he would conform to the prescriptive norms (i.e., fewer *ga*, used exclusively as a Conflictive/Contrastive marker). On the other hand, the interviewee in the TV setting is a vocal political opponent to the prime minister and his party. Especially, this leader's party voices his appeal to the individual voters' interests (Krauss, 1984; Jain & Todhunter, 1997; see discussions in Chapter 6). We predict that his utterances would be made less prescriptive in an attempt to project the image of his opposition party as approachable and responsive to individual voters' interests.

Third, based on theories proposed in previous CMC studies, we predict that CMC would generally yield frequent *ga* occurrences with a wide functional variation. However, due to the absence of the equivalent studies to date, detailed prediction on *ga* frequency/distribution are virtually impossible. CMC researchers disagree on the linguistic characteristics in the setting. Researchers in the early 1980s argued that the absence of social/physical contact would nullify interactional norms, and CMC participants would yield the uninhibited form of language (e.g., Kiesler, Siegel & McGuire, 1984; Siegel, Dubrovsky, Kiesler &

McGuire, 1986; Lee, O'Shea, Fung & Spears, 1992). On the other hand, recent studies suggest that anticipated future interaction would lead CMC participants to seek social information within the setting, and elicit a controlled form of utterances (e.g., Walther, 1992; Walther & Burgoon, 1992). In the BBS setting that this study has selected, however, it is our expectation that relatively open access ("Yahoo! Japan," 1998; see the subsequent section for details) would elicit the uninhibited form of language, which would translate into frequent *ga* occurrences with a wide functional variation. Since this study serves as a groundbreaking investigation in this field, it is of interest to examine our data in an attempt to analyze the extent to which they would conform to the previous results.

B. Research Design and Data Sources

The basic tasks in this variation analysis involve the collection of all occurrences of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*, and their categorization into the five (5) functions that the pragmatic analysis has identified. As mentioned above, this variation analysis predicts that different *ga* frequency/distribution patterns would reveal several characteristics of each *ga* function. In other words, each *ga* function would occur with different frequencies in different settings, and some *ga* functions might even be specific to a particular discourse setting. At the same time, this study anticipates that differences in addresser/addressee's roles in different

settings would have an impact on the *ga* frequency/distribution patterns. For adequate comparison, this new study collected approximately 1,000 full clauses (which will be defined in detail in the subsequent section) for each discourse setting. At the same time, none of the selected discourse settings consisted of exactly 1,000 full clauses because we analyzed each selected text in its entirety for optimal findings of the structural/discourse functions.

For the written texts, this study has selected editorials and breaking news stories from *Asahi Shimbun*, one of the four (4) nationally circulating newspapers in Japan. Most editorials come from hard copies released in August 1999 while the remaining ones, all of which were released September 1999, were downloaded from the *Asahi Shimbun* Web site (see Appendix). Editorials in August 1999 were collected during the author's short stay in Japan while those in September 1999 were collected on an everyday basis from the Web until the total number of full clauses reached close to 1,000.

Breaking news stories all came from the main page of the *Asahi Shimbun* Web site, which is constantly updated whenever the news stories are uploaded. These stories came from all but one section on the main page, including National, International, Economy, Politics, and Sports (see Appendix). These breaking news stories were collected randomly on an everyday basis until the total number of full clauses reached close to 1,000. Since part of our research interests includes differences between careful writing (i.e., editorials) and quick writing (i.e., breaking news stories), stories on the Obituaries section were excluded. As

Sandorfi (1998) points out, the media “often prepare obituaries ahead of time so they’re able to publish or broadcast immediately if such an incident occurs” especially for national dignitaries and celebrities. During the time of our data collection, obituaries included one for Sony co-founder Akio Morita, whose obituary was almost certainly prepared far ahead of time for timely release, in light of his significance in the electric appliance industry.

Spoken texts selected for this study came from press conferences with incumbent Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi (in office since July 1998) and radio/TV interviews with Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa. Transcripts of their interviews were available on the Official Residency of the Prime Minister Web site and the Japan Communist Party official Web site, respectively (see Appendix). Like other texts, transcripts of the press conferences and TV interviews were selected from the most recent to oldest as of the end of September 1999 until the total full clauses reached close to 1,000.

The criteria for selecting the transcripts were: 1) spontaneous responses to questions on different issues; and 2) differences between the interviewees’ political roles, which, according to our hypothesis, would affect their language use. First, in order to assure optimal spontaneity in the interviewees’ responses, this analysis selected only the earliest of two or more conference/interviews with virtually the same content. For example, out of two or more separate TV interviews on Parliament’s legal adaptation of the nation’s flag and anthem, this

study has selected only the earliest interview since utterances in the subsequent interviews would not be considered entirely spontaneous.

Second, this study has selected JCP among all other opposition parties for several reasons. Interviews with the chairmen of Komeito and the Liberal Party were readily excluded because these two parties are forming a trilateral coalition to date with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.⁴ Moreover, transcripts of interviews with the chairman of the leading opposition Democratic Party of Japan were excluded because they were obviously edited. Additionally, other parties do not make available the virtually non-edited transcripts of media interviews with their prominent members.⁵

Through these observations, this study came to a conclusion that interviews with Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and JCP leader Tetsuzo Fuwa were the only ones for adequate comparison because: 1) Transcripts are provided in a virtually unedited form; and 2) Political roles of these two individuals are so markedly different that the differences may translate into substantially different linguistic patterns. Within the context of our variation analysis, the substantially different linguistic patterns would involve skewed *ga* frequency/distribution patterns as a result of differences in the political roles that the two elected officials play. Conversely, such patterns would reveal some characteristics of these individuals' political roles.

In addition to the written and spoken texts, this study included the latest messages on *Yahoo! Japan* message boards on various sociopolitical issues. Based

on high responses, this study selected the following ten (10) topics: Net circles; favorite ramen noodle restaurants; abhorrent musicians; anti-smoking; the Toshiba scandal⁶; unemployment; politics in general; the national flag/anthem; the professional soccer league; and professional baseball (see Appendix). Members of *Yahoo! Japan* message boards will raise discussion topics on different issues and submit their messages via Common Gateway Interface (CGI), which will electronically post the messages on the WWW message boards. Membership for *Yahoo! Japan* message board is free of charge, and the registered users' messages are not edited or erased by the administrator unless viewers reported them as offensive, derogatory or defamatory ("Yahoo! Japan," 1998).

C. Full Clauses: Measurement Unit for this Study

Establishing a consistent measurement unit as the basis for frequency calculation of the Japanese conjunctive *ga* is essential for this study. Frequency analysis of this type would entail its validity only on the basis of a consistent form of measurement unit. Because of inherent linguistic differences of Japanese from other languages (see Kuno, 1973; Thompson, 1987; Odlin, 1989; etc.), the use of information units (Halliday, 1967), tone units (Lehiste, 1970), and other units would not be suitable for the purpose of this study.

Due to the absence of intonation and other elements that are specific to spoken settings, sentences and clauses would be the two reasonable choices for our measurement. However, the use of sentences is readily questionable as a measurement unit for this study because of the different ways that the press conferences and media interviews could be transcribed. To illustrate this point, we will cite the following example, where Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa accuses the Liberal Democratic Party of trying to allow the national police to wiretap the media with no probable cause:

(4.1) Jogai-sa reru naka ni, masukomi kankei,
exclude PASS among in mass-comm. related

hōdō kankei ga haitte inai, issai jogai-sa rete inai.
journalism related NOM included NEG at-all exclude PASS NEG

Lit. “Media organizations, or journalism related organizations are not exempt from wiretapping, (they are) not exempt at all.”

[D-2]

Unlike in English, a run-on sentence is considered syntactically well-formed in Japanese. In (4.1), *jogai-sa reru . . . haitte inai* and *issai jogai sarete inai* seem to be two separate sentences because the verbs *haitte inai* “is/are not included” and *jogai sarete inai* “is/are not excluded” are both sentence-final forms. However, since a run-on is perfectly acceptable in Japanese, it is entirely up to the scriptwriter’s discretion to divide them into two separate sentences or to conjoin them into one. Especially in cases of interviews of this kind, it is the scriptwriter who decides whether (4.1) should be considered one or two sentences. For this

reason, a sentence in interview transcripts would not be comparable to the one in written texts.

While a clause, especially compared to a sentence, would serve as a more adequate measurement unit for the frequency of *ga*, defining a clause in Japanese requires a set of rules. In English, one simple method to count clauses is to count the number of tensed verbs, as in the following sentence:

(4.2) I like reading novels for fun / but I hate having to read it for a class /
(where / indicates a clause boundary.)

In (4.2), the verbs *like* and *hate* are tensed because these two main verbs for each clause are used in the present tense. On the other hand, the verb *reading* and auxiliary *having to* are nontensed because the *V-ing* form in itself indicates nominalization, not tense (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1983). Thus, since (4.2) includes two tensed verb/auxiliaries, this sentence consists of two clauses.

Meanwhile, unlike English, Japanese does not make a clear distinction in terms of the physical appearance of the verb alone between tensed and nontensed VPs (see below for detailed discussion), and it is virtually impossible to base our tensed/nontensed distinction on the form of the verb. Instead, in light of the agglutinative structure of the Japanese language, the VP-final components would provide a more appropriate basis for such a distinction. Syntactically, a Japanese VP consists of a head verb followed by a string of the so-called auxiliaries that describe not only tense/aspect but also voice (active/passive), adversity as a result

of receiving action (Watabe, Brown & Ueta, 1991), offer/reception of favor, causative, assumption, relative social/sociopolitical status between the agent and patient, among many other things (YMCA, 1990b, pp. 16-22; Morimoto, 1996, pp. 98-155). Especially in VPs of considerable complexity, it is the string of auxiliaries or other postverbal components rather than the head verb itself that determines whether the VP is tensed or nontensed. The following examples illustrate this point:

(4.3) (a) *Watashi wa ashita eiga o miru.*
 I TOP tomorrow movie ACC watch
 “I will watch a movie tomorrow.”

(b) *Watashi no shumi wa eiga o miru koto da.*
 I GEN hobby TOP movie ACC watch act-of COPULA
 “My hobby is to watch movies.”

Both (4.3)(a) and (b) use the verb *miru* “to see,” which is either the dictionary (i.e., nontensed) form or nonpast (i.e., tensed) form, and the physical appearance of the verb alone does not indicate whether these verbs are tensed or nontensed.

However, the postverbal *-koto* in (4.3b) is roughly the English equivalent for an infinitive that is used “to make . . . a nominalized phrase” (3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 118) and therefore *miru* in (4.3b) is the nontensed dictionary form. In (4.3a), on the other hand, the *miru* comes in the sentence-final position, and therefore it is a nonpast (i.e., tensed) verb form.

In light of the SOV structure of the Japanese language (Kuno, 1973, p. 3; Thompson, 1987, p. 216; etc.) and the aforementioned discussion on a Japanese VP, this study employs the following rule as the general definition of a full clause:

(4.4) A Japanese full clause ends with a tensed VP.

Meanwhile, clauses with multi-verb VPs will require further examination. The following examples illustrate this point:

- (4.5) (a) Sono kangae-kata wa ima de mo kawara nai desu.
 this thinking-method TOP now even change NEG COPULA
 “This principle hasn’t changed even now.”
- (b) Kore ga kôka ga aru koto wa machigai nai n desu.
 this NOM effectiveness NOM exist fact TOP question NEG COPULA
 “There is no question of its effectiveness, I tell you.”
- (c) Kokumin yoron o haikai ni . . . giron o susumete-iku
 citizen opinion ACC backing with debate ACC proceed

 tsumori desu.
 intention COP

 “With popular backing, . . . we intend to proceed with the debate.”

The sentence-final VP for each of the examples above seems to consist of two verbs. In (4.5a), the verb *kawara nai* “not change” is followed by the copula *desu*. In (4.5b), the compound verb *machigai nai* “to be unquestionable” is followed by the implicative marker *-n*⁷ and the copula *desu*. (4.5c) includes the verb *susumete iru* “to proceed” and copula *desu* with the noun *tsumori* “an intention” in between.

Among the three examples, (4.5c) would be readily identified as one clause because *susumete iku* “to proceed”, one of the two verbs, is nontensed. To validate this claim, we cite the following examples:

- (4.6) (a) *Kokumin yoron o haikai ni . . . giron o susumete-itta
 citizen opinion ACC backing with debate ACC proceed

tsumori desu.
 intention COP

- (b) Kokumin yoron o haikai ni . . . giron o susumete-iku
 citizen opinion ACC backing with debate ACC proceed

tsumori deshita.
 intention COP

“With popular backing, . . . we intended to proceed with the debate.”

(4.6a) is ill-formed because the verb *susumete-itta* is wrongly tensed. (4.6b), on the other hand, is well-formed since it correctly assigns the past tense to the copula *deshita* and not the verb *susumete-iku*.

Meanwhile, the question remains as to whether (4.5)(a) and (b) should each be identified as one or two clauses. For (4.5a), one solution to the problem lies in the fact that *kawara nai desu* and the equivalent *kawari masen* are recognized as two alternate fixed forms of one clause-final VP (Morimoto, 1996, p. 225) rather than *kawara nai desu* as one VP and *kawari masen* as another. This recognition of the *V-nai desu/V-masen* patterns as alternatives is consistent with the textbook recognition of *Adj.-nai desu* and *Adj.-arimasen* as two alternate forms of predicative negative adjectives (Tsukuba Language Group, 1991, pp. 139-40).

Therefore, it is appropriate to recognize *V-nai desu* as one (as opposed to two) clause-final component.

For (4.5b), *machigai nai n desu* would be viewed as one unit as well because Japanese grammar textbooks recognize *V-n- desu* as one inseparable VP unit (3A Corporation, 1998b, pp. 8-9; Tsukuba Language Group, 1991, pp. 158-60). The following examples will provide evidence of our claim:

(4.7) (a) wa machigai na katta n desu.
 TOP question NEG PAST COPULA

(b) wa *machigai nai n de-shita.
 TOP question NEG COPULA-PAST

“There was no question that”

According to the syntactic rule, it is only the head verb that takes the tense marking while the copula resists it (Tsukuba Language Group, 1991, p. 160).

Therefore, (4.7a) is well-formed since the copula *desu* correctly remains unaffected. On the other hand, (4.7b) is ill-formed since the copula *deshita* “was/were” is wrongly assigned the past tense. For this reason, it is appropriate to recognize *V-n- desu* as one clause-final VP pattern.

In addition to the three VP patterns in (4.5), this study recognizes the following clause-final patterns as one rather than two or more separate tensed VPs:

(4.8) (a) *V ka dôka* (whether V or not)
 Bônenkai ni shusseki-suru ka dôka,
 year-end-party in attend whether-or-not

hatsuka made ni henji o kudasai.
20th no-later-than reply ACC please

“Please answer by the 20th whether you’ll attend the year-end party or not.”

(3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 92)

(b) *V-te imasu* (progressive)

Ima ame ga futte imasu ka.
now rain NOM fall PROG Q
“Is it raining now?”

(3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 95)

(c) *V-te arimasu* (state of inanimate entity)

Tsukue no ue ni memo ga oite arimasu.
desk GEN top at NOM put STATE
“There is a memo put on the desk.”

(3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 32)

(d) *V-te okimasu* (to do V as a preparatory measure)

Ryokô no mae ni kippu o katte okimasu.
trip GEN prior at ticket ACC buy do-in-advance
“I will buy a ticket before the trip.”⁸

(3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 92)

(e) *V yotei desu* (to be scheduled to V)

7-gatsu no owari ni Doitsu e shutchô-suru
July GEN end at Germany to take-a-business-trip

yotei desu.
plan COPULA

“I’m scheduled to go on a business trip to Germany at the end of July.”

(3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 92)

(f) *V yô ni narimasu* (to become capable of V-ing)

Oyo-geru yô ni narimasu.
swim-can to become
“You will become able to swim.”

(3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 92)

(4.8a) consists of two full clauses. *hatsuka made ni henji o kudasai* “please answer by the 20th” is evidently one full clause because it contains one VP *kudasai* “please give me.” The question is whether *Bōnenkai ni shusseki suru ka dôka* “whether you’ll attend the year-end party or not” should be considered one or two full clauses. From the strictly syntactic perspective, *dôka*, which roughly means “whether it is so,” is originally one separate clause. However, it is a fixed expression that does not occur in any other form in present-day Japanese. Additionally, Japanese language textbooks recognize *V ka dôka* as one established VP pattern (3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 92; Tohsaku, 1994, pp. 453-4). Therefore, recognizing *V ka dôka* as VP of one full clause is valid.

(4.8)(b), (c) and (d) share as their common structure a *te*-form verb followed by an auxiliary. The crucial element in these patterns is the fact that the *te*-form is inherently nontensed and therefore does not constitute a clause-final VP component in itself (see Notes in Chapter 3 for detail). Additionally, the auxiliaries *imasu* in (4.8b), *arimasu* in (4.8c), and *okimasu* in (4.8d) are all tense-marked.⁹ Therefore, *V-te imasu* in (4.8b), *V-te arimasu* in (4.8c), and *V-te okimasu* in (4.8d) are the VPs of one full clause.

(4.8e) is also considered one full clause even though it includes two verbs: *shutchō suru* “to go on a business trip” and the copula *desu*. However, the following examples provide evidence that *shutchō suru* is nontensed:

(4.9) (a) *7-gatsu no owari ni Doitsu e shutchō-shita
 July GEN end at Germany to take-a-business-trip

yotei desu.
plan COPULA

- (b) 7-gatsu no owari ni Doitsu e shutchô-suru
July GEN end at Germany to take-a-business-trip

yotei deshita.
plan COPULA

“I was scheduled to go on a business trip to Germany at the end of July.”

(4.9a) is ill-formed because the verb *shutchô shita*, which would roughly mean “to went on a business trip” is wrongly assigned the past tense. (4.9b), meanwhile, is well-formed because *shutchô shita* “to go on a business trip” is correctly nontensed and the past tense is correctly assigned to the copula *deshita* “was/were.” Therefore, *V yotei desu* “to be schedule to do” is one inseparable clause-final VP.

Finally, *V yô ni narimasu* in (4.8f) functions as one clause-final VP even though it includes two verbs: the potential verb *oyogeru* “to be able to swim” and *narimasu* “to become.” (*Yô ni*, which comes between the two verbs, literally means “so that.”) Again, the crucial point here is that *oyogeru* is a nontensed potential verb:

- (4.10) (a) *Oyo-geta yô ni narimasu.
swim-could to become

(b) Oyo-geru yô ni narimashita.
swim-can to became

“You became able to swim.”

(4.10a) is ill-formed because it wrongly assigns the past tense to *oyogeta* “was/were able to swim.” (4.10b), on the other hand, is well-formed because it correctly keeps *oyogeru* nontensed and assigns the past tense to *narimashita* “became.” For this reason, (4.8f), which includes only one VP, constitutes one full clause.

Finally, we need to examine embedded and relative clauses to determine whether or not they constitute full clauses. We cite the following examples for discussion:

(4.11) (a) Miller-san wa raishû Tôkyô e shutchô-suru to iimashita.
Mr. TOP next-week to go-on-business that said
“Mr. Miller said that he would go to Tokyo on a business trip next week.”

(3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 137)

(b) Watashi ga ashita au tomodachi wa Miller-san desu.
I NOM tomorrow meet friend TOP Mr. COPULA
“The friend whom I will meet tomorrow is Mr. Miller.”

(3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 142)

In (4.11a), *raishû Tôkyô e shutchô-suru* is an embedded clause which is a quotation of Mr. Miller’s statement. In (4.11b), *watashi ga ashita au* is a relative clause that modifies the noun *Miller-san*.¹⁰ These examples in themselves would not determine the full/non-full clause status of embedded/relative clauses because

the verbs *shutchô suru* “go on a business trip” and *au* “meet” may be either the dictionary (i.e., nontensed) or nonpast (i.e., tensed) form. However, the following examples provide evidence that these verbs are tensed:

(4.12) (a) Miller-san wa senshû Tôkyô e shutchô-shita to iimashita.
 Mr. TOP last-week to went-on-business that said
 “Mr. Miller said that he went to Tokyo on a business trip last week.”

(b) Watashi ga kinô atta tomodachi wa Miller-san desu.
 I NOM yesterday met friend TOP Mr. COPULA
 “The friend whom I met yesterday is Mr. Miller.”
 (3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 142)

(4.12a) is well-formed because the verb *shutchô-shita* “went on a business trip” is correctly assigned the past tense in accordance with the time expression *senshû* “last week”. (4.12b) is also well-formed because the verb *atta* “met” is correctly assigned the past tense according to the time expression *kinô* “yesterday”.

Therefore, since the VP at the end of an embedded clause and the one at the end of a relative clause are both tensed, an embedded clause and a relative clause each constitute a full clause in accordance with our full clause definition (4.4). Under the definition (4.4) and the explanations above, (4.11)(a) and (b) each consist of two full clauses. In (4.11a), *raishû Tôkyô e shutchô-suru* “(Mr. Miller will) go on a business trip to Tokyo” constitutes one full clause and *Miller-san wa to iimashita* “Mr. Miller said that” constitutes another. In (4.11b), *watashi ga ashita au* “(the one whom) I will meet tomorrow” is one full clause and *tomodachi wa Miller-san desu* “(the) friend is Mr. Miller” another.

While the pragmatic analysis in Chapter 3 identified the five separate functional categories of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*, an adequate understanding of each function requires analysis of its frequency/distributions in different settings. At the same time, this study will also investigate the manners of *ga* occurrences in the selected texts. The fundamental purpose of this variation analysis is to explore all observable aspects of *ga* functions by examining each selected text in its entirety, and it is only by observing the *ga* occurrences beyond the scope of utterances immediately before/after *ga* that this analysis will reveal the structural, pragmatic, and discourse functions of *ga*. In discussing our findings in the variation analysis, Chapter 5 will focus mainly on the numerical results in the selected settings. Based on the characteristics of each setting and Japan's sociopolitical features, Chapter 6 will provide explanations for the *ga* frequency/distribution patterns obtained in Chapter 5.

Notes

¹ The Japanese language version of Windows 95 was not officially released until November 1995.

² For example, Bordia (1997) questions the applicability of most previous (i.e., pre-Windows 95) CMC studies to social functions due to their limited varieties of subjects. Since participation in CMC presupposed substantial computer literacy prior to the release of the user-friendly applications since Windows 95, it is questionable whether or not pre-Windows 95 CMC participants (who were predominantly computer experts) yielded the data that would be comparable to those of current CMC participants.

³ To the best of our knowledge, Georgakopoulou (1997), who investigated the style/code switching by Greek-English bilinguals, is the only post-Windows 95 empirical study to date in non-English CMC.

⁴ At the time of this study, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi has just formed a reshuffled coalition Cabinet involving the LDP, Komeito, and the Liberal Party. Months prior to the reshuffling, there already was a consensus between the three parties to agree on some of the key pieces of legislation such as the Flag-Anthem Adoption Bill and Wiretapping Bill.

⁵ The polite and plain styles are the situationally specific forms of language in Japanese. In speaking, the plain style is used towards close friends, younger individuals, and family members. Also, the plain style is common in informational writings such as newspapers, books, and academic journal articles (3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 130). Based on their use of the plain style, we concluded that transcripts of interviews with prominent members of several opposition parties were edited by the script writers. Also, transcripts of the interviews with then-Democratic Party chairman Naoto Kan, for example, excluded the unedited version of media questions. Additionally, small parties do not include transcripts of such interviews on their Web sites. As a result, it was only the Official Residency of the Prime Minister and Japan Communist Party Web sites that include interview transcripts written in the polite style along with unedited media questions.

⁶ The Toshiba scandal is among the most controversial incidents of 1999 in Japan. One middle-aged businessman became angry at a Toshiba public relations officer's verbal abuse in response to his product defect complaints, and he released the unedited recording of the telephone conversation on his personal anonymous Web site (Kojima, 1999). This site received an unprecedented 1 million daily hits. This controversy turned particularly ugly when anonymous Toshiba employees allegedly sent the Web site producer numerous obscene e-mails. This incident has drawn the public attention to other controversies through the so-called *kokuhatsu* (accusation) Web sites (Tanji, 1999).

⁷ In most cases, *-n-* has no adequate English equivalent. *V-n- desu* is reserved specifically to spoken discourse, and used to express the addresser's feeling such as surprise, suspicion, and curiosity (3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 8; Tsukuba Language Group, 1991, pp. 158-60).

- (a) Doko e ikimasu ka.
where to go Q
- (b) Doko e iku n desu ka.
where to go COPULA Q

“Where are you going?”

(a) is used as neutral question of where the addressee is going. Meanwhile, *iku n desu ka* in (b) adds the feeling of curiosity on the part of the addresser to imply his/her interest in going somewhere with the addressee, advice not to go to a dangerous or inappropriate venue, or criticism for the addressee leaving office abruptly.

⁸ This sentence expresses more than the English translation indicates. To illustrate this point, we will examine the following pair of examples:

- (a) Ryokô no mae ni kippu o kaimasu.
trip GEN prior at ticket ACC buy
- (b) Ryokô no mae ni kippu o katte okimasu.
trip GEN prior at ticket ACC buy do-in-advance

“I will buy a ticket before the trip.”

(a) is a simple statement of the addresser's future action since it uses the ordinary nonpast verb form *kaimasu* “do/will buy.” (b), on the other hand, implies

“[c]ompletion of a necessary action by a given time” (3A Corporation, 1998b, p. 32). While *kaimasu* in (a) denotes simple action, the auxiliary *okimasu* in (b) implies the notion that the subject conducts the action as a form of preparation. Thus, (b) means that the addresser will buy a ticket for assurance that he/she is prepared for the trip.

⁹ The VPs in (4.7)(b)-(d) are tense-marked as follows:

	<u>Nonpast</u>	<u>Past</u>
(b)	V-te imasu	V-te imashita
(c)	V-te arimasu	V-te arimashita
(d)	V-te okimasu	V-te okimashita

As shown below, only the clause-final auxiliaries are tense-marked while the *V-te* remains unaffected for its inherent tense-free feature.

¹⁰ There are two major differences between Japanese relative clauses and their English counterparts. First, a Japanese relative clause comes before the noun it modifies (Kuno, 1973, p. 234; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1983, p. 361; Odlin, 1989, p. 97). Second, Japanese has no equivalent for English relative pronouns such as *who*, *which*, *that* (Kuno, 1973, p. 234; Thompson, 1987, p. 219).

V: RESULTS: FREQUENCIES AND DISTRIBUTIONS OF *GA*

Our variation analysis categorized all instances of the Japanese conjunctive *ga* into the five functional categories that the pragmatic analysis has identified, including Conflictive/Contrastive, Referential, Insertive, Implicative, and Continuative *ga* (see Chapter 3). As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is the expectation of our variation analysis that differences in *ga* frequency/distribution patterns would reveal characteristics of each functional category in detail and those of each discourse setting. This chapter will first provide numerical results that our variation analysis obtained from each of the five selected discourse settings including the newspaper editorials, breaking news stories, press conferences, TV interviews, and WWW message boards (see Chapter 4). Following the numerical data, this chapter will discuss examples of each functional category from the selected settings. Based on the data obtained in this chapter, we will analyze the characteristics of each *ga* functional category and each selected setting in detail in the following chapter.

A. Frequency/Distributions of *ga* in Selected Settings

1) *Asahi Shimbun* editorials

21 *Asahi Shimbun* editorials selected for this variation analysis consisted of a total of 989 full clauses (see Table 5-1). As mentioned in Chapter 4, editorials in August 1999 were collected in hard copies during the author's stay in Japan while those in September 1999 were downloaded from the *Asahi Shimbun* Web site (see Appendix). Most morning editions of *Asahi Shimbun* include two editorials, although a few editions have three. In the case of our variation analysis, all editions included two editorials except the one on August 14, 1999, which had

Table 5-1: *Ga* occurrences in *Asahi Shimbun* editorials

	C/C	Referential	Insertive	Implicative	Continuative	Total	Clauses
[A-1]						0	48
[A-2]						0	43
[A-3]						0	45
[A-4]						0	41
[A-5]						0	42
[A-6]						0	55
[A-7]						0	66
[A-8]						0	63
[A-9]						0	59
[A-10]	2					2	43
[A-11]						0	48
[A-12]	1					1	42
[A-13]						0	31
[A-14]						0	34
[A-15]						0	27
[A-16]						0	51
[A-17]						0	46
[A-18]						0	54
[A-19]						0	53
[A-20]	2					2	54
[A-21]						0	44
Total	5					5	989
%	100.0					overall	0.51

three. Topics of the selected editorials ranged from domestic and international politics to sports (see Appendix).

Asahi Shimbun editorials yield the lowest overall *ga* frequency of all discourse settings in this study, with 5 out of the total 989 full clauses, or 0.51% of full clauses in the editorials. Also, *Asahi Shimbun* editorials use *ga* exclusively as Conflictive/Contrastive markers. Table 5-1 shows that Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* was used in 2 out of the 43 clauses in editorial [A-10], 1 out of the total 42 clauses in [A-12], and 2 out of the total 54 clauses in [A-20] (see Appendix).

2) *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news stories

Asahi Shimbun breaking news stories were found in the *Asahi Shimbun* Web site (see Appendix). Since *Asahi Shimbun* did not archive its news stories on the World Wide Web, we downloaded all selected news stories. As mentioned in Chapter 5, this variation analysis selected the breaking news stories from a variety of categories ranging from politics to sports (see Appendix). 44 breaking news articles consisted of the total 993 full clauses.

Compared to *Asahi Shimbun* editorials, the overall *ga* frequency in *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news stories is considerably higher with the total 46 out of 993 full clauses, or 4.63% of the full clauses (see Table 5-2). Another noteworthy difference in the breaking news stories is their occasional use of non-conflictive *ga*. As Table 5-2 shows, 38 *ga* function as Conflictive/Contrastive markers while the remaining 8 *ga* function as Continuative markers.

Table 5-2: *Ga* occurrences in *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news stories

	C/C	Referential	Insertive	Implicative	Continuative	Total	Clauses
[B-1]	1					1	11
[B-2]	1					1	10
[B-3]						0	47
[B-4]						0	16
[B-5]	1					1	25
[B-6]	1					1	24
[B-7]	1				1	2	49
[B-8]						0	43
[B-9]	2				1	3	20
[B-10]	3					3	25
[B-11]	1					1	16
[B-12]						0	12
[B-13]					1	1	13
[B-14]						0	23
[B-15]	2				1	3	24
[B-16]						0	12
[B-17]	1				1	2	13
[B-18]	1					1	27
[B-19]	1					1	21
[B-20]						0	17
[B-21]						0	13
[B-22]						0	18
[B-23]	1					1	19
[B-24]						0	26
[B-25]	1					1	36
[B-26]						0	15
[B-27]	2					2	19
[B-28]	1					1	15
[B-29]	2					2	33
[B-30]	1					1	14
[B-31]	2					2	33
[B-32]	4					4	34
[B-33]						0	22
[B-34]						0	22
[B-35]	1					1	16
[B-36]	1					1	28
[B-37]	1					1	13
[B-38]					1	1	19
[B-39]	1					1	20
[B-40]						0	31
[B-41]	1				1	2	15
[B-42]	1				1	2	29
[B-43]						0	9
[B-44]	2					2	46
	38				8	46	993
	82.61				17.39	overall	4.63

3) Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences

Transcripts of press conferences with Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi were downloaded from the Official Residency of the Prime Minister Web site (see Appendix). The six selected press conferences consisted of a total of 953 full clauses (see Table 5-3). The frequent use of redundant utterances and nonstandard word orders, and consistent use of the polite style¹ indicate that the transcripts were the faithful reproductions of the actual utterances, while hedges (e.g., *uh*, *ee*, etc.) were likely omitted from the transcripts. The prime minister's press conferences employed a similar setting to that of a U.S. president in the sense that it began with the prime minister's prepared speech followed by the question-and-answer session with a group of reporters. Since the objective of selecting this setting was to analyze *ga* occurrences in the prime minister's spontaneous speech, this study excluded the prime minister's opening speech in its entirety. Also, because of the objective to analyze the utterances of the prime minister, reporters' questions were excluded from our analysis. In the six press conferences, reporters asked Obuchi a variety of questions ranging from the multi-party coalition cabinet

Table 5-3: *Ga* occurrences in Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences

	C/C	Referential	Insertive	Implicative	Continuative	Total	Clauses
[C-1]	5	2	6		2	15	188
[C-2]	4	3	3		2	12	103
[C-3]	9	6	5		7	27	189
[C-4]	5	1	2		3	11	99
[C-5]	4	2	3		6	15	132
[C-6]	7	3	4		4	18	242
Total	34	17	23		24	98	953
%	34.69	17.35	23.47		24.49	overall	10.28

and his economic stimulus policies to Osaka's candidacy for the host city of the 2008 Olympic Games.

Among the five discourse settings in this study, Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences included the highest overall frequency of *ga*. As shown in Table 5-3, Prime Minister Obuchi used 98 *ga* in the total 953 full clauses, or 10.28% of full clauses. Another noteworthy finding is Obuchi's use of four different *ga* functions. In addition to Conflictive/Contrastive and Continuative *ga*, Obuchi used Referential and Insertive *ga*. 34 of the total 98 *ga* (34.69%) in the prime minister's press conferences function as Conflictive/Contrastive markers, 24 (24.49%) as Continuative markers, 17 (17.35%) as Referential markers, and 23 (23.47%) as Insertive markers.

4) Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's TV interviews

Transcripts of TV interviews with Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa were downloaded from the JCP Web site (see Appendix). Fuwa's utterances in the interviews included a total of 999 full clauses (see Table 5-4).

Table 5-4: *Ga* occurrences in Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's media interviews

	C/C	Referential	Insertive	Implicative	Continuative	Total	Clauses
[D-1]	5	1				6	185
[D-2]	1	1	2		1	5	257
[D-3]	2		1		1	4	305
[D-4]	5		4		1	10	252
Total	13	2	7		3	25	999
%	52.00	8.00	28.00		12.00	overall	2.50

The transcripts were considered faithful reproductions of the actual interviews by virtue of the consistent use of the polite style, and frequent occurrences of nonstandard word orders and insertions of the “(laughter)” notes. While the prime minister’s press conferences were presented in the one-to-multiple person setting, the JCP chairman’s TV interviews yielded a one-to-one person setting. Each TV interview began with a brief opening introduction by the interviewer followed by a series of questions to each of which the JCP chairman responds. Since the objective of this study is to investigate the *ga* frequency/distribution pattern of JCP chairman Fuwa’s utterances, interviewers’ utterances were excluded from our analysis. Also, as mentioned in Chapter 4, this study included only the first of two or more interviews with virtually the same contents in order to assure optimal spontaneity in Fuwa’s utterances. Contents of the interviews largely correspond to those of the prime minister’s press conferences, although the JCP chairman vigorously attacked the ruling-party proposed legislation, which the prime minister defended in his press conferences. In accordance with the guidelines mentioned above, this variation analysis selected the transcripts of the four latest TV interviews as of the end of September 1999 (see Appendix).

Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa’s media interviews yield similarities to, as well as differences from, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi’s press conferences. Fuwa’s interviews are similar to the prime minister’s press conferences in the sense that both of them use the same four functions including Conflictive/Contrastive, Continuative, Referential, and Insertive *ga*. On the other

hand, there are two noteworthy differences between the Communist Party chairman's interviews and the prime minister's press conferences. First, the overall *ga* frequency in Fuwa's interviews is considerably lower than that in Obuchi's press conferences, with 25 in 999 full clauses (2.50%) in Fuwa's interviews compared to 98 in 953 (10.28%; see Table 5-3) in Obuchi's press conferences. Second, approximately half of all *ga* in the Communist Party chairman's interviews functioned as Conflictive/Contrastive markers, compared to approximately one-third in the prime minister's press conferences. The JCP chairman's interviews included 13 (52.00%) Conflictive/Contrastive *ga*, 3 (12.00%) Continuative *ga*, 2 (8.00%) Referential *ga*, and 7 (28.00%) Insertive *ga*.

5) *Yahoo! Japan* message boards

Finally, our variation analysis examined the *ga* frequency/distributions of the total 100 messages on the *Yahoo! Japan* message boards. This study selected 10 topics of the message board based on the highest responses from the message board members (see Appendix). For our analysis for optimal variations in our data, 10 most recent messages as of September 19, 1999, by 10 different individuals² were selected from each of the 10 topics. Due to the primary emphasis in the data search on the collection of 100 messages, the total full clauses in this setting ended up as many as 1,213.

Yahoo! Japan message boards showed a marked difference from all other settings in the sense that they were the only setting with Implicative *ga*

occurrences of all selected for this variation analysis. As Table 5-5 shows, the message boards included the total 83 occurrences of *ga* out of the total 1,213 full clauses, or 6.84% of all full clauses. Out of the total 83 *ga*, 40 (48.19%) of them functioned as Conflictive/Contrastive markers, 9 (10.84%) of them as Referential markers, 5 (6.02%) as Insertive markers, 16 (19.28%) as Continuative markers, and 13 (15.66%) Implicative markers.

B. Examples of *ga* Functions

Our variation analysis shows that all *ga* occurrences in the five selected discourse settings fell into the five functional categories identified in the pragmatic analysis (Chapter 3). As a means of showing the validity of each functional category, this section discusses examples of each of the five functional categories

Table 5-5: *Ga* occurrences in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards

	C/C	Referential	Insertive	Implicative	Continuative	Total	Clauses
[E-1]	2	1				3	119
[E-2]	2	2			2	6	123
[E-3]	3		1	3		7	128
[E-4]	3			1	1	5	76
[E-5]	4		3	1		8	114
[E-6]	5	1			2	8	126
[E-7]	5	2		1	5	13	98
[E-8]	5			1	5	11	126
[E-9]	8	2		4		14	155
[E-10]	3	1	1	2	1	8	148
Total	40	9	5	13	16	83	1213
%	48.19	10.84	6.02	15.66	19.28	overall	6.84

from the selected texts. First, the following are two examples of

Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* in *Asahi Shimbun* editorials:

(5.1)

→ (a) Nihon de wa ôôni shite, en-daka no sokumen kara sawagi-tateru *ga*,
Japan at TOP often yen-high GEN aspect from clamor but

medaru no ura-gawa wa doru-yasu de aru.
medal GEN other-side TOP dollar-low COPULA

“In Japan, people often clamor for strong yen, *but* on the other side of the medal is a weak U.S. dollar.”

[A-20]

→ (b) 98-nen no kokumin-futan-ritsu wa 37% da *ga*,
yr. GEN per-capita spending TOP COPULA but

kinrôsha-setai no zeishakai hoshô futan-ritsu wa 16%,
working-family GEN tax social welfare spending TOP

to iu sôji o shimeshita ue,
that say figure ACC point and

‘Kokumin futan ritsu no takai kuni ga
citizen spending ratio GEN high nation NOM

keizai seichô ritsu ga hikui wake de wa nai.’
economic growth ratio NOM low fact COPULA TOP NEG

to nobete iru.
that state PROG

“(This year’s edition of the Welfare Ministry White Book) points out that the 1998 overall per capita Social Welfare Spending³ was 37%, but the per capita spending for working families was 16%; it further states, ‘Nations with high welfare spending do not necessarily have low economic growth.’”

[A-12]

(5.1a) illustrates a clear case of Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* since it draws a contrast between the public clamoring for strong Japanese yen and the weak U.S. dollars as a reverse side of the same coin. Similarly, *ga* in (5.1b) functions as a Conflictive/Contrastive marker since it draws a contrast between the per capita Social Welfare Spending in 1998 and the per capita Social Welfare Spending by working families. In both examples, the contrast is straightforward by virtue of reference to two currency units in (5.1a) and two percentage figures in (5.1b).

Second, the following examples of Referential *ga* come from the prime minister's press conferences:

(5.2) (a) Mazu, akemashite-omedetô-gozaimasu.

first A-Happy-New-Year

Mata, hôdô-kankei no minasan ni mo Heisei-10-nen ga
also media-affiliation GEN everyone for also year NOM

yoki toshi de arimasu koto o oinori môshiage masu.
good year at COPULA fact ACC pray POLITE COPULA

Sate, otazune no shuto-kinô iten no mondai de
INTERJ inquiry GEN Capital-function transfer GEN issue in

→ gozaimasu *ga*,
COPULA

kono mondai wa nani yori mo Tôkyô ikkyoku
this problem TOP what than also one-place

shûchû o zesei-shi nakereba naranai.
concentration ACC correct unless will-not-work

“First of all, I wish you a Happy New Year. Also, I hope that the 10th year of Heisei (i.e., 1999)⁴ will be a good year for everyone in the media as well.

Now, regarding the proposed transfer of the national capital that you just inquired about [*ga*], the Tokyo-only centralization must be corrected, more than anything else.”

[C-3]

(b) . . . kanô-na kagiri gôï o ete
possible as-long-as agreement ACC obtain

atarashii Kokkai ni nozomi-tai to kô iu fû ni kangaete orimasu.
new session to tackle-want that this way in think PROG

→ Ozawa-tôshu no koto ni tsukimashite desu *ga*,
chairman GEN issue in regard COPULA

kako san-kai tôshu-kaidan o itashi mashite,
past 3-times chairman-mtg. ACC do COPULA

kihon-teki-ni wa naikaku no mondai wa
basically TOP Cabinet GEN issue TOP

shuhan taru watashi ni go-ichi-nin o
P.M. is I to entrustment ACC

chôdai o itashite orimasu.
obtainment ACC POLITE COPULA

“. . . it is our hope to obtain the best possible form of agreement (on the two-party cooperation) and then to proceed to the new (Parliamentary) session.

Regarding (Liberal Party) chairman (Ichiro) Ozawa [*ga*], we have reached a general agreement through our three meetings that he will entrust me as Prime Minister with the selection of Cabinet members.”

[C-3]

Examples in (5.2) require a holistic view of the utterances, since a sheer look at the two clauses immediately before/after *ga* will not lead to an adequate

interpretation of the *ga* function. In (5.2a), the key to identifying the *ga* function is its use at the beginning of the *ga* clause of *sate* “now.” As is evident from the sequence in which it occurs, *sate* in (5.2) is not a time expression.⁵ Rather, *sate* is what Schiffrin (1987) calls a discourse marker. Just like the English *now*, *sate* in (5.2) is an indication that “the speaker is shifting orientation and through (it) a speaker is inviting a hearer to adjust the participation framework” (Schiffrin, 1987, p. 244). The prime minister’s previous utterances are New Year’s greetings to the media and the presumptive audience of the press conference while the subsequent utterances address his view on the issue of the proposed transfer of some government ministries out of Tokyo as a way to ease excessive centralization. Therefore, in conjunction with *sate*, the *ga* clause in (5.2a) functions as an introduction to the new discourse topic. Similarly, the utterances before the *ga* clause in (5.2b) discuss general cooperation between Prime Minister Obuchi’s Liberal Democratic Party and its Cabinet coalition ally Liberal Party while the subsequent utterances refer to Obuchi’s talks with Liberal Party chairman Ichiro Ozawa. Therefore, *ga* in (5.2b) functions as Referential marker with which the preceding clause introduces the new discourse topic.

Third, we provide examples of Insertive *ga* from the JCP chairman’s TV interviews as follows:

(5.3) (a) Amerika nado de wa kore ga yara rete ite,
etc. at TOP this NOM do PASS PROG

→ sono sūji mo aru n desu *ga*,
its figure also there-is COPULA

jissai-ni tōchō-shita aite no naka de,
actually wiretap person GEN among at

hanzai ni mattaku kankei ga nai noni
crime with at-all involvement NOM NEG despite

tōchō sareta to iu kokumin ga 8-wari kara 9-wari ni oyobu
wiretap PASS that say citizen NOM 8-10% from 9-10% to extend

to iu tōkei ga dete imasu.
that say figure NOM come-out COPULA

Sore dake no koto o yarō to shite iru
this much GEN thing ACC let's-do that try PROG

wake desu ne.
fact COPULA TAG

“America has been doing it (i.e., wiretapping), and statistics, whose figures I have [*ga*], show that as many as 80 to 90% of its citizens who have never been involved in criminal activities have been wiretapped. (The Obuchi administration) is trying to do such a thing (in Japan), right?”

[D-2]

(b) Yappari nagai aida, wareware wa handō-kōsei no jiki to
Also long period we TOP reaction-attack GEN period that

→ itte ru n desu *ga*, zūtto gyakufū o
say PROG COPULA long-time adversity ACC

abite ita jiki ga aru de sho.
be-exposed PAST period NOM there-is COPULA isn't-there

“Also, there was a period of time, which we call the period of reactionary attack [*ga*], when we (i.e., the Communist Party) suffered long years of adversity.”

[D-4]

In utterances with Insertive *ga* clauses such as (5.3)(a) and (b), the addresser initially discusses the main topic, temporarily departs from it at the middle with the Insertive *ga* clause that denotes supplementary and/or peripheral information, and then returns to the original main topic. In (5.3a), *ga* functions as Insertive marker since *sono sūji mo aru n desu ga* “whose figures I have” signals temporary departure from the main topic (i.e., wiretapping ordinary citizens in the U.S.). Also, *ga* (5.3b) is an Insertive marker as well because *handô-kôsei no jiki to itte ru n desu ga* “which we call the period of reactionary attack” suggests the JCP’s chairman’s temporary departure from the main topic (i.e., the JCP’s long political struggle in recent years) to provide the definition in his own terms of the “long years of adversity.”

Fourth, the following are two excerpts from *Yahoo! Japan* message boards that include Implicative *ga*:

(5.4) (a) Daisotsu tte puraido ga umareru yô na mono nan desu ka?
 College-graduate as-for pride NOM born such thing COPULA Q

Mâ, kyû-teidai to sôkei igai wa
 INTERJ fmr-imperial-univ. and Waseda-Keio other TOP

→ kô-sotsu to issho da to omou n desu ga?
 high-school-grad with same COPULA that think COPULA

Chinami-ni watashi wa sono izure nimo haitte inai node,
 incidentally I TOP these either into included NEG because

shigoto o shite ite mo, hazukashii node,
 work ACC do PROG even-if embarrassing because

amari daigaku no hanashi wa dasema sen.
 much college GEN talk TOP bring-up-can NEG

“Is a college degree something one can be proud of?
 Well, I think that except for those from former imperial universities
 (i.e., national universities), Waseda and Keio Universities,
 college graduates are no different from high school graduates [*ga*] . . .
 Incidentally, because I myself do not fall into any one of these
 categories, I am too embarrassed to mention my alma mater at work.”
 [E-8]

(b) Ken'en o uttaeru hito no iken ga
 anti-smoking ACC claim people GEN opinion NOM

→ iroiro arimasu *ga*_(A) . . .
 various there-is

→ Subete de wa nai no desu *ga*_(B),
 all at TOP NEG COPULA

Saidai-kôyokusû-teki-ni mite shimau to
 G.C.D. see happen-to if

kanari ijô desu ne.
 considerably abnormal COPULA isn't-it

Hisuterikku-ni nari sugite iru.
 hysterical become excessively PROG

“Anti-smoking advocates voice various opinions [*ga*](A)
 I'm not saying all of them are,
but (B) on the G.C.D. scale (sic)⁶ (their opinions are) extreme.
 They are demonstrating excessive hysteria.”

[E-9]

In (5.4a), *chinami ni* “incidentally”, the word that immediately follows *Mâ, kyû-teidai to omou n desu ga*, seems to signal the beginning of a new discourse topic; the preceding utterance expresses the correspondent's opinions about a

reputation of the nation's non-brand name universities while the subsequent utterance describes his/her circumstances. As described in detail in Chapter 3, *ga* in (5.4a) represents an example of Implicative *ga*, which indicates the ellipsis of the subsequent utterance such as, say, “but I don't know how you would feel about it.”

On the other hand, (5.4b) includes two *ga* occurrences in two different functions. First, the function of *ga* (A) does not seem to be an issue of the logical connection between the two clauses before and after *ga*. Instead, the dots after *ga* (A) indicate a discourse boundary. Therefore, *Ken'en arimasu* in (5.4b) is an opening remark of the correspondent's message, and *ga* (A) is an Implicative marker indicating the ellipsis of the subsequent utterance that would presumably state, “and I hereby discuss the issue of anti-smoking.” Second, *ga* (B) functions as Conflictive/Contrastive marker since the previous statement that all anti-smoking advocates are not extremists draws a contrast with the subsequent statement that anti-smoking advocates' collective opinions are essentially extremist.

Fifth, and finally, the following sentences from *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news stories are the examples of Continuative *ga*:

(5.5) (a) *Izuremo hôshasen igaku sôgô kenkyûjo*
 each radiation medical-study comprehensive institute

→ (Chiba-ken Inage shi) ni hansô sareta *ga*,
 Pref. City to transport PASS

uchi futari wa jûshô.
among 2-people TOP critical-condition

“All (victims) were sent to the Radiation Treatment Center in the City of Inage, Chiba Pref. [*ga*]; 2 among them were in critical condition.”
[B-7]

(b) Nichigin kambu wa, ‘Kantei kara sù jitsu mae ni
Bank-of-Jpn exec. TOP P.M. from a-few day prior at

→ hanashi o kiita *ga*, 2000-en satsu naraba
word ACC heard yen bill if

kokumin no nîzu mo takai nodewa.’ to iu.
citizen GEN needs also high perhaps that say

“A top official of the Bank of Japan said, ‘I heard word from the Prime Minister’s Residency a few days ago [*ga*], 2,000-yen bills would perhaps accommodate the citizens’ needs.’”

[B-42]

In (5.5a), *ga* does not indicate a contrastive logical relation between the previous and subsequent clauses. Additionally, the two clauses before and after *ga* do not occur in a chronological sequence; sending patients to a treatment center does not occur before the patients are in critical condition. Therefore, *ga* in (5.5a) functions as Continuative marker, a mere physical connector of two clauses (see Chapter 6 for detailed account of its functions). In (5.5b), there is no contrastive, sequential, or any identifiable logical connection between information on the proposed 2,000 yen bill and the Bank of Japan executive’s prospects on the bill. Therefore, *ga* in (5.5b) also functions as Continuative marker.

Results of our variation analysis in this chapter suggested the validity of the five functions identified in the pragmatic analysis to the extent that all *ga* occurrences in the five discourse settings were categorized into these functions. While it would be possible that the presently unknown functional categories may emerge as a result of investigating *ga* frequency/distribution patterns in other discourse settings (esp. personal conversations), our five functional categories seem to serve their purpose to investigate each of them. Also, differences between the discourse settings in the *ga* frequency/distribution patterns seem to be substantial enough to suggest the characteristics of the settings.

Based on the numerical results of our variation analysis, Chapter 6 will discuss our findings in this chapter in order to account for the differences in the *ga* frequency/distributions in the selected discourse settings. While we have essentially selected texts from three settings (i.e., spoken, written, and Computer-Mediate Communication), each of the five settings yielded its own distinctive *ga* occurrence pattern. This fact seems to suggest that differences in the *ga* frequency/distribution patterns may have more to do with characteristics of each setting than with properties of the spoken/written language. In light of the politically oriented contents in our written/spoken texts and socially oriented contents in the CMC texts, it would be beneficial to account for the *ga* occurrences in each setting from the social and political perspectives.

Notes

¹ The polite style in Japanese is marked by *-masu/desu* at the end of each sentence, which is absent in the plain style. The polite style is commonly used in speaking (esp. formal) while the plain style is common in writing (3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 130). All texts of the press conferences and TV interviews were transcribed in the polite style.

² Although the true identity of message authors was unavailable due to their use of the registered alias, its automatic insertion on the top of each message enabled the selection of the 10 most recent messages by 10 different individuals.

³ The per capita Social Welfare Spending refers to the percentage of taxes and social welfare in the so-called Gross Domestic Revenues, which excludes indirect taxes and other spending from the GDP. This article accuses the national government by pointing out that the ministry uses the internationally unrecognized form of statistical formula with a smaller denominator figure in an attempt to make the welfare spending appear large as a justification for welfare spending cut.

⁴ Japan is the only nation in the world at the present time that still names years by era according to the constitutional monarch's throne (Inoue, 1984, p. 45). Since 1868, one emperor's throne constitutes one era. The current era of Heisei began in 1989, when Emperor Akihito ascended to the throne (Nippon Steel Human Resources Development, 1993, p. 99).

⁵ The Japanese equivalent for the English *now* as time expression is *ima* (3A Corporation, 1998a, p. 30).

⁶ *Saidai kôyakusû* "Greatest Common Denominator" is apparently the correspondent's erroneous choice of a lexical item, which does not describe his/her intended meaning (i.e., the moderate-extreme continuum).

VI: DISCUSSION: DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS OF *GA*

Previous prescriptive studies suggested that the use of *ga* in different functions is essentially an issue of conforming to one of the two rules for logical clarity. On the other hand, our pilot study on the functions of *ga* in a live TV talk show (see Chapter 3) revealed five (5) separate functional categories, some of which had not been previously found. On the basis of the high frequency and functionality in the spoken setting, Chapter 3 suggested that denouncing the nonconflictive *ga* based on the previous prescriptive accounts would be futile. Especially, the manner of *ga* occurrences in the pilot study was such that its further investigation in different discourse settings would possibly reveal characteristics of the *ga* functions as well as those of the settings.

The *ga* frequency study, which is described in detail in Chapters 4 and 5, focuses on the different patterns of *ga* occurrences in five discourse settings. Figures in Chapter 5 show some of the anticipated results, but there are several elements in the results that were out of our initial predictions. Especially, our results suggest considerably more differences than similarities between the written and spoken texts. In fact, the differences are such that treating the two

written/spoken texts separately would be more beneficial for our discussions than attempting to find common features among them.

A. *Asahi Shimbun* Editorials

Asahi Shimbun editorials represent a clear example of the prescriptive form of the language. The editorials' exclusive use of Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* indicates their attempts to conform to the moderate version of the prescriptive rule mentioned in Chapter 2. Especially, the significantly low frequency overall of *ga* in the editorials and the total absence of *ga* in the vast majority of the articles are clear indications of the writers' effort to observe even the rigid form of the prescriptive rule. Out of the total 21 editorial articles that this study investigated for analysis, *ga* appeared in only three (3) of them, in each of which only one (1) or two (2) of the Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* was used (see Table 5-1 of Chapter 5).

The explanations for the results of our investigation of *Asahi Shimbun* editorials seem to lie in a combination of various sociolinguistic factors. First, the general social status of *Asahi Shimbun* would account for our results. Compared to those in the U.S., major newspapers in Japan enjoy a considerably larger volume of paid circulation. For example, *The Wall Street Journal*, ranked No.1 circulating newspaper in the U.S., has an average daily paid circulation of 1,763,140 as of 1995 ("World Almanac," 1997, p. 290). By contrast, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the No.1

circulating newspaper in Japan, has an average daily paid circulation of 10,050,285, and the No.2 ranked *Asahi Shimbun* has an average daily paid circulation of 8,252,192 as of 1995 (“Yomiuri Shimbun,” 1999).

In addition to the large volume of circulation nationwide, *Asahi Shimbun* has a long-established reputation as a newspaper for the well-educated. One survey shows that nearly two-thirds (66.5%) of college professors nationwide subscribe to *Asahi Shimbun* (“Daigaku Nyūshi,” 1999). Also, *Asahi Shimbun* has been overwhelmingly ranked No.1 nationally in the number of articles cited in college admission tests. In Spring 1999, 220 college/universities used *Asahi Shimbun* articles in their admission tests, while only 46 schools used articles by the No.2 Nikkei (“99 Nendo,” 1999).

Furthermore, the extensive process involved in writing editorials everyday would be another significant factor in the use of the prescribed form of the language. According to Editorial Board (1998), daily editorials are essentially the collective work of the board members rather than of an assigned individual. Editorial Board (1998) explains that writing the two editorial articles of the day¹ begins with a meeting by the 35-member board, which collectively decides the topics of the articles. Since this board consists of long-term reporters from different fields of expertise ranging from politics and international affairs to sports, the board initially decides which two editorial board members would write the day’s articles. Prior to the writing process, the editorial board members discuss each article extensively to “offer a critique of the writer’s position. If a position is

too idealistic, it is certain to be rebutted and tempered with realism; opinions that are unduly compromising and uncritical will be checked by ideals and principles” (Editorial Board, 1998).

In addition to the extensive process involved in the production of editorial articles, it is common among Japan’s nationally circulating newspapers that their editorials represent the opinions of the newspaper companies rather than of the individual authors. Editorial Board (1998) says, “the editorial represents the opinion not of individual writers but of Asahi Shimbun, as represented by a consensus reached through exhaustive debate of Editorial Board members.” Furthermore, Mikio Shimizu, director of the *Mainichi Shimbun* Editorial Board, says in an interview that editorials are released in anonymity because of this reason (“Shasetsu,” 1992, p. 6). Shimizu cites as a hypothetical example a situation where an editorial discussed the then controversial issue of Japan sending the peacekeeping troops to the Middle East in the wake of the Persian War.² If the designated author agreed as an individual that Japan should send the troops but the Editorial Board collectively decided to form its opinion against it, the author’s article would have to oppose the troops because that would express the collective opinion of the newspaper organization. Especially in such cases, Shimizu says, the newspaper organization couldn’t allow the designated writer to claim authorship of the article since it would not reflect his/her own opinions (“Shasetsu,” 1992, p. 6).

At the same time, it is noteworthy that editorials are written within a considerably limited time available until the deadline. Nationally circulating newspapers follow roughly the same timetable as well as procedure to produce editorials (“Shasetsu,” 1992). *Asahi Shimbun*, *Mainichi Shimbun*, and other nationally circulating newspapers hold a two-hour Editorial Board meeting starting at noon to determine the topic of the next day’s editorials as well as designated writers. After an exhaustive discussion among the Editorial Board, the designated writers immediately begin to write the articles. However, since the deadline for publication on the following morning edition is between 4:00p.m. and 5:00p.m., the designated writer has to complete his/her article in a matter of a few hours. Despite this rigid time constraint, editorial writers are fully capable of producing comprehensive and flawless articles because of their years of experience as professional writers (“Shasetsu,” 1992; Editorial Board, 1998).

Second, another possible explanation for this prescriptive use of *ga* seems to lie in what Bernstein (1971) calls the elaborated code. As is well known, Bernstein (1971) categorized language in society from the sociological perspective into two categories: elaborated and restricted codes. The elaborated code is named as such based on an assumption that limited common knowledge shared by participants in communication would yield a wide variety of linguistic forms. On the other hand, the restricted code is so named under an assumption that substantial common knowledge shared by participants in communicative activities would yield a limited variety of linguistic forms. According to Bernstein (1971),

the elaborated and restricted codes each have their distinctive characteristics in linguistic structures. Since the elaborated code entails little common knowledge, it generates an explicit and prescribed form of language. On the other hand, the restricted code entails considerable common knowledge, it generates an insider-specific and non-prescribed form of language. In this respect, *Asahi Shimbun* editorials' attempts to avoid *ga*, and especially the nonconflictive *ga*, seem to conform to Bernstein's (1971) theory on the elaborated code.

However, this explanation seems to conflict with Hinds' (1987) typology of Japanese as a reader responsible language. According to Hinds (1987), a reader responsible language is one where "the person primarily responsible for effective communication is the listener" (or reader in this case) (p. 143) while a writer responsible language imposes the primary responsibility for effective communication on the speaker or writer. Hinds (1987) claims that in English it is the speaker/writers who assume "the responsibility to make clear and well-organized statements. If there is a breakdown in communication, for instance, it is because the speaker/writer has not been clear enough" (p. 143). On the other hand, Japanese imposes this responsibility on the listener/reader because homogeneity in the language community impels the listener/reader to interpret the speaker/writer meanings properly, and "[w]hether this explanation is correct is not the issue" (Hinds, 1987, p. 144).

At the same time, this does not mean that Japanese addressers generally are straightforward communicators. On the contrary, as Yoshikawa (1978), Tsujimura

(1987), and other cultural theorists have pointed out, there frequently is a substantial difference between actual utterances and their intended meanings. For instance, the young Japanese in recent years have been known for declining invitations to social events on the ground that they are busy. Several years ago, a pair of co-resident assistants to a group of Japanese students in the OSU English Language Institute-Kyoto complained to the university's Office of International Programs of their Japanese students' tendencies to decline the invitations to dormitory activities because they were busy. Especially, they expressed surprise to learn that by busy the Japanese students meant busy playing Nintendo rather than with a prior engagement or studying for a major exam. Quite expectedly, the co-assistants were not pleased with the discovery. From the Japanese perspective, however, all these possible meanings should well be equally expected since the Japanese notion of *busy* often means the speaker's reluctance to participate. In other words, while the speaker would justify his/her decline by saying he/she is busy, the actual circumstance would often have nothing to do with his/her availability at the proposed time.

Hinds (1987) further contrasts Japanese and English from the perspective of coherence in writing as follows:

. . . for English readers, unity is important because readers expect, and require, landmarks along the way. Transition statements are very important. It is the writer's task to provide appropriate transition statements so that the reader can piece together the thread of the writer's logic which binds the composition together.

In Japanese, on the other hand, the landmarks may be absent or attenuated since it is the reader's responsibility to determine the relationship between any one part of an essay and the essay as a whole. This is not to say that there are no transition statements in Japanese. There are. It is only to say that these transition devices may be more subtle and require a more active role for the reader.

(p. 146)

From the perspective of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*, Hinds' (1987) analysis would lead to a prediction that *ga* would not be edited out by the writer because it would be the reader's responsibility to interpret its functions in each occurrence. Rather than editing out, Japanese writers would consciously use nonconflictive *ga* to add the mystic quality to the text, as Tadao Umesao, a nationally known ethnologist, suggested in an interview (Honda, 1991).

The solution to this conflict lies in the relativity of Hinds' (1987) theory. As Hinds (1987) himself admits, the reader-writer responsibility is a matter of degrees rather than of two alternatives. Moreover, categorizing Japanese as a reader responsible language does not mean that all forms of Japanese discourse would yield this feature. On the contrary, as Hinds (1987) suggests, some settings in Japanese may yield writer responsible features while some in English may yield reader responsible features (p.143). In addition to this relativity, Japanese prescriptivists such as Iwabuchi (1960) and Honda (1991) argue that the ultimate goal of any professional writer is to write something that is comprehensible *to the readers*. In order to achieve this goal, professional writers are expected to refrain from making any assumption about the readers' knowledge, while addressers in a

spoken setting in Japanese would impose their assumptions of knowledge on the addressees.

The exclusive use of Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* and substantially low *ga* frequency in the editorials are a result of the prescriptive norms superceding the reader responsible feature in an overwhelming manner. Japanese is essentially a reader responsible language, and its texts would generally yield a number of *ga*. In the newspaper editorials, however, the inherent prescriptive force in writing the editorials would overcome the intrinsic tendency to include reader responsible features, which in this case would be realized in the form of frequent *ga* occurrences. As a result, the editorials yield the *ga* frequency/distribution pattern that seems to conform to Bernstein's (1971) elaborated code in the sense that *ga* as a multi-functional lexical item is suppressed in the editorials in favor of the mono-functional *daga*, *shikashi*, and *tokoroga* (all of which mean "however"), as well as *sore nano ni* (which means "despite this"). Rather than imposing the responsibility for interpretation of logical relationships on the readers by using *ga* for all connections, the writers would assume the responsibility to establish a clear logical connection between clauses by using the mono-functional word/expressions in the editorials.

B. *Asahi Shimbun* Breaking News Articles

While *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news articles reveal the writers' effort to conform to the prescriptive norms, they suggest several important differences from the editorials. Relevant sociocultural information will account for our results.

Asahi Shimbun breaking news articles are similar to the newspaper editorials in the sense that *ga* functions predominantly as a Conflictive/Contrastive marker. In the breaking news articles, 38 of the total 46 (82.61%) of all *ga* occurrences are used as Conflictive/Contrastive markers, and the remaining *ga* all function as Continuative markers. Among the five settings in our study, newspaper articles are the only settings where Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* constitutes the overwhelming majority of all *ga* occurrences. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences use Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* in only 34.69% (34 of 98), Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa 52.00% (13 of 25), *Yahoo! Japan* message boards 48.19% (40 of 83) of all *ga* occurrences.

Meanwhile, the breaking news articles suggest four important differences from the editorials. First, unlike in the editorials, not all *ga* in the breaking news stories function as Conflictive/Contrastive marker. In fact, approximately one out of six *ga* (17.38%; 8 of 46) in the breaking news stories function as Continuative marker. Second, the overall *ga* frequency in the breaking news stories is significantly higher than that in the editorials. While the editorials use *ga* in 0.51% of all full clauses, the breaking news stories use *ga* in 4.63% (46 of 993) of the

total full clauses. Third, nearly two-thirds (29 of 44) of the breaking news stories include at least one *ga*, while only 3 of 21 editorial articles include *ga*. Fourth, Figure 5-2 of Chapter 5 reveals that *ga* is used with relatively consistent frequency across articles. Especially, it is noteworthy that the breaking news stories employ essentially the same linguistic pattern in terms of *ga* frequencies across articles of all news categories.

One simplistic explanation for these results in the breaking news stories is the writers' compromise in the prescriptive quality of language in favor of releasing the stories at the earliest possible time. As is widely known, releasing news stories as early as possible is the primary concern for media organizations. The extremely high percentage of Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* and restricted *ga* categories used in the breaking news stories could be considered indications of the writers' efforts to conform to a prescriptive norm of written Japanese. If we accept this premise, then we would assume that the small percentage of Continuative *ga* escaped the eyes of the writer and/or proofreaders. Editorial Board (1998) does not elaborate on the details of the proofreading process, and therefore there is no guessing how these Continuative *ga* would slip out of the eyes of *Asahi Shimbun*, supposedly the users of the prescriptive form of language.

While this simple explanation would be considered plausible in itself, validity of this claim presupposes an explanation for the force that drives the Japanese speaker/writers to use *ga* frequently. Our data indicate that *ga* occurs with the lowest frequency in *Asahi Shimbun* editorials (0.51%), the second highest

frequency in *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news articles (4.63%), and the highest in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards (6.84%) of all written settings. These figures would be predictable in light of the characteristics of each setting. As mentioned earlier, *Asahi Shimbun* editorial articles are expected to include the fewest *ga* because of the responsibility for the newspaper organization that represents the intellectuals. *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news articles are expected to include a small number (but not as small a number as the editorials) of *ga* because of the limited time available for release. On the other hand, *Yahoo! Japan* message boards would yield the highest frequency of the three because they are the products of nonprofessional writers. At this stage, the question is whether a low *ga* frequency would be a result of conscious *ga* suppression, or a high *ga* frequency would be a result of conscious *ga* production.

The answer to this question lies in the fact that vagueness in Japanese utterances is frequently a result of the addresser's deliberate attempt to avoid straightforward clarity. Several communication theorists have approached this issue from the perspective of Japan's traditional mode of communication. Tsujimura (1987), for example, points out that indirect utterances traditionally have been an important element in Japanese literature. As typical examples, Tsujimura (1987) cites several love poems during the Heian Period (794-1185 A.D.) to point out that "[n]o direct and blunt expression can be seen such as 'I love thee'" (p. 123). It further points out that 72 verses of *One Hundred Poems from One Hundred Poets* (the 13th Century anthology by imperial edict; see Honda,

1956) include indirect descriptions of natural beauty as important cultural symbols. Also, Okabe (1987) suggests that avoiding straightforward expressions serves as “a much more dominant principle in Japanese communication” (p. 135) than the Gricean Maxim of Clarity (Grice, 1975). To illustrate this point, Okabe (1987) cites the following well-known case of the Japanese form of rejection:

The Japanese word, *o-mo-i-ya-ri*, means the “speaker’s worries,” and usually a speaker is afraid to jeopardize the future relationship with the listener. So the speaker often expresses his rejection indirectly by saying, “Let me consider your proposal for a while.” At the same time, the listener can understand what kind of feeling the speaker actually has; he infers the speaker’s intention of rejection easily. Both the speaker and the listener are able to take the role of the other because of their knowledge about the traditional mode of Japanese communication.

(pp. 135-6)

Additionally, Suzuki (1975) uses the term “mystification of language” (p. 31; in Hinds’ 1987 English translation) to account for the intentional vagueness in Japanese utterances. While European languages such as English and French praise clarity, Japanese tends to avoid clarity. Speaker/writers of Japanese “like to give dark hints and to leave them (i.e., addressees) behind nuances” (Hinds, 1987, p. 145) because the absence of vagueness entails a lack of sophistication. Under these circumstances, Japanese readers “anticipate with pleasure the opportunities that such writing offers them to savor this kind of ‘mystification’ of language” (Suzuki, 1975, p. 31; English translation by Hinds, 1987, p. 145). These theories seem to be consistent with Hinds’ (1987) typology of Japanese as a reader responsible language in the sense that speaker/writers deliberately obscure their

utterance/sentences rather than fail to articulate their intended meanings in a straightforward manner.

Based on the aforementioned theories by Suzuki (1975), Tsujimura (1987) Okabe (1987), and Hinds (1987), we propose that the Japanese conjunctive *ga* crystallizes the essence of the language in one syllable. Throughout a long history and deep-rooted sociocultural practice, the Japanese have developed deliberate indirect utterances as a fundamental mode of effective communication. According to the norms of the language community, straightforward utterances are often perceived as not only unsophisticated but socioculturally inappropriate. From the aesthetic perspective, the absence of clarity wins praise from the reader/listeners because it adds the mystic quality to the utterances. On the other hand, excessively straightforward utterances frequently are subject to criticism because they are perceived as lacking in depth. From the sociocultural perspective, deliberate vagueness serves as an effective means of preserving the addressee's face and preventing confrontations. Meanwhile, dogmatically straightforward utterances would frequently lead to serious consequences. It is the sort of intrinsic force common to Japanese speakers that drives Japanese addressers to use seemingly vague utterances. In this sense, *ga* symbolizes Japanese speaker/writers' intrinsic tendency to mystify their utterances. With a number of functions, *ga* is a useful device to suggest inferences about the surrounding utterances rather than to establish solid coherence in the surrounding utterances. In *Asahi Shimbun* editorials, all instances of nonconflictive *ga* are suppressed in favor of the optimal

logical clarity that is expected in the editorials of the nationally reputable newspaper. In *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news articles, on the other hand, suppression of nonconflictive *ga* fails despite the writers' attempts to limit the *ga* functions in the written setting, which are evident from our data. Coupled with the compelling need to release the news stories as early as possible, the intrinsic tendency for *ga* overcomes the prescriptive norm in this setting.

C. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's Press Conferences

Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences suggest similarities to Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's TV interviews and *Yahoo! Japan* message boards in the sense that these three settings all yield instances of Referential and Insertive *ga*. Also, Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* is commonly found in all five settings in this study, and Continuative *ga* is used in all settings except in *Asahi Shimbun* editorials, as mentioned earlier. On the other hand, it is the high frequency rather than the variation of usage that characterizes the prime minister's press conferences.

In contrast to the other settings, Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences suggest five significant differences. First, the press conferences overall include an average of more than one *ga* in every 10 full clauses (98 of the total 953 full clauses [10.28%]; see Figure 5-1). Second, the press conferences

yield the largest number of Continuative *ga* of all settings (24 in 953 full clauses). Third, this setting includes the largest number of Insertive *ga* as well (23), compared to 7 in the TV interviews, and 5 in the message boards. Fourth, the prime minister's conferences yield the largest number of Referential occurrences (17), compared to 2 in the TV interviews and 9 in the message boards. Fifth, the frequency of Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* in proportion to all *ga* occurrences is the lowest in the press conferences with 34.69% (34 in 98 occurrences), compared to 52.00% (13 of 25 *ga* occurrences) in the Communist Party leader's TV interviews and 48.19% (40 of 83 occurrences) in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards.

These complex results may arise from general characteristics of the setting, political surroundings in Japan, the traditional role of the prime minister in Japan's political scene. First, we will examine instances of Referential *ga* in the following excerpts from two of the prime minister's press conferences, (6.1) from [C-1] and (6.2) from [C-2] (see Appendix):³

(6.1) Reporter:

. . . . Raigetsu, Kô Takumin Chûgoku kokka shuseki ga
 next-month Jiang Zemin China president NOM

hô-nichi sareru wake desu ga,
 visit-Jpn. do fact COPULA

sono sai ni mo onaji yô ni owabi no kotoba o
 this moment in also same manner in apology GEN word ACC

bunsho ni morikom areru to,
 document in include HONOR that

sô itta okangae wa oari nano deshô ka.
such idea TOP exist COPULA Q

Sore to mô itten. Roshia to no Heiwa Jôyaku no mondai
this and more one Russia with GEN peace treaty GEN issue

desu keredomo, Nihon gawa to shite wa,
COPULA although Japan side as TOP

sono nengen ga bunsho ni morikom areru yô
this time-limit NOM document in include PASS in-order-to

akumade mo kodawa rareru no ka,
persistently insist HONOR whether

sono hen no sôri no gokenkai o otazune shitai to
this situation GEN P.M. GEN idea ACC ask want that

omoimasu.
think

“ next month, during Chinese president Jiang Zemin’s visit to Japan,
are you considering including word of apology in the same way (you did in
a meeting with Korean president Kim Dae Jung)?

Also, one more question. Regarding the issue of a peace treaty with
Russia, are you still persistently discussing (with Boris Yeltsin) the time
limit for the formal peace treaty. Please give us your thoughts on this
matter.”

Prime Minister:

Mazu okotae suru mae ni, Kim Daichû daitôryô to no
first answer do before Kim Dae Jun president with GEN

Kyôdô Sengen shomei no mondai ga gozaimashita
mutual declaration signing GEN issue NOM there-was

Atarashii 21-seiki wa otagai subarashii Nikkan no partnership o
new Century TOP mutually excellent Jpn-Korea GEN ACC

tsukuri-age nai ka to iu shunô dôshi no shinrai no moto ni
establish shall-we-Q that leader among GEN trust GEN basis on

kono sengen ni shomei o itashimashita.
 this declaration on signature ACC did

Sokode otazune no Kô Takumin kokka shuseki no
 then your-question GEN Jiang Zemin president GEN

Hô-nichi no sai ni, aratamete dôyô na mono ni tsuite
 Visit-Jpn. GEN during again same thing in regarding

dô toriatsukau ka to iu koto de gozaimasu
 how handle Q that issue COPULA

→ Iu mademo arimasen *ga*_(a), kotoshi wa Heiwa Jôyaku
 say unnecessary this-yr. TOP peace treaty

20-shûnen to iu kinen no toshi demo gozaimasu no de, . . .
 anniv. that celebration GEN year also COPULA because

→ Tsugi ni Roshia to no kankei de gozaimasu *ga*_(b),
 next Russia with GEN relation COPULA

11-gatsu ni watakushi hô-ro suru koto wa sude ni kettei shiteoru
 month in I visit-Russia do fact TOP already decided

tokoro de
 thing because

“Before answering your question, I would first like to discuss the signing of the Japan-Korea Declaration with President Kim Dae Jung I have signed the declaration based on the mutual commitment (with President Kim) to establishing the superb Japan-Korea partnership for the 21st Century

Then, regarding your question on how we will deal with the similar declaration during Chinese President Jiang Zemin’s visit to Japan

Needless to say [*ga*], this year is the 20th anniversary of the Peace Treaty (with China), so

Next, regarding the relationship with Russia [*ga*], my scheduled visit to Russia in November has already been determined, so”

(6.2) Reporter:

Futatsu shitsumon o sasete itadaki masu.
two question ACC let-me-do POLITE COPULA

Mazu hitotsu, hajô o mokuzen ni shita
first No.1 collapse ACC in-sight at did

chihô-jichitai no zaisei saiken ni muketa shisaku o
local-gov't GEN budget reform to directed measures ACC

nanika okangae deshô ka. Areba, gutaitekini onegai shimasu.
any think COPULA Q if-any specifically please

Tsuzuite, futatsume desu
next No.2 COPULA

Ryô ibento no seifu no yûchi ni kansuru gutaitekina
both event GEN gov't GEN hosting in regarding specific

hôsaku ga areba, okotae negaimasu.
measures NOM if-any answer please

“I would like to ask you two questions. First, No.1, with the collapse of local government budgets in sight, do you have any measures to reform their budget? If any, please give us specific answers.

Second, No.2, if you have any specific plans in hosting both events (i.e., 2008 Olympic Games and 2000 G8 Summit), please share with us.”

Prime Minister:

→ Soredewa, okotae itashimasu *ga*_(a), goshiteki no tôri,
then answer POLITE point-out GEN as

chihô-zaisei ga kiwamete kibishii jôkyô de gozaimashite,
local-budget NOM extremely hard situation COPULA

tokuni, dai-toshibu no fu-ken de, keiki no teimei
especially big-city GEN prefecture at economy GEN downturn

ni yorimashite, hôjin-kankei-zei o chûshin to shita
 due-to corporate-taxes ACC central to did

zeishû no ochikomi ga hijôni ôkii
 tax-revenue GEN down NOM very big

Dai-ni no Osaka no Gorin-yûchi ni tsuite de
 No.2 GEN GEN Olympic-hosting in regarding

→ gozaimasu *ga*_(b), Olympic kaisai o waga kuni de suru to iu koto wa,
 COPULA hosting ACC our nation in do that fact TOP

waga kuni no sports no fukyû, shinkô, kokusai shinzen
 our nation GEN GEN popularization advancement int'l friendship

no suishin, shakai keizai no kasseika nado nimo ôkina
 GEN promotion society economy GEN vitalization etc. also big

igi o yûsuru koto wa ninshiki o itashite orimasu. . . .
 significance ACC have fact TOP recognition ACC do POLITE

“Then, let me answer [*ga*]. As you point out, local government budgets are suffering extremely difficult circumstances, and especially damaging is the downfall of revenues from corporate taxes in big cities due to the recession

Regarding your No.2 question on Osaka’s candidacy to host the (2008) Olympic Games [*ga*], I do recognize the significance of its impact on the popularization and advancement of sports in our nation, promotion of international friendship, vitalization of our society and economy, and other things”

Ga (6.1a) is a Referential marker since it signals the introductory statement of a discourse topic on the significance of 1998 for the formal Japan-China diplomatic relationship. Similarly, *ga* (6.1b) is also a Referential marker since it marks the beginning of the response to the reporter’s question on the Japan-Russia relationship. In (6.2), *ga* (a) is a Referential marker since it signals *soredewa okotae itashimasu* “then, let me answer” as the starting point of the prime

minister's response to the reporter's question on the serious deficit in local government budgets. Also, *ga* (b) is a Referential marker as well since it introduces *dai-ni no Osaka no Gorin-yûchi ni tsuite de gozaimasu* "regarding your No.2 question on Osaka's candidacy to host the (2008) Olympic Games" as the discourse topic of the reporter's question on Osaka's candidacy for hosting the 2008 Olympic Games.

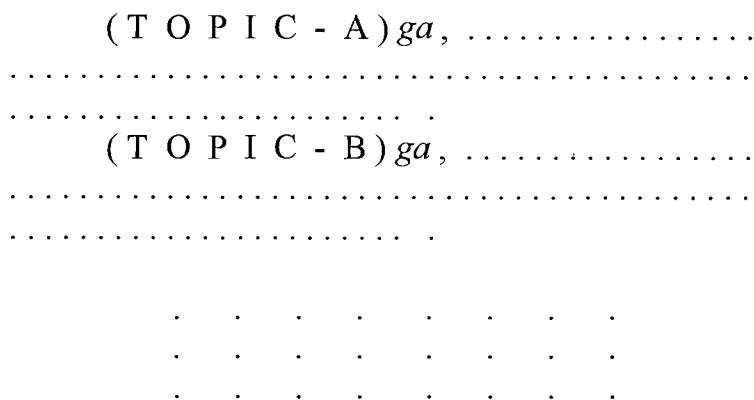
It seems that the key to the frequent occurrences of Referential *ga* in the press conferences would lie in the characteristics of this discourse setting. Japanese prime minister's press conferences form a similar frame to those of a U.S. president. In this setting, reporters wishing to ask the next question would raise their hands, and the prime minister would designate one of them as the next interviewer. Throughout the session, only one person would do the speaking at one time, and there would be hardly any interruption during the speaker's utterances.

One noteworthy characteristic of the press conferences is the complexity of the reporters' questions in a single turn. In this one-to-multiple person setting, it is highly unlikely, if possible at all, that each individual reporter would get two or more turns to ask questions to the prime minister. Therefore, instead of asking the prime minister a short question in expectations of opportunities for subsequent follow-up questions, the reporter would make every possible effort to include all potentially relevant information on one turn. In (6.1-2), the reporter would first provide relevant background information, and then address the questions. In cases of multiple questions, the reporters would often use the expressions *sore to mô*

hitotsu “and one more thing” in (6.1), and *mazu hitotsu* “first the No.1 (question)” and *tsuzuite futatsume desu* “next the No.2 (question)” in (6.2) as introductory markers for each question. With or without multiplicity, the very nature of this discourse setting causes the reporters’ questions to be complex in their information contents.

In response to the reporters’ complex questions, the prime minister would answer with multiple information units. As our observation of examples above shows, the prime minister’s responses to the reporters’ questions typically yield the structure shown in Figure 6-1. In our press conferences, the prime minister frequently used Referential *ga* in direct response to the reporters’ questions as in (6.1a) and (6.2a, b). On the other hand, the prime minister occasionally used Referential *ga* to introduce his self-initiated topics. For instance, the prime

Figure 6-1: Typical use of Referential *ga* in discourse topics



(TOPIC-A, B: Clauses that introduce the discourse topic of the subsequent utterances.)

minister used Referential *ga* (6.1a) not to respond directly to the reporters' question but to introduce his self-initiated topic on the significance of 1998 as the 20th anniversary of the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty. Also, Figure 6-1 does not at all intend to imply that Referential *ga* is required or desired as a device to indicate the discourse topic. It is merely a device that helps the addressees recognize the topic shift in the addresser's utterances in a spoken setting. As (6.1) shows, the prime minister uses a variety of topic shift markers besides the Referential *ga* clause, such as *mazu* "first" and *sokode otazune no . . .* "then regarding your question on" Nevertheless, it is the complexity of information content and/or multiplicity of the reporters' questions that led the prime minister to use Referential *ga* as well as other devices to indicate topic shift.

Second, Prime Minister Obuchi's frequent use of Continuative *ga* seems to render his utterances lengthy. The following examples come from press conference [C-4]:

(6.3) Nao, 2-ten no Jikkô-sei kakuho no tame no
meanwhile 2nd-pt. GEN implementation retention GEN sake GEN

kanren-hôan nado ni suite môshiage reba,
related-legislation etc. about say if

kono Nichi-Bei bôei kyôryoku no tame no shishin,
this Japan-U.S. defense cooperation GEN sake GEN guideline

sunawachi Guideline no mondai ni tsuikimashite wa,
that-is GEN issue regarding TOP

reisen no shûketsu-go mo nao genzai kono Ajia chiiki o
Cold-War GEN end-after even still today this Asia-region ACC

meguri mashite kiwamete kon'nan na muzukashii jôkyô mo
 surrounding extremely difficult hard circumstance even

misugosu koto ga dekinai jôkyô de gozaimasu no de,
 overlook INF NOM cannot situation at COPULA because

sô itta imi de kono chiiki no heiwa to antei no iji ga
 so say sense in this region GEN peace and stability GEN retention NOM

Nihon no anzen ni yori issô jûyô de aru
 Japan GEN security for more increasingly important COPULA

to iu koto ni kangami mashite, kono kôka-teki na Nichi-Bei bôei
 that fact with considering this effective Japan-U.S. defense

kyôryoku no kankei o kôchiku-suru tame ni sakusei-sareta
 cooperation GEN relation ACC establisah in-order-to write-PASS

mono de arimasu kara, seifu to itashi mashite mo,
 thing COPULA because Gov't for becoming also

sakkyû ni kokkai de go-shingi o itadaki,
 soon Parliament at deliberate ACC do

→ seiritsu mata wa shônin o onegai shitai to omotte orimasu *ga* (a),
 pass or TOP approval ACC request want that think PROG

izureni itashi mashi te mo, kihon-teki ni
 either happen COPULA even-if basically

Nichi-Bei Ampo Jôyaku to iu mono o shikkari to
 Japan-U.S. Security Treaty that thing ACC firmly

kore o fumaete, Nihon no anzen o kakuho-shite ikô
 this ACC base Japan GEN security ACC obtain let's

to iu kanten ni tsuki mashite wa, Jimin-tô mo Jiyû-tô to mo,
 that view in regarding TOP LDP also Liberal-Party also

sono kihon-teki rinen, kangae-kata ni wa isasaka no
 this basic principle way-of-thinking in TOP slight GEN

→ sôï mo nai wake de arimasu *ga*_(b), izureni itashi mashite
 difference even there-isn't fact COPULA either happen COPULA

mo sorezore no tô no shuchô ni tsuki mashite wa,
 even-if each GEN party GEN opinion regarding COPULA TOP

kono kyôgi o tsûji mashite, matomete maitte orimasu node,
 this negotiation ACC go-through-and compile (polite) PROG because

zehi kono ten ni tsuki mashite mo,
 definitely this point in regarding COPULA also

jitsugen o shite mairi tai,
 realization ACC do proceed-want

soshite, ichi-nichi mo hayaku tsugi no tsûjô-kokkai ni okimashite,
 and one-day even early next GEN reg.-Diet-mtg. at located

kore ga seiritsu seshimuru yô ni sarani renritsu-naikaku to shite no
 this NOM pass cause-to in-order-to more Coalition-Cabinet as GEN

jitsu o agete mairi-tai to, kono yô ni kangaete orimasu.
 achievement ACC make proceed-want that this way in think PROG

Lit. “Meanwhile, regarding your second question on the legislation for retaining practical efficiency, this legislation on the Japan-U.S. defense cooperation, or the ‘Guidelines’ issue, even after the end of the Cold War, we are now facing the difficult situation in the Asia region, the difficult situation that one cannot overlook, so, in light of the importance of this region’s peace and stability for Japan’s security, since the Guidelines were drawn for building the efficient Japan-U.S. defense cooperation, our Government would like the Parliament to deliberate this bill to passage or approval [*ga*](a) the LDP and Liberal Party do not differ in any way in their basic principle that Japan should maintain its security on the basis of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty [*ga*](b) since we are currently building a consensus on each party’s opinions through negotiations, we would definitely like to establish it [i.e., the consensus] as well as to make a landmark accomplishment as the Coalition Cabinet by passing the bill in the regular Diet meeting as soon as possible.”

i.e., “Meanwhile, I will answer your second question regarding the legislation on the Japan-U.S. defense cooperation, or the ‘Guidelines’ issue. Even after the end of the Cold War, we are now facing the difficult

situation in the Asia region, the difficult situation that one cannot overlook. Therefore, in light of the importance of this region's peace and stability for Japan's security, the Guidelines were drawn for building the efficient Japan-U.S. defense cooperation. Our Government would like the Parliament to deliberate this bill to passage or approval. The LDP and Liberal Party do not differ in any way in their basic principle that Japan should maintain its security on the basis of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Since we are currently building a consensus on each party's opinions through negotiations, we would definitely like to establish it [i.e., the consensus] as well as to make a landmark accomplishment as the Coalition Cabinet by passing the bill in the regular Diet meeting as soon as possible."

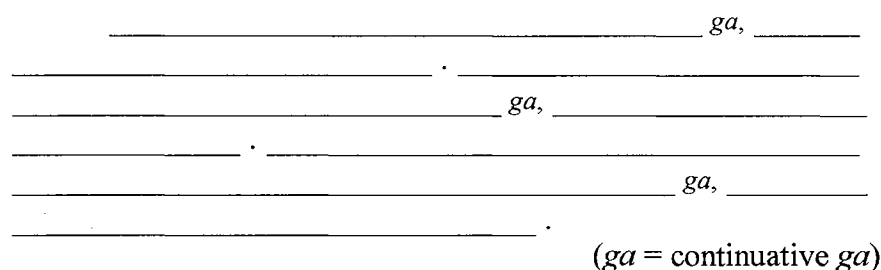
As the literal English translation shows, Prime Minister Obuchi's utterance in (6.3) consists of *one* sentence which includes two occurrences of Continuative *ga*. First, *ga* (6.3a) is a Continuative marker since it does not guide the stream of logic to any particular direction or signal the function of the preceding clause in terms of the given discourse topic. Second, *ga* (6.3b) is a Continuative marker as well since it does not function as a logical connector or as a discourse topic marker.

In superficial view of examples such as (6.3), it seems as though Continuative *ga* did not have any essential function. Its absence would not create a loss of an essential logical connector or a discourse topic marker. Additionally, as shown in example (6.1), Continuative *ga* does not seem to appear at a specific location in a stream of utterances, unlike Referential *ga* (which appears after a topic-marking clause) and Insertive *ga* (which appears after an NP; see detailed discussion later in this chapter). Nevertheless, the high frequency of Continuative *ga* in the prime minister's press conferences is so substantial that there must be an element in this discourse setting which would account for the frequent

occurrences. Besides the linguistic environment, potentially relevant background information such as Japan's political surroundings and social structure would merit a close insight as ways to find explanations for the frequent Continuative *ga* occurrences in the prime minister's press conferences.

One such explanation is that Prime Minister Obuchi uses Continuative *ga* as a discourse marker for assertion softening. This assertion softening *ga* is different from Alfonso's (1992) "assertion softener" (p. 517) in two important ways. First, Alfonso's (1992) assertion softener is what we have renamed Implicative *ga*. While Implicative *ga* is used to suggest inferences of the speaker's intended meaning (see detailed explanation later in this chapter), Continuative *ga* does not add anything to, or suggest any inferences about, the surrounding utterances. Second, while Implicative *ga* functions as a marker of the end of the speaker's turn and/or of a discourse topic, Continuative *ga* does not serve as turn- or topic-final marker. Instead, Continuative *ga* in cases like (6.3) functions as a discourse marker for assertion-softening in the sense that its frequent use within an utterance would effectively reduce the number of utterance-finals as a means of minimizing the assertiveness. Figure 6-2 is a graphic representation of Prime

Figure 6-2: Continuative *ga* as discourse marker for assertion softening



Minister Keizo Obuchi's utterances. Rather than indicating the end of the utterances by suppressing Continuative *ga*, the prime minister would use them with considerably high frequency as a way to minimize the sense of assertiveness in his responses. By contrast, Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's TV interviews include considerably fewer instances of Continuative *ga* as a result of assertive utterances (see detailed explanation of the Communist Party leader's TV interviews later in this chapter).

Analysis of Japan's sociopolitical surroundings provide clues for Prime Minister Obuchi's frequent use of Continuative *ga* as a marker for assertion softening. As numerous political analysts and journalists have pointed out, the role of a Japanese prime minister is not one of a national leader per se. Kenji Hayao, assistant professor of political science at Boston College, argued,

“In the United States, at least in relation to the rest of the executive branch, the president's position is preeminent. . . . Unlike presidential systems, parliamentary ones do not make the prime minister the preeminent head of the executive. . . . And as in most other parliamentary systems, Japan's constitution makes the cabinet collectively responsible to the National Assembly; that is, all members of the cabinet are jointly responsible for any policy or decision officially made by it. . . . Because the cabinet is a collective body, the prime minister's position is often described as only ‘first among equals.’”

(Hayao, 1993, p. 38)

In addition to constitutional limitations to the prime minister's power, Japan's social structure prevents a person at the top of a group from performing the role of a leader per se. As a matter of fact, Nakane (1970)⁴ states, “the

Japanese language has no term for the word leadership”⁵ (p. 69). In Japan, a leader is a paternalistic head of a group whose authority hinges largely on “the relative balance of abilities and personalities which the leader and his subordinates bring into a given group” (Nakane, 1970, p. 70). She continues,

More than anything else, the qualification of the leader in Japanese society depends upon his ability to understand and attract his men. No matter how great his wealth and power, how brilliant his talent or what type his personality, if a man is unable to capture his followers emotionally and glue them to him in vertical relationships he cannot become a leader. Consequently it may be that Japanese soil cannot grow a charismatic leader, or, to put it in other words, a leader may exercise his charisma only through immediate personal relations. The strength of personal ties inhibits the attraction of a leader who possesses only charismatic qualities. In fact, the enduring Japanese image of the leader is not that of Napoleon but always that of Oishi Kuranosuke, leader of the famous Forty-Seven Rōnin.⁶

(Nakane, 1970, pp. 70-1)

In this social structure, it is not a capable and charismatic individual but a long-established (and therefore considerably aged) and unselfish consensus builder that assumes the position of Japan’s prime minister most of the time. In fact, it is the internal recognition as an excellent consensus builder that brought Keizo Obuchi into premiership in July 1998. For instance, John Neuffer, a political analyst of Mitsui Marine Research Institute, points out in his media interview that “(Prime Minister) Obuchi’s greatest asset was that his consensus building skills will work in his favor after the divisive race for the presidency (of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party)” (Khergamvala, 1998). Also, *USA Today* reporter James Cox points out that it is rarely the bold leadership that brought Japanese

prime ministers in the past atop the political hierarchy. He continues, “Historically, the job itself has differed radically from the executive role of, say, a U.S. president. Japanese prime ministers have tended to be consensus-builders who left policy formulation to the country’s powerful bureaucrats” (Cox, 1998).

It is these sociopolitical surroundings that prompt Prime Minister Obuchi in the press conferences to use Continuative *ga* frequently as assertion-softening marker. Japanese society in itself has strong tendencies to resist leadership in the hands of a truly capable individual. “[I]t is not essential for the superior, including the man right on the top, to be intelligent. In fact, it is better if he is not outstandingly brilliant. . . . The leader must have some weakness for which his men are always ready to compensate or provide support. Having established a firm relationship in this manner, the followers are always eager to understand and cooperate with the leader’s ideas and actions” (Nakane, 1970, pp. 65-6). Since the popularity of a group head in Japanese society hinges heavily on the kind of firm relationship Nakane (1970) describes, the very appearance of exceptional brilliance would have a negative impact on the duration of his/her term. Therefore, the prime minister would refrain from remarks and manners of articulation that would become subject to controversy. The frequent use of Continuative *ga* would reduce the feel of assertiveness in the utterances, and therefore would conform to general expectations of a group head (i.e., prime minister in this case) in Japanese society.

Third, these sociopolitical surroundings seem to play an equally significant role in Prime Minister Obuchi's frequent use of Insertive *ga* as well. To illustrate this point, we will first cite the following excerpts from the press conferences, (6.4a) from [C-3] and (6.4b) from [C-5]:

(6.4) (a) masa ni sore o hitotsu-hitotsu gutaika-shite iku no ga
truly this ACC one-by-one materialize go-on fact NOM

hon-naikaku no tsutome to kangaete orimasu no de,
this-Cabinet GEN duty that think PROG because

→ o-kotoba ni arimashita *ga* ^(a),
your-word in there-was

jakkan kono ondo-sa to iu koto wa
somewhat this temperature-diff. that fact TOP

ondo ga hikuku natte iru n ja nai ka
temp. NOM low become PROG fact whether

→ to iu koto darô to omoimasu *ga* ^(b),
that fact maybe that think

mattaku sono yô na koto wa nai to iu fû ni
at-all this manner fact TOP not that way in

omotte orimashite
think PROG

“It is the very duty of this Cabinet to materialize these (plans for decentralization) one by one, and therefore, people, as there was (reference) in your word [*ga*](a), criticize (this Cabinet) for being relatively reluctant to tackle these [*ga*](b), we don't believe it is the case. . . .”

(b) kore made no keiki-taisaku ni tsuki mashite wa
now up-to GEN economy-policy in regard COPULA TOP

→ 11-nendo yosan mo sô de arimasu *ga* ^(a),
1999-yr. budget also so COPULA

sono mae no hosei yosan nado o tsûji mashite,
this before GEN supplementary budget etc. ACC through

arayuru shudan o kôjite keiki-kaifuku ni
every-possible means ACC use economic-recovery for

saizen o tsukushite kita tsumori de gozaimasu.
best ACC attain kept belief COPULA

“Regarding our economy (revitalization) policies up to now, as was the case with the 1999 budget [*ga*], it is our belief that we have attained our best to use every possible means for economic recovery (in the 1998 budget) through the supplementary budget etc. . . .”

First, *ga* (6.4a-a) is an Insertive marker since *o-kotoba ni arimashita ga* “as there was (reference) in your word” suggests a temporary departure from the main discussion on Obuchi’s commitment to decentralization. Second, *ga* (6.4b) is an Insertive marker as well since *11-nendo yosan mo sô de arimasu ga* “as was the case with the 1999 budget” provides supplementary information at the middle of the discussion on the 1998 budget. On the other hand, *ga* (6.4a-b) is a Conflictive/Contrastive marker and therefore will be excluded from our analysis in this section.

There are structural and pragmatic features that characterize Insertive *ga* as distinct from all other uses. Structurally, while *ga* clauses of all other types are unconstrained entities, an Insertive *ga* clause, as its name suggests, is embedded

within a clause (see Figure 6-3 for graphic representation). Pragmatically, Insertive *ga* yields one of the following two functions: 1) To make reference to, or assessment of, a statement that is relevant to a given discourse; and 2) To provide peripheral information that is relevant to a given utterance. While 2) would be straightforward, 1) would require additional explanation. First, the “statement that is relevant to a given discourse” means that an Insertive *ga* clause may refer to what has been previously stated or what is about to be stated:

(6.5) Shikashi ima Nukaga chōkan ni atae rare-ta shigoto
 however now minister to give PASS-PAST duty

→ to iu mono wa, iu mademo arimasen *ga*,
 that-called thing TOP say necessary NEG

chōtatsu jishi hombu no moto-kambu no
 supply implementation HQ GEN fmr-exec. GEN

hainin jiken, arui wa mata,
 misappropriation scandal or TOP also

shōko kakushi no giwaku o meguri mashite
 evidence hiding GEN allegation ACC related COPULA

kono mondai ni kansuru kichin-to-shita taiō no
 this problem in regard clear handling GEN

Figure 6-3: Structure of Insertive *ga* clauses

Insertive *ga* clause
 [[. *ga*,] ,

Other *ga* clauses
 [. *ga*], [,

([] = a clause)

sekininsha to-shite hatasa na kereba naranai
 executive as accomplish unless won't-work

tachiba darô to omotte orimasu.
 standpoint may-be that think PROG

“However, the duty assigned to (defense) minister Nukaga is, needless to say [*ga*], to accomplish his role as the executive (of the Defense Agency) to resolve the scandal on misappropriations by top Supplies Section officers and allegations on destroying evidence.”

[C-1]

The Insertive *ga* clause (6.4a) makes reference to a previous statement by a reporter in the press conference. The *ga* clause (6.5), on the other hand, makes reference to what the speaker (i.e., the prime minister) is about to say. Second, pragmatic functions of Insertive *ga* are not limited to a mere reference. In some cases, the speaker would make assessment of a relevant statement, as the following example shows:

(6.6) . . . Soshite shisô tetsugaku mo issho de are ba,
 and ideology philosophy also same COPULA if

Jiyû-tô, kore o “Ho” to itte wa ikenai
 Liberal-Party this ACC conservative that say TOP not-good

→ kamo shire masen *ga*, Jimin-tô to Jiyû-tô to no iwayuru
 perhaps-the-case L.D.P. and L.P. and GEN so-called

Ho-ho rengô to môshimasu ka, gôdô to iimasu ka,
 convs.-consv. union that call Q alliance that say Q

sô iu koto o kangaete mo ii node wa nai ka
 so say thing ACC think even-if good COPULA TOP isn't-it Q

to iu koe mo watashi no tokoro ni kikoete kite orimasu.
 that say voice also I GEN place at audible come PROG

“. . . . and since we have common ideology and philosophy, the Liberal Party, which we couldn't call conservative [*ga*], . . . the so-called union, or alliance, between the LDP and Liberal Party is something we should consider, I hear some saying.”

[C-6]

The Insertive *ga* clause in (6.4a) and (6.5) simply introduces the relevant statement. On the other hand, the *ga* clause (6.6) includes the speaker's own assessment of an appropriate categorization of the Liberal Party in terms of the reformist-conservative continuum.

One explanation for the frequent Insertive *ga* occurrences lies in the general length of utterances in Prime Minister Obuchi's turns. As mentioned earlier, reporters in the press conferences would ask the prime minister long and detailed questions at each turn because each of them would get one turn only. Therefore, the prime minister would reciprocate each question with a detailed response. On the one hand, it is possible to assume that a long utterance with complex contents would naturally produce a number of justifications with supplementary detail that is expressed by Implicative *ga* clauses. On the other hand, the increasingly intense media scrutiny would naturally inhibit the interviewee (i.e., Prime Minister Obuchi) from making straightforward statements. A simple response with little background information may prompt the reporters' misinterpretations, whether they might be well-founded or solely speculative. While these reasons would appear to be plausible, there would be sociopolitical elements that prompt Prime Minister Obuchi to use Insertive *ga* frequently.

In addition to the explanations above, the prime minister's frequent use of Insertive *ga* would have something to do with his role as head of the elected officials⁷ and with Japanese society's value of *wa* (harmony) as among the utmost virtues. As Okabe (1987) points out, the traditional mode of communication in Japan would prevent the speakers from making direct utterances. Especially from the pragmatic perspective, Okabe (1987) argues that avoiding downright demand, rejection, asserting, and criticism "is a much more dominant principle in Japanese communication than the (Gricean) maxim of 'not to speak ambiguously or obscurely'" (p. 135). He continues, "It is true that the industrialization and the modernization of the Japanese society has exerted a strong influence on its patterns of culture. Nevertheless, there still exists a cultural lag in many aspects of social life." While the young Japanese may employ a nontraditional mode of communication, Prime Minister Obuchi exhibits a traditional mode of communication both as individual in the older generation⁸ and as head of the conservative government.

From the sociopolitical perspective, Prime Minister Obuchi's frequent use of Insertive *ga* clauses would be interpreted as a result of compromise politics which Japanese Parliament has adopted in the course of the postwar democratic government. According to Krauss (1984), Japanese Parliament was polarized in its extreme form during 1955-1970 with the conservative Liberal Democratic Party holding the comfortable majority in both houses. During these years, snap voting by the majority, and the so-called cow-walking,⁹ frequent no-confidence motions

and even physical barricading of the chamber by the opposition were common practice. However, eroding public confidence due to a series of bribery scandals often cost the LDP the single-party majority since the 1970s, and forced its members to work with opposition members (pp. 246-53). Especially, the bipartisan House Management Committee has further streamlined cooperation across party lines (Krauss, 1984, p. 271). In such political surroundings, coupled with the traditional role of a group head as consensus builder, it is the responsibility of a Japanese prime minister to represent the consensus-driven decisions of his government rather than only one side of the polarized Parliament. In this respect, Insertive *ga* would serve as an effective discourse marker for Prime Minister Obuchi since its clauses would help him project an image as good consensus builder. By virtue of frequent reference to supplementary and peripheral information, the prime minister would give the existing and prospective audience an impression that his Cabinet's decisions reflect considerations (rather than disregard) of the marginal as well as dominant concerns for the issue. This pattern would, at least from Prime Minister Obuchi's perspective, conform to the public expectation of him as an inclusive head of the government instead of a leader who would often disregard marginal public interests.

Fourth, and finally, the overall high frequency of the Conjunctive *ga* and Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* are attributable to a combination of various factors. The high frequency of the three types of *ga* discussed in detail above has naturally raised the overall *ga* occurrences. On the other hand, the spontaneous nature of

Prime Minister Obuchi's utterances would account for the frequent occurrences of Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* in the press conferences. As mentioned earlier, *ga* is not a sociolinguistically stigmatized form of expression in Japanese. Also, unlike other types of *ga*, Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* functions as logical connector, which would not mandate suppression. Especially, this spontaneous discourse setting gives the speaker virtually no time for *ga* suppression.

D. Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's TV Interviews

Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's TV interviews are similar in their discourse patterns to Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences in the sense that both settings yield the same four types of *ga* functions including Conflictive/Contrastive, Referential, Continuative and Insertive. However, in view of the spontaneous nature of the setting, it is intriguing that the TV interviews yield considerably lower *ga* frequencies than the press conferences. Overall, the TV interviews include *ga* in only 2.50% of the full clauses (25 in 999), compared to 10.28% (98 in 953) in the press conferences. With respect to categories, more than half (52.00%; 13 of 25) of the *ga* in the TV interviews are used as Conflictive/Contrastive markers. Also, the frequencies of nonconflictive *ga* are substantially lower in the TV interviews than in the press

conferences. The TV interviews exhibit 2 instances of Referential *ga*, 7 instances of Insertive *ga*, and 3 occurrences of Continuative *ga*.

As is the case with the prime minister's press conferences, it is the combination of general characteristics of this discourse setting and sociopolitical surroundings in Japan that would provide plausible accounts for these complex results. First, we will examine the following excerpts from TV interview [D-2] to investigate the general characteristics of this setting:

(6.7) Interviewer:¹⁰

... kokkai no seiryoku-bunya dake o mimasu to,
Parliament GEN power-area only ACC see if

Kômeito ga sansei-shite iru kara, hōan wa tōru n ja nai ka
NOM agree PROG because bill TOP pass COPULA NEG Q

to iu mitōshi ni natte iru n desu ga....
that say prospect to become PROG COPULA

“... because Komeito agrees (on the LDP sponsored bill) according to the Parliament's power distribution, there are prospects for the passage of the bill....”

JCP chairman Fuwa:

Yappari soko de wa, kokumin no yoron to undō da
after-all these at TOP citizen GEN opinion and activity COPULA

to omou n desu yo. Wareware wa mochiron, kokkai de
that think COPULA (end) we TOP of-course Parliament at

giron o yarimasu keredomo, kokumin no aida de iimasu to,
argument ACC do but citizen GEN inside in say if

ima yôyaku 'kore wa nan darô ka.' to iu koto de,
 now finally this TOP what COPULA Q that say fact and

me ga muki hajimete iru tokoro desu.
 eye NOM direct begin PROG in-progress COPULA

“After all, that’s the opinions and activities of the citizens (that speak).
 Of course, we will present our argument in Parliament, but our citizens
 have finally begun to direct their eyes (to this matter), like ‘What is
 this?’”

Interviewer:

Yôyaku sô iu kanji ni natte kite imasu ne.
 finally so say mood to become gradually PROG yes

“Yes, finally this mood is coming.”

Fuwa:

Rei no Guideline to iu kotoba ga warui n desu ne.
 at-issue GEN that say word NOM bad COPULA isn't-it

Kono aida, seifu ga katakana-go to iu no wa,
 this past gov't NOM word that say thing TOP

Nihonjin ni wakari nikui to happyô shita
 Jpn-people to comprehend hard that announce PAST

bakari deshô. (warai)
 just isn't-it laughter

“That word Guideline is a bad one, too, isn't it? It was just days ago that
 the (LDP) government denounced the katakana words (i.e., English loan
 words) as something hard for the Japanese to comprehend. (laughter)”

Interviewer:

Sô iu hanashi ga arimashita ne.
so say story NOM there-was yes

“Yes, there was such a story.”

Fuwa:

Are wa, sono katakana-go de, kore wa nanika gunji no
that TOP this word with this TOP some military GEN

semmonka no hanashi de, jibun-tachi ni wa kankei nai to
expert GEN talk and self-(plural) to TOP relation NEG that

iu fû ni omowa seru shikake nan desu yo. . . .
say manner in think CAUSE trick COPULA (end)

“Using the katakana word (Guidelines) is a trick (by the LDP) that intends to lead the public to believe that this issue involved some military experts which is of no concern for them.”

The excerpts above draw a sharp contrast to the prime minister’s press conferences in an important way. While the reporter’s question and the prime minister’s response are both extremely long as shown in (6.3), each turn in the TV interview is considerably shorter.

The key factor to this exchange of short turns lies in the reciprocal nature of this discourse setting. Unlike the prime minister’s press conferences, the JCP chairman’s TV interviews provide a person-to-person setting, and guarantee a full-fledged one-to-one exchange of utterances within the scheduled time of the TV program. The result of this feature is increased reciprocity in the discourse pattern as evidenced in the reporter’s use of short questions and the back-channel cues or

so-called *aizuchi*¹¹ (LoCastro, 1987) such as *Sô iu hanashi ga arimashita ne*. “Yes, there was such a story.” in (6.7). Also, the reciprocity has an impact on the Communist Party chairman’s response, which is considerably shorter than that of the prime minister (see 6.1 for an example). More importantly, this general discourse pattern results in the reduction of the frequency of *ga* as a discourse marker. The prime minister’s utterances in the previous section yield many instances of *ga* as devices for topic shift, reference to logical connection, and assertion-softening since each of his turns is expected to provide self-sufficient responses to the reporter’s detailed question from different perspectives. By contrast, the JCP chairman’s utterances do not exhibit many occurrences of fulfilling these functions since the frequent turn-taking would practically serve these purposes. On the other hand, reciprocity in the TV interviews would have little impact on the frequency of Conflictive/Contrastive *ga*, since its function does not extend beyond the level of the utterances immediately before/after it.

Another observable difference of the JCP chairman’s interviews from the prime minister’s press conferences is the considerably lower frequency of Referential *ga*. As shown in Table 5-3, the TV interviews include only 3 instances of Referential *ga*, compared to 17 in the prime minister’s press conferences. The following excerpt from TV interview [D-1] is a representative example of JCP chairman Fuwa’s use of Referential *ga*:¹²

(6.8) Yamamoto:

. . . . Ano, shôhi-zei no hikisage, kore wa Kyôsan-tô no
well consumption-tax GEN cut this TOP Comm-Party GEN

nenrai no shuchô na n desu kedomo, juyô o sakidori-suru
years GEN claim COPULA but demand ACC receive-in-advance

dake ja nai ka to. Ammari shôhi ni wa kôka ga
only COPULA NEG Q that very consmp. to TOP impact NOM

nai n ja nai ka to iu iken ga
NEG COPULA NEG Q that say opinion NOM

kanarazu dete kimasu ne.
always appear come-out TAG

“ . . . Uh, the consumption tax cut is a long-term demand of the Communist Party. But there are always opinions that this (cut) will end up nothing more than an advance revenue (for the government). They claim that (the cut) will not be effective (for economic recovery).”

Fuwa:

Ee, Jimin-tô no gawa kara ne. (warai)
yes LDP GEN side from TAG laughter

“Yes, from the LDP side, right? (laughter)”

Yamamoto:

Kore wa dô mimasu ka. Kôka arimasu ka.
this TOP how see Q impact exist Q

“How do you view this? Is it going to be effective?”

Fuwa:

Kore wa, tatoeba, shôhi-zei hikisage to iu katachi ja
this TOP for-example consmp-tax cut that say form COPULA

nai n da kedomo, kyonen no kure ni seppa-tsumatte,
 NEG but last-yr. GEN end at become-desperate

ôte no sùpâ ga shôhi-zei bun toka
 major GEN dept.-store NOM consmp.-tax share or

sore ijô no ne-sage o yatta de sho.
 this more GEN price-cut ACC did TAG

Yappari kôka ga aru n desu ne.
 after-all impact NOM exist COPULA TAG

Kore o nihon-zenkoku de issei ni yarô to iu no ga
 this ACC Jpn-entire at all-together let's-do that say thing NOM

shôhi-zei no hikisage desu kara, kore ga
 consmp.-tax GEN cut COPULA because this NOM

kôka ga aru koto wa machigai nai n desu.
 impact NOM exist fact TOP question NEG COPULA

→ Watashi, hontô ni tsûkan-shite iru n desu *ga*,
 I truly painfully-feel PROG COPULA

shôhi no ochikomi ga fukeiki no gen'in da
 consumption GEN decrease NOM recession GEN reason COPULA

to iwa rete ichi-nen ni narimasu yo. . . .
 that say PASS 1-year at pass TAG

“This is not an example of the (actual) tax cut. At the end of last year, some major department stores desperately cut prices of their products for the amount of consumption tax or even higher. This shows it (i.e., tax cut) is effective. Since tax cut means doing this nationally, there is no question it is effective.

As I am painfully aware [*ga*], it's already one year since consumption decrease was raised as reason for the recession. . . .”

Ga (6.8) is a Referential marker since *Watashi, hontô ni tsûkan-shite iru n desu ga* “I am painfully aware” introduces Fuwa’s feelings about the ongoing recession as the topic of the subsequent utterances while he discusses the effect of the JCP-proposed consumption tax cut up to the topic shift.

The low frequency of Referential *ga* in JCP chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa’s utterances is attributable to the characteristics of this discourse setting. As mentioned above, this setting includes the frequent exchange of short turns. Consequently, the interviewer’s question is inclined to be short and narrowly focused. In response to such a question, JCP chairman Fuwa would reply in short utterances without much elaboration. If the interviewer felt the chairman’s elaboration necessary, he would ask follow-up questions in the subsequent turns. Also, in this discourse setting, it is the interviewer as host of the TV program who assumes the initiative in topic shifts. As a result, the use of Referential *ga* clauses would occur less frequently in the JCP chairman’s utterances than in those of the prime minister. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Referential *ga* in the JCP chairman’s utterances always occur in long turns. Example (6.8) is a partial excerpt from his 28-clause turn. The other Referential *ga* occur in his 36-clause turn in the May 7, 1999, program, and in the 17-clause turn in the June 9, 1999, program. In other words, it is only when the interviewee decided to elaborate on his response that he would use a Referential *ga* clause to introduce the elaboration.

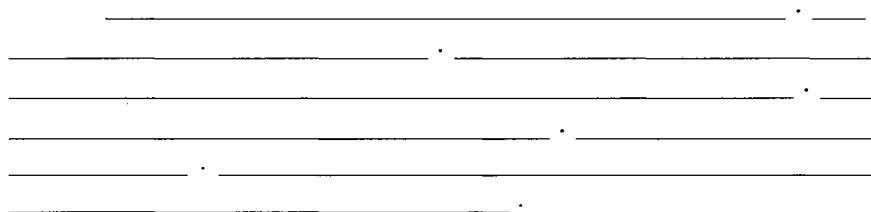
Similarly, the rare Insertive *ga* occurrences in the JCP chairman’s utterances are attributable to the reciprocal nature of the setting. As mentioned

earlier, the press conferences assume one turn per interviewer, and each reporter makes every possible attempt to include all aspects of relevant information in his/her question. In response to such questions, the prime minister replies with long utterances. As a result, the longer the turn, the more peripheral information the response will include; therefore, the more Insertive *ga* it will include.

Consequently, this means that Fuwa's utterances would include fewer Insertive *ga* clauses since his turns tend to include only the information that is optimally relevant to the TV interviewer's more narrowly focused question. Fuwa's occasional use of Insertive *ga* clauses is a result of his decision to elaborate on his response in a long turn.

Finally, the low frequency of Continuative *ga* in the JCP chairman's TV interviews draws a sharp contrast to its high frequency in the prime minister's press conferences. Figure 6-4 is a graphic representation of JCP chairman Fuwa's utterances. As mentioned earlier, Continuative *ga* functions as an assertion-softening marker in a spoken setting. The prime minister's frequent use of Continuative *ga* is a result of *ga* retention in an attempt to conform to Japan's

Figure 6-4: Absence of Continuative *ga* in JCP Chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's utterances (See Figure 6-2 for comparison to Prime Minister Obuchi's utterances.)



cultural norms, lead people to avoid confrontation and to resist the western style of leadership. By contrast, the JCP chairman's utterances include considerably fewer Continuative *ga*. Compared to the prime minister's frequent use of Continuative *ga* to minimize the assertive tone (see Figure 6-2 for comparison), the JCP chairman's Continuative *ga* suppression suggests his attempt to reinforce the sense of assertion. This explanation may seem to contradict our earlier argument about Japanese expectations for a group head, the very role which Tetsuzo Fuwa seems to be serving. Instead of cultural norms, it is the political surroundings that would account for our results.

The key to our results on Continuative *ga* lies in JCP's political role. Numerous researchers in Japanese politics point out that JCP has traditionally maintained its distance from all other parties. For example, Okimoto (1988) suggests that JCP is the only self-sponsoring political party while all other parties depend on interest groups such as large corporations, labor unions, and religious groups (p. 177). As recently as 1995, JCP is the only political party that refuses to accept any public funds (Kubota, 1997, p. 128). Second, since the 1955 establishment of the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party, JCP has represented one division of the tripartite structure with the other two being the ruling LDP and a group of opposition parties. While the conservative LDP never sided with JCP on ideological grounds,¹³ JCP refused to ally itself with the mainstream opposition group to allow itself to articulate its reformist stance in clear terms. As mentioned earlier, Japanese Parliament has seen different political parties working together

for a consensus since the late 1960s, and snap vote in collusion¹⁴ (Krauss, 1984, p. 252) has become a common practice between the LDP and the opposition group. This multipartisan cooperation has seriously eroded the opposition group's relationship with the JCP, which persisted in anti-LDP agenda. Furthermore, the 1970s was about the time the JCP shifted its emphasis into concrete benefits to individual voters in an attempt to win public reputation as "a legitimate democratic party responsive to the policy concerns of the voters" (Krauss, 1984, p. 256), while the opposition group's political agenda were based mostly on the benefits of their interest groups. As a result, the JCP gained a public image as an alternative force to LDP-opposition politics (Jain & Todhunter, 1997, p. 237), whose impact would be limited but felt enough to force both the LDP and the opposition group to act in the interest of individual voters. As evidenced in several key elections since the 1970s, voter dissatisfaction with the status quo often resulted in JCP's gain of Parliament seats (Watanuki, 1977, p. 41; Jain & Todhunter, 1997, p. 229).

These complex political surroundings provide a rationale for JCP chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's Continuative *ga* suppression. The key factor to Fuwa's *ga* suppression is the fact that a JCP chairman does not serve the role of a traditional Japanese group head. As previously stated, a Japanese prime minister represents the interests of various groups including his party and interest groups, and his utterances would retain Continuative *ga*, which expresses the sense of conciliation to the interests of these groups. On the other hand, the JCP chairman's utterances do not conform to Japan's traditional expectation for a group head due to the

party's primary emphasis on the practical benefits of individual voters rather than support groups. As a means of reinforcing JCP's public image as representatives of individual voters (as opposed to a group of voters with special interests), the tone of assertiveness is an effective political tool for JCP chairman Fuwa to deliver a strong appeal to individuals. In this respect, Continuative *ga* suppression in Fuwa's utterances is attributable to his political motivation of appealing to individual voters by reinforcing an assertive tone through the repetition of *ga*-less clause finals.

E. *Yahoo! Japan* Message Boards

While *Yahoo! Japan* message boards show a similar pattern of *ga* variations to the prime minister's press conferences and the JCP chairman's TV interviews, there are several features in the message boards that distinguish their utterances from those in the other discourse settings. In simple terms, *Yahoo! Japan* message boards include the same four *ga* functions that were observed in the press conferences and TV interviews: Conflictive/Contrastive; Referential; Insertive; and Continuative. However, the message boards are the only setting where Implicative *ga* occurs. Especially in light of its total absence in all previous discourse settings and relatively frequent occurrences in the message boards, it is

even possible to argue that Implicative *ga* would be one characteristic feature of BBS utterances.

As shown in Table 5-5, the message boards include *ga* in 6.84% of all full clauses (83 *ga* in 1,213 full clauses). While the message boards yield a higher percentage of overall *ga* occurrences than the editorials, breaking news stories, and the JCP chairman's TV interviews, they show a lower percentage than the prime minister's press conferences. Of the total 83 occurrences of *ga* in the message boards, 40, or nearly half, were used as Conflictive/Contrastive markers. Referential *ga* and Continuative *ga* in the message boards both occur with higher frequency than in the TV interviews but with lower frequency than in the press conferences. The message boards include 9 Referential *ga* and 16 Continuative *ga*, compared to 2 Referential *ga* and 3 Continuative *ga* in the TV interviews, and 17 Referential *ga* and 24 Continuative *ga* in the press conferences. On the other hand, the frequency of Insertive *ga* in the message boards is almost as low as that in the JCP chairman's TV interviews, and considerably lower than that in the prime minister's press conferences. The message boards include 5 Insertive *ga*, compared to 7 in the TV interviews and 23 in the press conferences. Finally, the total 13 Implicative *ga* account for 15.66% of all *ga* occurrences in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards. In other words, Implicative *ga* accounts for roughly one in every six *ga* occurrences in the message boards.

In light of the uniqueness of these results, it is necessary to look into the features of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in addition to those of

Japan's communicative norms as possible explanations for our results. First, the infrequent Insertive *ga* occurrences in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards are attributable to the physical setting of the message boards. As mentioned in Chapter 4, message board members will first select the category that is most relevant to what they will write, type a message on the CGI form, and then submit it so that the message will be electronically posted on the designated category of the message board (see Chapter 4). The superordinate categories (e.g., social, political, entertainment, sports, etc.) were predetermined by the *Yahoo! Japan* administrators while the subordinate categories (e.g., national flag/anthem, Toshiba scandal, professional soccer league, etc.) are electronically added to the message board by the members for inclusion under the relevant superordinate category. Shortly after the submission, the subordinate categories will appear for all registered members to post their comments.

The crucial point to interpret the difference in Insertive *ga* results between the message boards and other settings lies in the message board correspondents' presumption about each given topic. In the press conferences, Prime Minister Obuchi's utterances are directed to the general public with different levels of familiarity with the topics. Additionally, the one-to-multiple person setting demands inclusion of as much information as possible in the response to the reporters' complex question. In this respect, Insertive *ga* clauses serve as a tool to provide the peripheral information that is relevant to the prime minister's utterances. Meanwhile, participation in the message boards presupposes

substantial familiarity with background information on a given topic. For example, the message board [E-1] included a number of pop musicians' names, which those who are not interested in Japan's pop music would not know. Also, while a number of messages in [E-6] (i.e., Toshiba scandal; see Notes in Chapter 4) referred to one article in a weekly tabloid magazine which denounced the anti-Toshiba Web page author, there was no message which explained its content. Despite the absence of background information, the correspondents in [E-6] showed little difficulty exchanging their views because of their awareness of the article.

Second, the moderately frequent occurrences of Referential and Continuative *ga* in the message boards seem to mirror the correspondents' intrinsic perception of CMC. While the message boards include Referential *ga* clauses with moderate frequency, their use is different from that of the prime minister in the sense that the message board members, unlike the prime minister, do not use Referential *ga* clauses to reciprocate the interviewers' multiple questions in a single turn. The following example of Referential *ga* comes from the message board [E-6]:

(6.9) Anata no ossharu yô ni, kigyô ni tachimukau tame no
 you GEN say as corporation to fight-back sake GEN

hohô da to wa omoimasu.
 means COPULA that TOP think

→ Fu no sokumen desu *ga*,
 negative GEN aspect COPULA

yokare to omotte shita koto darô kedo,
 let's-make-it-right that think did thing ASSUMPTIVE however

HP seisakusha no ito ga zenzen chigau hôkô ni
 author GEN objective NOM completely wrong direction to

mukau koto ga aru koto. . . .
 face thing NOM exist fact

“As you say, I also think that (the accusation Web sites are) one method to fight back (for individual consumers) to (large) corporations.

On a negative side [*ga*], even though they may be well-intended, some HP authors are directed to a completely wrong objective. . . .”

Ga (6.9) is a Referential marker since the clause *Fu no sokumen desu ga* “On a negative side” introduces the paragraph that discusses disadvantages of the accusation Web sites such as the anti-Toshiba page (see Chapter 4). While Prime Minister Obuchi’s frequent use of Referential *ga* is a result of his reciprocation to each aspect of the interviewers’ questions, Referential *ga* clauses in the message boards such as (6.9) come as a result of the correspondents’ voluntary decision to discuss more than one aspect of the given topic.

Meanwhile, the manner of use of Continuative *ga* in the message boards is similar to that in the prime minister’s press conferences. The following example from the message board [E-4] includes one instance of Continuative *ga*:

(6.10) Mushiro seifu kaishaku kara “Kimi” ni tsuita
 rather gov’t interpretation from Your-Majesty to attached

shûshoku ga torete shimatta toki ni
 embellishment NOM removed COMPLETIVE time at

shôchô-ten'nô-sei ga yuragu
 symbol-emperor-system NOM become-shaken

→ to omou *ga*, dô da?
 that think how Q

“ . . . Rather, I think that the symbolic monarchy will become shaken when the government removes the luscious quality from its interpretation of the expression *kimi* (Your Majesty) [*ga*]; how do you think?”

Ga (6.10) is a Continuative marker since it softens the tone of assertion in the VP *omou* “[I] think.” As is the case in the prime minister’s press conferences, Continuative *ga* is used in the message boards to soften the tone of assertion which is inherent in the VP.

The occurrences of Referential and Continuative *ga* in this setting are especially noteworthy because they suggest important similarities between the CMC (i.e., message board) setting and the two spoken settings in this variation analysis. As mentioned above, the use of Referential *ga* in the message boards is attributable to the correspondents’ voluntary decision to address various elements of a given topic. On the other hand, Continuative *ga* in the message boards functions as an assertion-softening marker, just as it does in the prime minister’s press conferences. One important common feature in these two *ga* types is that they both presuppose the physical presence of the addressees. This is evident from the fact that Referential and Continuative *ga* occur in our two spoken settings but not in the written settings. Additionally, Referential *ga* in the spoken settings

suggests the addresser's avoidance of an impression that his/her argument is one-sided by showing concern for different perspectives of a given topic. Furthermore, Continuative *ga* retention suggests the addresser's consciousness of the impact of his/her utterances on the addressees. One problem with this argument is that the addressees are not physically present in the message board setting. Another pitfall is that, by virtue of appearing in the form of scripts, message boards seem to show the characteristics of written settings. In light of these contradictions, it seems to be reasonable to investigate the characteristics of the message boards from the perspective of CMC.

Based on the previous studies on CMC and the manner of Referential and Continuative *ga* occurrences, we stipulate that the use of Referential and Continuative *ga* in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards is a result of the correspondents' subconscious recognition of their virtual audience. The message correspondents' use of Referential *ga* could be viewed as a sign of their concern for the readers' responses. While messages that present multiple perspectives of a given issue would be regarded favorably by the readers, those that present one-sided arguments would be subject to negative future responses. Moreover, in light of its function as an assertion-softening marker, Continuative *ga* in the message boards suggests the correspondents' attempt to conform to an expectation of softened utterances. Despite the fact that the intended addressees are physically absent, the message boards generally exhibit the same pattern of utterances found in an

interactive setting, by virtue of including Referential/Continuative *ga* as sociocultural discourse markers.

Unlike earlier predictive claims, recent studies show that the duration of interaction develops positive communication among CMC participants. Studies on CMC in the 1980s mainly focused on negative, antisocial interactions. For example, Kiesler, Siegel & McGuire (1984) argue that the inherent absence of social context cues in CMC would not only impede efficient communication but elicit utterances that would cause the addressers to flame.¹⁵ However, recent empirical studies based on comparisons with FTF data have found substantial evidence that CMC participants act according to the interest of the virtual community. For example, Walther & Burgoon's (1992) comparative experiment with CMC/FTF groups of young adults shows evidence that CMC participants "adopt communication behaviors that are more stereotypically desirable" (p. 79). Furthermore, Hollingshead, McGrath & O'Connor's (1993) longitudinal study shows that the duration of interaction has an impact on positive communication. Additionally, Walther (1994) reports empirical results showing that "anticipated future interaction" has a more significant impact on affinity in CMC interactions than it does in FTF interactions. Based on these empirical results, Walther (1997) concludes that "CMC users are sensitive to whether or not to expect ongoing interaction with their partners, which in turn shapes their interpersonal interaction" (p. 349). To put it another way, the more future interactions are expected, the more positive the mode of communication.

This inclination for a positive mode of communication leads to a claim that CMC essentially functions as a virtual community. Fernback (1997) uses the word *collectivity* to describe the characteristics of CMC as a virtual community.

According to Fernback (1997), the primary concern for CMC collectivity is the participants' "common good" (p. 46) in the sense that this virtual community is open to all types of rhetoric and accessible to those wishing to participate. She continues:

There is a virtual ideology in cyberspace which is collective in orientation. There is a strong sense among users that, despite the tolerance needed for the space to be open-minded and despite the potential for oppressiveness—a humanity which is authentically expressed among its constituents via a mass medium whose content is not wholly determined by corporate executives. It is an ideology that characterizes collectivist rhetoric as something positive

(p. 46)

As shown above, results of the recent empirical studies substantiate Fernback's (1997) recognition of CMC as a virtual community. More important, these studies are consistent with an earlier claim that our message board correspondents' use of Referential/Continuative *ga* suggests their self-identification as desirable members of the virtual community. Since utterances in this setting are directed to the virtual addressees, the addressers are expected to conform to the sociocultural norms of the virtual community by including Referential *ga* as an indicator of multiple perspectives and Continuative *ga* as an assertion-softening marker.

Third, and finally, the occurrences of Implicative *ga* exclusively in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards are such a salient feature in our findings that their use undoubtedly characterizes distinctive features of this discourse setting. In light of the previous discussions on Referential and Continuative *ga*, which reveal the characteristics of CMC as a virtual community, two questions need to be addressed: 1) Does Implicative *ga* exhibit types of CMC features that we have not addressed thus far?; and 2) To what extent are the accounts for the Implicative *ga* occurrences in the message boards relevant to the aforementioned explanations for the Referential/Continuative *ga* occurrences in the two spoken settings? In an attempt to answer these two questions, we will examine the following excerpt from the message board with an instance of Implicative *ga*:

(6.11) Ken'en o uttaeru hito no iken ga
anti-smoking ACC claim people GEN opinion NOM

→ iroiro arimasu *ga*_(a) . . .
various there-is

→ Subete de wa nai no desu *ga*_(b),
all at TOP NEG COPULA

Saidai-kôyokusû-teki-ni mite shimau to
G.C.D. see happen-to if

kanari ijô desu ne.
considerably abnormal COPULA isn't-it

Hisuterikku-ni nari sugite iru . . .
hysterical become excessively PROG

“Anti-smoking advocates voice various opinions [*ga*](a)
I'm not saying all of them are,

but (b) on the G.C.D. scale (sic) (their opinions are) extreme.
They are demonstrating excessive hysteria. . . .”

[E-9]

There are two characteristics in Implicative *ga*. First, Implicative *ga* typically appears at the end of the last utterance of a discourse paragraph. Second, unlike other types of *ga*, Implicative *ga* appears in utterance-final position (see Figure 6-5). *Ga* (6.11a) is an Implicative marker since it comes at the end of the opening paragraph that addresses the issue the correspondent intends to discuss.

Meanwhile, *ga* (6.11b) is a Conflictive/Contrastive marker since it makes a contrast between the argument that anti-smoking advocates are not unanimously extremist and the one that they nevertheless are extremist on average. (Since the current discussion focuses exclusively on Implicative *ga*, the Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* clause (6.11b) will be excluded from the subsequent discussion in this section.) As mentioned in Chapter 3, Implicative *ga* is, as its name suggests, used at the paragraph-final position to elicit an implicit message that signals the end of a discourse topic in the optimally relevant manner. In this particular instance, the appropriate interpretation of the Implicative *ga* clause

Figure 6-5: Use of Implicative *ga*

.....

 *ga*.

(6.11a) would be “Anti-smoking advocates voice various opinions, (*and I hereby discuss my opinion of their arguments*).”

In light of the recent findings on Japanese community norms and characteristics of CMC, the Implicative *ga* occurrences in Yahoo! Japan message boards seem to reveal a salient feature that requires detailed explanation. From the sociocultural perspective, it may be possible to argue that the frequent occurrences of Implicative *ga* in this setting suggest the message board’s conformity to Japanese community norms. Watanabe’s (1993) study on framing in Japanese group discussions suggests that procedural matters are considered important in Japanese group interactions. Watanabe’s (1993) data show that a Japanese discussion group spends considerably more time than its American counterpart trying to determine the social relationship between the members. Within the scope of this discourse setting, this sociocultural characteristic feature would translate into the way the message board participants would initiate topic shift. Rather than abruptly initiating topic shift, the addresser would direct to the addressee(s) an Implicative *ga* clause as an interactive cue to confirm that all participants are ready for topic change. The crucial premise to this argument is that, while the addressees are not physically present in this setting, participants in our message boards make utterances as though the addressees were physically present. Although these explanations would be plausible, they are not sufficient in themselves since they do not adequately address the differences between the message board setting and media interview/conferences. As we did for

Referential/Continuative *ga*, it will be necessary to review research on communication and CMC further.

Our results of Implicative *ga* show several fundamental characteristics of this virtual community. As mentioned earlier, communication on a message board entails the assumption of “anticipated future interactions” (Walther, 1994) and therefore generally elicits a positive mode of communication. Additionally, various CMC researchers point out that CMC utterances suggest egalitarianism among the participants. According to these researchers, CMC provides little information in a practical form on the participants’ gender, ethnic identity, economic status, or physical appearance, and therefore encourages equal participation (Rice, 1986; Eveland & Bikson, 1989; Walther, 1992; Fernback, 1997; etc.).¹⁶ Within the scope of Japanese message boards, this setting does not assign a situationally predetermined role to each participant. Especially, the use of aliases by literally all participants in the message boards (ranging from the obviously un-Japanese *catflap* and *pinpon-98* to parodies of Japanese celebrities such as *otorasan* and *syouden*) further obscures their identity. These factors have established this virtual community as a group of individuals with equal status.

Our data show that this egalitarianism translated into the frequent occurrences of Implicative *ga* as one form of a socially driven approval request for topic shift. On the one hand, participants in a Japanese FTF community would assess their social identity in an attempt to establish an internal hierarchical ranking, which is primarily based on age (Nakane, 1970, pp. 25-40; Watanabe,

1993, p. 185; Nippon Steel Human Resources Development, 1997, p. 149). Since this hierarchy preassigns a social superior the right to topic shift, the frequent use of Implicative *ga* by a social superior would be unnecessary while its frequent use by a social inferior would be perceived as a threat to the hierarchy. On the other hand, the very setting of the TV interviews and press conferences assign each participant a situationally prescribed role. More specifically, these settings assign the role of topic shift to the interviewers, and the use of Implicative *ga* as a topic shift marker by the interviewers would be unnecessary while its use by the interviewees would violate the situational rule. Therefore, it is only an egalitarian social setting such as CMC that prompts the participants to assess their status constantly for the virtual addressees' approval of topic shift, which is realized in the form of frequent Implicative *ga*.

F. Summary of *ga* Functions

So far, we have discussed *ga* occurrences and their functions from the perspective of each discourse setting. Important salient features of each setting have contributed to our discovery of various discourse functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*. Based on our findings in the five discourse settings, we summarize functions of each *ga* type as follows:

Conflictive/Contrastive *ga*

Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* is the received form of *ga* that establishes a conflictive or contrastive logical relationship between two clauses. While prescriptivists consider this type of *ga* to be acceptable, concerns for potential confusion on the readers' side because of very frequent *ga* occurrences could lead writers to suppress all forms of *ga* including Conflictive/Contrastive *ga*. While Conflictive/Contrastive *ga* is retained in spoken/CMC settings and quick writings such as breaking news articles, it is suppressed in prestigious informational writing such as newspaper editorials.

Continuative *ga*

Continuative *ga* shows a salient characteristic of not only this word but also the Japanese language as a whole. Like the remaining types of *ga*, Continuative *ga* does not deliver any overt lexical meaning. Unlike Conflictive/Contrastive *ga*, it does not connect two clauses for a logical connection between them. At the same time, it is different from the remaining *ga* types in the sense that it does not appear at any specific position in a stream of utterances. In spoken/CMC settings, Continuative *ga* is used to soften the assertive tone of the utterances since the SOV structure of the Japanese language has inherent tendencies toward assertiveness by virtue of the VP at the utterance-final position. In settings where observing group norms will be considered important for legitimate membership, Continuative *ga* would occur frequently as an assertion-softening marker while it would be

suppressed when directing the utterances to individuals perceptually in isolation from a group. In informational writings, Continuative *ga* is subject to suppression due to the prescriptive rule, but it would occasionally “slip out,” thereby sacrificing prescriptive quality in favor of prompt release of information.

Referential *ga*

Referential *ga* indicates topic shift at the end of a paragraph-initial clause. (See Figure 6-1.) From the perspective of discourse functions, Referential *ga* clauses serve the following purposes: 1) To indicate an item-by-item response to complex questions by the addressee(s); and 2) To elaborate on the addresser’s own previous utterances. The frequency of Referential *ga* seems to be determined by the complexity of utterances. The press conferences employ frequent Referential *ga* as indicators of an item-by-item response to complex questions, while its moderately frequent occurrences in *Yahoo! Japan* message boards are a result of the addressers’ elaboration on a given topic. Meanwhile, frequent exchange of short turns would give the discussants an anticipation of future opportunities for elaboration, thereby minimizing the occurrences of Referential *ga* in the TV interviews.

Insertive *ga*

Insertive *ga* distinguishes the press conferences from other spoken/CMC settings in its frequent occurrences. Unlike all other types of *ga* clauses, an

Insertive *ga* clause appears within another clause (see Figure 6-3). Insertive *ga* is used: 1) To make reference to, or assessment of, a statement that is relevant to a given topic; and 2) To provide peripheral information that is relevant to a given stream of utterances. The prime minister uses Insertive *ga* in his long turns partly as a means of justifying his claims by offering supporting marginal details, and partly as a device for assessing the addressees' knowledge of different aspects of a given topic. On the other hand, the Insertive *ga* frequency is low in the TV interviews and message boards for two different reasons. Utterances in the TV interviews do not employ many Insertive *ga* clauses because each speaking turn is too short to include it. The message board includes few Insertive *ga* clauses because this setting, where participants presuppose substantial familiarity with primary and marginal information on the assigned topic, would not necessitate them.

Implicative *ga*

Implicative *ga* reveals a salient characteristic of CMC by virtue of its exclusive occurrences in the message boards. Structurally, Implicative *ga* occurs at the end of a discourse paragraph. Pragmatically, this *ga* serves as topic shift marker. Additionally, this *ga* functions as an implicit approval request for topic change. The anonymity of the participants leads to a sense of equality among them, and consequently CMC resists the establishment of a hierarchy, which would grant social superiors control over topics in group interaction. Furthermore,

CMC entails the absence of a prescribed frame that assigns the control over topics to designated individuals. For these reasons, Implicative *ga* is an appropriate cue for the topic shift request in the message boards, while it does not serve this purpose in the TV interviews or press conferences, where the interviewers are situationally granted control over topics.

This study conducted the variation analysis in an attempt to investigate in detail the characteristics of each of the five *ga* functions that were identified in the pragmatic analysis (see Chapter 3). This variation analysis showed the validity of our five functional categories in the sense that all *ga* occurrences in the variation analysis fell into the categories. Additionally, this variation analysis revealed characteristics of each selected discourse setting. Especially, this study led to reveal the impact of the addressers' sociopolitical roles on the *ga* frequency/distributions in their utterances. Moreover, this study led to the discovery of features of Japanese CMC. At the same time, however, the absence of spontaneous personal conversation and other settings would leave studies of this kind open to possibilities of presently unknown revelations as a result of further investigation. As a conclusion of this study, the next chapter will summarize our findings and discuss their limitations as a basis for suggestions for future studies.

Notes

¹ *Asahi Shimbun* usually publishes two editorial articles per day, while it occasionally releases three.

² Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan bans the use of a military as a means of resolving international conflict (Nippon Steel Human Resources Development, 1997, p. 69).

³ *Ga* occurrences in interviewers' questions are not indicated with arrows since they are not Prime Minister Obuchi's utterances and are therefore excluded from our data.

⁴ Nakane (1970) is frequently cited by many researchers as a classic of sociological studies on Japanese group structure.

⁵ L1 speakers of Japanese commonly use the word *ridāshippu* (a Japanese approximation of the English borrowing) to describe the western notion of leadership.

⁶ Nakane's (1970) notes read, "Since Oishi was an extremely paternalistic leader, he enjoyed such complete devotion from his forty-six retainers that they left their families and set out on a course which would end in the suicidal deed (*harakiri*), in order that they might assist the leader's revenge on his own master. . . Seven Rōnin reveal in extreme form the ideal personal relationship (Always in terms of superior-inferior) in Japanese eyes" (p. 71).

⁷ Japan is a constitutional monarchy, where the head of the national is an emperor, who serves ceremonial functions. Under this type of the government, the prime minister is legally defined as head of the government.

⁸ Keizo Obuchi was born in June 1937 (Khargamvala, 1998). Obuchi was 61 years old when he took office in July 1998, and 62 years old at the time of this study.

⁹ *Gyūho* (cow-walking) is a Japanese form of filibuster. During these years, opposition party members would walk to the ballot as slowly as a cow in an attempt to prevent the passage of controversial bills by the time limit. Unlike U.S.

House members, who now use an electric voting device, Japanese Parliamentary members line up to cast their votes.

¹⁰ The interviewer in the May 7, 1999, TV program was Jiro Arioka, an *Asahi Shimbun* editorial board member.

¹¹ LoCastro (1987) uses the term *aizuchi* almost interchangeably with back-channel cues.

¹² The interviewer in this TV program is Takashi Yamamoto, political analyst for NHK (a.k.a., Japan Broadcasting Corporation).

¹³ Johnson (1995) points out that the primary purpose of the conservative alliance into the LDP was “to prevent the Japanese Communists and Socialists from ever coming to power” (pp. 213-4).

¹⁴ The term snap vote refers to voting on legislation without adequate debate in Parliament. Prominent members of the LDP have frequently negotiated with their opposition counterparts behind the backstage in order to assure passage of key legislation while members of relatively small parties including the JCP would oppose it. Since passage of the bill is virtually guaranteed by the time it is brought to Parliament, the bill would pass without much debate in the chamber.

¹⁵ *Flaming* is a popular term among CMC researchers which refers to making inflammatory remarks toward the addressee(s) in an CMC setting (Kiesler et. al., 1984; Siegel, Dobrovsky, Kiesler & McGuire, 1986; Lea, O’Shea, Fung & Spears, 1992; etc.).

¹⁶ Egalitarianism in CMC is not necessarily viewed positively by all researchers. Several studies on task-oriented CMC found that equal weight on diverse opinions makes a consensus more difficult to reach in CMC than in FTF (for details, see Hiltz, Johnson & Turoff, 1986; George, Easton, Nunamaker & Northcraft, 1990; and Baym, 1995).

VII: CONCLUSION

Although our study primarily aimed to investigate in detail functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*, it has contributed to numerous findings. Our pragmatic analysis of *ga* used in *New Sunday Morning with Hiroshi Sekiguchi* (a two-hour nationally televised live talk show) reorganized the previously identified *ga* functions into five separate categories. Based on the five functional categories identified in the pragmatic analysis, we conducted a variation analysis of *ga* frequency/distributions in five settings including: *Asahi Shimbun* editorials; *Asahi Shimbun* breaking news stories; Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's press conferences; Japan Communist Party chairman Tetsuzo Fuwa's TV interviews; and *Yahoo! Japan* message boards. This analysis suggested the validity of our five functional categories to the extent that all *ga* occurrences in the five selected settings in the variation analysis fell into the following five functional categories: Conflictive/Contrastive (to indicate a contrastive logical relations between two clauses); Referential (to introduce a new discourse topic); Insertive (to provide peripheral information at the middle of an utterance); Implicative (to indicate the

shift of a discourse topic, and to request for approval of topic shift); and Continuative (to soften the assertive tone of an utterance).

One important finding in our analysis was that *ga* is a product of Japanese people's intrinsic tendency to mystify their language. While prescriptivists denounced the conjunctive *ga* as a cause for confusion in writing due to its multiple functionality, *ga* conforms to the L1 speakers' sociocultural norms to avoid straightforward utterances. In this respect, while there is a constant force on L1 speaker/addressers to produce *ga* frequently in order to conform to their norms, newspaper writers make every possible attempt to suppress *ga* in response to the prescriptive force.

Additionally, our study revealed numerous characteristics of the selected discourse settings. Our findings in the written/spoken settings show that the addressees' sociopolitical roles have a considerable impact on their use of *ga*. The newspaper writers suppress the intrinsic force for use of *ga* in favor of the prescriptive norm. Meanwhile, Japanese elected officials' public speech suggests the politicians' roles in their *ga* use. As shown in Chapter 6, the prime minister's frequent use of *ga* suggests his traditional role as consensus builder rather than as leader per se because of his people's long-established sociocultural expectations about the role of a head of a group. On the other hand, the opposition party chairman's infrequent use of *ga* suggests his assertiveness as a political tool to appeal to prospective voters as individuals rather than as groups. In addition to written/spoken settings, our investigation of *Yahoo! Japan* message boards

revealed their participants' formation of an egalitarian virtual community on the World Wide Web in the sense that: 1) Their use of Continuative *ga* as assertion-softening marker and Referential *ga* as topic shift marker suggest the addressers' wish to be desirable members of the virtual community; and 2) Absence of sociocultural information about the participants (especially age) led the addressers to the frequent use of Implicative *ga*, which suggests the addressers' constant assessment of their social status within the virtual community relative to that of the addressees. These findings are especially noteworthy because they provide important preliminary information about post-Windows 95 Japanese CMC, which represents the first truly popular participant form (see Chapter 4).

However, this study has several limitations. First, our variation analysis excludes data from personal interactions due to potential difficulties in gaining the agreement to participate from the prospective respondents and in making adequate comparison of their data with those of the discourse settings that we have selected. Second, while our study has led to meaningful revelations as a result of comparison of data from both extreme ends of the conservative-reformist continuum, it does not include the data from other political parties due to their unavailability at the time of the study. Third, while BBS indeed represents one form of CMC, the absence of data from e-mails, Web pages, and other forms of CMC would limit the applicability of our claims to all forms of CMC.

In light of the findings and limitations of our study that we have discussed, we propose several suggestions from three perspectives for further studies of the

Japanese conjunctive *ga*. First, based on our findings in this study, a study of *ga* in personal interactions is desired. Since it would be difficult to conduct a comparative variation analysis for the reasons mentioned above, it would be realistic to take a different approach to the data, for example, taking into consideration only the occurrences of each *ga* type in proportion to all *ga* occurrences. Second, from the perspective of the impact of one's political role to his/her language use, it is desirable that a future study examine *ga* occurrences in utterances of other prominent elected officials in an attempt to find any consistent pattern between their political platforms and language use. Also, in light of the LDP's brief loss of the prime minister's office to a coalition of opposition parties in 1993-96, comparison of prime minister Obuchi's data with those of former non-LDP prime ministers¹ may reveal aspects of the relationship between their political interests and language use. Third, from the perspective of CMC, it is anticipated that *ga* be explored in several different ways in an attempt to find characteristics of CMC. One possibility is to compare our BBS data with those of personal e-mails and Web sites as a way to find similarities and differences between BBS and e-mail/WWW communities. Another possibility is to explore similarities and differences of BBS communities across languages in an attempt to examine the universality of existing English-based CMC theories.

In conclusion, while this study has revealed structural patterns and discourse functions of the Japanese conjunctive *ga*, exploring *ga* occurrences in a wider variety of discourse settings will deepen our understanding of its functions.

At the same time, this study has presented possibilities for new revelations from CMC and political speeches. Political discourse in Japanese is one field which has been rarely studied for linguistic discoveries. Additionally, there have been few studies to date on non-English CMC that aim to describe linguistic patterns in the setting across languages. In light of predictions that English CMC will become a minority on the Internet in a near future,² the time seems to be ripe for the studies we hereby propose.

Notes

¹ After nearly 40 years of the majority rule, the LDP temporarily relinquished Parliamentary majority and the prime minister's seat to a coalition of opposition parties in July 1993. During the time of opposition rule, Mirohiro Hosokawa (July 1993-April 1994), Tsutomu Hata (May 1994-June 1994), and Tomi'ichi Murayama (June 1994-January 1996) formed the coalition cabinets until Ryutaro Hashimoto brought the prime minister's office back to the LDP in January 1996 (Jain, 1997; Nakano, 1997).

² Vice president Michael Erbschloe of Computer Economics Inc., a California-based research firm, points out that there recently has been a rapid increase in Chinese and Japanese Internet population. This population growth already impels corporate Web sites to provide multiple language choices, which he predicts will become the standard features by 2001. As a result, Erbschloe states, "By 2002, the majority of worldwide Internet users will be non-English-speaking; and three years later, six out of 10 Internet users are expected to speak a language other than English" (Dillon, 1999).

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APPENDIX: References to Language Sources

The following is a list of sources for the language materials used in this study. Newspaper articles are listed in the chronological and then alphabetical order to indicate the dates during which the data were collected. To avoid confusion between citations of research and those of the language materials, this study indicates sources of the language materials with the serial numbers shown below. Unlike many newspaper Web sites, *Asahi Shimbun* (1999) does not archive its articles on the World Wide Web, and therefore the editorials and breaking news stories became unavailable a few days after their release.

Live TV talk shows

Sekiguchi Hiroshi no shin Sandê môningu [New Sunday Morning with Hiroshi Sekiguchi]. (1997, March 23). Tokyo: Tokyo Broadcasting System, Inc.

Sekiguchi Hiroshi no shin Sandê môningu [New Sunday Morning with Hiroshi Sekiguchi]. (1998, June 14). Tokyo: Tokyo Broadcasting System, Inc.

A. *Asahi Shimbun* editorials

Main: *Asahi Shimbun*. (1999). *Asahi newspaper | Morning edition*. Retrieved September 29, 1999, from the World Wide Web:
<http://www.asahi.com/paper/editorial.html>

[A-1] Sanka o motto hiroge tai [Women's participation encouraged]. (1999, August 6) *Asahi shimbun*, 5.

[A-2] Shimatte wa naranu kioku [The past one must not forget]. (1999, August 6). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.

- [A-3] Nobinobi to tanoshiku [Enjoy the game]. (1999, August 7). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-4] Tsugi wa seijika no ban da [It's politicians' turn]. (1999, August 7). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-5] Higata o tori modosô [We must get the tideland back]. (1999, August 9). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-6] Hontô ni shimpai subeki wa [What one should really worry about]. (1999, August 9). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-7] Sentaku no jiyû o ubau mai [Government must not deprive people of freedom to choose]. (1999, August 10). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-8] Shuppatsu-ten ni muri ga aru [Nonaka's ideas don't make sense from the beginning]. (1999, August 10). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-9] Kyôkô saiketsu ga fukameta kenen [Deepened worries over LDP's railroading]. (1999, August 11). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-10] Matamata shushô kôtetsu to wa [Yeltsin did it again]. (1999, August 11). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-11] Dochira no chôryû o erabu ka [Government powerplay or people's freedom]. (1999, August 13). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-12] Hontô no 'kokumin futan' to wa [What 'people's due' really means]. (1999, August 13). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-13] Mazu gakkô kara kaeyô [School ought to change first]. (1999, August 14). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-14] 'Shinkû' no genkai ga mieta [Limitations to 'vacuum packed' Cabinet]. (1999, August 14). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.
- [A-15] Hi-kôkai wa gensoku ni hansuru [Sealing information is against principles]. (1999, August 14). *Asahi shimbun*, 5.

- [A-16] 3-seku shori – Sekinin no shozai o meikaku ni [3rd sector bankruptcy – Clarify where responsibility rests]. (1999, September 25). *Asahi Shimbun*. Retrieved September 25, 1999 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.asahi.com/paper/editorial.html>
- [A-17] Obuchi shin-taisei – Ozawa, Kanzaki ryô-shi wa nyû-kaku o [Obuchi's new Cabinet – Ozawa and Kanzaki ought to be in]. (1999, September 25). *Asahi Shimbun*. Retrieved September 25, 1999 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.asahi.com/paper/editorial.html>
- [A-18] Daiei yûshô – Kazu-kazu no omoi o nosete [Daiei wins league – Fans with past memories]. (1999, September 26). *Asahi Shimbun*. Retrieved September 26, 1999 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.asahi.com/paper/editorial.html>
- [A-19] Hatoyama Minshu-tô – Ji-ji-kô to taiketsu dekiru ka [Hatoyama's Democratic Party – Can it compete with the coalition?]. (1999, September 26). *Asahi Shimbun*. Retrieved September 26, 1999 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.asahi.com/paper/editorial.html>
- [A-20] En-daka to G7 – Daiji na no wa ashi-moto gatame da [Strong yen and G7 – Importance of solid foundation]. (1999, September 27). *Asahi Shimbun*. Retrieved September 27, 1999 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.asahi.com/paper/editorial.html>
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