

Cultivating Empathy:
A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Language Socialization
Through Picture Book Reading Practices

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the role of cultural norms in Japan and the United States in shaping children's linguistic and emotional development. In particular, it examines how parents in these countries use verbal interactions to cultivate empathy in their children. Central to this study are two questions: whether there is a difference in the level of empathy exhibited by American and Japanese parents, and how American and Japanese parents assist their children in acquiring empathy.

Previous research has highlighted cultural distinctions, noting that Japanese parents tend to emphasize affection and interpersonal relationships, while American parents focus on information sharing and fostering independence. These practices are believed to involve scaffolding within the zone of proximal development (ZPD), a concept that describes the support that caregivers provide to help children achieve tasks slightly beyond their current abilities but within their potential. However, the specific influence of scaffolding on emotion socialization across cultures has not been thoroughly examined, marking an underexplored area in cross-cultural studies of language socialization.

To address these research gaps, the study used picture book reading sessions as a standardized data collection method. It comprised two distinct analyses examining how emotion socialization was practiced during these sessions with children aged 0–7. The first analysis examined the interactions of 165 American parents and 105 Japanese parents reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* or its Japanese version, *Harapeko Aomushi*, with their 0–4-year-old children. The results uncovered distinctive patterns of speech: the Japanese parents often employed enactments to foster empathy and social norms, while the American parents typically engaged in question-and-answer sequences to promote their children's self-expression, even when the children were at an early, preverbal stage. These early efforts suggest that the parents were establishing a culturally specific foundation for speech that is crucial for their children's later development. It also suggests that parents scaffold beyond the

ZPD, implying that children may have more potential for development than currently thought.

The second study explored the interactions of 59 American and 112 Japanese parents sharing a wordless picture book, *Found.*, with their 3–7-year-old children. It investigated how these parents used the book as a tool to foster empathy by discussing the characters' emotions. The findings revealed no significant differences between the cultures in terms of the frequency and depth of emotional references made. However, the results uncovered distinct approaches in scaffolding techniques: the Japanese parents were more inclined to use enactments, whereas the American parents leaned toward structured questioning. This insight challenges the traditional view of individualism versus collectivism frameworks, suggesting that parents across both cultures similarly prioritize the development of empathy in their children, albeit through different methods.

The findings from these studies prompted a reevaluation of scaffolding and the ZPD. This dissertation therefore introduces a novel two-tiered scaffolding framework that blends readiness scaffolding with practical scaffolding to address both immediate educational needs and long-term development goals. It also proposes the novel assisted comprehension, reflective application, and creative engagement (ARC) model, which redefines developmental progressions into three distinct zones that reflect unique stages in children's emotional and cognitive development: the zone of assisted comprehension, the zone of reflective comprehension, and the zone of innovative application. Integration of the two-tiered scaffolding framework with the ARC model offers a holistic view of development that more accurately represents children's varied emotional and cognitive growth trajectories.

The conclusions of this research have significant implications for emotion socialization research. The ARC model and the two-tier scaffolding framework are proposed as a comprehensive approach that respects both cultural differences and similarities in parental scaffolding, which will be useful for contemporary research in language socialization.

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List of Abbreviations

ACC	accusative case marker
ARC	assisted comprehension, reflective application, and creative engagement
COP	copula
EMPH	emphatic particle
EXTEND	extended form
GEN	genitive case marker
INF	infinitive
NOM	nominative case marker
PAST	past tense
PROG	progressive
Q	question marker
QUOT	quotation
TE	<i>te</i> -form
TOP	topic marker
ZAC	zone of assisted comprehension
ZAD	zone of actual development
ZIA	zone of innovative application
ZND	zone of next development
ZPD	zone of proximal development
ZRA	zone of reflective application

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Everyone experiences emotions, yet the timeline of their acquisition remains elusive. While many parents eagerly document milestones such as a baby's first steps, first words, and first day of school, the onset of emotional responses such as the first display of anger or empathy often escapes our notice. Emotions are undeniably central to our existence, shaping our identity, our relationships, and our overall well-being. Nevertheless, the process through which we develop emotions is largely taken for granted, assumed to be gradual, and without distinct markers.

However, contrary to popular belief, emotions are not completely inherent. Social emotions, such as empathy, are developed through interactions within society, primarily with parents. From birth, infants are highly attuned to their own emotions and those of people around them. Remarkably, infants have been observed to express, within their first week, distress and crying in reaction to the sound of another infant crying, yet they do not respond in the same way to a computer-generated sound of similar intensity (Martin & Clark, 1982; Sagi & Hoffman, 1976; Simner, 1971). This sensitivity aligns with the ethological theory of child development, suggesting that infants are predisposed to react to social and emotional cues from caregivers, as these reactions are believed to enhance survival (Hinde, 1974). For instance, children have been shown to withdraw from unfamiliar toys when their mothers exhibit fear rather than happiness (Gunnar & Stone, 1984; Sorce et al., 1985). Therefore, it is clear that, even in infancy, there is a profound responsiveness to the socioemotional signals of others, which plays a crucial role in infants' interactions and development within their social environment.

Given that emotions are socially constructed, it stands to reason that cultural contexts play a significant role in their acquisition. As highlighted by Erin Meyer (2014) in her seminal work, *The Culture Map: Breaking Through the Invisible*

Boundaries of Global Business, the manner in which emotions are expressed, suppressed, and managed differs across cultures, leading to challenges in international business interactions. Given the vast cultural variances that are profound enough to have catapulted *The Culture Map* to global bestseller status, with translations into Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Indonesian, Turkish, Russian, Dutch, Spanish, German, French, and Italian, it is reasonable to assume that the development and expression of emotions are profoundly influenced by cultural norms from a very young age.

The influence of cultural factors on children's emotional development is well-documented. Japanese socialization practices have been said to prioritize affection, interpersonal relationships, and group harmony (Crane & Fernald, 2016; Hess et al., 1980; Ishizaki, 1996; Lebra & Lebra, 1986; Markus & Kitayama, 1991), reflected in communication methods that value indirectness and empathy (Karasawa et al., 2006; Clancy, 1986). By contrast, American socialization tends to emphasize independence, self-reliance, and straightforward communication. American parents are more inclined than Japanese parents to use language as a tool for conveying information and fostering problem-solving skills (Fernald & Morikawa, 1993; LeMaster, 2020).

At the same time, the widespread acceptance of the dichotomy between collectivist and individualistic cultures, prevalent both in academic discussions and everyday societal discourse, often goes unquestioned. However, in today's highly globalized context, it is crucial to reevaluate this dichotomy to examine whether these cultural patterns still hold and, if so, to what extent. Friedlmeier and Corapci (2011) have argued that this dichotomy should be seen as complementary rather than mutually exclusive, suggesting that both orientations can coexist to varying degrees.

Moreover, there is a notable gap in research regarding how empathy—a profoundly social emotion—is socialized through language, with even fewer studies conducting comparative analysis. This shortfall is likely due to multiple challenges. First, conducting quantitative research on children, particularly in Japan, is difficult, as many Japanese parents are hesitant to provide video recordings of their children.

Second, conducting comparative research requires researchers to have a deep linguistic and cultural understanding of both languages and cultures involved to accurately analyze the data. Lastly, linguistic studies on emotions are a relatively recent development. Although Roman Jakobson's communication model (Jakobson, 1961), introduced in the 1960s, underscored the emotive or expressive function of language, it was not until the late 1980s and 1990s that research into the linguistic representation of emotions gained significant traction. Thus, it has been less than four decades since anthropological linguists such as Catherine Lutz and Geoffrey White began to investigate how emotions are culturally constructed and conveyed through language across different societies (Lutz & White, 1986).

1.2 Objective and Scope of This Study

Building on the background discussed above, this dissertation aims to elucidate how cultural norms in Japan and the United States influence the socialization of language and empathy in children. Specifically, it addresses two main questions: Do American parents or Japanese parents exhibit greater empathy? And how do American and Japanese parents impart empathy to their children?

This study, while acknowledging the value of a broader cultural and emotional spectrum, specifically contrasts these two nations for pertinent reasons. First, the contrasting communicative practices, cultural values, socioeconomic status, and educational philosophies between Japan and the US make them an ideal pair for comparative research (Murase et al., 2016). Azuma (1994) has suggested that many Americans adhere to the instruction model, emphasizing direct communication and the intentional imparting of information by socializing agents such as parents, caregivers, and teachers, to which children listen and respond. Conversely, in Japan, the prevalent osmosis model fosters an empathetic and interdependent relationship between socializing agents and children. This stark contrast renders Japan and the US particularly suitable for comparative analysis. Second, the choice of these countries is

also driven by practical considerations, as the researcher has extensive familiarity with both. Being a native of Japan with Japanese parents, and having spent a significant part of early childhood in the US, the author has firsthand experience of child-rearing practices in both cultures, as well as a network for data collection. While it is important to approach data analysis without bias, the alignment of personal experiences with the studied cultures has been beneficial throughout the research process.

This dissertation integrates the theoretical frameworks of language socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1986) with a focus on emotion socialization, together with Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and the scaffolding method introduced by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976). Language socialization, rooted in linguistic anthropology, examines how individuals acquire language and cultural norms through interactions within their communities, emphasizing the transmission of cultural values and practices. At the same time, ZPD is a foundational psychological theory that focuses on the potential for cognitive development when a learner is supported by more knowledgeable others, through a process known as scaffolding. Despite their distinct origins, language socialization, emotion socialization, the ZPD, and scaffolding share a fundamental emphasis on the social aspect of learning. This viewpoint underscores the importance of support, guidance, and the cultural backdrop in nurturing linguistic, cognitive, and social abilities. This study integrates these theories, utilizing the methodological rigor of language socialization through conversation analysis and discourse analysis, alongside the broad thematic structures provided by ZPD and scaffolding.

This study is motivated by the need to expand the empirical base concerning emotion socialization in American and Japanese households. It aims to provide a comprehensive lens through which to analyze the socialization processes employed by American and Japanese parents. It contributes to theoretical advancement by introducing the concept of two-tier scaffolding, which distinguishes between

strategies that prepare children for upcoming developmental tasks and those that support immediate learning experiences. Furthermore, this study offers a reconceptualized tripartite model of the ZPD termed the assisted comprehension, reflective application, and creative engagement model (the ARC model), providing a more precise representation of emotional and cognitive development, extending beyond mere task-oriented learning.

The scope of this study, as previously mentioned, is limited to Japan and the United States, with a clear focus on how cultural and linguistic practices within these countries shape parental behaviors. Eligibility for participation was based on self-identification as either Japanese or US American, along with fluency in the dominant language of the respective country, either Japanese or American English. While factors such as citizenship, place of birth, and generational status were initially considered as part of the inclusion criteria, they were ultimately disregarded. This decision was made on the understanding that such criteria do not necessarily correlate with an individual's immersion in the cultural norms and language practices inherent to the respective cultures. Therefore, recruitment was based on participants' self-identification, with subsequent disqualification based on a post-participation demographics questionnaire if participants had not spent the majority of their lives in the identified country. Data collection spanned from March 2019 to February 2024.

Building on this foundation, the research focuses on the specific practices of parent-child and parental solo picture book reading in the two countries. Numerous studies highlight the strong encouragement by caregivers in both Japan and the United States for children to participate in shared book reading activities (Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute, 2019; Hindman et al., 2013; Child Trends, 2013). Shared book reading is more than a literacy exercise; it is a dynamic interactive environment. Through the shared attention to text and illustrations, children and parents engage in a rich dialogic exchange. This exchange fosters language development, from vocabulary expansion to complex grammatical structures

(Blewitt et al., 2009; Britto & Brooks-Gunn, 2001; Bus et al., 1995; Duursma et al., 2008; Hindman et al., 2013; Noble et al., 2018; Ninio, 1983; Payne et al., 1994; Snow & Goldfield, 1983). Moreover, picture books introduce children to diverse perspectives and emotional experiences, offering them the opportunity to empathize with others (Aram & Aviram, 2009). Research shows that reading activates areas of the brain associated with empathy, similar to real-world experiences (Richardson et al., 2018). The narrative discussions, facilitated by parental guidance, allow children to delve into understanding emotions, motives, and consequences, fostering their empathetic understanding and emotional intelligence.

Methodologically, the structured nature of book reading establishes a consistent framework that supports exploration and discussion. This consistency enables standardized comparisons while preserving the authentic flow of interactions between parents and children. It provides a valuable, controlled, yet inherently engaging context for investigating the development of empathy. Although the study's focus on book reading, rather than everyday conversations, may present limitations, the decision to concentrate on this setting was made based on the judgement that the benefits of a controlled environment would compensate for these constraints.

This dissertation primarily investigates the verbal interactions between parents and their children, focusing on spoken input and responses. While recognizing that multimodal expressions – such as participants' positioning during reading sessions, vocal tone, pitch, intonation, gestures, and facial expressions – play a significant role in conveying emotional states and are integral to the book-reading experience (Beauvoir-Hourdel, 2020), these aspects are not explored in the current study. Instead, the research prioritizes a thorough and detailed analysis of spoken utterances. Furthermore, the emphasis of this study leans more towards the analysis of parental speech rather than children's responses, with a specific interest in exploring variations in parental scaffolding techniques between Japan and the USA. This study's focused scope limits observations to language phenomena within a specific context and target.

Yet, it is argued that these constraints are not challenges but rather provide a rich foundation for impartial analysis of picture book reading practices among American and Japanese parents. Such a targeted framework facilitates a concentrated exploration, potentially offering valuable perspectives for the cross-cultural analysis of parental scaffolding.

1.3 Organization of This Dissertation

The remainder of this dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical frameworks that anchor the research. It begins with an overview of language socialization (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986a, 1986b), positioning it as a pivotal intersection of linguistics and anthropology that sheds light on how individuals, especially children, navigate and internalize the complexities of language use within varied social contexts. This examination extends to understanding the acquisition of cultural norms and knowledge through language, emphasizing the role of interaction in shaping linguistic competencies.

Next, the topic of emotion and empathy socialization (Eisenberg et al., 1998) are introduced, discussing how cultural values and societal norms shape individuals' comprehension, expression, and regulation of emotions from an early age. The thesis places a particular emphasis on the development and scaffolding of empathy—an affective stance that stems from the understanding and sharing of another's emotional experiences (Eisenberg, 2002; Decety & Jackson, 2004). This section underlines the pivotal role that family and social interactions play in cultivating emotional intelligence and empathetic abilities, highlighting the importance of these dynamics within the larger context of socialization.

Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development and Wood, Bruner, and Ross's (1976) concept of scaffolding are then elucidated. The dissertation explicates the application of these theories to language and child development, demonstrating the critical role of engagement with more knowledgeable individuals in

supporting learning and development. The comprehensive treatment of these theoretical perspectives establishes a multidisciplinary lens through which the subsequent empirical studies are viewed.

Chapter 3 examines the variances in language socialization practices within American and Japanese contexts, offering a detailed examination of literature that highlights the distinct socialization goals prevalent in these cultures. Additionally, the chapter discusses the pivotal role of shared book reading in nurturing language and emotional intelligence in both American and Japanese cultures. It demonstrates how this activity supports the development of children's linguistic and social skills (DeBaryshe, 1993; Lever & Sénéchal, 2011; Aram & Aviram, 2009), reflecting the broader cultural differences in communication styles and priorities as previously described (DeLoache & DeMendoza, 1987; Kang et al., 2009; Murase et al., 2005; Murase, 2014).

This chapter also identifies three significant gaps in the existing body of research. First, it points to the over-reliance on case studies, which may limit the generalizability of findings. Second, it questions the assumption that immediate development follows caregiver scaffolding within the ZPD, suggesting a need to consider the long-term effects of socialization practices. Lastly, it notes the scarcity of research on emotion socialization studies, particularly from a cross-cultural perspective, advocating for more comprehensive investigations.

Chapters 4 and 5 comprise the core empirical sections of the dissertation, detailing two studies that investigate the role of shared book reading in scaffolding children's emotional development in American and Japanese families. Chapter 4 focuses on the ways parents use *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969) or its Japanese version, *Harapeko Aomushi* (Carle, 1976), as a tool to build emotional readiness, revealing culturally specific strategies that reflect broader communicative and pedagogical values. Chapter 5 extends this exploration to the reading of *Found*. (Newman & Day, 2018), a wordless picture book, to explore how parents encourage

empathy development in children aged 3 to 7. This study contrasts the expected cultural predispositions towards empathy and individualism, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess how emotions are discussed and scaffolded during reading sessions. These chapters offer a comparative viewpoint, highlighting the multifaceted ways in which cultural contexts shape parental approaches to nurturing empathy and self-expression. The findings underscore the complexity of emotional socialization, revealing both cultural specificities and universal aims in fostering empathetic understanding through picture book reading.

Chapter 6 synthesizes the findings in Chapters 4 and 5 with the theoretical discussions introduced earlier, presenting the concept of two-tier scaffolding. This concept differentiates between strategies that prepare children for upcoming developmental tasks and those that support immediate learning experiences. This distinction underscores the adaptive nature of parental scaffolding, tailored to meet both their children's long-term and short-term developmental needs. Furthermore, this chapter proposes the ARC model, a novel reinterpretation of Vygotsky's ZPD, to also encompass emotional and cognitive development.

This innovative model outlines three distinct developmental zones: (1) the zone of assisted comprehension (ZAC) for foundational learning, (2) the zone of reflective application (ZRA) for applying and reflecting on knowledge, and (3) the zone of innovative application for autonomous innovation. This revamped perspective on Vygotsky's ZPD suggests a more comprehensive understanding of the transition from supervised learning to self-directed application, highlighting the scaffolded nature of development with stages that are flexible and non-linear. Through the framework of two-tier scaffolding and the ARC model, the chapter questions the traditional dichotomy of individualism versus collectivism, revealing a complex interaction between culture, parental practices, and child development.

The final chapter summarizes the research outcomes and their broader implications, addressing the methodological aspects and constraints faced during the

study. It also outlines potential avenues for future research in this domain, aiming to build upon the insights and understandings garnered from the current work.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Language Socialization

2.1.1. Development of the Field

Language socialization is a multidisciplinary field that emerged as a distinct subfield of interactional linguistics (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2001, 2018) in the mid-1980s, aiming to bridge the gap in research on communication among children and adults, as well as among children themselves, within various social settings. Bambi Schieffelin and Elinor Ochs, who were at the forefront of this field, conceptualized language socialization as “socialization through the use of language and socialization to use language” (1986b, p.163). This concept is integral to the broader objectives of interactional linguistics, which seek to decipher the mutual influence of language and interaction (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2018). Recognized as an ongoing process that commences with prenatal social interactions, language socialization underscores the role of communicative interactions in shaping and reshaping individuals and their cultural contexts throughout their lives (Duranti et al., 2012; McDermott et al., 1978).

Prior to the emergence of language socialization, the role of young children in anthropological and ethnographic research was frequently underestimated (Goodwin, 1997). The majority of studies on child discourse were primarily aimed at assessing children’s linguistic abilities from a psycholinguistic standpoint, a focus often regarded as marginal within the fields of anthropology and linguistics (Ochs, 2002). However, by the mid-1980s, the scope of conversation analysis had broadened to encompass the social and communicative competencies of children (Cook-Gumperz & Kyratzis, 2001). This pivotal change acknowledged children as active contributors within the dynamic of the parent–child relationship, mutually influencing and being influenced by the ongoing process of language socialization (Goodwin & Kyratzis, 2011).

In 1978, Ochs and Schieffelin introduced developmental pragmatics as a subfield, integrating anthropological, sociological, psychological, and linguistic perspectives to illuminate “how young children, over developmental time, produced and interpreted language in context” (Ochs, 2002, p. 105). The emergence of developmental pragmatics marked a significant advance in the investigation of children’s communicative practices within social settings, also unveiling a prevalent Western bias in the understanding of children’s communication. Such bias often led to overgeneralizations that did not hold true across non-Western cultures. For example, Ochs’s studies in Samoa highlighted that individuals of varying social ranks regularly participated in group conversations, with children actively involved from a young age. Additionally, it was common for children as young as to take on caregiving roles for their younger siblings. These distinct social environments profoundly shaped the manner and content of children’s communication (Ochs, 2009).

Contrasting with the Western convention of parents as the main caregivers engaging frequently with their children, many non-Western societies exhibit a different caregiving structure, where children are often looked after by other children or by collective groups of adults instead of primarily by mother-child and father-child dyads. In such environments, particularly where children are considered to have lower social status, it is not uncommon for communication to flow predominantly from caregivers to children in a one-way manner (Kyratzis & Cook-Gumperz, 2015). Research indicates that in 80 out of 165 traditional societies studied, the primary caregivers of young children were other children, not adults (Ervin-Tripp & Strage, 1985). In the majority of the remaining societies, child care responsibilities were assumed by groups of adults, diverging from the mother-child and father-child dyads prevalent in Western contexts.

Language socialization, recognizing the significance of these varied social structures, has emerged as a subfield that intersects anthropology, sociology, psychology, and linguistics (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986a). Its primary aim is to explore

how novices learn the knowledge and language necessary to navigate society effectively through interactions with more experienced individuals. Unlike language acquisition research, which focuses on understanding linguistic competence at various stages of development, language socialization research emphasizes the process by which individuals integrate into social groups, highlighting the pivotal role of language in this assimilation (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986a). These two research domains provide complementary perspectives on child development and language learning, each contributing unique insights from their respective angles.

Aligned closely with the principles of language socialization research is the usage-based theory of language acquisition. This theory argues that language learning is fundamentally driven by exposure to and engagement with language in everyday contexts, particularly for infants. It underscores the significance of practical language usage in the learning process, challenging the notion of innate or abstract linguistic knowledge (cf. Tomasello, 2003). Both the usage-based theory and the theory of language socialization emphasize the importance of cultural learning and adopt an ethnomethodological perspective, focusing on the analysis of talk-in-interaction.

However, these approaches diverge in their analytical focus. The usage-based theory explains how individuals *derive* the rules of language use from contextual interactions, whereas the theory of language socialization investigates how the context of language use itself *structures* these rules (Sterponi & Lai, 2015). Moreover, the usage-based model considers specific interactional events as activity formats that provide a functional basis for linguistic behaviors by children and their interlocutors. By contrast, the theory of language socialization examines the social organization of communicative events, highlighting the ideological frameworks that determine children's role within these events and the types of behaviors they are exposed to and encouraged to adopt (Sterponi & Lai, 2015).

2.1.2. Overview of the Principles

Genuine language socialization research often takes a longitudinal, ethnographic, and cross-cultural approach (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002). As Kulick and Schieffelin (2005) have stressed –

Language socialization studies should fulfill three criteria. They should be ethnographic in design, longitudinal in perspective, and they should demonstrate the acquisition (or not) of particular linguistic and cultural practices over time and across contexts. These criteria are important to bear in mind when considering whether or not a particular perspective is a language socialization perspective, or if it is a study of language and social interaction. (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2005, p. 350)

However, meeting all three criteria within a single study poses a significant challenge. Additionally, despite the original goals set by the founders of language socialization theory, it might not be necessary to fulfill all these criteria strictly. The requirement for ethnographic depth can complicate the quantification and systematic comparison of languages due to the reliance on extensive data collections, which may result in the field being characterized by individual case studies (Brown & Gaskins, 2014). Utilizing quantified data can mitigate the risk of making over-generalizations from singular instances. Therefore, it is crucial to adhere to the theoretical and methodological foundations of authentic language socialization research, while also adopting a flexible approach to its boundaries. This flexibility can prevent potential pitfalls and encourage the development of innovative methodologies that contribute to the advancement of language socialization studies.

Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen (2003) developed a framework to categorize research within the realm of language socialization, distinguishing it as a topic, approach, method, and intervention. When considered as a *topic*, language socialization research encompasses studies that explore aspects of the language socialization process without necessarily employing a language socialization

methodology. As an *approach*, it includes studies that consider the social environment but might not incorporate a longitudinal design. Viewed as a *method*, language socialization demands adherence to longitudinal ethnographic research principles. As an *intervention*, it aims to confront and challenge existing restrictive practices by questioning the “common sense” that legitimizes such practices.

Within the diverse scope of language socialization research, two core elements consistently emerge. First, the field acknowledges children as active agents in their own development and in constructing conversations with their peers and caregivers (Kyratzis & Cook-Gumperz, 2015). Echoing this perspective, Ochs and Schieffelin (2008) highlighted that “language socialization is inherently bidirectional, despite the apparent asymmetries in power and knowledge” (p. 6). For instance, a study by Pontecorvo et al. (2001) on Italian parent–child dinner conversations illustrated how a child’s inquiry, such as “why?”, invites the parent to provide explanations from a knowledgeable standpoint, thereby scaffolding the parent’s role as an authority figure. This dynamic underscores the interdependent nature of the parent–child relationship, where both parties produce utterances that align with their respective roles as experts and novices.

Not only is language socialization inherently bidirectional but also, interestingly, it sometimes displays a reversal of traditional roles, where the younger individuals act as experts, and the older individuals as novices. This phenomenon is highlighted in *The Handbook of Language Socialization* (2012) by Ochs and Schieffelin, who note that rapid technological advancements and evolving perspectives often render the older generation’s knowledge and methodologies less relevant. They highlight that it is not uncommon for older individuals to learn from the younger generation in various socialization contexts (Duranti et al., 2012, p. 4).

A notable instance of this reversal is observed in bilingual children from immigrant families, who may be more adept in the dominant language and culture of their new country compared to their parents, who might only speak a minority

language. In such cases, these children frequently take on the role of language brokers. They assist in translating and navigating cultural and linguistic barriers for their parents, significantly impacting the family's integration into the dominant language and cultural milieu (Antonini, 2016).

Second, language socialization research, while deeply rooted in the methods and insights of conversation analysis, diligently bridges these conversational interactions to broader regional and global contexts (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2005). Kulick and Schieffelin go as far as to say that any socialization study overlooking the crucial role of language in cultural practice acquisition is fundamentally lacking, emphasizing the indispensability of documenting language's function in this process.

Cultural practices highlighted in language socialization can be categorized as either explicit or implicit. Explicit socialization into language usage involves direct instruction on culturally appropriate language, such as teaching children to use polite forms such as "please" or to show respect towards elders and those of higher social status (Cook, 1996). Implicit socialization, on the other hand, occurs through the transmission of sociocultural norms via linguistic structures and discourse patterns, often without direct instruction. This can include nonverbal cues from caregivers, such as head nods or sighs, in response to a child's socially inappropriate comments. These interactions may pass unnoticed by caregivers as instances of socialization, yet they play a crucial role in imparting sociocultural norms. Through everyday conversations, a vast array of sociocultural information is subtly conveyed to children, shaping their speech and, ultimately, the social norms they will pass on to succeeding generations (Cook, 1996).

2.2. Emotions, Empathy and Emotion Socialization

2.2.1 Emotions

The definition of "emotion" has been a subject of long-standing debate among researchers from various academic fields. In the context of language and culture, one

definition describes emotions as “internal states with both a cognitive dimension (as opposed to sensations like hunger or cold) and a subjective appraisal dimension (distinguishing them from purely intellectual evaluations such as belief or agreement)” (Ponsonnet, 2022, p. 2). However, as Thoits (1989) elaborated in her influential research on the sociology of emotions, there are differing viewpoints:

Social construction theorists (Averill, 1980; Gordon, 1989b; Harré, 1986) as well as symbolic interactionists (Hochschild, 1979, 1983; Shott, 1979), propose that emotions are largely shaped by the interpretation of situations, the vocabulary used to describe emotions, and the beliefs about emotions, which all vary according to time and location. On the other hand, positivists (Kemper, 1978; Scheff, 1979) argue that emotions are consistent, automatic, and patterned reactions to specific types of social stimuli. Similar debates have taken place in the fields of anthropology (e.g., Levy, 1973; Lutz, 1982; Lutz & White, 1986) and psychology (e.g., Zajonc 1980, 1984; Lazarus, 1982, 1984); all these debates arise from disagreements regarding the specificity of the links among emotional components—situational stimuli, physiological changes, and expressive behaviors.

In addition to the definition of emotions, whether such a thing as basic emotions exists has also been a central debate. Paul Eckman (1992) identified seven basic emotions that he argued were universal: anger, contempt, disgust, enjoyment, fear, sadness, and surprise. He has maintained that these emotions are innate, universal, and accompanied by facial expressions. On the other end of the spectrum are social emotions, such as empathy, sympathy, gratitude, jealousy, envy, shame, guilt, pride, embarrassment, and admiration. Basic emotions only require the awareness of one’s own physical state (Thoits, 1989), while social emotions are responses to social situations and interactions with others. Generally, the acquisition of basic emotions precedes the acquisition of social emotions, which are often more complex.

The existence of these basic emotions has been a long-debated topic centered around whether emotions are universal or inherently cultural (Lutz & Abu-Lughod, 1990). This is due to the dilemma that facial expressions, speech, intonation, and other observable factors do not always reflect what a person is truly feeling. While some emotions may be innate, the directly observable emotional expressions are often more of a social display than a window on the emotions being experienced. Some studies completely deny the existence of universal basic emotions (Armon-Jones, 1985; Ortony & Turner, 1990), while other studies suggest there may be more basic emotions, perhaps up to 27 (Cowen & Keltner, 2021).

Ethnomethodological research and language socialization studies argue that emotions are fundamentally cultural, maintaining that “emotional expressions and emotional experiences build sociality, and social activities construct emotions” (Takada, 2019, p. 13). In anthropology and psychology, some scholars have distinguished emotions from feelings, affects, moods, and sentiments (cf. Thoits, 1989), while language socialization refers to these concepts comprehensively as *affective stance* and considers linguistically indexed affect to be a fundamental aspect of communicative competence (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2005; Burdelski, 2020). This thesis adopts a language socialization perspective to examine parent–child interactions, aligning with the aforementioned views that emotions represent an affective stance. Consistent with earlier research in language socialization, it assumes the position that emotions are both shaped by and instrumental in shaping social activities.

2.2.2 Empathy

2.2.2.1 Definition of Empathy

Empathy is recognized as a complex social emotion, characterized by the ability to understand and share the emotions and feelings of others. Distinct from other social emotions, empathy primarily involves the engagement in another’s

emotional state. Two of the most commonly adopted definitions of empathy are: (1) “an affective response that stems from the apprehension or comprehension of another’s internal state or condition, and that is similar to what the other person is feeling or would be expected to feel” (Eisenburg, 2002, p. 135); and (2) “a sense of similarity between the feelings one experiences and those expressed by others” (Decety & Jackson, 2004, p. 71). Both definitions consider empathy to be transactional in nature and context dependent. However, Eisenburg’s definition focuses on the cognitive aspect of understanding how others feel, while Decety and Jackson emphasize the emotional resonance with others.

As these two definitions indicate, the concept of empathy is traditionally categorized into two primary forms, cognitive empathy and emotional empathy, sometimes also known as affective empathy. Cognitive empathy, or perspective-taking, is the intellectual capacity to recognize, comprehend, and resonate with another person’s thoughts, feelings, and circumstances from their standpoint, rather than from one’s own. This facet of empathy involves an awareness of another’s emotional state without the requirement of experiencing those emotions oneself. It plays a pivotal role in facilitating effective communication and can be instrumental in resolving conflicts, as it fosters understanding without the necessity of emotional engulfment.

By contrast, emotional empathy, or affective empathy, involves the ability to vicariously share and personally experience the emotions of another person as though they are one’s own. This empathic response allows individuals not only to understand but also to emotionally participate in another’s feelings, engendering a deeper level of compassion and support. Emotional empathy can cultivate interpersonal connections and mutual understanding.

Both cognitive and emotional empathy are foundational to forming meaningful, empathetic relationships and adeptly managing social interactions. Cognitive empathy offers the advantage of comprehension and perspective-taking

without the obligation of emotional involvement, making it especially valuable in professional settings or specific social contexts. Conversely, emotional empathy promotes a deeper emotional bond and support, enhancing closeness and compassion in personal connections.

Both cognitive and emotional empathy are often seen as distinct constructs in neuroscience, supported by functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) studies and research on individuals with autism, highlighting anatomical and functional differences (Shamay-Tsoory et al., 2009; Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004). Yet, in psychology and social sciences, the boundary between cognitive and emotional empathy is more contentious. The debate centers around the concern that focusing exclusively on the cognitive aspects of empathy may neglect its emotional components, and vice versa; limiting empathy's definition to emotional resonance overlooks the role of cognitive perspective-taking (Davis, 2018). This dissertation, aiming to explore how parents foster empathy in children – both in understanding and vicariously experiencing others' emotions – adopts an integrated approach. It defines empathy as an affective stance stemming from both the comprehension and sharing of another's emotional state.¹

2.2.2.2 Development of Empathy

The developmental trajectory of empathy begins in infancy, underpinning the notion that empathy, as a complex social emotion, necessitates significant cognitive development and thus must be acquired over time. Goetz, Keltner, and Simon-Thomas (2010) define empathy as *a social skill* related to being able to understand

¹ It may be useful to distinguish empathy from sympathy. Sympathy involves feelings of compassion or concern, whereas empathy extends to understanding and connecting with another's emotional state. While empathy can lead to sympathetic responses, it encompasses a broader range of reactions, including subconscious emotional mirroring and conscious cognitive processing. Sympathy often follows from empathic engagement but can also arise independently of it, triggered by emotions other than empathy (Eisenburg & Strayer, 1987).

others' experiences and being able to feel what another person is feeling, highlighting its foundational role in social interactions.

From the earliest stages of life, children exhibit preliminary forms of empathy. Hoffman (2000) details that infants demonstrate discomfort and cry in response to the cries of another baby within the first week of life, a reaction not observed when exposed to a computer-generated sound of the same intensity (Martin & Clark, 1982; Sagi & Hoffman, 1976; Simner, 1971). By the age of 9 months, infants reach a critical developmental milestone referred to as the *9-month revolution* (Tomasello, 2009, 2019), during which they begin to differentiate between others' facial expressions, show a preference for familiar faces, develop joint attention, and engage in proto-conversations with their caregivers. Hoffman describes this phase as the *global empathy stage*, where children respond empathetically yet cannot distinguish their emotions from those of others.

As children approach the age of two, their ability to differentiate their emotional responses from those of others matures. They start to identify basic facial expressions and use emotional vocabulary such as *happy*, *sad*, and *angry* to articulate these emotions. Bretherton et al. (1981) observed, through ethnographic fieldwork, that children as young as 25 months exhibit an awareness of differing psychological states, asking questions such as, "Mommy, is Tara mad at me?" (p. 356), indicating an understanding that their emotional state can differ from that of others. Additionally, children at this age respond physically to the socioemotional cues of others, such as hesitating to approach new toys if their mothers express fear (Gunnar & Stone, 1984). Despite their growing responsiveness to others' emotions, their attempts to offer support may be egocentric, exemplified by a child offering their favorite toy to soothe another child, regardless of the latter's interest in that toy. This behavior characterizes what Hoffman (2000) calls the *egocentric empathy stage*.

Supporting Hoffman's observations, various studies from the psychological and linguistic fields show that by 24 months, children start to verbally express their

own feelings, albeit still focused on their immediate desires (Brown & Dunn, 1991). The most common affect words used by American children at this age include *cry*, *hurt*, *happy*, and *sad* (Bretherton & Beeghly, 1982; Clancy, 1999; Wellman et al., 1995). By 36 months, children exhibit a broader interest in others' feelings, referring to others' desires and past events to contextualize their own emotions in relation to those of others (Brown & Dunn, 1991).

Between the ages of 3 and 4, children make significant strides in their ability to empathize with others, moving beyond the egocentric stage. They begin to understand that other people's perspectives can differ from their own, which enables them to empathize with individuals not physically present and even with characters from stories. By the age of 6, they start learning the norms of emotional expression, sometimes exaggerating or suppressing their facial emotions (Ekman & Oster, 1979). By the age of 7, children are capable of recognizing complex emotions such as surprise and disgust, with their empathetic responses becoming increasingly nuanced and context-dependent, as opposed to relying solely on facial cues (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). As children age, their empathetic reactions to others in picture or story contexts grow until they reach mid-elementary school, at which point these responses tend to stabilize. This progression continues until empathy fully matures between the ages of 13 and 15 (Goleman, 2006), marking the culmination of empathy development that begins with rudimentary empathetic responses in infancy and evolves into a sophisticated social skill in adolescence.

2.2.3 Emotion Socialization

Emotion socialization, a sub-field of language socialization, focuses on how emotional competence is expressed and acquired in a given community (Cole & Tan, 2007). Emotional competence refers to the ability to appropriately utilize emotions in one's cognitive processes and social interactions, as well as to express and understand one's own and others' emotions. From the perspective of emotion socialization,

affective stance and emotional competence are viewed as acquired skills rather than innate qualities.

Early childhood is a critical period during which children learn to express and control their emotions, with parents playing a fundamental role (Mirabile et al., 2018). In a study examining how infants' facial expressions changed between 3 and 6 months, it was discovered that the infants' expressiveness increased in accordance with demands from their families, cultures, and gender (Malatesta & Haviland, 1982). Ochs (1982) also discovered that young children in West Samoa learn high-affect forms at the one-word stage before using more neutral forms, such as first-person pronouns that arouse sympathy. The early development of this sensitivity to culturally accepted displays of emotional stances is a significant outcome of the socialization provided by caregivers in the community.

Eisenberg et al. (1998) identified three ways in which parents may emotionally socialize their children: through parent–child discussions of emotion, parental reactions to children's negative emotions, and parents' own emotional expressions. While such parental emotion socialization attempts may not always be successful, as they can be contested or ignored by the child (Burdelski, 2020), parents have a significant influence on how children perceive and express emotions in accordance with their community's expectations. Although only a limited number of cross-cultural studies have been conducted on children's emotion recognition (Chronaki et al., 2018), multiple research efforts have highlighted differences in the ways children from various cultures interpret situations. For instance, in a laboratory experiment involving a disappointing gift, American preschoolers exhibited negative facial expressions for a longer duration than their Chinese peers (Ip et al., 2021). Similarly, Ma et al. (2018) discovered that Japanese children are less prone to savor positive emotions compared to European Americans.

These findings underscore the impact of culture on perception, indicating that different countries have diverse values concerning how situations are interpreted and

the associated emotional responses. Such evidence suggests that cultural influences can shape perceptions from a young age, leading to varied interpretations of identical situations. Nevertheless, the process and timing through which children acquire these emotional and situational understandings could differ, suggesting that cultural distinctions in perception may not always continue into adulthood.

2.3 The Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding

2.3.1 The Zone of Proximal Development

The zone of proximal development (hereafter referred to as ZPD) was introduced by Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist born in 1896. As Vygotsky died due to a relapse of tuberculosis in 1934 at the age of 37, his profound insights into children's psychological development initially went unrecognized and were largely unpublished during his lifetime and virtually unknown internationally (Rieber & Robinson, 2013). In one of Vygotsky's last private notebook entries, he writes: "this is the final thing I have done in psychology – and I will like Moses die at the summit, having glimpsed the promised land but without setting foot on it. Farewell, dear creations. The rest is silence" (Zavershneva, 2018, p. xxi). Indeed, his works have remained "silent," receiving little attention, with his international reputation for groundbreaking work on children's psychological development blossoming only decades after his death, propelled by English translations.

One of his major contributions was the idea of the ZPD, which is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978, p. 86). Put differently, it can be defined as "what the child is able to do in collaboration today he will be able to do independently tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1934/1987, p. 211). His primary interest was in the development of children with disabilities, which developed into an interest in how children master

cultural experience with the help of adults (Zaretsky, 2021). This led to the idea of ZPD, which was first used by Vygotsky in 1933 in a closing speech at a conference on diagnostic assessment, a year before his death. Vygotsky argued that two children may demonstrate the same level of mastery (zone of actual development, or ZAD), but have different potentials for the levels they are capable of mastering with the aid from adults or more advanced peers (ZPD). For example, if a child can solve a math problem alone, it is within their ZAD. If they can solve it with the help of more advanced individuals, it is beyond their ZAD but within their ZPD. If they cannot solve the problem regardless of assistance, it is beyond their ZPD. Initially the ZPD was a pedagogic notion, a useful concept that provided information to the teacher in planning teaching (Taber, 2018). The ZPD is considered where most effective learning takes place, as it encourages students to reach beyond their current understanding and thus leads to cognitive development.

The translation of Vygotsky's work into English, notably the 1962 *Thought and Language* and the subsequent *Mind in Society* in 1978, reviewed by philosopher Stephen Toulmin as the work of "the Mozart of psychology," marked a turning point for the ZPD's reception in the West, spotlighting Vygotsky's emphasis on cultural influence in psychology. This acknowledgment broadened the application of the ZPD across disciplines, such as sociology, pedagogy, and linguistics, sparking an exponential increase in ZPD-centric publications and interdisciplinary research (Skåland & Arnseth, 2024; Stiles et al., 2016; Taber, 2018; Zaretsky & Kholmogorova, 2020).

Despite its acclaim, the ZPD's theoretical essence and practical relevance have ignited scholarly debates, reflecting the nascent stage of Vygotsky's theory at his passing and the varied interpretations of its core tenets. While some scholars have asserted the ZPD's centrality within Vygotsky's broader theoretical framework (Holzman & Newman, 1993), others have critiqued its conceptual vagueness, suggesting it merely describes beneficial learning environments (Gillen, 2000;

Yasnitsky, 2019). Nonetheless, its enduring influence in education and child development is undisputed.

The debate extends to the interpretation of the ZPD's definitions, especially regarding the nuances of guidance and the expected timeframe for learning outcomes. Critics have highlighted that the prevalent English translations may not fully encapsulate Vygotsky's original concepts. Zaretsky (2021) has argued that the definition should be understood as *with the adult's help* rather than *under adult guidance*, suggesting a shift from a hierarchical to a more collaborative adult-child relationship.

Further complicating the interpretation of the ZPD is the emphasis on the temporal dimension in the English translations, particularly the transition from *today* to *tomorrow*. Smagorinsky (2018) has argued that this has been interpreted too literally, with Russian scholars in the US clarifying that it signifies a more general *soon in the future* rather than a strict 24-hour period. Smagorinsky has argued that the term *proximal* is misleading; suggesting that the ZPD might be better conceptualized as the zone of next development (ZND), which focuses on long-term developmental trajectories rather than immediate outcomes. He has elaborated that the objective is not to foster independent skill execution within a day, but to immerse children in a prolonged acculturation process. This process aims at not only developing specific competencies, such as literacy, but also facilitating their growth toward achieving culturally significant, socially valued conceptual goals.

This dissertation adopts the stance that the zone of proximal development aligns more closely with the zone of next development, suggesting that collaborative learning in the present does not necessarily guarantee immediate independence in the future. Instead, it posits that the transition from dependency to autonomy is a gradual, long-term process. However, this raises an important question: What constitutes *long-term*? For instance, adults often have clear memories of specific advice received from their parents at the time of being in elementary school. However, it is a stretch to

argue that just because this advice turned out to be beneficial in hindsight, it should fall within the scope of the ZPD. Attempting to stretch Vygotsky's ZPD concept to encompass all forms of guidance dilutes the original potency and intent of the theory. It becomes crucial, therefore, to accurately define the scope of what *proximal* means in terms of temporal distance and the nature of the guidance provided. Identifying these parameters will ensure that the theory retains its relevance and applicability, while also acknowledging the nuanced and individualized paths of human development. Yet, given the inherent challenges in precisely gauging a child's developmental stage, determining the scope of what constitutes *proximal* proves exceptionally challenging. Consequently, this dissertation argues for the necessity of an auxiliary framework to complement the ZPD.

2.3.2 Scaffolding

The term *scaffolding* has often been associated with, and at times used interchangeably with, Vygotsky's ZPD. However, it is a widespread misconception that Vygotsky himself introduced the term *scaffolding*. In fact, the term was coined by Wood, Bruner, and Ross in 1976. This concept emerged from their meticulously conducted research, which consisted of observing tutoring sessions involving 30 American children aged 3 to 5 years. Their study illustrated the manner in which tutors can facilitate learning by moderating a task's complexity and guiding learners to concentrate on elements that are within their grasp. The findings from this study underscored the pivotal role of scaffolding in enabling children to tackle problems that surpass their capacity for independent resolution, thereby accelerating their learning process more effectively than if they were to attempt these tasks unaided. The research also highlighted that the need for tutoring interventions varies according to the age of the learner, with older children demonstrating a reduced need for such support. As learners gradually acquire more skills, the tutor's involvement shifts from a hands-on approach to one that primarily affirms the learners' ability to solve

problems independently, mirroring the progressive transition of responsibility from tutor to learner.

Arising from this foundational research, the term *scaffolding* has been widely adopted to describe the transient assistance offered by parents or educators to aid a child in accomplishing tasks that currently exceed their capability to perform independently. This educational strategy involves the deconstruction of a multifaceted task into smaller, more digestible segments, while offering the necessary guidance and support at each step. As the learner's proficiency increases, the level of support is progressively diminished, aiming to foster a gradual increase in independence. The overarching objective of scaffolding is to facilitate the learner's acquisition of skills and knowledge in a manner that is sufficiently challenging yet avoids overwhelming them. Through this approach, scaffolding ensures that the learning experience is calibrated to the learner's evolving competencies, encouraging growth and development while maintaining a focus on achievable progress.

Scaffolding emerges as a powerful concept, primarily due to its ability to render children's developmental progress and the nature of instructional support visible, transforming what might otherwise remain an obscure general notion of *guidance* into something more concrete and measurable. Additionally, its relevance to fostering children's development beyond their current capabilities aligns closely with the ZPD. Indeed, Cazden (1979) posited that scaffolding and the processes described by Vygotsky as taking place in the ZPD share similarities, though caution is advised against conflating the two as identical. Qin (2022) has further detailed how Bruner took Cazden's insights into account, leading to the association of scaffolding with the ZPD.² Bruner and his colleagues identified scaffolding as a key strategy within

² Qin has highlighted that associating the ZPD with scaffolding represents a misconception, arguing that such a connection undermines the efficacy of the ZPD. Contrary to this perspective, as discussed further in this section, this paper posits that the ZPD and scaffolding are complementary concepts. While they cannot be used interchangeably, they are theoretically interrelated.

language development during an era dominated by Chomsky's language acquisition device (LAD) theory. They proposed the language acquisition support system (LASS), emphasizing the critical role of social interaction and support in learning language. This view led to further research, with many scholars (e.g., Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Tajeddin & Kamali, 2020; Walqui & van Lier, 2010) suggesting that scaffolding is inspired by Vygotskian activity theory.

The debate over the relationship between the ZPD and scaffolding has been a subject of ongoing discussion. At the heart of this debate is the question of whether scaffolding primarily aims at facilitating task completion or whether its scope extends beyond that. Smagorinsky (2018) has contended that while the ZPD focuses on the broader spectrum of long-term human development, scaffolding is often perceived as a means to assist in the immediate completion of tasks. Conversely, Shvarts and Bakker (2019) have argued that scaffolding represents a teaching methodology that operates within the ZPD, serving to stimulate developmental processes. Similarly, Mermelshtine (2017) has viewed scaffolding as a catalyst for development, suggesting a broader interpretation of its purpose.

The variance in interpretations likely stems from the ambiguity surrounding the definition of scaffolding. The application and understanding of scaffolding differ significantly across research contexts and fields; some studies interpret it as a tool for completing specific tasks, while others see it as a mechanism for learning or skill development (Xi & Lantolf, 2020). This dissertation endeavors to explore the concepts of the ZPD and scaffolding from the perspective of linguistics, specifically from the angle of language socialization. Due to this standpoint, this study posits that scaffolding represents a crucial form of verbal input from experts to novices, facilitating both explicit and implicit development in emotional and linguistic domains. While the origins of scaffolding and the ZPD may be traced back to

different foundations, with each concept initially charting its own course, this dissertation contends that it is reasonable to view scaffolding as a tangible method of support instrumental in reaching the ZPD. The immediate effects of vocal scaffolding on development might not be instantly observable; however, it is equally true that without the incremental progress achieved through everyday learning experiences, significant future development cannot occur. To narrowly define scaffolding as merely a tool for accomplishing tasks overlooks its broader potential. Moving beyond the original experiments of Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976), which focused on tangible tasks such as building blocks, and extending the core principles of scaffolding to more abstract areas such as emotional growth appears to be both logical and promising.

2.4 Summary

This chapter examined foundational theoretical frameworks pertinent to this study, specifically language socialization, emotion and empathy socialization, and Vygotsky's concepts of the zone of proximal development and scaffolding, within the realms of linguistic studies and child development.

Language socialization concerns the study of how individuals are socialized through and into the use of language within various social contexts. The field aims to understand the dynamics between language use and socialization, including the ways in which children acquire language and cultural knowledge through interactions with more experienced members of society.

One subfield of language socialization is emotion socialization. Emotion socialization is a key aspect of how individuals learn to understand, express, and regulate emotions in line with cultural norms. This process begins in early childhood, with significant influences from family interactions and societal expectations. It involves teaching children the appropriate ways to display emotions through direct communication about emotions, modeling by parents, and reactions to children's emotional expressions. Differences in emotion socialization practices across cultures

highlight its deep cultural embeddedness. Empathy, a complex social emotion involving the understanding and sharing of others' feelings, develops through this socialization process, evolving from basic emotional responses in infancy to more nuanced empathetic abilities in adolescence. While there are various definitions of empathy, this dissertation defines empathy as an affective stance that stems from the understanding and sharing of another's emotional experiences.

The chapter concludes with an exploration of Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development, which is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). This dissertation emphasizes its role in cognitive and social development through interaction with more knowledgeable others. It clarifies the relationship between the ZPD and scaffolding, the latter being transient assistance offered by parents or educators to aid children in accomplishing tasks that currently exceed their capability to perform independently. Scaffolding is discussed in the context of facilitating not just task completion but broader developmental goals within the ZPD framework.

Overall, this chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the theoretical underpinnings of language socialization, the role of emotions and empathy in social interaction, and the importance of scaffolding and the ZPD in child development and learning. It underscores the interdisciplinary nature of studying language and socialization, highlighting the contributions of anthropology, psychology, sociology, and linguistics to understanding how individuals acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate their social environments.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

3.1 Language Socialization in Japan and the USA

A substantial body of research supports the view that Japanese parents prioritize affection and interpersonal relationships, whereas American parents tend to focus on imparting information and fostering independence (Crane & Fernald, 2016; Hess et al., 1980; Ishizaki, 1996; Lebra & Lebra, 1986; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). For example, *omoiyari* (empathy) and *amae* (dependence on others) are considered common traits of communication in Japanese (Doi, 1973; Lebra, 1976).

However, it is important to avoid over-generalizing cultural differences. More recent studies have examined whether concepts such as *omoiyari* and *amae* can be found in other cultures, even if they do not have specific vocabulary equivalents in terms of meaning. Results have shown that, while the experiences may not be identical, cultures other than Japan also display behavior similar to these concepts (Niiya et al., 2006; Spiechowicz, 2016). As Killen and Wainryb (2000) have emphasized in their study on interdependence and independence in cultural contexts, oversimplifying societies and individuals into binary categories overlooks the complexities and subtle variations in social realities, resulting in distorted depictions. As Edward Said stressed in *Orientalism* (1978) –

One does not really make discourse at will, or statements in it, without first belonging—in some cases unconsciously, but at any rate involuntarily—to the ideology and the institutions that guarantee its existence. [...] The principal feature of mythic discourse is that it conceals its own origins as well as those of what it describes. (Said, 1978, p. 252)

This statement suggests that a careful examination is necessary in cross-cultural studies to distinguish between actual cultural differences and the effects of deep-seated biases.

Upon acknowledging such limitations, the notion that the Japanese prioritize interpersonal relationships while Americans lean towards information-oriented communication remains widely accepted across various research fields, supported by empirical evidence. For instance, in a comparative study on what Japanese and Americans perceive as the most important lesson for children to learn in preschool, in 1989, 31% of the Japanese participants had answered *empathy*, compared to just 5% of Americans. By 2003, these percentages had increased to 39% for Japanese and 14% for Americans, yet the emphasis on empathy remained more pronounced among the Japanese participants. Conversely, in 1989, 33% of the American participants had answered that the most important thing for children to learn in preschool was to have self-confidence and independence, while only 10% of the Japanese participants had concurred. The results in 2003 saw a significant drop in the figures for both groups (19% for Americans and 0% for Japanese), yet the overall trend highlighted that the American emphasis on independence persisted (Karasawa et al., 2006).

Given the differences in communication patterns between Japanese and English, the Japanese language serves as an ideal subject for comparing language socialization practices with those of Western cultures. However, it is worth noting that there have been relatively few language socialization studies on Japanese compared to other Western languages, with most such studies conducted by scholars trained in the US (Cook, 2008). Among these, Patricia Clancy's study conducted in 1986 was a highly influential first glimpse at language socialization in Japan. Based on naturally occurring conversation data from three Japanese 2-year-old toddlers and their mothers, Clancy found that when Japanese mothers scold their children, they tend to use declaratives instead of imperatives and to promote their children's understanding of indirect speech. For example, if a child is aggressive with his or her toy, the mother may say "*Kawaisō*" ("Poor thing")³ instead of directly asking or directing her child to

³ Henceforth in this paper, Japanese is romanized using the Hepburn system and italicized, followed by the English translation, enclosed in parentheses.

play with the toy more gently. The use of such linguistic forms trains children to understand indirect speech from an early age, and the use of empathetic expressions, such as *poor thing*, articulates the feelings of others and encourages empathy.

Clancy's influential work shed light on the morphological and contextual features of Japanese and initiated the documentation of how Japanese language socialization practices differ from those of Western cultures. Since the 1990s, Japanese language socialization studies have delved into topics such as emotions, politeness, gender, literacy, narrative, and classroom interactions (Cook & Takada, 2023).

One line of research that developed in the 1990s was how Japanese sentence final particles convey epistemic and affective stances and how children acquire these. Several significant studies on Japanese sentence final particles emerged in the 1990s, including those by Cook (1990) on the use of *-no* to implicitly indicate interpersonal harmony, Ohta (1991) on the function of sentence final particles in reducing speaker responsibility, Suzuki (1999) on *-chau* used by parents to teach (dis)preferred behaviors, Yoshimi (1999) on the usage of *-ne* by L2 Japanese learners and its influence by L1 Japanese speakers and their L1 epistemic constraints, and Endo (2021) on how the use of *-teageru* can have varying functions based on the speaker's relationship to the listener and context.

Among these sentence final particles, one that has garnered significant attention is the *-desu* and *-masu* form. It was traditionally believed that honorific language was not frequently used in daily conversations between parents and children. However, various analyses from the perspective of language socialization, based on conversational data, revealed that honorifics are employed in situations involving role-playing, giving instructions, and parental responsibilities. For instance, it has been observed that preschool students occasionally use honorifics when declining suggestions. Consequently, honorifics do not necessarily signify politeness

but rather the presentation of one's public self. Furthermore, children can learn to use honorifics appropriately to convey their public image by the age of 3 (Cook, 1996; Fukuda, 2005; Burdelski, 2013, Cook & Takada, 2023).

In addition to such studies of Japanese sentence final particles, researchers have also examined how affective stance is embedded in longer segments of Japanese conversation and how children acquire the skill to use this. Fernald and Morikawa (1993) discovered that Japanese mothers often encourage their children to physically and verbally express affection towards their toys, exemplified by prompts such as “*Kawaii shite agete*” (“Give it some love”). In this context, children are expected to gently pat the toy dog while praising its cuteness with phrases such as “*Kawaii*” (“So cute”). This finding aligns with an observation by Clancy (1986), who noted a scenario after a 2-year-old child's toy dishes accidentally fell on her assistant. The child's mother instantly remarked, “*Neechan itai tte*”⁴ (“The older sister says, ‘Ouch, ouch’”), even before any response from the assistant. This underscores the cultural practice of imbuing toys with emotional characteristics and encouraging empathetic interactions in children.

In Japanese cultural practices, representing the emotions of others through speech and interacting with inanimate objects as though they are living beings exemplify *cultural gloss*, a concept introduced by Burdelski (2013, 2015). These practices, indicative of empathy training, leverage reported speech alongside physical gestures and expressions, significantly contributing to children's moral, social, and linguistic development within their cultural context. Cultural gloss is not merely a tool for communication but also a means of socialization, integrating children into their cultural milieu and acquainting them with the communicative norms and values upheld by their society (Burdelski, 2015).

⁴ The term *nēchan* (older sister) is used by the child's mother to refer to Clancy's assistant.

While Americans also speak on behalf of others' emotions, there is a notable difference in the generality of these utterances. Research indicates that empathy training for American children tends to commence later in life compared to Japanese children. A study on 5-year-old children's narratives in Japan and the US (Minami, 1994) revealed that American mothers are more evaluative, solicit more information from their children, and allow their children longer speaking turns. Fernald and Morikawa (1993) found that during free play, American mothers focus on object names (e.g., "That's a dog. Do you like it? She's got a collar."), whereas Japanese mothers put more emphasis on practicing social routines (e.g., "*Hai dōzo. Chōdai. Arigatō.*" ("Here you go. Give it to me. Thank you.")). Burdelski (2011) has argued that the use of such formulaic expressions and politeness routines is an integral part of empathy training in Japan.

Other emotions and emotional responses besides empathy that are considered central to East-Asian culture have also received attention. Takada (2019) has argued that shame plays a crucial role in language socialization, as it is used to condemn children's inappropriate actions while promoting cooperation. Distress and crying have also garnered considerable interest. Crying is seen as a learning opportunity for expressing and controlling emotions (Wilce, 1998). In a comparative study on how Swedish and Japanese preschool teachers respond to children's crying, Cekaite and Burdelski found that in Sweden, teachers ask children to retell incidents to understand the situation and specify the root cause of crying. Conversely, Japanese preschool teachers use Wh-questions and polar questions to understand the situation but do not attempt to identify the cause (2021). In the US, research has shown that teachers often employ methods such as exclamations, imperatives, and predicates to intervene in and resolve conflicts (LeMaster, 2020).

While the display of affective stance through sentence final particles and conversational interaction remains central in Japanese language socialization studies,

since the 2000s some studies have also focused on Japanese students' English as a Second Language (ESL) language socialization. Research on Japanese students studying abroad has shown that they learn to communicate in pragmatically appropriate ways in their target language, including offering advice, speaking up, and constructing their identities (Matsumura, 2001; Kobayashi, 2004; Soltani & Tran, 2023).

3.2 The Role of Picture Books in Linguistic and Emotional Development

Shared book reading is a widely practiced activity in literate societies, often valued as an enriching parent–child engagement. It is widely believed to be beneficial for children's language development. Numerous studies have indicated that shared book reading stimulates the acquisition of new vocabulary (Ninio, 1983; Payne et al., 1994 ; Snow & Goldfield, 1983; Blewitt et al., 2009), grammar (Noble et al., 2018), literacy (Britto & Brooks-Gunn, 2001; Bus et.al., 1995; Duursma et al., 2008; Hindman et al., 2013), language skills (DeBaryshe, 1993; Lever & Sénéchal, 2011), and empathy (Kerigan & Çelebi Öncü, 2022; Kucirkova, 2019). Additionally, it offers an avenue for parents and caregivers to impart to children the nuances of social interactions and conversational norms (Takada & Kawashima, 2019).

In light of this prominence, shared book reading, along with observational methods such as studying natural conversations or free play activities, is frequently employed to gauge children's linguistic abilities. Free play studies primarily focus on the spontaneous communication dynamics between caregivers and children. For instance, in such studies, parent–child dyads might be provided a set of toys to interact with, with sessions lasting 5–15 minutes (Crane & Fernald, 2016; Ogura et al., 2006; Poulain & Brauer, 2017). The setting can vary from a familiar home setting to a more structured and controlled university laboratory, based on the research's contextual requirements.

One of the advantages of free play observation is its capacity to foster genuine engagement. Children possess the autonomy to decide their play methods and items, while caregivers can closely focus on the children in their care, replicating their everyday interactions owing to minimal limitations. However, controlling specific aspects such as the type of free play (e.g., role-play, car racing, or block games) can be challenging while ensuring the authenticity of the interaction.

By contrast, picture book reading is often seen as a more structured activity. Shared picture book reading usually consists of one parent reading to one or more children in a sitting or lying position, while showing the pictures and text to them. This setting allows for substantial control over the contextual backdrop, emphasizing a specific book, yet ensuring genuine parent–child dialogue. An added advantage is the emergence of unique conversational instances not commonly found in everyday interactions.

While the method of book reading as a developmental tool is lauded for its effectiveness, it is not without its limitations. The inherently dyadic nature of book reading restricts the ability to observe interactions among multiple children, potentially limiting insights into the dynamics of peer interactions. Moreover, the communication elicited during these sessions is often heavily influenced by the book’s content, distinguishing it from the more spontaneous and varied interactions that occur during free play. Research highlights that parents typically initiate conversation during book reading and maintain control over the activity, which might suggest a more passive role for the child (DeLoache & DeMendoza, 1987). However, this perspective does not fully account for the interactive nature of book reading sessions. Both the child’s and the parent’s contributions outside the text—referred to as extratextual utterances—significantly influence the session’s content and flow. These interactions suggest that book reading is not merely a unilateral activity where the parent reads to a passive child but a collaborative engagement that enhances learning and development (Crain-Thoreson et al., 2001; Justice & Kaderavek, 2003).

Furthermore, empirical studies have emphasized the importance of these extratextual interactions in enriching the child's linguistic and cognitive skills. They facilitate a deeper understanding of the narrative, encourage inferential thinking, and promote empathetic responses towards the characters (Aram & Aviram, 2009). The active participation of children in these dialogues underscores the bidirectional nature of learning during book reading sessions. This understanding challenges the initial critique, revealing book reading as a complex, interactive process that fosters a wide range of developmental benefits, from language acquisition to socio-emotional growth, within the unique context of parent-child interactions (Wang & Zheng, 2023).

In a seminal longitudinal study examining shared picture book reading sessions between a mother and her infant (aged 8 to 18 months), Ninio and Bruner (1978) underscored the crucial role of the mother in fostering an environment that nurtures the child's understanding of social and linguistic norms. This study, which focused on the development of labeling skills during these reading sessions, presented an argument against nativist theories of language acquisition. Ninio and Bruner proposed that lexicon development in children could follow various pathways, with the mother's role being instrumental in guiding the child to comprehend the rules of social interaction and conversation. They emphasized that during these shared reading sessions, both mother and child engage in a structured conversational pattern, particularly when it comes to labeling objects. This structured interaction not only facilitates the child's language development but also introduces them to the dynamics of social communication.

A detailed analysis of transcripts of the communication between mother and child during these sessions reveals that the turns of the mother and the child occur in almost perfect alternation, resembling a genuine conversation. Remarkably, only about 1% of their phrases overlap, indicating highly coordinated turn-taking. Furthermore, the mother only uses four key utterance types during book reading: (1) the attentional vocative *Look*, (2) the query (*what* questions), such as *What's that?*, (3)

the label *That's an X*, and (4) the feedback, such as *yes* (Ninio & Bruner, 1978). These key utterance types follow a strict pattern of occurrence and ordering. At the beginning of a book reading cycle, the mother starts with (1), (2), or (3). During the book reading, in over 90% of cases, (1) precedes (2), and (2) precedes (3), which may be followed by (4). This structure mirrors that of an adult conversation, highlighting that the mother engages in linguistically conventional behavior during shared book reading sessions. However, it should be noted that this is specific to book reading sessions; in regular play situations where the labeling routine is not present, the child's intended meaning can be interpreted in a wider range of options as the child's focus of attention is drastically broadened. Thus, the mother can only respond to the child with an innocuous remark, such as "Yes, I know," to stay in a conversational framework.

Ninio and Bruner's (1978) findings are significant in shedding light on the effects of conversational structure on children's language acquisition. Although it may seem that the mother's imitation of the child's labeling is a central element for the improvement of the child's labeling skills, the data prove that the child's rate of repeating a label is not solely affected by the mother's imitation. The child repeats a label following the mother's imitation in 45.8% of cases, but this also follows laughter or feedback in 42.9% of cases. The only instance where a child repeats a label less frequently (reduced to 9%) is after a negative response, such as "It is not a flower." Thus, it is more important for the mother to provide a conversational setting, where the child can label on their own, than to correct or imitate the child. The child's ability to label objects and concepts is greatly enhanced by mastering the conversational dynamics shared with their mother, within which the practice of labeling is embedded.

While Ninio and Bruner's study remains a seminal work in the field, subsequent research has aimed to address its limitations (Chan et al., 2009; Crane & Fernald, 2016; Duursma et al., 2008; Fernald & Morikawa, 1993; Fletcher & Reese,

2005). One of the key shortcomings is the exclusive focus on a single Caucasian, middle-class family. Consequently, recent studies have emphasized inclusivity, examining factors such as sex, age, ethnicity, social class, reading frequency, and book selection (Temple & Tabors, 1994; Kang et al., 2009). For example, in a cross-cultural study of American and Japanese mother–child dyads, Murase et al. (2005) used imitation and interpersonal utterances in addition to Ninio and Bruner’s codes to capture linguistic characteristics of Japanese, such as the sentence-final particle *ne* (right?), which is commonly used to express sympathy.

The majority of linguistic studies on shared reading have been based on middle-class White mothers and their children (e.g., Fletcher & Reese, 2005; Kang et al., 2009). In contrast to these, Anderson-Yockel and Haynes (1994) explored shared reading dynamics between working-class African American and White mothers, revealing that African American mothers pose fewer questions than their White counterparts, highlighting a potential ethnic influence on parent–child interactions during reading. However, Haynes and Saunders (1999) also examined 20 middle-class White and African American mothers and found that White mothers tend to label objects more frequently than African American mothers, a result that challenges earlier findings and suggests that social class might play a more significant role than ethnicity in shaping these interactions. Yet more recent research, including a study by Luo, Snow, and Chang (2012) that compared low-income Taiwanese and American families reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969), indicates that both social class and ethnicity significantly affect shared reading experiences. They found that Taiwanese mothers engage in more extensive conversations with their children, offering and seeking additional information, although they solicit and receive fewer evaluations from their children.

Similarly, in their 2020 study, Rochanavibhata and Marian examined book-sharing practices among American and Thai mother–preschooler pairs. They studied 21 monolingual Thai mothers and 21 monolingual American-English mothers, along

with their 4-year-old children. The research revealed significant differences in narrative style between the American and Thai groups. The American mothers employed an elaborate, story-building approach, using affirmations, descriptions, extensions, and recasting techniques, while the Thai mothers favored a simpler storytelling style with more attention directives and expansions. Consequently, the American children developed longer narratives compared to their Thai counterparts, who often mirrored their mothers' simpler speech patterns. The study further identified a correlation between the narrative styles of mothers and their children, highlighting the significant role of maternal scaffolding in the development of children's narrative abilities. These insights underscore the profound impact of cultural factors on the methods of maternal scaffolding and, subsequently, on the narrative development of children.

The extent to which social class and ethnicity influence shared book reading practices is complex and hard to pinpoint due to their entanglement with various demographic factors. For example, lower social classes often coincide with lower educational levels among parents, which, according to Kang et al. (2009), are linked to how frequently books are read. Additionally, ethnicity has been shown by Yarosz and Barnett (2001) to impact reading frequency. This complex interaction complicates the task of distinguishing the specific contributions of each factor.

In addition to ethnicity and social class, the sex of participants in the book reading sessions may influence the way that parents read to their children and how the children respond (Fletcher & Reese, 2005). Frosch et al. (2001) compared maternal and paternal book readings with young children and evaluated parental reading behaviors based on warm/supportive or hostile/intrusive measures. Based on their findings, fathers are more detached than mothers during book reading. Leaper et al. (1998) maintained that mothers talk more frequently and use more polar interrogatives than fathers do during book reading, while fathers are more informative and ask wh-questions. They also suggest that mothers are more supportive of and

talkative with girls than boys, and such differential treatment increases according to the child's age.

Western families are known to devote more time to book reading with girls than with boys (Teale, 1986), although there is a significant possibility that this may have rapidly changed over the past two decades. Previous studies are limited regarding historical moment, cultural specificity, class, and race, in addition to many other variants; thus, it may be reductive to make claims about the influence of sex based on such limited criteria. In fact, Crain-Thoreson et al. (2001) found that neither the complexity nor the style of conversation differed between maternal and paternal utterances, and there was no differences between the language directed at boys and that directed at girls. It is highly likely that sex roles have vastly changed in the 21st century compared with the 1980s, when shared book reading was still a new interest in linguistics, and previous studies' findings need to be revisited to accommodate the social dynamics of the present era.

Reading frequency is another factor that is said to influence both parents' and children's utterances during book reading. While it can be challenging to separate the influence of reading frequency from other factors, such as parents' educational level, ethnicity, child's age, number of siblings, and social class (Child Trends, 2013; Lyytinen et al., 1998; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994; Yarosz & Barnett, 2001), studies indicate that repeated readings of the same book contribute to an increase in 2-to-3-year-old children's repetition of maternal utterances and read-alongs with the reader (Fletcher & Jean-Francois, 1998, as cited in Fletcher & Reese, 2005). Mc Arthur, Adamson, and Deckner (2005) found that while utterance content did not change substantially with repeated readings of the same book, the format of the utterances – wh-questions, polar questions, feedback, comments, role-play, calls for attention, response, answers own question – were correlated with book familiarity for 2-to-3-year old children. For 4-year-olds, Schapira, Deitcher, and Aram (2020) found that

parents shifted the content of their utterances from being *action* focused in their first reading to *consciousness* focused by their third reading.

The genre and format of books play significant roles, especially as children are frequently exposed to the same material within a brief timeframe. Fletcher and Reese (2005) acknowledged that the genre of a book can influence the subtle variances in the interactions between parents and their children during shared reading sessions. Parent–child language is different when reading narrative storybooks compared with manipulative books that involve opening flaps and slots (Justice & Kaderavek, 2003). Furthermore, mothers of 2-year-old toddlers label items in the books, ask questions, and give more positive feedback for expository books than for narrative books, but are more descriptive and engage in decontextualized maternal talk when reading narrative books (Nyhout & O’Neill, 2013; Pellegrini et al., 1990; Price et al., 2009). Responses to wordless picture books have also been found to differ from responses to books with text. Wordless picture books seem to elicit more extratextual talk in general, and the extratextual talk is more centered on the mental and emotional aspects of the book, although parental utterances’ grammatical complexity is higher with narrative books with text (Brownell et al., 2013; Petrie et al., 2021; Ziv et al., 2013). In regard to book format, research has been conducted comparing e-books with traditional books. One study found that, regardless of book format, children experience the same level of emotional arousal, but experience fewer positive emotions when their parents are absent from the book reading activity (Avelar et al., 2022).

In many cases, caregivers are responsible for the book choice. Parents tailor their book choice, reading frequency, and linguistic expressions to their children’s ages (Iwasaki et al., 2010; McArthur et al., 2005; Togami & Sugawara, 2018). They choose specific books based on their children’s knowledge, carefully considering each book’s context and language (Crain-Thoreson et al., 2001). Thus, choosing a different book inevitably influences the extratextual talk that occurs during book reading.

While ethnicity and social class have been widely contemplated in recent years, it is rather surprising that children's age differences have not received as much attention (Fernald & Morikawa, 1993). As listed in Table 1, the majority of linguistic studies on shared book reading are based on an age span of 0–12 months, and the majority of the studies' samples comprise 30–60 participants. Only two studies have an ample triple-digit number of participants, yet both focus on a narrow age difference of 15 months and 5 months, respectively. Many studies focus on 1-to-2-year-old children because they rapidly acquire vocabulary and develop from the babbling stage to being able to form coherent sentences during this period (Fenson, 1994; Ninomiya, 1985).

Table 1

Participant Age and Number in Shared Book Reading Studies

	Children's Age Span (months)	Age Difference (months)	Number of Participants
Murase et al., 1998	0–27	27	66
Fernald & Morikawa, 1993	6–19	13	60
DeLoache, 1984	12–18	6	30
DeLoache & DeMendoza, 1987	12–18	6	30
Ogura et al., 2006	12–24	12	31
Murase et al., 2005	12–27	15	120
Temple & Tabors, 1994	16–21	5	290
Haynes & Saunders, 1999	18–30	12	20
Murase, 2014	20–27	7	18
McArthur et al., 2005	24–36	12	36
Crane & Fernald, 2016	25–36	11	2
Crain-Thoreson et al., 2001	36–48	12	23
Kang et al., 2009	49–60	11	62
Minami, 1994	49–60	11	26

Among the limited number of studies focusing on children's age differences, the longitudinal study of Murase et al. (1998) involved 66 mother-child dyads in which the children were 10, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, and 27 months old. They found that, as the children's linguistic and cognitive skills developed, the mothers decreased the amount of scaffolding, and the children learned to spontaneously label objects. Murase et al. (1998) and DeLoache and DeMendoza (1987) reached the same conclusions based on English and Japanese cases, respectively. As the children matured, the mothers also introduced more complex information into their discourse and asked questions instead of providing information (Murase, 2014). Ishizaki (1996) suggested that this process can be divided into three stages. In the formation stage, mothers create the format, but children cannot participate. In the acquisition stage, children become active participants in developing the format and acquire skills in how it works. Finally, in the usage stage, children become capable of using all key utterances and create formats, changing roles with their mothers.

3.3 Shared Picture Book Reading in Japan and the United States

Many American and Japanese caregivers strongly encourage children to engage in shared book reading. According to a large-scale survey conducted in 2019 on the book reading habits of Japanese households, 22.6% of 3-to-4-year-old Japanese children were read to three to four times weekly by a family member, and 36.3% were read to every day (Benesse Educational Research and Development Institute, 2019). Many American parents are also reported reading to their children at least several times a week, regardless of ethnicity or socioeconomic status (Hindman et al., 2013). According to a nationwide study conducted in the US, approximately 81% of 3-to-5-year-old children were read to three or more times weekly by a family member in 2016, and 55% were read to every day in 2007, consistent with minor fluctuations since 1993 (Child Trends, 2013; Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2019). While Japanese caregivers tend to read to their children less

frequently compared with American caregivers, it is safe to state that book reading still plays a prominent role as a parent–child activity that is routinely performed at home in both countries.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, both American and Japanese parents are known to provide scaffolding to their children, starting from newborns, but in different ways. Extensive research supports the view that Japanese parents are affection oriented and value interpersonal relationships, while American parents are information oriented and respect independence (Crane & Fernald, 2016; Hess et al., 1980; Ishizaki, 1996; Lebra & Lebra, 1986; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). This difference in prioritized traits leads to different reading patterns in English and Japanese.

In the United States, one of the most commonly observed scaffolding techniques while book-reading involves parents asking their children questions or commenting on words or pictures in the book. This meaning-based talk (Hindman et al., 2013) includes labeling objects, asking questions about the illustrations, and pointing out immediately observable details regarding the text or illustrations. Such meaning-based talk is mainly conveyed through the use of declaratives (“There’s an elephant” and “I think the elephant is happy”), interrogatives (“What is this?” and “Do you think the elephant is happy?”), and imperatives (“Look at the elephant” and “Point to something that’s blue”). Parents of 12-to-18-month-old children adjust the complexity of their questions and comments based on their children’s age and level of development (DeLoache & DeMendoza, 1987).

Parents also engage in inferential conversations with their children, which involve predicting what will happen next, expanding the story, and imagining the emotions and actions of the character that are not explicitly described in the book. However, it has been observed that these types of inferential conversations occur less frequently compared to conversations centered around the explicit meaning of the text. In a study on American parents reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle,

1969) to their 5-year-old children, most parental utterances tended to focus on explicitly described details, while comments and questions regarding the interpretations of events were limited (Kang et al., 2009).

Compared to the numerous studies on shared book readings in English, there are only a handful of such studies in Japanese. Among the limited number of studies, one notable observation is the prioritization of interpersonal utterances in shared book reading in Japanese. Murase et al. (2005) collected data from 60 Japanese and 60 American mother–child pairs (children aged 12–27 months) to examine how parents initiated and responded to children’s labeling. The mother–child pairs were videotaped browsing three wordless picture books for five minutes each. The recordings were transcribed, and correct naming by noun, correct onomatopoeia, and action words of the character were regarded as labeling. The mother’s last utterances before the child’s labeling were coded as either information asking or labeling, and those after the child’s labeling were coded as imitation, elaborative information asking, instructional feedback, or interpersonal utterance. Multiple codes were applied to the same utterance; for example, when a mother responded, “That’s right. It’s an elephant,” after her child’s prior utterance of “elephant,” this response was coded as both instructional feedback and imitation.

The results revealed that Japanese children’s labeling follow their mother’s labeling (Japanese: 41%, American: 22%), and American children’s labeling follow their mother’s information asking (Japanese: 45%, American: 61%). An analysis of discrete maternal utterances showed that American mothers produce more labeling compared with Japanese mothers, so this tendency is unlikely to be attributable to Japanese mothers’ frequent labeling but is due to Japanese children’s tendency to imitate their mothers’ labeling. Furthermore, this study revealed that Japanese mothers made more interpersonal utterances after their children’s labeling (Japanese: 24%, American: 4%), whereas American mothers made more elaborative information-asking utterances (Japanese: 7%, American: 14%). These findings align with and

further support the widely accepted notion that “East Asians are more attentive than are North Americans to contextual and relational information and that North Americans are more attentive than are East Asians to individual objects” (Murase, 2014, p. 2). Research based on both shared book reading and free play have revealed similar outcomes (Crane & Fernald, 2016; Fernald & Morikawa, 1993).

In a longitudinal study focusing on children aged 10 to 27 months, Murase et al. (1998) discovered a significant correlation between the development of linguistic and cognitive skills in children and a decrease in the amount of scaffolding provided by their mothers. Similarly, in a study involving slightly older children, aged 3 years and 3 months to 6 years and 8 months, Saito and Uchida (2013) observed a similar trend where mothers employed less cognitively demanding utterances, such as labeling and describing pictures, when their children were younger. Over time, these mothers gradually reduced their verbal involvement in favor of allowing their children to take on more independent cognitive tasks. These observations are consistent with those of other studies, which have found that parents generally reduce their input for children aged 3 to 4 (Dickinson et al., 1992). This reduction in parental involvement encourages children to assume more responsibility in shared reading discussions. Solidifying these insights, the period from age 3 to 4 emerges as a pivotal moment when parental support begins to wane. Furthermore, Murase (2014) has suggested that, as children grow older, their mothers are more likely to present complex information during interactions and increasingly use questions to provoke cognitive engagement, rather than merely supplying information.

3.4 Summary and Research Gaps

This chapter explored the dynamics of language socialization in Japan and the United States, highlighting a key difference in the goals of socialization between these societies. Research has shown that Japanese socialization practices prioritize interpersonal relations, empathy, and group cohesion, whereas American practices are

more centered on fostering independence, self-sufficiency, and straightforward communication. Japanese parents, in accordance with these objectives, use language to cultivate sensitivity to others' emotions and a preference for indirect communication, thereby promoting harmony in social interactions. This method is evident in their preference for declarative rather than imperative forms when speaking to their children, encouraging an early comprehension of nuanced communication. By contrast, the American method of language socialization is more focused on the transmission of information and the development of independence in children. American parents tend to encourage qualities such as self-assurance and independence, employing language as a means for exchanging information and enhancing problem-solving abilities.

The significance of shared book reading in the development of language and emotional intelligence was also discussed, illustrating its value in both American and Japanese cultures in bolstering children's linguistic and social competencies. Building on extensive prior research, the approach to shared reading mirrors the broader cultural variances in communication styles and priorities as previously outlined.

While acknowledging the distinct differences in language socialization practices between American and Japanese cultures, especially in the context of book reading, there are primarily three research gaps that warrant further investigation.

The first research gap stems from the prevalent reliance on case studies within the field of language socialization. Language socialization research often focuses on the immediate context to link individual behaviors to broader cultural frameworks, utilizing the conversation analysis method to dissect individual cases. Although this approach is valuable for examining everyday conversations and deriving dynamic cultural insights from seemingly nuanced interactions, it carries the risk of over-interpreting contexts and attributing cultural significance where it may not be warranted (Duff & Talmy, 2011). To counterbalance this tendency, researchers sometimes adopt a longitudinal perspective to examine how socialization unfolds over

time. Despite its benefits, this approach presents logistical challenges, such as the difficulty of simultaneously observing numerous participants and the tedious task of data analysis, which involves transcribing and meticulously examining vast amounts of data. Consequently, the field is primarily dominated by case studies, which, while crucial, limit the generalizability of the findings. To mitigate these issues and reduce the risk of biased interpretations, incorporating quantitative methods could provide a broader, more objective view of cultural practices in language socialization.

The second research gap is the assumption that caregivers' scaffolding is conducted for proximal development. Language socialization research often presupposes that parents either consciously or subconsciously guide their children towards cultural assimilation through their interactions, implying an immediate or near-immediate impact on the child's development. This perspective is partly rooted in the field's deep engagement with Vygotskian theories since its inception. Ochs and Schieffelin, in their seminal 1986 paper that introduced the concept of language socialization, drew upon Vygotsky's idea that novices develop skills within the ZPD, transitioning from guided or collaborative activities to independent actions. In this context, cultural knowledge is both the framework for and the product of communicative activities.

Considering that Ochs and Schieffelin's analyses were shaped by Western perspectives, especially through English translations of Vygotsky that highlight the idea that assistance provided today fuels tomorrow's development, they may have embraced the concept of the ZPD as having near-immediate effects. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the ZPD might actually manifest its effects over a much longer term. This raises questions about the nature of scaffolding in the short term and its impact on long-term development, suggesting that the relationship between immediate socialization practices and their long-term developmental outcomes needs further exploration.

Finally, and probably the most straightforward of the three research gaps, emotion socialization remains an under-explored area within the broader context of language socialization. Despite the critical role of socioemotional development, research focusing on how children's emotional growth is supported by parental scaffolding is relatively scarce. Nelson et al. (2011) highlighted the lack of attention given to children's emotional development within these contexts. Although there has been an increase in research on emotion socialization in recent years, the depth of understanding of how children are socialized to experience and express emotions is still limited (Cekaite & Ekström, 2019). Furthermore, there is an even smaller body of work examining this process from a comparative or cross-cultural perspective, indicating a significant gap in our knowledge about the ways in which different cultures shape the emotional experiences and expressions of their members. This gap underscores the need for more comprehensive research in the area of emotion socialization, particularly studies that consider diverse cultural practices and their impact on emotional development.

Chapter 4 Scaffolding Emotional Readiness

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to explore the scaffolding techniques employed by parents in the upbringing of their 0-to-4-year-old children, with a specific focus on the differences between book readings engaged in by American and Japanese parents. Language socialization is a lifelong process that begins prenatally and continues throughout one's life. One of the premises of language socialization is that parents use everyday opportunities to teach even infants how to conform to societal norms (Duranti et al., 2012). Based on this understanding, this chapter takes a cross-sectional approach to observe the initial years of a child's life, specifically from infancy to 4 years of age, to identify the fundamental forms of scaffolding provided by parents.

The hypothesis posits that, drawing on prior research detailed in earlier chapters, parents in the USA and Japan will favor speech styles integral to their distinct cultural contexts, aligning with scaffolding principles within the ZPD. This suggests that parents are expected to incrementally introduce more sophisticated speech patterns and cognitively demanding content to older children.

Through an in-depth exploratory analysis of the data, this chapter highlights two specific types of utterances that emerges as distinctive elements within the context of shared book reading in English and Japanese. The first type focuses on specific questions parents ask their children at the end of a book reading session, such as "What do you think?," serving as an invitation for the children's opinions (this process is hereafter referred to as "opinion-asking"). Notably, this particular form of engagement was found to be prominent in the book reading sessions engaged in by American participants. The second type of utterance is enactments, which are utterances and dialogues created for emulating a fictional character – an aspect that prominently characterized the Japanese shared book reading sessions.

This chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 presents a review of the previous literature on parental enactment during book reading sessions. Section 3 provides a summary of the data collection process, participant demographics, and codes. In section 4, scatterplots are utilized to visually illustrate the correlation between the proportion of parents' enactments and questioning and the age of their children. This is accompanied by an in-depth examination of each type of enactment and question-asking, supported by relevant excerpts from the dataset. The findings from these data are further examined in section 5 from the perspective of the acquisition of affect, social routines, and disclosure of opinions.

4.2 The Literature on Enactment During Shared Book Reading

Labeling and questioning the content that can be directly observed are primary modes of extratextual interaction during book reading. Additionally, parents often engage in creating fictional dialogues and embodying characters as they read. Through these enactments, they emphasize particular actions or emotions by verbalizing them, for example, expressing hunger with phrases such as, "I am so hungry," or mimicking eating sounds with, "chomp chomp chomp," alongside corresponding facial expressions, gestures, and vocal tones. This form of communication involves speakers altering their presentation to assume the roles of either imaginary or real characters (Holt, 2007). This chapter categorizes such expressions as *enactments*.

The concept of *enactment* captures varied yet related dimensions of communication. As defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), enactment refers to the act of impersonating a character dramatically. In the field of linguistics, it signifies a kind of constructed dialogue, which Tannen (1986) describes as "a re-creation of speech in conversation or fiction" (p. 311). However, Yamamoto (2013) has argued for drawing a distinction between enactments and constructed dialogues. Enactments can seamlessly integrate into dialogues without the need for introductory

markers, whereas constructed dialogues typically need a lead-in with a subject and verb, such as “he said.” Moreover, while constructed dialogues often replicate original speech, enactments may be entirely imaginary, not based on any factual event.

Research has shown that enactments serve as a communication tactic for executing speech acts, such as making arguments and presenting evidence (Arita, 2021). Even toddlers as young as 22 months engage in enactments to express their experiences, though in a more rudimentary form (Gerhardt, 1989). These enactments are often conveyed using multiple semiotic signals, such as eye contact, body posture, hand movements, and variations in voice pitch and rhythm, along with verbal language. Additionally, some studies have indicated that when children physically embody characters through gestures, it may enhance their memory of storylines and support the learning of new words (Wall et al., 2022).

Yet, the most prevalent form of enactment children experience is likely not their own, but that which comes from their parents. In a longitudinal study examining both French- and English-speaking pairs, Beaupoil-Hourdel (2020) discovered that parents frequently adopt the strategy of embodying characters during shared reading sessions. This technique assists children in empathizing with the characters and enhances their comprehension of the narrative. Children develop an understanding of others’ feelings through a “constant back-and-forth movement from the book’s story to their own everyday experiences” (Beaupoil-Hourdel, 2017, p. 67). Parental enactments serve as a conduit, connecting these realms and fostering a deeper engagement with the reading activity.

Within the setting of shared book reading, enactments fulfill a unique role distinct from their function in everyday conversations. Rather than being employed to argue or present evidence, enactments in shared reading contexts are characterized by the dramatization of characters, aligning closely with their lexical definition. Consequently, this chapter defines *enactment* as the act of emulating the feelings or

behaviors of a fictional character through spoken utterances or dialogue and adding spoken details to the narrative.

In this study, for an utterance to be considered an enactment, it must be a product of the speaker's imagination. Matsumura et al. (2016) discussed "dramatic book reading," a practice where caregivers use distinct prosodic elements to differentiate the dialogues of various characters in a text. However, this research specifically examines enactments that readers themselves invent and introduce, aiming to understand how parents utilize such enactments to enrich the story beyond what is explicitly stated in the book. While the role of gestures and physical embodiment in the communication of enactments between parent and child is recognized, the study predominantly investigates the verbal aspect of these enactments.

4.3 Methodology

4.3.1 Data Collection Method

American parent-child dyads (children's age = 0;2–4;11, $n = 165$ pairs) and Japanese parent-child dyads (children's age = 0;2–4;11, $n = 105$ pairs) were asked to video record themselves while the parents read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969) or its Japanese version *Harapeko Aomushi* (Carle, 1976) to their children in their respective languages. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969) is a 22-page picture book about a caterpillar that becomes a butterfly. At the beginning of the story, the caterpillar is born from a small egg. It eats fruit and other foods nonstop for six days, until its stomach aches from overeating. Then, on the seventh day, the caterpillar eats a leaf and feels better. It turns into a chrysalis and after two weeks becomes a beautiful butterfly.

The researcher was not present with the participants at the time of recording and the parents were asked to email the video to the researcher afterwards. The above book was selected for the present study due to its status as a bestseller in both Japan

and the United States, its widespread readership among families, its suitability for children aged 0 to 4 years, and its non-didactic nature. The absence of a didactic tone was deemed crucial to ensure that the translation of the text had minimal interference with the parent–child conversation that took place during the book reading sessions.

From July 2019 to December 2020, participants were recruited through the researcher’s circle of friends and family, as well as through public posts on social networks. Parents who participated in the study were provided with an overview of the research design and were asked to participate only if they agreed to its terms. To avoid influencing parent–child dialogue during the sessions, the aim of the study was not communicated to the participants before videotaping. Participants were informed that the conversation data would be examined for interesting phenomena found in shared book reading sessions. They could opt out of the study at any time, and in the event that they chose to do so, it was ensured that their data would not be used.

Additional instructions included the following: (1) The primary person responsible for reading in their household should read the picture book. If multiple caregivers take turns reading daily, each caregiver should read once to the child(ren). (2) Participants were asked to read the picture book as they normally would at home. They did not need to repeat the video recording if their child(ren) moved out of frame or became distracted during the reading session. (3) If participants had multiple children, they were asked to read to each child individually. (4) As much as possible, all participants in the reading session should be in frame when the video was recorded, although participants’ faces did not have to be shown if they chose not to do so. The camera angle and positioning, as well as the timing and duration of the reading session, were not specified so that participants could read to their children as naturally as possible, without feeling self-conscious about being on camera.

The participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire after recording their book reading session.⁵ The questionnaire included questions on the dyads' demographic background, the book reading experience, whether the reading was different from their usual reading sessions, and whether the camera recording interfered with their reading. The questionnaire also asked about the participants' reading frequency, measured as the number of times the parent(s) read to their children every week: zero, once every other week, once to twice per week, three to four times per week, or every day. The reading history was measured as the number of times the children had been read the book before this reading session, ranging from zero, 1–5, 5–10, or more than 11 times. Children's ages were reported in months and the sex of the reader(s) were indicated as male, female, or other. Readers' education was indicated by their educational level, ranging from the completion of junior high school, high school, undergraduate studies, to graduate studies. Finally, readers' ages were reported in years.

4.3.2 Participants

A total of 165 American parent–child dyads and 105 Japanese parent–child dyads were recruited for this study. The mean age of the American readers was 34.5 years ($SD = 4.74$, min = 26, max = 53) while the average age of the Japanese readers was 32.9 years ($SD = 4.25$, min = 27, max = 46). In both language groups, over 60% of the readers were between 26 and 35 years old. The mean age of the children in the American sample was 2.4 years ($SD = 1.33$, min = 0;2, max = 4;11) compared to 2.2 years in the Japanese sample ($SD = 1.48$, min = 0;2, max = 4;11). Over 60% of respondents in both groups were within the 26–35 months age bracket.

This research aimed to examine the nature of interactive dialogues between parents and children during shared book reading sessions, emphasizing the

⁵ See Appendices A and B for the complete version of the questionnaire.

authenticity of these interactions as they naturally occur in home settings. Therefore, it was essential for participants to have extensive experience with shared reading. The data in Table 2 reveals that a significant majority of participants routinely participate in these activities. Notably, 71.5% of American parents and 41.9% of Japanese parents reported engaging in daily reading sessions with their children. Moreover, over 93% of American and more than 72% of Japanese parents read with their children at least three times a week. Although variations in the frequency of shared reading sessions could be attributed to differences in parental education levels and the ages of the children, the data also imply that shared book reading is more prevalent in American cultural traditions compared to Japanese ones. The survey also found that women predominantly took on the role of reading to children in the household, accounting for 73.9% of the book reading sessions in American families and 82.9% in Japanese families.

In terms of educational attainment, American participants generally had higher education levels compared to their Japanese counterparts. While nearly all participants from both countries had completed high school, about 93% of Americans and 94% of Japanese respondents held a bachelor's degree or higher. Although the percentages are close, a larger proportion of Japanese respondents, including both mothers and fathers, had obtained bachelor's degrees. However, the American sample featured a notably higher number of individuals with MA and PhD degrees. It is important to emphasize that these findings do not necessarily represent the educational landscape of the United States and Japan as a whole but rather reflect variations in terms of how participants were recruited for the study.

The determination of the participants' nationality was grounded in their life experience, specifically whether they had spent the majority of their lives in Japan or the US, and their self-identification as either Japanese or American. To further clarify the participants' cultural backgrounds, the questionnaire included questions about the participants' history of residing overseas, aiming to identify those who, despite their

self-identification, had substantial experience living abroad. Of the respondents, 30% of Japanese and 12% of American participants reported having lived outside their home country. Notably, 53% of these Japanese respondents and 46% of these American respondents had lived overseas for more than five years. Specifically, 14 Japanese participants reported having lived in the US for between 5 to 10 years, while five American participants reported having lived in Japan for the same duration.

Regarding the reading habits related to *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, 66% of Japanese and 69% of American families reported previously having read the book to their children. Of these families, 49% of the Japanese and 59% of the American families had read the book to their children more than ten times. The frequency of reading the book and the overall engagement with it were similar for the American and Japanese groups. This similarity suggests that *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, despite its American origins and subsequent translation into Japanese, enjoys widespread popularity in both countries. Furthermore, it was found that participants' frequency of reading the book had a minimal effect on the outcomes of the study.

Table 2

Demographic Descriptive Data

Demographic Factor	Japan (N=105)	Ratio (%)	US (N=165)	Ratio (%)
Sex of the readers				
Female	87	82.9	122	73.9
Male	18	17.1	43	26.1
Other, N/A	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sex of the child				
Female	56	53.3	68	41.2
Male	48	45.7	97	58.8
Other, N/A	1	1.0	0	0.0
Reader's education				
Doctorate	0	0.0	33	20.0
Masters	10	9.5	48	29.1

Undergraduate	86	81.9	75	45.5
High school	5	4.8	7	4.2
Junior high school	1	1.0	0	0.0
N/A	3	2.9	2	1.2
Reading frequency				
Every day	44	41.9	118	71.5
3–4 times/week	32	30.5	37	22.4
1–2 times/week	19	18.1	8	4.9
1 time / 2 weeks	7	6.7	14	1.2
Never	3	2.9	0	0.0
Reading history of <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i>				
11+ times	35	33.3	72	43.7
6–10 times	9	8.6	14	8.5
1–5 times	25	23.8	22	13.3
0 times	34	32.4	52	31.5
N/A	2	1.9	5	3.0

In both the American and Japanese cohorts, several families noted differences between the reading sessions conducted for this study and their typical reading routines. Key differences listed in Table 3 include variations in the location, timing, and posture of participants during the reading sessions. Additionally, distractions caused by the presence of the camera were reported, affecting either the children or the readers. While feedback was specifically solicited from those who stated that the video recording disrupted their session, some families volunteered reasons for not perceiving the camera as intrusive. The primary explanations among these respondents were either that: (1) their children were too young to notice the camera, or (2) they had strategically concealed the camera, rendering it hidden to the children.

Table 3

Comments on Differences Between Study and Usual Reading Sessions

Comment	Japan	US
Time, place, or posture was different.	8	5
The book was easier than what they usually read.	0	2

The book was more difficult than what they usually read.	4	1
The children were more engaged than usual.	10	0
The children were quieter than usual.	4	2
The children were less engaged or distracted by the camera.	24	22
The reader was distracted by the camera.	8	6
The reader read faster than usual.	2	2
The reader's utterances/gestures were less frequent than usual.	1	1
The reader's utterances/gestures were more frequent than usual.	0	2
Usually sang the song. ^a	1	0
Usually read to their children all at once.	1	10
Usually, the child chose which book to read.	3	3
Usually read in a different language.	1	1

Notes. ^a In Japan, *Harapeko Aomushi no Uta* (The Very Hungry Caterpillar Song) is well-known, often sung in numerous kindergartens and preschools. Observations from the video recordings of the Japanese participants showed moments when children wanted to sing the song or started singing it during the session, instead of listening to their parents read the book. These moments were interrupted by their parents, who steered the activity back to reading to comply with the study's guidelines. Children who could not be redirected and persisted in singing were excluded for the purposes of the analysis.

4.3.3 Codes

Coding was conducted by the author, a Japanese/English bilingual, using MaxQDA, a mixed-methods coding software program. All utterances in the video recordings, including the readings of the text, were transcribed. All utterances that could not be deciphered in three passes, including children's nonverbal vocalizations, were considered unintelligible. Utterances not directly related to the content of the book, such as attentional vocatives (e.g., "Look!"), utterances concerning page turning (e.g., "Turn the page."), and beginning/closing remarks during the book

reading session (e.g., “Do you want to read this book with me?” and “The end.”) were omitted from the analysis.

All utterances were first divided into smaller segments based on the idea unit proposed by Kroll (1977), in terms of which an utterance is defined as “a chunk of information which is viewed by the speaker/writer cohesively as it is given a surface form” (1977, p. 89). According to this method, every new idea is considered a new unit. To determine a new idea, Kroll used a number of syntactic structures as operational definitions: (1) complete relative clauses when the relative pronoun is present, (2) phrases set off from the clause by commas, (3) verbal elements as objects, (4) reduced clauses in which a subordinator is followed by a non-finite verb, (5) and postnominal “-ing” phrases used as modifiers, absolutes, appositives, and verbals. For example, “Sue roared all the harder,/ She claimed I looked funny,/ clinging there,/ screaming.” (Kroll, 1977, p. 91) is considered four idea units. According to this method, repetition and repair are considered a single unit, as they only convey a single idea. For example, a parent’s string of speech during the book reading session, “That’s green. Green caterpillar, right? Green. Green.” may be divided into three units: “That’s green.”, “Green caterpillar, right?”, and “Green. Green.” This coding method was developed based on English conversations, but it also allows for more meaning-based coding and the coding of Japanese due to its lenient grammatical requirements.

After dividing all spoken utterances into idea units (hereinafter referred to as ‘units’), any unit in which a parent asked their child about their opinion of the book were categorized as *opinion-asking* utterances. Similarly, all utterances in which a parent enacted the characters was further labeled as an *enactment*. Through inductive coding, the enactments were subsequently divided into sub-categories based on the focus of each enactment. There were no instances of overlap, as each enactment was assigned to a single sub-category.

Table 4 is a comprehensive list of the units that were coded as enactments and their sub-categories, as well as opinion-asking. Notably, the Japanese enactments exhibited greater diversity compared to the English enactments. Among all the enactments listed in Table 4, American parents primarily enacted eating, hurting, and expressing enjoyment of food (“yummy”). The most prevalent form of enactment in both Japanese and English involved pretending to be the caterpillar and eating food. Enactments such as pretending to sleep in a cocoon and crying due to stomachache were exclusively observed in the Japanese samples. Both Japanese and American participants included enactments of sensations such as experiencing pain from stomachache and enjoying food.

Furthermore, Japanese parents also enacted sensations of hunger and warmth. Some instances were found where Japanese parents asked their children questions that only the caterpillar would know the answer to, such as “*oishī?*” (“Does it taste good?”), prompting the children to act out the role of the caterpillar. In certain cases, Japanese parents engaged in conversation with their children while pretending to be a caterpillar, greeting them with “*ohayō*” (“Good morning”) or introducing themselves as a caterpillar “*Yā hana-chan, futotcho aomushida yo*” (“Hi Hana-chan, I am a chubby caterpillar”).

Opinion-asking was more prevalent in the American group and was conveyed through various expressions.

Table 4*List of Enactments and Opinion-Asking Found in the Data⁶*

Type	Japanese
Enacting an action	
Eating	ぱくぱく <i>paku paku</i> , むしゃむしゃ <i>musha musha</i> , もぐもぐ <i>mogu mogu</i> , はむはむ <i>hamu hamu</i> , あむあむ <i>amu amu</i> (different variations of “chomp chomp”) Chomp chomp, nom nom, slurp slurp
Sleeping	ぐうぐう <i>Gū gū</i> (Zzzzz)
Crying	えんえん <i>en en</i> , えーんえーん <i>e:n e:n</i> , うえーんうえーん <i>ue:n ue:n</i> , いーんいーん <i>i:n i:n</i> (different variations of “boo hoo”)
Enacting a sensation	
Hurting	いたい <i>itai</i> , いたー <i>ita:</i> (different variations of “ow”); 食べすぎちゃった <i>tabe sugi chatta</i> (I ate too much), He’s going yegh::, Ow::, Ugh::, Oh::
Yummy	ああ美味しい <i>Ā oishī</i> (Ah, yummy), Mm:, yummy, yum
Warm	あったかい <i>attakai</i> (It’s warm)
Hungry	お腹減ったよ <i>onaka hetta yo</i> , お腹空いたよ <i>onaka suita yo</i> (both variations of “I’m hungry”); まだ食べたいよ <i>mada tabetai yo</i> (I still want to eat); 食べ物ないかな <i>tabemono nai ka na</i> (I wonder if there’s any food)
Enacting a conversation	
Making the child enact the caterpillar	おいしい? <i>Oishī?</i> (Is it tasty?), はいどうぞ <i>Hai dōzo</i> (Here you go), 食べないの? <i>Tabenai no?</i> (Aren’t you going to eat it?), 食べる? <i>Taberu?</i> (Do you want to eat it?)
Caterpillar talking to the child	お腹減ったよ <i>onaka hetta yo</i> , お腹空いたよ <i>onaka suita yo</i> (both variations of “I’m hungry”);

⁶ Henceforth, elongated vowels using the long dash in Japanese such as えーんえーん are annotated using a colon (*e:n e:n*). Long vowels such as かわいい are annotated using macrons over the vowels (*kawaiī*).

まだ食べたいよ *mada tabetai yo* (I still want to eat);
 食べ物ないかな *tabemono nai ka na* 'I wonder if
 there's any food)

Opinion-asking

面白かった? *Omoshiro katta?* (Was it interesting?)
 Did you like that book?, Did you like the book?, It's a
 good book?, How was that?, Five stars?, Do you like
 this story?, What do you think?, Pretty good?, Was that
 fun?

The units classified as enactments were subsequently coded with additional codes to indicate the timing of their occurrence during the book reading session. As shown in Table 5, the 22-page book was divided into 12 scenes based on the plot. If an enactment was used in between scenes, it was coded as belonging to the previous scene. As opinion-asking utterances occurred exclusively after completing the reading of the book, they were not assigned codes for the specific scenes in which they occurred.

Table 5

List of Scenes in Harapeko Aomushi and The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Scene	Plot
0	Title of the book
1	The caterpillar is still an egg
2	The sun rises and the egg hatches
3	On Monday he eats one apple
4	On Tuesday he eats two pears
5	On Wednesday he eats three plums
6	On Thursday he eats four strawberries
7	On Friday he eats five oranges
8	On Saturday he eats through many foods and has a stomachache
9	On Sunday he eats one leaf and feels better
10	The caterpillar is no longer hungry
11	The caterpillar turns into a cocoon
12	The caterpillar turns into a butterfly

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Influence of Demographics on Coded Utterances

A preliminary analysis utilized multiple regression analysis to exclude the influence of participants' demographic backgrounds on the study's findings, focusing instead on linguistic and age-related variables. Coded data from MaxQDA were exported to Excel and then uploaded to SPSS for statistical processing. Linear multiple regression with forced entry was applied, incorporating all independent variables into the model, separately analyzing the data for the American and Japanese parents and children concerning the demographic correlations of each utterance category.

Demographic information was quantified to facilitate statistical examination. The frequency of reading activities was measured on an interval scale, as detailed in Table 6, while the history of reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* or *Harapeko Aomushi*, educational background, and age were assessed using ordinal scales. Age categories were segmented into five-year intervals, ranging from a scale of 1 for readers aged 21–25 to 9 for those 61 and older. Gender was coded on a nominal scale: 0 for male and 1 for female. Participants who either did not disclose their demographic information or provided data incompatible with these categories were labeled as N/A.

Table 6

Scale for Conducting Multiple Regression Analysis on Demographics

Scale Type	Scale
Reading frequency	
Interval	14 = daily, 7 = 3–4 times per week, 3 = 1–2 times per week, 1 = once every 2 weeks, 0 = no reading habit at home

History of reading		
Ordinal		1 = never read it, 2 = read it 1–5 times, 3 = read it 6–10 times, 4 = read it 11 or more times
Reader's age		
Ordinal		1 = 21–25, 2 = 26–30, 3 = 31–35, 4 = 36–40, 5 = 41–45, 6 = 46–50, 7 = 51–55, 8 = 56–60, 9 = 61 and older
Reader's education		
Ordinal		2 = junior high school, 3 = high school, 4 = bachelor's degree, 5 = master's degree, 6 = doctorate degree
Reader's sex		
Nominal		0 = male, 1 = female
Child's sex		
Nominal		0 = male, 1 = female

Table 7 presents selected findings from the multiple regression analysis concerning the participants' demographic information and the proportion of opinion-asking among American participants. The analysis revealed no significant relationship between the participants' demographic backgrounds and their conversational contributions. Although the statistical analysis encompassed all variables and demographic factors (detailed in Appendix G), only the results in Table 7 indicate any correlation.

The model's low R-squared value and its non-significant p-value indicate a weak model fit, suggesting a negligible correlation between demographic factors and coded utterances. However, the significant association between the family's prior experience with reading the book ($p < 0.001$) and the reader's level of education ($p = 0.025$) with the frequency of opinion-seeking utterances implies that these variables' removal from the model would notably impact the regression equation's slope (β) and the model's fit (R-squared). Hence, despite a low R-squared, a significant β -value is crucial as it highlights how variations in demographic details correlate with changes in utterance frequency.

Upon examining Table 7, it can be concluded that despite a broadly insignificant correlation, the American reader's education and the family's reading history are linked to the proportion of opinion-seeking from parents. Parents who had more frequently read the book to their children tended to solicit the children's opinions less frequently, likely because they already had insights into the children's preferences. Additionally, higher educational levels in readers correlated with more frequent requests for children's opinions, though the effect was modest, as evidenced by a low R-squared ($R^2 = 0.099$) and β -value ($\beta = 0.186$). No significant correlations could be found for their Japanese counterparts.

Table 7

Regression Analysis: American Parents' Demographics and Opinion-Asking

	β	t	p	R^2	Adj. R^2	F	p
Child's sex	-0.056	-0.704	.482	0.099	0.057	2.347	.027*
Reading frequency	0.075	0.884	.378				
History of reading	-0.325	-3.730	.000***				
Child's age	-0.011	-0.134	.894				
Reader	-0.004	-0.050	.960				
Reader's education	0.186	2.267	.025*				
Reader's age	0.040	0.467	.641				

Notes. For the complete results, see Appendix G. R^2 = coefficient of determination. R^2 indicates how close the data are to the fitted regression line: $0.3 < R^2 < 0.5$ is considered mildly correlated, $0.5 < R^2 < 0.7$ is considered moderately correlated, and $R^2 > 0.7$ is considered strongly correlated. Adj. R^2 = adjusted coefficient of determination. A value closer to 1 indicates that the model explains a large portion of the variance in the dependent variable, considering the number of predictors, while a value near or below 0 indicates that the model does not improve the prediction over

the mean model. The probability of R^2 is shown in the $p(R^2)$ column; a probability of <0.05 is considered significant. $F = F$ test. A higher F -value indicates a greater degree of evidence against the null hypothesis. β = standardized coefficient. This indicates the correlation between the demographic factors and codes. The value ranges between $-1.0 < \beta < 1.0$. If a code is negatively correlated with a demographic detail, it means that the code increases when the demographic detail decreases. The correlation is stronger when it is closer to either end of the distribution. The probability of β is shown in the p column. $t = t$ statistic. This measures the degree of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable. A higher absolute value of the t -statistic indicates a greater likelihood that the coefficient is significantly different from zero.

$*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

4.4.2 Enactments

4.4.2.1 Correlation Between Parents' Enactment Proportion and Child's Age

Of the 105 Japanese participants who read to their children, 12 (11.4%) solely read the text without producing any extratextual utterances. Of the remaining 93 participants, 48 (51.6%) utilized enactments at least once. In comparison, of the 165 American participants, 11 (6.6%) did not produce any extratextual utterances. Of the remaining 154 participants, 43 (27.9%) used enactments at least once. These findings indicate that nearly twice as many Japanese parents used enactments during their book reading sessions compared to their American counterparts.

The parents' utilization of enactments (or lack thereof) was examined using a scatter plot to identify trends based on the children's ages. Figures 1 and 2 display the results, with each black dot representing a single sample. The vertical axes indicate the proportion of enactments, while the horizontal axes indicate the exact age of the child at the time of recording (in years and months).

As depicted in Figure 1, in the Japanese group, parental enactments constituted a larger proportion of all utterances during the preverbal phase, albeit with individual variations. The maximum proportion reached approximately 100% around 6 months of age, while parents of older children used a relatively smaller proportion of enactments. This suggests that Japanese parents engage their children in a significant amount of enactment from infancy and gradually decrease the proportion as the children grow older. By contrast, the utilization of enactments within the American group exhibited lower frequencies and proportions across all age groups. The highest observed ratio was 60% at the age of 2 years, while the majority of cases ranged from zero to 20%, without any discernible trend. Only four parents with preverbal children employed enactments, with the majority of enactments being directed at verbal children, particularly after the age of 3 years.

Figure 1

Descriptive Data of Japanese Parents' Utterances and Use of Enactment

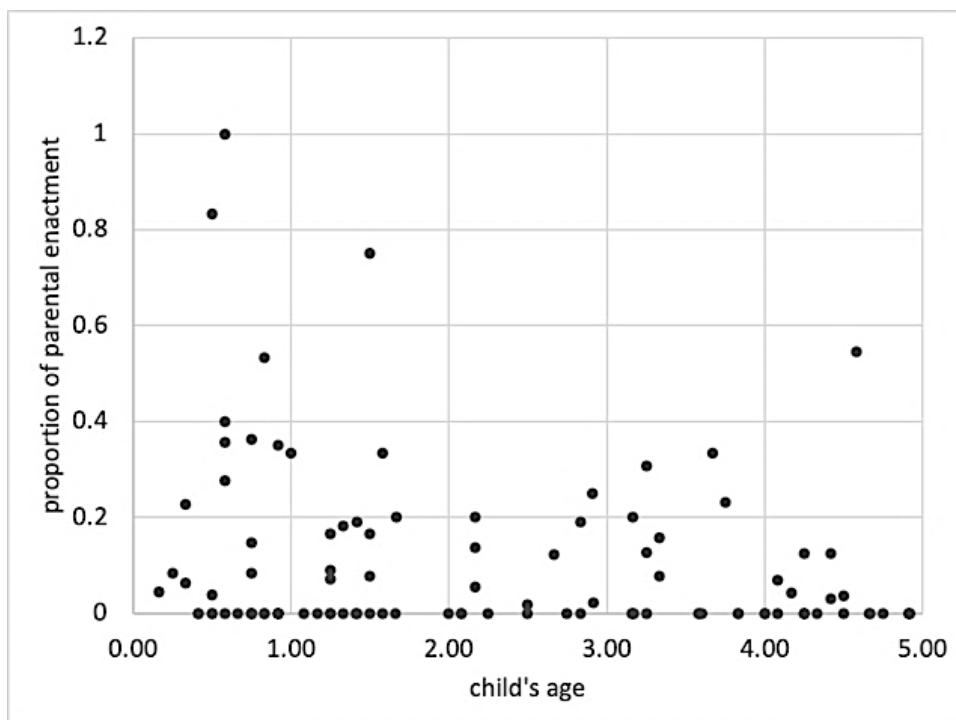
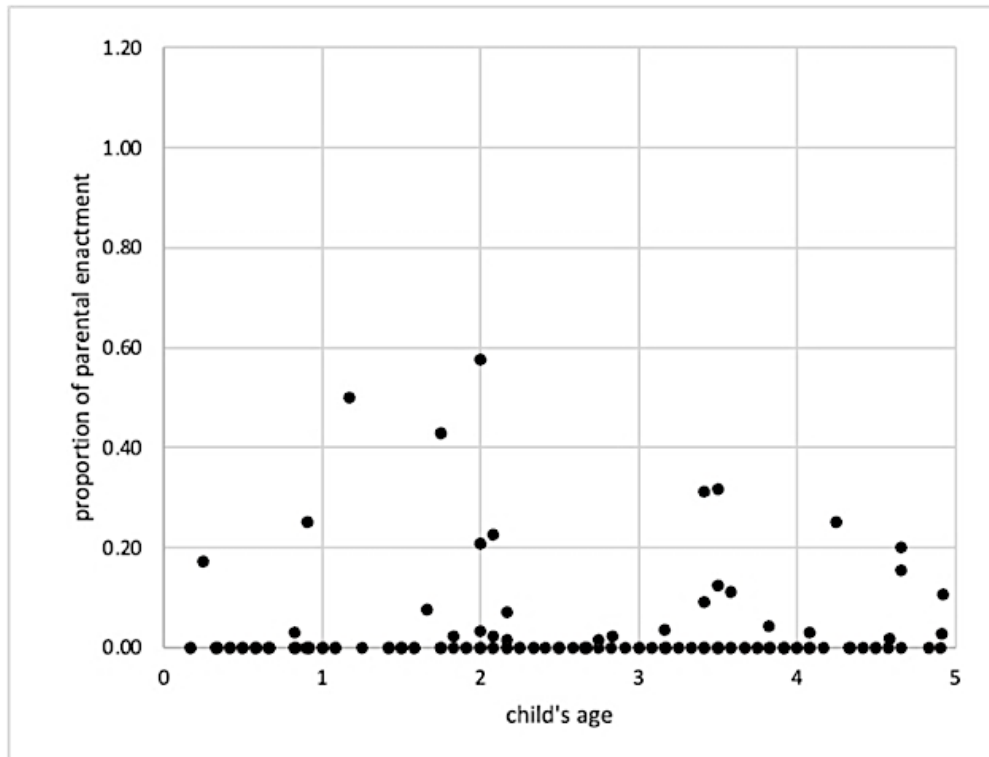


Figure 2

Descriptive Data of American Parents' Utterances and Use of Enactment



4.4.1.2 Parents' Enactment by Category and Scene

Parents not only adjusted the proportion of enactments according to their children's age, but also used enactments at different moments during book reading to refer to different actions and sensations. Table 8 and Table 9 present the total number of times the American and Japanese parents used enactments by category and scene.

Table 8*Japanese Parents' Use of Enactment by Category and Scene*

Type	Scene												Total (Ratio)		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11			12
Enacting an action															
Eating	1	0	0	24	16	18	15	13	5	11	0	0	3	106 (.59)	129
Crying	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	22 (.12)	(.72)
Sleeping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1 (.60)	
Enacting a sensation															
Hurting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	2	0	0	1	15 (.84)	31
Hungry	0	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8 (.45)	(.18)
Yummy	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	7 (.39)	
Warm	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (.60)	
Enacting a conversation															
Character talking to child	0	2	2	0	0	1	8	0	0	1	1	0	0	15 (.84)	18
Making the child enact a character	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3 (.16)	(.10)
Total	1	3	14	29	20	19	24	15	47	19	1	2	34	178	

Table 9*American Parents' Use of Enactment by Category and Scene*

Type	Scene												Total (Ratio)		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Enacting an action															
Eating	0	0	1	7	7	6	4	7	9	6	0	5	0	52 (.70)	52 (.70)
Enacting a sensation															
Hurting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	9 (.12)	22 (.30)
Yummy	0	0	0	4	2	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	13 (.18)	
Total	0	0	1	11	9	7	5	9	21	6	0	5	0	74	

4.4.1.3 Enacting an action

As indicated in Table 8 and Table 9, approximately 70% of the enactments across both Japanese and American samples consist of actions. Among these action enactments, the most commonly used form in the Japanese sample was pretending to eat, accounting for 106 out of 178 enactments (59.6%). This type of enactment was also the sole action category observed in the American sample. Eating enactments were predominantly employed from Scene 3, where the caterpillar begins consuming food, up to Scene 9, where the caterpillar becomes full. This enactment typically occurred at the end of each scene, immediately after the parent had read from the book, as seen in Excerpt 1 (line 2) and Excerpt 2 (line 3).

In the American sample, there were five cases in which parents pretended to eat when the caterpillar emerged from the cocoon. However, no such cases were observed in the Japanese sample. This difference is likely attributable to translation variations, as in English, the caterpillar *nibbles* its way out of the cocoon, whereas in Japanese, it simply *comes out* (*dete kita*) of the cocoon.

Similar to Excerpt 1, in some cases involving older children, the child initiated the enactment, and the parent would join in by also pretending to eat. However, such occurrences were infrequent, observed in only two out of 105 dyads in the Japanese sample and one out of 165 dyads in the American sample. The high frequency of enactments pretending to eat was expected, given that the book revolves around the caterpillar's consumption of various foods, providing ample opportunities for parents to engage in pretend eating while reading.

Excerpt 1

Japanese Dyad Enacting Eating (child's age = 4;7)⁷

- 1 MOT: あおむしは緑の葉っぱを食べました。
Aomushi wa midori no happa o tabemashita.
caterpillar TOP green GEN leaf ACC eat-PAST.
The caterpillar ate the green leaves.
- 2 MOT: ぱくぱくぱく
Paku paku paku
Chomp chomp chomp
Chomp chomp chomp.
- 3 CHI: ぱくぱく。それでここから
Paku paku. Sore de koko kara
Munch munch. with-that here from
Munch munch. And then from here
- 4 CHI: それでここから降りる。
Sore de koko kara oriru.
with-that here from descend-INF.
And then descend from here.

Excerpt 2

American Parent Enacting Eating (child's age = 4;11)

- 1 MOT: And the next day was Sunday again!
- 2 The caterpillar ate through one nice green leaf.
- 3 Chomp, chomp, chomp, chomp, chomp, and he felt much better.

In addition to pretending to eat, there were instances in the Japanese sample where parents also pretended to cry. These were exclusive to the Japanese sample.

The enactment of crying accounted for 12.4% of all enactments (22 out of 178

⁷ Henceforth, all spontaneous utterances are underlined. The unmarked utterances are direct readings of the text in the book.

enactments). These enactments of crying occurred exclusively at the climax of the story when the caterpillar experiences a stomachache from overeating. For example, in Excerpt 3, during an interaction between a 3-month-old Japanese child and their mother, the mother initially reads from the book: *Sono ban aomushi wa, onaka ga itakute nakimashita* (That night, the caterpillar cried because he had a stomachache) in line 1. Immediately after, she shifts her focus by saying *en en en* (boo hoo boo hoo boo hoo) in line 2, indicating her transition from narrating the story to expressing the caterpillar's feelings of sadness due to the stomachache. This shift emphasizes the emotional aspect of the character rather than solely focusing on the sensation of a stomachache. It highlights the parent's aim to scaffold their child's understanding and empathy towards the caterpillar's emotional state. This use of enactment demonstrates the mother's intention to engage her child in a deeper understanding of the caterpillar's emotions and foster empathy towards the character.

Excerpt 3

Japanese Parent Enacting Crying (child's age = 0;3)

- 1 MOT: そのばんあおむしはおなかが痛くて泣きました。
 Sono ban aomushi wa onaka ga itakute nakimashita.
 that night caterpillar TOP stomach NOM painful-TE cry-PAST.
 That night, the caterpillar cried because its stomach hurt.
- 2 えんえんえん。
 En en en.
 sob sob sob.
 sob sob sob.

4.4.1.4 Enacting a Sensation

In addition to enacting actions, parents also frequently referred to the caterpillar's sensations, such as its liking for food, *oishī* (yummy), and having a stomachache, *itai yo* (ouch). Sensation enactments were comparatively less common

than action enactments in both Japanese participants (17.4%) and American participants (29.8%). Since there were only a limited number of instances in which parents enacted sensations, it was not possible to compare individual patterns of sensation enactments, such as hunger, pain, warmth, and tastiness, to determine which pattern was used for particular ages. However, based on the available data, it can be roughly inferred that in the Japanese sample, pain was enacted more frequently for pre-verbal children under the age of 1 year and 6 months (10 cases) compared to children aged 1 year and 7 months and older (five cases). On the other hand, tastiness was enacted more frequently for verbal children over the age of 1 year and 7 months (five cases) than for preverbal children (three cases). In the American sample, enactments for pain and tastiness were evenly distributed from ages 1 year and 5 months to 4 years and 11 months. However, the sample size is too small to generalize these findings.

Almost all instances of hurt enactments in the Japanese sample, and all instances in the American sample, occurred when the caterpillar had a stomachache, which was the same scene in which many parents pretended to cry in Japanese (12 out of 15 instances in the Japanese sample). A typical example of how parents enacted pain in Japanese is shown in Excerpt 4 and Excerpt 5. In Excerpt 4, line 2, the mother embeds *ita:i* (o:w) into the text while reading from the book. The original text is *onaka ga itakute nakimashita* (He cried because his stomach hurt), but the mother altered *itakute* (because it hurt) to *itai ita:i* (ow o:w) in order to change the descriptive text into an enactment. Although the mother had the option to enact either crying or pain, she chose to enact the sensation of pain by repeating *itai* (ow). The child then repeated their mother's enactment in line 3, and the mother affirmed it by repeating *itai itai* again in line 4 before moving on to the next page (line 3). In the case of slightly older children, as shown in Excerpt 5, the mother enacted both crying and pain before immediately continuing to read the next page. In both excerpts, the

enactment shifted the focus of the book reading from the plot of the caterpillar overeating to the caterpillar's personal experience of pain and sadness.

Excerpt 4

Japanese Dyad Enacting Pain (child's age = 1;5)

- 1 MOT: そのばんあおむしは、
Sono ban aomushi wa
that evening caterpillar TOP
That night the caterpillar
- 2 おなかがいたいいたーいってなきました。
onaka ga itai ita:i tte nakimashita.
stomach NOM painful painful-QUOT cry-PAST.
cried "Ow o:w"
- 3 CHI: いたーい。
Ita:i.
painful-EXTEND.
O:w.
- 4 MOT: いたいいたい。 つぎのひはまたにちようび。
Itai itai. Tsugi no hi wa mata nichiyōbi.
painful painful. next GEN day TOP again Sunday.
Ow ow. The next day was Sunday again.

Excerpt 5

Japanese Parent Enacting Pain (child's age = 3;9)

- 1 MOT: そのばん あおむしは
Sono ban aomushi wa
That evening caterpillar TOP
That night the caterpillar
- 2 おなかがいたくてなきました。
onaka ga itakute nakimashita.
stomach NOM painful-and cried.
cried because he had a stomachache.

- 3 えーんえーん、お腹痛い。泣いてる。えーん、えーん、えーん。
 E:n e:n, onaka itai.Nai teru. E:n, e:n, e:n.
 Wah-wah, stomach hurt. Is-crying. Wah wah, wah.
 Boo hoo, my stomach hurts. He's crying. Boo hoo.
- 4 つぎのひはまたにちようび。
 Tsugi no hi wa mata Nichiyōbi
 Next NOM day TOP again Sunday.
 The next day was Sunday again.

In the American sample, a similar interaction can be observed, but the child's response differs slightly. In Excerpt 6, the parent pretends to have a stomachache by saying "Ugh" after reading from the book in line 1. Similar to the Japanese sample, this enactment shifts the focus of the book reading from the plot of the caterpillar overeating to the caterpillar's personal experience of pain. However, in this case, the child responds by evaluating the caterpillar's decisions and mentioning that it shouldn't have eaten all of that food in line 2. The mother acknowledges her child's opinion by repeating it while casually correcting grammatical errors in line 3. Compared to the Japanese examples in Excerpts 4 and 5, it can be observed that the parent's initiative to reinforce or emphasize the enactment is relatively weaker.

Excerpt 6

American Dyad Enacting Pain (child's age = 3;2)

- 1 MOT: That night he had a...? Stomach-ache. Ugh...
 2 CHI: He shouldn't eat all the food!
 3 MOT: He shouldn't have eaten all that food.
 4 CHI: Once upon a time he eat a leaf.
 5 MOT: The next day was Sunday again.

Parents also enacted tastiness to redirect their children's focus from the plot to the character's sensations. In Excerpt 7, the Japanese mother enacted eating pears in

line 1 to which the child responded by also pretending to eat the pictures on the following page (line 2). The mother then mentioned that her child was supposed to eat the pears first (line 3), leading the child to enact eating the pears in line 4. The mother acknowledged her child's enactment by affirming with *so* (yes) and additionally enacted that the pear is *oishī* (yummy) in line 5. In this excerpt, the mother went beyond simply adopting the character's perspective of eating the food; she also enacted the caterpillar's sensation of enjoying it.

Enactments of tastiness also occurred in the American sample, although in a simpler form. In Excerpt 8, for instance, the father says “yum yum yum yum” in line 2 after reading that the caterpillar ate two pears. In response, the child asked about the meaning of *pears*, vocalizing the word with a rising intonation in line 3. However, the father met this with zero uptake and proceeded with reading from the book without acknowledging the child's inquiry. Here again, it can be observed that the enactment was more pronounced in the Japanese sample.

Excerpt 7

Japanese Dyad Enacting Tastiness (child's age = 3;3)

- 1 MOT : かようび、なしをふたつたべました。あむ、あむ。
 Kayōbi, nashi o futatsu tabemashita. Amu, amu.
 Tuesday, pear ACC two ate. Chew, chew.
 On Tuesday, he ate two pears. Chomp chomp.

- 2 CHI : あむあむ。
 Amu amu.
 Chomp chomp.
 Chomp chomp.

- 3 MOT : そっちはまだだよ。なしだよ。
 Sotchi wa madada yo. Nashida yo.
 That-side TOP not-yet COP yo. Pear COP yo.
 Not that side yet. Pears.

- 4 CHI : あむあむ。
 Amu amu.
 Chomp chomp.
 Chomp chomp.
- 5 MOT : そ、おいしい。 やっぱり おなかはぺっこぺこ。
 So, oishī. Yappari onaka wa pekkopeko.
 Yes, delicious. As expected stomach TOP hungry.
 Yes, yummy. He was still hungry.

Excerpt 8

American Parent Enacting Tastiness (child's age = 2;1)

- 1 FAT: On Tuesday he ate through two pears!
 2 Two pears! Yum yum yum yum!
 3 CHI: Pears?
 4 FAT: On Wednesday... he ate through three plums.

4.4.1.5 Enacting a Conversation

A more sophisticated form of parental enactments involved parents extending their usage of enactments to communicate with their children while pretending to be the caterpillar. Enactments of conversations were only found in the Japanese sample.

There were two main forms in which parents enacted conversations. The more common form involved parents taking on the role of the caterpillar to interact with their children. This included greeting them, expressing gratitude, and introducing themselves as the caterpillar. In these cases, children were encouraged to participate by recognizing their parents as the caterpillar. Less frequently, parents prompted their children to enact the caterpillar by asking questions that only the caterpillar could answer, such as “Is it tasty?” or “Do you want to eat it?”, and by presenting the children with imaginary food through physical gestures. In these instances, parents were eliciting a response from their children from the perspective of the character.

Both types of enactments shared the common feature of parents anticipating some form of reaction to the enactment.

Excerpt 9 provides an example of the caterpillar talking to the child. In this excerpt, a Japanese mother is reading to her 3-month-old daughter. She begins by reading from the book, saying, *Chippokedatta aomushi wa hora, kon'nani ōkikute futotcho ni natta nodesu* (The small caterpillar became a big fat caterpillar) in lines 1–2. She then points to the caterpillar and repeats the words *futotcho aomushi* (chubby caterpillar) in line 3. Continuing in line 4, she says, *Yā hana-chan, futotcho aomushida yo* (Hi Hana, I'm a chubby caterpillar), before resuming reading from the book. In this interaction, the mother temporarily steps out of her role as the reader and enacts the caterpillar by assigning it dialogue and addressing her daughter from the perspective of the caterpillar. Given that the child is only 3 months old, the mother most likely does not expect her baby to understand the words spoken, but the use of enactments highlights the fixed expression *Yā [name], [name] da yo* ("Hi [name], I'm [name]"), commonly used in self-introductions.

Excerpt 9

Japanese Parent Enacting a Conversation (child's age = 0;3)

- 1 MOT: ちっぽけだったあおむしはほら、
Chippokedatta aomushi wa hora,
tiny was caterpillar TOP look,
The small caterpillar look,
- 2 こんなに大きくて太っちゃになったのです。
kon'nani ōkikute futotcho ni natta nodesu.
this much big and chubby became NOM is
became this big and chubby.
- 3 ふとっちょあおむし。ふとっちょあおむし。
Futotcho aomushi. Futotcho aomushi.
Chubby caterpillar. Chubby caterpillar.

Chubby caterpillar. Chubby caterpillar.

- 4 やあ花ちゃん、太っちょあおむしだよ。
Yā hana-chan, futotcho aomushida yo.
Hey Hana-chan, chubby caterpillar COP yo.
Hi Hana, I'm a chubby caterpillar.
- 5 まもなくあおむしは
Mamonaku aomushi wa
Soon caterpillar TOP
Soon, the caterpillar
- 6 さなぎになって何日も眠りました。
sanagi ni natte nannichi mo nemurimashita.
pupa become and several days also slept.
built a cocoon and slept for many days.

With children that were already verbal, Japanese parents continued pretending to eat food, cry, and have stomachaches as they did with their pre-verbal children; however, they also began using enactment to involve their children in role-play routines and teach fixed expressions, such as *hai dōzo* (Here you go.). In Excerpt 10, after the mother reads to her 2-years and 2-months-old child from the book that the caterpillar ate two pears (line 1), she proceeds to pretend to feed the pears to her son by picking at the illustrations with her fingertips and bringing them to her son's mouth while saying *hai dōzo* (Here you go), which is commonly used at the dinner table when serving food at home (line 2). While her son pretends to eat the pear, his mother adds sound effects by saying the words *paku paku paku* (chomp chomp chomp) and offers her son another bite by saying *hai dōzo* again (line 2). The son replies by saying, as the caterpillar, that the imaginary pear he just ate was sour (line 3).

The mother's initial *hai dōzo* in this excerpt serves as the backdrop for a playful mother-and-child act centered around the customs of serving and eating food. The mother's use of *dōzo* demonstrates the polite way to offer food to someone, implying that the proper reaction is to accept and eat the food rather than to refuse it.

Throughout the skit, the mother, taking on the role of the host, consistently offers more food the moment it seems the child, assuming the part of the guest, has completed their serving. It's expected that the guest, in this scenario the child, should offer compliments or make polite remarks about the food as it is being served to them. Through this enactment, the mother creates a scenario that allows the child to practice and familiarize themselves with social rituals and set phrases.

Excerpt 10

Japanese Parent Making the Child Enact a Character (child's age = 2;2)

- 1 MOT: 火曜日なしを二つ食べました。
Kayōbi nashi o futatsu tabemashita.
Tuesday pear ACC two ate.
On Tuesday, he ate two pears.

- 2 なし。はいどうぞ。ぱくぱくぱく。はいどうぞ。
Nashi. Hai dōzo. Paku paku paku. Hai dōzo.
Pear. Yes here you go. Chomp chomp chomp. Yes here you go.
Pears. Here you go, chomp chomp chomp. Here you go.

- 3 CHI: なし。すっぱい。
Nashi. Suppai.
Pear. Sour.
Pear. It's sour.

In this study, the emphasis on social routines continued when reading books to 3-year-olds. In Excerpt 11, a mother says *gochisōsamadeshita*. (Thank you for the meal) to her child (3;3) after she reads from the book that the caterpillar felt much better after eating a green leaf (line 3). This is also a common phrase that Japanese children are encouraged to say after meals. The mother's enactment conveys that saying grace after meals is worth being added and highlighted in the book reading activity.

Excerpt 11

Japanese Parent Enacting Social Routines as Conversation (child's age = 3;3)

- 1 MOT: もうあおむしははらぺこじゃなくなりました。
Mō aomushi wa harapeko janaku narimashita.
Already caterpillar TOP hungry is-not became.
Now the caterpillar wasn't hungry anymore.
- 2 おなかの具合もすっかり良くなりました。
Onaka no guai mo sukkari yoku narimashita.
Stomach's condition also completely good became.
His stomach felt much better.
- 3 ごちそうさまでした。
Gochisōsamadeshita.
Feast was-thankful-for.
Thank you for the meal.

For Japanese children over the age of 4, enactments were no longer used for imitating crying, practicing routines, or pretending to have a stomachache. The ratio of enactments significantly decreased compared to the reading sessions with younger children, and the only expressions used were to pretend to eat. Enactments were no longer one of the central techniques that parents employed during book reading sessions with their children at this stage.

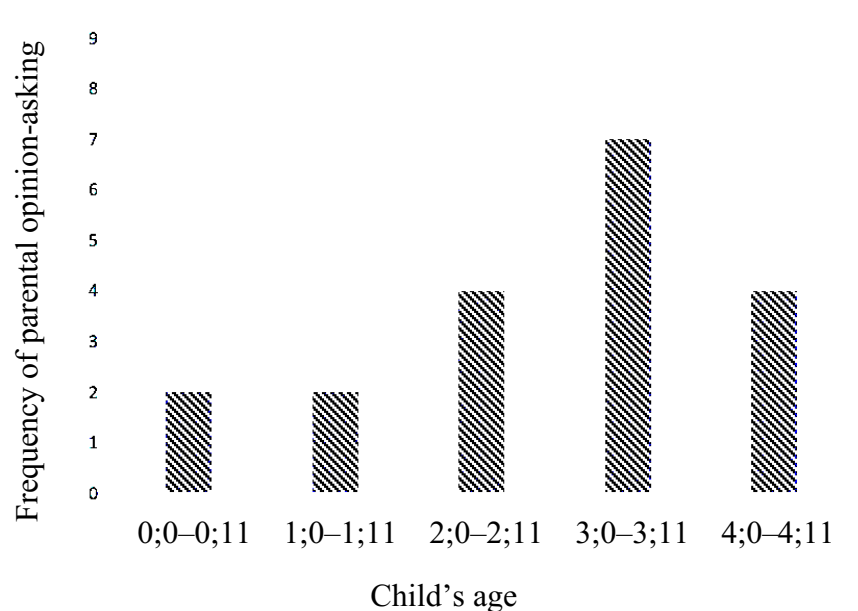
4.4.3 Opinion-Asking

Of the 154 American participants that produced extratextual utterances, 19 (12%) asked their children their opinion of the book after the book reading session. As some parents asked multiple times, there were a total of 27 utterances that were coded as opinion-asking. Compared to the American participants, only one Japanese parent out of the 93 participants that made extratextual utterances asked their child's opinion. Figure 3 displays the numbers of American parents who utilized opinion-asking at the end of the book reading session, organized according to the age of the child. The

horizontal axis represents the child's age, with each bar representing a one-year age group. The vertical axis indicates the number of dyads in which parental opinion-asking was observed. While it is important to acknowledge that further data are necessary to establish broader generalizability, these results suggest that parental opinion-asking is a distinctive characteristic of shared book reading in American households, or at the very least, a less prevalent practice within Japanese shared book reading sessions. Based on the trend illustrated in Figure 3, some American parents may begin encouraging their children to express their opinions from infancy, and continue increasing such scaffolding opportunities until it peaks at the age of 3.

Figure 3

Frequency of American Parents' Opinion-Asking



The most commonly used form of opinion-asking was the phrase “Did you like the book?”, with slight variations such as “Did you like that/it?” and “Did you like *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*?” This particular expression accounted for 55.5% (15 out of 27) of all opinion-asking statements. These, combined with other polar

interrogative questions as in “Was that fun?” and “It’s a good book?”, constituted 77.7% of all opinion-asking utterances (21 out of 27). Comparatively, open-ended questions were less frequently used, making up 22.3% of all statements (6 out of 27). All except one of the open-ended questions were phrased as “What do you think?”, while the remaining one was “How was that?” It was expected that open-ended questions would primarily be used by parents of older children, as polar questions are simpler to answer and require less cognitive effort. However, this assumption was proven wrong. Out of the six instances of open-ended questions, four were directed at children aged 2 and under.

One noteworthy characteristic observed among parents interacting with pre-verbal children is their inclination to rephrase their inquiries multiple times, employing an approach that commences with an open-ended question, such as “What do you think?”, before transitioning to polar questions. In Excerpt 12, the mother consistently employs these expressions with her 7-month-old infant, repeatedly inquiring about their opinion of the book using both polar and open-ended questions. After she finishes reading the last line in the book (line 2), the mother initiates the conversation by asking, “What do you think?” and promptly follows up with the query, “Did you like that book? Yeah? What about this?” (lines 3–5). This sequence of interrogatives serves to elicit the expression of preferences from the infant and fosters a cognitive framework in which the act of book reading is not regarded as a passive endeavor characterized solely by the parent’s recitation, but rather as an interactive process that prompts the child to assess the book and articulate their opinions.

Similarly, in Excerpt 13, a father to a 1-year-old child initially asks, “How was that?” Subsequently, the father refines his query into a polar question, asking, “Pretty good?” and further modifies it to “Five stars?”, thereby introducing a rating system to discern the child’s level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the book. This progressive rephrasing of the question demonstrates the father’s attentiveness to

extracting specific evaluative feedback from his young child, despite his child still being linguistically undeveloped and incapable of answering these questions. In Excerpt 14, the father employs a similar expression to gauge the child's response to the reading experience. Initially, he poses the question, "Was that fun?" (line 3), inquiring about the overall reading experience. Subsequently, the father narrows down his question to "Did you like that book?" and then further points out specific aspects, such as the food and the caterpillars, which may have captured the child's particular interest (lines 5–6).

Excerpt 12

American Parent's Opinion-asking (child's age = 0;7)

1 MOT: Then he nibbled a hole in the cocoon, pushed his way out
2 and(0.2) He was a beautiful butterfly::!
3 Wow, [name]! What do you think?
4 He's a beautiful butterfly! Wow buddy!
5 Did you like that book? Yeah? What about this?
6 Huh. Wow. Wow. Do you see the apple? And the blueberries?
7 Oh, those are plums. Never mind. Yeah?
8 Wow buddy, can you turn the pages?
9 Wow. Yeah. Good job, buddy. And there's strawberries.
10 Yeah. Wow! And there's pears. Huh!
11 The end. Good job, buddy!

Excerpt 13

American Parent's Opinion-asking (child's age = 1;0)

1 FAT: Then he nibbled a hole in the cocoon,
2 pushed his way out and... He was a beautiful butterfly!
3 The end. Done. How was that? Pretty good? Five stars?

Excerpt 14

American Parent's Opinion-asking (child's age = 0;10)

- 1 FAT: And... He was a beautiful butterfly!_
2 Yayyyy! See his pretty wings?
3 All the colours? The end. Was that fun?
4 Did you like that book, [name]?
5 You like seeing all the food? All the caterpillars?
6 Yeah, that's the sun!

In contrast to the repeated questioning observed in interactions with pre-verbal children, parents of older children only asked for their opinions once. Among the 11 children aged above 2 years and 6 months, all but one responded to their parents' inquiries, prompting reciprocal exchanges. A typical exchange can be observed in Excerpt 15, in which the mother initiates the interaction by asking her child whether they liked the book (line 1). Subsequently, the child responds with a positive affirmation, stating "Yeah" in line 2, and further expresses a desire to read the book again.

Excerpt 15

American Parent's Opinion-asking (child's age = 3;1)

- 1 MOT: You like the book?
2 CHI: Yeah. Can we read it (0.1) can we read it again?
3 MOT: Again?
4 CHI: Yeah.

4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 Cultural Variances in Speech Style

Quantitative analysis indicated that Japanese parents frequently engage in enactments with their infants. These enactments were predominantly observed with pre-verbal children, gradually diminishing as the children aged, and virtually disappeared by the time they reached 5 years old. The most common type of enactment involved actions, such as pretending to eat the food depicted in the book. Additionally, enactments of crying were often noted, a feature not present in the American dataset. These enactments of crying represent a shift from physical to emotional elements within the story. With the older children, the practice of enacting social routines became apparent, marking another distinct aspect of the Japanese dataset.

Conversely, it is evident that enactment receives relatively less attention from American parents compared to their Japanese counterparts. In the American dataset, enactments predominantly centered on actions such as eating or expressing pain, whereas other behaviors, such as crying or interacting through dialogue with the child, were conspicuously missing.

This difference might be attributed to the functional role of enactments in shared book reading by American parents. Specifically, the incorporation of sound effects and dramatized expressions in English tend to aim at intensifying the narrative's pivotal scenes. For instance, when narrating *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, American parents may emphasize the act of eating or the caterpillar's discomfort, thereby spotlighting crucial moments within the story. This strategy implies a selective application of enactments to highlight essential aspects of the narrative, rather than the comprehensive use of enactments for a fully immersive storytelling experience. It was observed that American parents are more likely to engage their

children in discussions about the book, asking for their children's opinions more frequently than Japanese parents.

This variation may reflect the underlying cultural divergences in communication styles. Research has shown that interactions among Americans often prioritize asking questions, maintaining equal participation and projecting intellectual competence (Shigemitsu, 2015). For instance, Toda, Fogel, and Kawai (1990) observed that American mothers are more likely to use polar (yes/no) questions with their 3-month-old infants than Japanese mothers. By contrast, Japanese culture often views the lack of self-expression positively (Nakanishi, 1986; Yang, 2011). Furthermore, as highlighted in earlier discussions, Japanese parents are known to cultivate empathy in their children, encouraging them to cooperate and harmonize with others in society. Japanese preschools place a significant emphasis on emotional development as a key objective (Hayashi et al., 2009). One of the methods employed to achieve this goal involves specific practices such as expressing emotions on behalf of others and speaking to inanimate objects as if they were alive, serving as empathy training methods (Burdelski, 2019). Enactments during shared book reading can be considered an extension of this cultural practice, with parents playing a different character so that their children can better understand how others act or feel by observing their parents' acting.

The internalization of these different speech styles by the children is demonstrated in the excerpts provided in this chapter. In Excerpt 6, following the parent's exclamation of "Ugh" in response to the caterpillar's stomachache, the 3-year and 2-month-old child proceeded to evaluate the caterpillar's actions, asserting that it should not have consumed such a large quantity of food. This response from the child, given that the plot's enhancement had concluded and that the "Ugh" served no further purpose, suggests a demonstration of the child's comprehension of the plot. Notably, in the Japanese context, this same scene often prompted many parents to continue

pretending to cry, emphasizing their empathy with the caterpillar rather than critically evaluating its actions. Thus, Excerpt 6 serves as a compelling example of how the child has already internalized a speech style that deems the expression of opinions appropriate for both parent and child.

4.5.2 Scaffolding Beyond the ZPD to Pre-Verbal Children

An intriguing finding emerged regarding the practices of American parents actively soliciting feedback from infants on picture books, along with Japanese parents' preference for frequent enactments with their infants. Among the American participants, parents persistently asked their infants questions, despite the infants' apparent inability to respond. These parents dedicated time to rephrasing their questions multiple times. This practice of breaking down questions likely does not enhance the infants' understanding or their ability to respond at such an early age. Instead, this approach may be aimed at modeling a variety of expressions for soliciting opinions and underscoring the importance of these interactions for future conversations, when the infants are more likely to engage and respond.

Likewise, Japanese parents seem to immerse their children in frequent enactments, regardless of the children's current level of understanding. For instance, in Excerpt 9, it seems improbable that a 3-month-old infant could grasp the immediate shift from the parent reading the book to embodying a character with the line, "Hi Hana, I'm a chubby caterpillar." The change in voice and the implication of taking on the caterpillar's role is most likely beyond the infant's comprehension at this age.

Interpreting these parental practices through the lens of scaffolding, it might seem at first glance that parents engaging in complex enactments or seeking feedback from infants are not directly scaffolding, given that such activities appear to go beyond the infants' immediate comprehension capabilities. This could be mistakenly viewed merely as aimless parental vocalizations. Toda, Fogel, and Kawai (1990) have

observed that maternal speech to infants at the one-word stage is more complex and conversational compared to speech directed at older infants. Initially, parents may not aim to teach directly; their speech evolves to become slower and more simplified as children grow, adapting to direct scaffolding needs. Yet, considering the extensive research on early scaffolding and the multifaceted ways parents can subconsciously socialize their children into societal norms, it is unlikely that parents engage in these practices without purpose. It is more probable that this early exposure acts as foundational scaffolding, preparing children for skills and societal expectations they will encounter later.

Indeed, as children grow older, even their brief responses, such as “Yeah” or “It’s cool,” when parents solicit opinions, indicate that the early immersion in opinion-asking and enactments has laid groundwork. Through repeated exposure from an early age, children learn that shared book reading is interactive and that they are expected to evaluate the content and express their opinions post-reading. This process instills a broader realization that their input is valued, even in scenarios that might seem one-sided. Thus, such early practices foster a communicative environment where expressing opinions is not just accepted but encouraged, nurturing a speech style that values open exchange and feedback.

If this is the case, it suggests that scaffolding beyond the ZPD is effective, contrary to what has been posited by earlier research. DeLoache and DeMendoza (1987) conducted a study with 30 mother–infant pairs, with infants aged 12–18 months, and concluded that parents tend to scaffold within the realms of what their children already know, opting to explain rather than question concepts that are outside the child’s existing knowledge base. Similarly, Danis, Bernald, and Leproux (2000) conducted research on a sample of 17 French-speaking parent–child dyads with children aged 22–42 months. They observed that parents would elevate the complexity of their speech to stretch beyond their children’s current capabilities but

within a reachable distance, thereby enhancing their children's linguistic responses. These findings align with Vygotsky's theory of the ZPD, supporting the view that effective parental scaffolding occurs within this zone and has immediate impacts on learning.

However, the insights from this study challenge the traditional understanding by suggesting that parental utterances that far exceed a child's current cognitive abilities can still serve as a preparatory form of scaffolding for future learning. This implies that even when parental speech appears to surpass what children can understand or respond to at the moment, it can lay the groundwork for more effective and targeted scaffolding later on. Essentially, this broader application of scaffolding acts as an anticipatory step, preparing children for subsequent learning opportunities and cognitive development.

4.5.3 The Age of Three: A Turning Point in Reading and Development

This study highlights the age of 3 as a pivotal milestone in shared book reading across both American and Japanese groups. Japanese parents notably reduce their use of enactments with children around 3 years old, seldom using these with children over 4. Similarly, the peak of American parents' practice of soliciting opinions at the end of a book reading session coincides with the age of 3. Despite the differences in scaffolding techniques between American and Japanese parents, the age of three emerges as a critical transition point in both cultures, marking a shift in parental engagement strategies. This shift may be partly attributed to developments in children's theory of mind. By the age of 3 to 4, most neurotypical children begin to understand and empathize with the perspectives and emotions of others (Hoffman, 2000; Rall & Harris, 2000). This period is crucial for book reading, as it establishes the foundation for connecting with fictional characters and for forming personal opinions and perspectives.

In a longitudinal study by Brown and Dunn (1991), children as young as 24 months started to express their feelings, though initially focused on their immediate desires. By 36 months, these children began to show an interest in the emotions of others and referenced people's desires in a wider context, including past events, to articulate their feelings based on those of others. This cognitive development, coupled with the extensive scaffolding provided by parents from infancy, suggests that by the age of 3, children in this study no longer required the same level of scaffolding to form basic opinions, grasp emotional concepts, and understand social routines such as saying grace before and after meals.

4.6 Summary

This chapter examined the utilization of enactments and opinion-asking practices by parent-child dyads to elucidate the timing, frequency, and motivations behind these practices during shared picture book reading sessions. The participants consisted of Japanese parent-child dyads (children's age = 0;2-4;11, $n = 105$ pairs) and American parent-child dyads (children's age = 0;2-4;11, $n = 165$ pairs). Video recordings were made while parents read either *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* or its Japanese translated version, *Harapeko Aomushi*, to their children in their respective native languages. The recorded videos were transcribed, coded, and subsequently subjected to graphical and statistical analyses.

The findings demonstrate distinct cultural practices. The Japanese parents employed enactments as a form of scaffolding, particularly during interactions with their infants. Quantitative examination revealed a gradual decline in Japanese parental enactments as the children's age increased, reaching a peak during infancy and diminishing almost entirely by the age of 5. Enactments serve as a means to enhance empathy in children by enabling them to adopt the perspectives of characters and comprehend the emotions of these characters. Through the use of enactments,

Japanese parents emphasize indirect speech, empathetic expressions, and social routines to cultivate empathy and cooperation within their society. As the children progressed in age, the occurrence of enactments progressively decreased, suggesting that Japanese parents immerse their children in a rich array of enactments from an early age and subsequently dismantle this scaffolding as children's linguistic and cognitive capacities develop.

By contrast, American parents emphasized self-expression during shared book reading, manifested through the act of asking for their children's opinions following the book reading activity. American parents actively inquired about their children's opinions on the book, fostering a speech style that values the sharing of thoughts and perspectives. This practice starts at an early age, with parents engaging even infants in dialogue and gradually eliciting brief responses as children grow older. Enactments in American shared book reading sessions were primarily used to make stories more engaging rather than to foster emotional or social understanding.

Despite these cultural differences, both groups began their respective practices – enactments in Japan and question-asking in the United States – from infancy, laying an early foundation for cognitive and social development. American parents actively encouraged feedback from their infants during shared book reading, despite the infants' limited ability to respond. This practice serves as a form of early scaffolding, preparing children for future interactions and cognitive development by exposing them to various forms of expression. Similarly, Japanese parents' use of enactments with infants, even when the children might not fully understand these, can be viewed as foundational scaffolding for emotional and social development.

The age of 3 emerges as a critical milestone in both cultures. At this stage, children develop a basic understanding of others' thoughts and feelings, allowing them to engage with fictional characters, form opinions, and express their own emotions. With this cognitive development and the scaffolding provided by parents,

children become more independent in forming opinions, acquiring affect, and engaging in fundamental social routines.

Overall, these findings underscore the significance of considering cultural contexts when investigating parent–child interactions. They also highlight the pivotal role of the early years in a child’s life, as parents scaffold essential traits during this formative period. The scaffolded acquisition of empathy and self-expression in Japan and the US, respectively, are likely to have lasting effects on the linguistic patterns and practices of individuals in these cultural contexts.

Chapter 5 Scaffolding Empathy and Perspective-Taking

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, the analysis focused on book reading sessions with children aged 0 to 4 years. The findings indicate that parents in both Japan and the US immerse their children in scaffolding from an early age, the Japanese parents using enactments and the American parents soliciting their children's opinions. This finding demonstrates that parental support extends well beyond the children's current capabilities within their zone of proximal development (ZPD). Additionally, the age of 3 emerged as a pivotal point in both cultures, marking when children begin to grasp the concepts of others' thoughts and emotions. These observations lead to two pertinent questions: (1) How does the approach of parents to foster empathy evolve after the age of 3, particularly up to the age of 7, when children exhibit a heightened capacity for empathetic understanding? (2) Do American and Japanese adults aim for different outcomes in empathy development, or are the paths divergent yet ultimately leading to the same objective?

In light of the literature discussed in Chapter 2, cultural contrasts in parenting approaches are evident – Japanese parents emphasize emotional connections, whereas American parents prioritize information sharing and self-reliance (Crane & Fernald, 2016; Hess et al., 1980; Ishizaki, 1996; Lebra & Lebra, 1986; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Building upon these insights and the observations from the previous chapter, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- 1) Japanese parents are more likely to discuss the emotions of characters and express empathy towards these characters during book reading sessions, in contrast to American parents, who are expected to focus more on the characters' actions and interpret them from an objective standpoint.

- 2) Both American and Japanese parents will continue to engage their children in empathy-oriented scaffolding beyond the limits of the child's ZPD, albeit utilizing distinct linguistic strategies to achieve this.

To evaluate the hypotheses effectively, selecting a book abundant in emotional expressions was crucial to encourage extensive discussions on empathy among participants. Considering the varied manifestations of empathy across cultures, in both experience and expression, identifying a book available in both Japanese and English that preserves the same nuances was challenging. As a result, a wordless picture book emerged as the most suitable format, as it allowed for an exploration of empathy without the limitations of language translation, facilitating a more equitable comparison of emotional engagement and expression between American and Japanese parents. After considering various titles, *Found.* by Newman and Day (2018) was ultimately chosen as the standard material for the research.

This book was chosen due to its rich expression of emotions. There are other picture books without text that focus on emotional expression, but *Found.* was considered the best option as it has a limited number of characters and the story can be enjoyed by a wide age group from 3 to 7 years old. It also features illustrations that are primarily monochromatic, with an illustration style that is often used in both American and Japanese picture books. It also contains limited English writing (such as store signs) within the pictures, allowing for a full understanding of the content even without the ability to read English.

The protagonist of the story is a girl who recently lost her dog.⁸ The girl is looking out of the window of her apartment when she sees a wet dog on the street in the rain. The girl takes the dog home and as they play together, she gradually becomes

⁸ The protagonist of this story is named Jenn. However, this is not made explicit in the story, and is only mentioned in fine print under the copyright as a book description. Therefore, the ambiguity of the protagonist's name and gender leads to varying interpretations among readers – some perceived the protagonist as female, while others viewed them as male. For clarity and consistency within this paper, the protagonist will be referred to using she/her pronouns.

attached to it. There are various depictions of the girl and the dog spending a good time together, such as playing outside and sleeping together. However, one day when she goes to buy pet food with the dog, she finds a “Lost Dog” poster on a telephone pole. The girl struggles overnight with whether to return the dog to its owner, but decides to do so the next morning. The dog wags its tail happily when reunited with the boy owner, who is also very pleased, but the girl looks at the dog and its owner with a complex expression. With a heavy heart, the girl starts to head home, but on the way, she passes by an animal shelter and sees a dog looking at her. She decides to take the dog home, and begins to live with the new dog.

The book is marketed on Amazon US for children aged 3 to 8 years, yet its emotional complexity might challenge the comprehension abilities of the 3-to-5-year age group. The scene where the protagonist finds out that her dog is actually a lost dog and she is considering whether to return the dog demands a two-step cognitive process for full comprehension. Initially, children have to empathize with the protagonist, recognizing her sadness of now having to return the dog. Subsequently, they must grasp that her sorrow stems from empathizing with the dog’s owner, as she too, has experienced the loss of a dog and understands how the owner must be feeling. However, the inclusion of such complex themes was a conscious decision, aimed at exploring advanced scaffolding practices beyond the ZPD.

This chapter is structured as follows: Section 2 outlines the methodology used for the data collection, including details on the participant demographics and the coding framework employed. Section 3 presents the findings from the data analysis, beginning with a statistical examination of how the demographics impacted the coded utterances using multiple regression analysis. Following this, the chapter presents a statistical comparison of Japanese and American parental solo reading sessions in using the Mann–Whitney *U* test, aimed at identifying any significant differences between the two groups. This section is supported by a qualitative analysis, offering

insights through selected excerpts from the data. Next, an analysis focusing on the shared book reading sessions is provided, utilizing multiple regression analysis to explore correlations with the children's age and language differences, complemented by another layer of qualitative analysis. Section 4 synthesizes these findings, interpreting them within the context of scaffolding techniques and their role in fostering empathy and perspective-taking in children.

5.2 Methodology

5.2.1 Data Collection Method

The participants comprised American and Japanese parents and their children, ages 3 to 7. This research was conducted with the support of the JST Doctoral Program Student Support Project⁹ and the Doctoral Program Student Research Support Program.¹⁰ The research design was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Graduate School of Letters at Keio University to ensure there were no ethical issues before implementation.¹¹

Eligibility for participation was based on several criteria: (1) American participants had to identify as US Americans, reside in the USA or Japan, and predominantly use American English at home; (2) Japanese participants had to identify as Japanese, reside in Japan or the USA, and predominantly use Japanese at home; (3) the adult reader had to identify as the child's parent or primary caregiver; (4) the child had to be aged between 3 and 7 years; (6) participants had to be able to receive the picture book by mail; and (7) participants had to consent to the videotaping of the reading sessions and the subsequent data submission. Recruitment was achieved using snowball sampling among the researcher's network and through

⁹ "Analysis of Parent-Child Conversation from the Perspective of Sociolinguistics of Interactions," MKHQ2204.

¹⁰ "Analysis of Parent-Child Conversation from the Perspective of Sociolinguistics of Interactions".

¹¹ Ethics Review Approval Number: 230260100.

social media calls. Prospective participants were screened via Google Forms to ensure that they met the criteria.¹²

Those who responded to the screening questionnaire and met the participation criteria were contacted individually and sent a consent form. The consent form was also completed using Google Forms.¹³ It began with an explanation of the research design, and if potential participants agreed to the content, they were asked to respond with their name, contact information, and address for sending the picture book. To avoid influencing parent–child dialogue during the sessions, the aim of the study was not communicated to the participants before videotaping. The participants were informed that the recorded data would be used for analyzing parent–child conversations and gestures during book reading. Those who did not qualify as research subjects during this process were provided with the reason, and during the recruitment, it was announced that the decision to participate or not, or to withdraw from participation at any point, would not result in any disadvantage.

Subjects who submitted consent forms were sent one copy of *Found*. (Newman & Day, 2018) per household. The researcher was not present with the participants at the time of recording. Parents were asked to first record themselves narrating the story at home as though they were sharing it with another adult who had not read the book previously. Next, they were asked to record themselves reading the same picture book to their child or children at home, just as they typically would. If they had multiple eligible children, they were asked to record separate videos with each child if possible. There were no specific requirements regarding camera angles or directions. Showing faces was preferred, but if participants felt uncomfortable doing so, videos featuring only the backs of heads were also acceptable. Participants were asked, once they had completed the recording process, to send the videos to the researcher, Moeko Ozaki, via email. Additionally, parents were asked to complete the

¹² See Appendices C and D for a complete copy of the inclusion criteria.

¹³ See Appendices E and F for a complete copy of the consent form.

post-recording questionnaire via Google Forms. The post-recording questionnaire asked about the readers' and the children's demographics and about the book-reading experience. The questions of the post-recording questionnaire are listed in Table 10.

Participants were not financially compensated for their involvement in the study. Instead, they were allowed to retain the picture book mailed to them for the research. During the data collection period, from September 2023 to February 2024, the book was listed on Amazon at a price of US\$19.99 and had a retail value of US\$13.79, equivalent to approximately ¥2082 at the time of data collection.

Table 10

Post-Recording Questionnaire Questions

Question	Response format and content
About the reader	
Role	multiple choice: mother, father, guardian, prefer not to say, other (open answer)
Age	open answer: age in years
Education	multiple choice: high school diploma or equivalent, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, professional degree, technical or vocational training, some college, no degree, currently enrolled in an educational program, prefer not to say, other (free comment)
Neurodivergence	multiple choice: yes, no, prefer not to say, other (open answer)
Experience living abroad	open answer: country and duration
About the child	
Language	open answer: all languages used in their household

Child's age	open answer: age in years and months
Gender	open answer
Neurodivergence	multiple choice: yes, no, prefer not to say, other (open answer)
Book reading frequency	multiple choice: every day, 3–4 times a week, 1–2 times a week, once every other week, none
About book-reading	
Reading experience of <i>Found</i> .	multiple choice for whether they had read the book before: yes, no, other (open answer)
Difference with typical regular sessions	open answer for any differences compared to their typical book reading off-camera
Video recording disruption	open answer for whether the video recording disrupted their book reading experience

5.2.2 Participants

A total of 268 Japanese-speaking parents successfully completed the initial screening questionnaire. Of these, 16 were deemed ineligible and another 68 withdrew prior to finalizing the consent form, leaving 184 who finally completed the consent form. Subsequently, 66 of these participants chose to discontinue their participation after receiving the picture book. Consequently, 118 Japanese families ultimately submitted their videos for the study.

In the cohort of American participants, 141 completed the screening questionnaire. Of this group, 11 did not meet the study criteria and 40 opted out before consenting, resulting in 90 participants who completed the consent form. Subsequently, 36 of these participants discontinued participation after receiving the picture book. As a result, 54 American dyads ultimately completed and submitted their video recordings. Of the participants that submitted their videos, the submissions of 15 Japanese participants and two American participants were incomplete: They had either only submitted one of the two videos required, or they had not filled out the

post-reading questionnaire, or their videos did not adhere to the instructions. The data from these participants were excluded from the study. This meant that the final number of participants included were 103 Japanese participants (112 parent–child dyad videos), and 52 American participants (59 parent–child dyads).

The mean age of American readers was 36.9 years ($SD = 6.13$, min = 31, max = 46) while the average age of Japanese readers was 36.5 years ($SD = 4.3$, min = 29, max = 49). The mean age of the children in the American sample was 5.0 years ($SD = 1.39$, min = 3;0, max = 7;10). This was similar to the Japanese sample, where the average age was also 5.0 years ($SD = 1.26$, min = 3;0, max = 7;11).

Table 11 summarizes participants' demographic responses. The study aimed to examine the dynamics of interactive conversations between parents and children during shared book reading sessions, so the participants needed to have considerable experience in shared book reading to ensure that the observations mirrored authentic household interactions. Significant majorities, 74.6% of American and 64.3% of Japanese parents, reported reading to their children on a daily basis. Additionally, over 91% of American and more than 82% of Japanese parents participated in shared book reading with their children at least three times a week, highlighting the prevalence of this activity among the study's participants.

The survey revealed that in most households, mothers predominantly read books to their children, with rates of 88.1% in American and 91.1% in Japanese families. The gender distribution among participating children showed that 52.5% of American and 57.1% of Japanese children were female.

Regarding neurodiversity, 15.3% of American and 0.9% of Japanese adult participants identified as neurodivergent. For children, 10.2% of children in the United States and 1.8% of children in Japan were reported by their parents as neurodivergent or were suspected of being neurodivergent. The noted difference in the reporting of neurodivergence among American and Japanese participants, including

both adults and children, may indicate variations in social awareness and acknowledgment of neurodiversity, rather than an accurate representation of the proportion of neurodivergent individuals that participated in this study.

In terms of educational attainment, the American respondents generally had higher education levels compared to their Japanese counterparts. All participants from both countries had completed high school, and over 90% of both American and Japanese respondents held a bachelor's degree or higher. As was the case with the data in Chapter 4, it is important to emphasize that these findings do not necessarily represent the educational landscape of the United States and Japan as a whole but rather reflect variations in how the participants for the study were recruited.

Participants' nationalities were identified based on their self-identification and the primary language spoken at home. Those who identified as Americans and primarily spoke American English at home were categorized under the American group for data collection. In the post-reading questionnaire, participants provided details about their international living experiences and other languages spoken at home, to capture those who, despite their self-identification, had significant experiences living abroad. Of the respondents, 39% of American and 27.7% of Japanese readers reported living outside their respective home countries. Specifically, 23.7% of American participants had lived in the US, and 11.6% of Japanese participants had lived in Japan. Additionally, 25% of American participants spoke Japanese at home (though not as the primary language), and 8% of Japanese participants spoke English at home. These substantial percentages likely reflect the recruitment method, which involved a snowball sampling technique starting from the researcher's personal network.

Concerning the reading habits associated with the book *Found.*, none of the Japanese families and only one American family reported having read the book to their children. This outcome was anticipated, given that a main factor in choosing

Found. for this study was its lesser-known status in comparison to classic children's literature. This choice facilitated the standardization of participants' prior exposure to the book, ensuring a more uniform baseline for examining their interactions during the reading sessions.

Table 11

Participant Demographics

Demographic Factor	Japan (N=112)	Ratio (%)	USA (N=59)	Ratio (%)
Reader's role				
Mother	102	91.1%	52	88.1%
Father	8	7.1%	7	11.9%
Other, N/A	7	6.3%	0	0.0%
Sex of the child				
Female	64	57.1%	31	52.5%
Male	48	42.9%	27	45.8%
Other, N/A	0	0.0%	1	1.7%
Reader's neurodivergence				
Yes	1	0.9%	9	15.3%
No	110	98.2%	50	84.7%
Other, N/A	1	0.9%	0	0.0%
Child's neurodivergence				
Yes	2	1.8%	6	10.2%
No	103	92.0%	51	86.4%
Other, N/A	7	6.3%	2	3.4%
Reader's education				
Doctorate	3	2.7%	6	10.2%
Enrolled in an educational program	0	0.0%	2	3.4%
Professional degree	4	3.6%	3	5.1%
Master' degree	5	4.5%	25	42.4%

Bachelor's degree	92	82.1%	19	32.2%
Associate's degree	7	6.3%	3	5.1%
Some college, no degree	0	0.0%	1	1.7%
High school	1	0.9%	0	0.0%
Reading frequency				
Every day	72	64.3%	44	74.6%
3–4 times/week	20	17.9%	10	16.9%
1–2 times/week	14	12.5%	5	8.5%
1 time / 2 weeks	2	1.8%	0	0.0%
Never	4	3.6%	0	0.0%
Reading history of <i>Found</i> .				
Yes	0	0.0%	1	1.7%
None	112	100.0%	51	86.4%
Other languages spoken at home				
American participants: Japanese	0	0.0%	15	25.4%
Japanese participants: English	9	8.0%	0	0.0%
Other	4	3.6%	12	20.3%
None	99	88.4%	32	54.2%
Reader's experience living abroad				
American participants: Japan	0	0.0%	14	23.7%
Japanese participants: USA	13	11.6%	0	0.0%
Other	18	16.1%	9	15.3%
None	81	72.3%	36	61.0%
Child's experience living abroad				
American participants: Japan	0	0.0%	9	15.3%
Japanese participants: USA	2	1.8%	0	0.0%
Other	1	0.9%	1	1.7%
None	109	97.3%	49	83.1%

Table 12 lists the parents' feedback on how their reading sessions with *Found* differed from their usual experiences. This feedback was gathered through an open-ended question, allowing participants to freely express their thoughts. The data reveal

that 17.3% of American and 15.5% of Japanese parents noticed no or minimal differences, indicating that a majority in both the American and Japanese cohorts did observe some differences during their reading sessions. Notably, nearly half of the parents in both groups were unaccustomed to wordless picture books, with 50% of American and 47.6% of Japanese parents highlighting this as a challenge. The book led to more interactive reading sessions for 18.4% of Japanese parents, compared to only 5.8% of American parents, with the former group specifically mentioning an increase in question-asking to ensure their children's comprehension of the plot.

Conversely, a small fraction of parents, 5.8% of American and 2.9% of Japanese participants, reported reduced interactivity, often attributing this to the children being more tired, distracted, or quieter than usual. A total of 21.2% of American parents mentioned changes in the timing, place, or position of reading sessions, in contrast to just 3.9% of Japanese parents. The focus level during these sessions was reported to be higher by 3.9% of Japanese parents, whereas none of the American parents noted an increase in focus. Both groups had a small percentage of parents who answered that they typically would not choose this book, at 3.8% for American parents and 3.9% for Japanese-speaking parents. Concerning session duration, 1.9% of parents from both groups observed that reading took longer than usual. The practice of reading to more or fewer siblings at once than usual did not affect Japanese parents but was mentioned by 7.7% of American parents. Lastly, the inability to code-switch due to research constraints was noted by 1.9% of American parents but not observed among Japanese parents.

Table 12*Parental Feedback on Reading Session Differences*

Parent's Response	Japan (N=103)		USA (N=52)	
None/minimal	16	15.5%	9	17.3%
Not used to reading wordless picture books	49	47.6%	26	50.0%
More interactive than typical readings	19	18.4%	3	5.8%
Less interactive than typical readings	3	2.9%	3	5.8%
Different timing/place/position during reading	4	3.9%	11	21.2%
Child was more focused	4	3.9%	0	0.0%
Different book choice	4	3.9%	2	3.8%
Took longer than usual	2	1.9%	1	1.9%
Child wanted to read	1	1.0%	1	1.9%
Usually read to more/fewer siblings at once	0	0.0%	4	7.7%
Could not code-switch	0	0.0%	1	1.9%

Table 13 presents data on the responses of parents regarding the impact of video recording on their book reading sessions. In both groups, the majority of parents reported no or minimal disruption due to video recording, with 61.5% (32 responses) of American participants and 51.5% (53 responses) of Japanese participants indicating this. The second most common response in both languages was that the child was aware of the recording, with 23.1% (12 responses) of American participants and 22.3% (23 responses) of Japanese participants reporting this. Participants feeling nervous was reported by 24.3% (25 responses) of the Japanese parents, but this was much less commonly reported by American parents, with only 9.6% (five responses) reporting this. Lastly, a negligible number of parents reported that the reading was shorter than usual due to video recording, with 1.9% (two responses) of American

participants and an identical percentage (1.9%, one response) of Japanese participants reporting this.

Table 13

Parental Feedback on Video Recording Causing Disruption

Parent's response	Japan		USA	
None/minimal	53	51.5%	32	61.5%
Child was aware of the recording	23	22.3%	12	23.1%
Participants were nervous	25	24.3%	5	9.6%
Reading was shorter than usual	2	1.9%	1	1.9%

5.2.3 Codes

The collected videos were transcribed verbatim. The subsequent coding was facilitated by MaxQDA, a software designed for mixed-methods research. The coding procedure adhered to the principles of thematic analysis. Initially, an exploratory coding phase identified all instances of parents' and children's utterances relating to characters' emotions within the videos.

The guiding principle for coding was that any continuous speech segment that conveyed a single emotional concept was coded as one utterance. This applied regardless of length. For example, a parent might succinctly state, "She's sad," in reference to the protagonist's feelings after a specific event in the story, or they might elaborate by role-playing the character, saying, "I really liked the dog and didn't want to give it away, but now I'm sad because I have to." Both instances were coded as individual utterances. Although this approach does not standardize utterance length or ensure a consistent method for segmenting utterances, this was not problematic as the analysis in this chapter did not hinge on the precise number of utterances or the ratio of utterances to specific codes.

Following this initial coding, utterances were segregated into two categories, those from parents and those from children. Parental utterances were further categorized by utterance type, as listed in Table 14. These categories were established through inductive, bottom-up exploratory coding and were designed to be mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive.

Parents engaging with their children during shared picture book reading sessions predominantly asked three types of questions. The most frequent inquiries revolved around the characters' emotions, utilizing both polar and open-ended questioning forms. Examples of such queries include "Is he happy or sad?," "What kind of face is she making?," and "How does she feel?" A second category, emotional causation, involved questions about the factors influencing the characters' emotions. Although these questions do not directly address emotions or empathy, they play a crucial role in scaffolding the child's understanding and identification of characters' emotions, thereby implicitly conveying emotional concepts. In addition to these, parents occasionally probed their children's feelings towards the story or asked how they would feel in the characters' situations. These interactions were specific to parent-child dyad shared picture book reading sessions and distinctly absent in solo parental readings.

Besides asking questions, parents also frequently commented on emotions, adopting either an etic or emic perspective in their comments. From an etic perspective, parents discussed characters' emotions from an outsider's viewpoint, using cues such as *seems sad*, *looking sad*, *being sad*, and *clearly sad* to describe observations. Japanese parents, for instance, might use suffixes such as *-sō*

(*Kanashi-sō*, she looks sad) or *-mitai* (*Kanashī mitai*, she seems sad) to syntactically cue their etic observations. Conversely, the emic perspective involved parents empathizing directly with the characters, using phrases such as "She's sad" or "She still misses her puppy," or in Japanese, *kanashiku narimashita* (she became sad)

and *kanashīdesu* (she's sad). This encompasses enactments such as "I became sad"; however, to prevent double-coding and account for the distinct nature of enactments, these enactments were assigned a separate code, details of which will be elaborated on later.

Comments on the parents' own emotional responses towards the characters also emerged, marked as introspective empathy. These ranged from sympathizing remarks such as "poor puppy," to expressions of joy and verbalizations of their own emotions, such as "I'm feeling sad."

Enactments were categorized into two sub-groups. As discussed in the previous chapter, enactment refers to the act of emulating the feelings or behaviors of a fictional character through spoken utterances or dialogue and adding spoken details to the narrative. Simple vocalizations such as "wait" or action-accompanying phrases such as "here you go" were classified as enactments of characters' voice or motion. Other enactments, embodying characters' internal thoughts and emotions, such as "I still miss Prudence, I don't know" or "What should I do?" were coded as enactments of character emotions, noted for being more empathetic and laden with emotion compared to their motion/voice counterparts.

Table 14

Parental Utterance Codes by Form

Code	Examples
Asking	
Emotion Causation	Do you know why she's sad? なんで悲しいの? <i>Nande kanashī no?</i> (Why is she sad?)
Character Emotion	Is he happy or sad? How does she look?

	嬉しいのかな？ <i>Ureshī no ka na?</i> (Is she happy?) どんな顔してる？ <i>Don'na o kao shi teru?</i> (What kind of face is she making?)
Child's	Did the book make you feel anything?
Perspective-Taking	How do you think you'd feel?
	花子だったらどうする？ <i>Hanako dattara dō suru?</i> (What would you do?)
Commenting	
Etic Perspective of Emotion	You can tell she's not happy. The dog seems happy. She walks back with a sad look. 悲しそうだね <i>Kanashi-sōda ne</i> (He looks sad) しょんぼりしてます <i>Shonbori shitemasu</i> (He's dejected) 悲しげです <i>Kanashige desu</i> (He seems sad)
Emic Perspective of Emotion	She's not really sure. She still misses her doggy. She's sad. 悲しくなりました <i>Kanashiku narimashita</i> (He became sad) 心の内は複雑です <i>kokoronouchi wa fukuzatsudesu</i> (She's feeling torn) 女の子は困りました <i>on'nanoko wa komarimashita</i> (She doesn't know what to do)
Introspective Empathy	Poor little puppy I would feel sad too Yay! 悲しいね <i>Kanashīne</i> (It's sad, isn't it) かわいそう <i>Kawaisō</i> (Poor thing)

Enacting

Character Action	No, you need to get down Pick me, hey, I'm right over here You can't play with that 一緒に寝ようよ <i>Issho ni neyou yo</i> (Let's sleep together) 遊んで <i>Asonde</i> (Let's play) 待っててね <i>mattete ne</i> (wait) ワンワン <i>wanwan</i> (woof woof) どうぞ <i>dōzo</i> (here you go)
Character Emotion	I still miss Prudence, I don't know. I shouldn't keep him because someone else is worrying about him. せっかく仲良くなったのに <i>Sekkaku nakayoku nattanoni</i> (I'm friends with him now) 寂しいけど返してあげようかな <i>sabishikedo kaeshite ageyou ka na</i> (Maybe I should return him even though it will make me sad) どうしよう <i>dō shiyō</i> (What should I do?)

The codes from Table 14 were further grouped into larger categories based on the purpose the utterance serves in terms of parental scaffolding. The categorization of utterances into thematic codes was designed to highlight the developmental trajectory towards empathy in children. The methodological framework for this categorization is predicated on the recognition that empathy development involves a series of cognitive and emotional milestones, beginning with the identification of emotions and culminating in empathetic engagement. First, a child must recognize others' emotions. Then, they must understand the context behind the emotion and why the person is feeling the way that they are feeling. Upon this basic recognition of others' emotions, the child can then proceed to take on the perspective of the other

person and feel with them. The child may or may not decide to align with the other person's emotions – if they do, they may experience empathy. Therefore, the four thematic codes in Table 15 can be regarded as the intentions or purposes behind scaffolding during picture book reading.

The initial thematic code, *Recognizing Emotions*, encompasses utterances that prompt or discuss the emotional states of characters within the story. These utterances are twofold: They either explicitly ask the child to articulate the character's emotions ("What do you think the character is feeling right now?") or they involve parental commentary on the emotions displayed by the characters based on an etic perspective, thereby serving to direct the child's attention to these emotional states. The objective of these interactions is not only to notice emotions but also to engage the child in a process of accurate emotional identification, leveraging both the narrative and illustrative content of the book as a contextual backdrop.

The next thematic code, *Understanding Emotions*, is defined by utterances coded as inquiries regarding the causation behind characters' emotions. This dimension of scaffolding is essential for developing a further understanding of emotions, as it extends beyond mere recognition to an exploration of causality. Utterances within this category include direct questions aimed at elucidating the reasons behind a character's emotional state ("Why do you think she's feeling sad?"). Only utterances where parents explicitly encouraged children to consider the causation of emotions were included in this category. This distinction was made to differentiate between intentional scaffolding efforts and mere narrative recounting. Thus, comments where the causal link between an event and an emotion was implied rather than interrogated were excluded, except where parents clearly aimed to engage the child in a deeper understanding of emotional causality. For instance, tag questions used to seek affirmation, such as "I think she's unhappy because she has to return the

dog, right?” and utterances resembling self-talk such as “I wonder why” were excluded from this analysis.

The *Perspective-Taking* code encompasses utterances that invite children to adopt the viewpoint of the characters. This code includes comments based on emic perspectives and enactments, albeit to varying degrees of immersion. Such utterances not only facilitate a deeper connection with the characters but also enable children to engage in a form of emotional mirroring, thereby fostering a preliminary form of empathy.

Finally, the *Expressing Empathy* code captures utterances that transcend the narrative content to address the emotional responses of both the parent and child towards the characters’ situations. This includes parental introspective empathy towards the characters and inquiries about how the child might feel if placed in the characters’ circumstances. These forms of utterance are critical as they bridge the gap between recognizing and understanding emotions and the experiential assimilation of these emotions, thereby facilitating empathetic development.

These four codes were further classified into either basic or advanced emotions. Basic emotions include recognizing and understanding emotions, while advanced emotions involve perspective-taking and expressing empathy. The basic codes are deemed basic because they do not necessitate the parent’s and child’s personal experience or identification with the characters’ emotions. Conversely, advanced emotions require a mental leap from the story and an empathetic simulation of the character’s emotions.

Table 15*Scaffolding Purpose in Parental Utterances*

Thematic Codes	Included Codes
Basic emotions	
Recognizing emotions	Asking character's emotion Commenting from etic perspective
Understanding emotions	Asking emotion causation
Advance emotions	
Perspective-taking	Commenting from emic perspective Enacting character action Enacting character emotion
Expressing empathy	Parental empathy towards characters Asking child's perspective-taking

Different coding schemes were applied to children's utterances compared to those for parents, reflecting the nature of their responses – primarily reactions to parental prompts rather than spontaneous comments. As listed in Table 16, the children's coding scheme loosely mirrored the parental codes, maintaining the same main categories. A significant adaptation was including yes/no or one-word responses to emotion-focused polar questions as indicative of emotional comprehension, categorized as comments on emotions. Non-responsive answers such as "I don't know" or incorrect answers were labeled *dispreferred responses*, distinguishing them from "correct" answers and highlighting a lack of understanding. Spontaneously offered utterances were additionally tagged as *autonomous* for analytical purposes, emphasizing their value in assessing unguided emotional comprehension.

Table 16*Children's Utterance Codes by Form*

Code	Examples
Asking	
Character Emotion	悲しんでる？怒ってる？ <i>Kanashinderu? Okotteru?</i> (Is she sad? Or is she angry?) (no English cases)
Emotion Causation	Why? Why is she sad? なんで？ <i>Nande?</i> (Why?)
Commenting	
Character Emotion	He's happy. 悲しそう <i>Kanashisō.</i> (He seems sad) うん、悲しい <i>Un, Kanashī.</i> (Yeah, he's sad)
Emotion Causation	It's because he's wet. 会いたかったから悲しいんじゃない？ <i>Aitaikara kanashī n janai?</i> (Maybe she's sad because she wants to meet him?)
Introspective Empathy	That was a little bit sad. Poor puppy. ちょっと怖かった <i>Chotto kowakatta</i> (It was a bit scary) かわいそう <i>Kawaisō</i> (Poor thing)
Enacting	
Character Action	Eat your dog food. Go to bed. 餌があるよ <i>Esa ga aru yo</i> (There's some dog food for you) おやつどうぞ <i>oyatsu dōzo</i> (Have some snacks)
Character Emotion	I hate my dog. 悲しいな <i>Kanashī na.</i> (I'm sad)

ちよつと心配だな *chotto shinpai da na*. (I'm a little worried)

Autonomous

As shown in Table 17, the codes applied to children's utterances were aligned with the thematic categories used for parents, except for those within the *asking* category. This exclusion is based on the rationale that a child's inquiries about characters' emotions or their causes do not inherently demonstrate an understanding of those emotions.

Table 17

Comprehension Level in Children's Utterances

Thematic Codes	Included Form of Codes
Basic emotions	
Recognizes emotions	Commenting on character's emotion
Understands emotions	Commenting on emotion causation
Advance emotions	
Perspective-taking	Enacting character's action/emotion
Expressing empathy	Commenting on own emotional response

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Influence of Demographics on Coded Utterances

Based on the data presented in Table 18 and mirroring the methodology of Chapter 4, the relationship between demographic factors and verbal interactions during reading sessions were analyzed using multiple regression analysis, conducted with SPSS, a software program for statistical analysis. Prior to the analysis, a check for multicollinearity was performed to ensure the independence of the independent

variables. The test confirmed that multicollinearity was not a significant issue.¹⁴ The model handled missing data through listwise deletion.

The multiple regression analysis revealed no statistically significant correlations between the demographics of the parents and their solo book reading behaviors for both the American and Japanese datasets. By contrast, shared reading sessions with children displayed some weak correlations, as detailed in Table 18.¹⁵ The results indicate that Japanese children are more likely to provide full-sentence answers regarding character emotions when the parent is male, older, and had lived in the US. A similar pattern emerged when children were prompted to elaborate on the reasons behind a character's emotions, with the demographic characteristics of the parent being male and older contributing to more comprehensive responses from the children. However, while the statistical significance was notable ($p = .003$), the model's adjusted R^2 value was minimal ($Adj. R^2 = 0.181$), suggesting a low level of explanatory power.

For the American participants, the influence of demographic factors on the children's responses was minor. Specifically, female children showed a greater tendency to articulate their emotions in complete sentences, for example, "I feel sad that she had to return the dog." There was also a notable trend for children who had spent time living in Japan to offer full-sentence answers when the reader was not a Japanese speaker. Despite these findings, the overall link between demographic variables and the children's verbal reactions during reading sessions was weak and largely non-significant.

One key observation from the study was that there were no significant correlations between the age of the children and the coded utterances, across both the American and Japanese groups. As the initial multiple regression analysis did not identify any correlations using scale-based children's ages, the ages of the children

¹⁴ Further details are provided in Appendices H and I.

¹⁵ For the results that were not statistically significant, see Appendices J and K.

were further categorized into two groups: ages 3–4 and ages 5–7. This division was based on the developmental milestone that occurs between 3 and 4 years of age, when children begin to grasp the concept of displacement. The analysis employed the Mann–Whitney U test, but failed to reveal any statistically significant patterns.¹⁶

¹⁶ Certain behaviors were statistically significant, such as American children enquiring about the reasons behind a character's emotions, American children explaining the characters' emotions in response to their parents' questions, and their ability to understand the characters' emotions. Similarly, instances where Japanese children provided an unpreferred response to questions about their own emotional reactions were also significant. However, the actual number of occurrences for each of these behaviors was very low, with fewer than 10 instances for each category, indicating that the sample sizes were too small for these findings to be considered relevant.

Table 18*Regression Analysis of Demographics' Influence on Coded Utterances*

<i>DV</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β^*	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Adj. R</i> ²
Japanese child answering parent's question about the character's emotion in a full sentence									
	Reader is mother	-1.556	0.435	-3.576	-3.576	.001	***	2.738	.003 .181
	Reader's age	0.078	0.027	2.829	2.829	.006	**		
	Reader's education	0.121	0.140	0.867	0.867	.388			
	Reader is neurodivergent	-0.737	1.561	-0.472	-0.472	.638			
	Reader lived in the US	0.757	0.384	1.971	1.971	.052	†		
	Reader lived abroad	0.070	0.310	0.226	0.226	.822			
	Reader speaks English	-0.171	0.424	-0.403	-0.403	.688			
	Reader speaks another language	-0.389	0.688	-0.565	-0.565	.573			
	Child's age	-0.005	0.091	-0.060	-0.060	.952			
	Child is female	-0.138	0.231	-0.598	-0.598	.551			
	Child lived in the US	-0.803	0.897	-0.895	-0.895	.373			
	Child is neurodivergent	-0.161	1.121	-0.144	-0.144	.886			
	Reading frequency	0.024	0.024	0.977	0.977	.331			

Japanese child answering parent's question about the cause of character's emotion in a full sentence

Reader is mother	-0.539	0.211	-2.557	-2.557	.012	*	2.047	.026	.118
Reader's age	0.038	0.013	2.868	2.868	.005	**			
Reader's education	0.017	0.068	0.251	0.251	.803				
Reader is neurodivergent	-0.336	0.756	-0.444	-0.444	.658				
Reader lived in the US	0.148	0.186	0.794	0.794	.429				
Reader lived abroad	0.092	0.150	0.616	0.616	.540				
Reader speaks English	-0.132	0.205	-0.641	-0.641	.523				
Reader speaks another language	-0.147	0.333	-0.441	-0.441	.660				
Child's age	0.014	0.044	0.314	0.314	.755				
Child is female	-0.164	0.112	-1.473	-1.473	.144				
Child lived in the US	-0.056	0.434	-0.128	-0.128	.898				
Child is neurodivergent	-0.116	0.543	-0.213	-0.213	.832				
Reading frequency	0.012	0.012	1.032	1.032	.305				

American child answering parent's question about their own emotional response in a full sentence

Reader is mother	0.025	0.088	0.286	0.286	.777		2.450	.017	.302
Reader's age	-0.002	0.007	-0.268	-0.268	.790				
Reader's education	0.015	0.023	0.662	0.662	.512				

Reader is neurodivergent	-0.062	0.103	-0.600	-0.600	.552	
Reader lived in Japan	0.238	0.164	1.455	1.455	.155	
Reader lived abroad	0.028	0.080	0.351	0.351	.728	
Reader speaks Japanese	-0.200	0.116	-1.723	-1.723	.094	†
Reader speaks another language	0.054	0.068	0.799	0.799	.430	
Child's age	0.008	0.021	0.368	0.368	.715	
Child is female	-0.118	0.057	-2.061	-2.061	.047	*
Child lived in Japan	0.250	0.128	1.953	1.953	.059	†
Child is neurodivergent	0.009	0.112	0.081	0.081	.936	
Reading frequency	-0.008	0.009	-0.960	-0.960	.344	

Note: The dependent variable (DV) refers to the outcome we are trying to predict, in this case, codes related to demographics. The independent variable (IV) represents the demographic factors being analyzed for their impact on the DV. β (Beta): This measures the expected change in the DV for a one-unit increase in an IV, assuming other variables are constant. Standard error (SE): An estimation of the variability in the beta coefficient, essentially reflecting the precision of the beta estimate. Standardized beta (β^*): This standardized measure shows the strength and direction of the correlation between demographic factors and codes, with values ranging from -1.0 to 1.0. A negative correlation implies that as one demographic detail decreases, the corresponding code increases, and vice versa. The closer the value is to -1.0 or 1.0, the stronger the correlation. p-value for β : Indicates the likelihood that the observed correlation is due to chance. A small p-value suggests strong evidence

against the null hypothesis, favoring a significant relationship between the IV and the DV. t-statistic: Evaluates the ratio of the departure of the estimated parameter from zero to its standard error. A larger absolute t-value suggests a higher likelihood that the parameter significantly differs from zero, meaning the IV has a notable effect on the DV. F-test: Assesses the overall significance of the model, comparing the variance explained by the model against the unexplained variance. A higher F-value points to more substantial evidence against the null hypothesis. Adjusted R^2 (Adj. R^2): Adjusts the coefficient of determination for the number of predictors, offering a more accurate measure of how well the model explains the variability in the DV. A value close to 1 suggests the model explains most of the variance, while a value near or below 0 indicates little to no explanatory power. p-value for R^2 : Shows the significance of the model's explanatory power, with values less than 0.05 typically considered evidence of a significant model.

† $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

5.3.2 Analysis of Parental Solo Reading

5.3.2.1 Statistical Analysis of the Influence of Language

The analysis of the parental solo reading videos aimed to examine whether there were statistical differences in the distributions of coded utterances across languages. The study incorporated videos from 52 American and 103 Japanese parents engaging in solo book readings. Table 19 presents the raw numbers of all coded utterances in the parental solo readings, categorized by the language utilized.

Table 19

Raw Data of Code Distribution Across Languages in Solo Readings

Category	Code	USA		Japan	
		total	<i>M</i>	total	<i>M</i>
Commenting	Etic emotion	160	3.08	261	2.53
	Emic emotion	189	3.63	188	1.83
	Introspective empathy	15	0.29	7	0.07
Enacting	Character motion/voice	33	0.63	288	2.80
	Character emotion	9	0.17	112	1.09
Scaffolding purpose	Recognizing emotions	160	3.08	261	2.53
	Understanding emotions	1	0.02	0	0.00
	Perspective taking	230	4.42	593	5.76
	Expressing empathy	15	0.29	7	0.07

The underlying hypothesis posited that readings would differ by language. Consequently, the null hypothesis for each analysis was based on the assumption that the distributions of readings by Japanese and American parents were identical. To test this hypothesis, the Mann–Whitney *U* test was employed. This non-parametric test is suitable for comparing differences between two independent groups when the dependent variable is continuous or ordinal but does not follow a normal distribution. Given that the dependent variable in this study (coded utterances) is continuous and

may not adhere to a normal distribution, the Mann–Whitney U test was deemed the most appropriate method for the data analysis.

The results, detailed in Table 20, reveal no significant differences in the distribution of total emotional utterances by parents ($U = 2762.5, p = 0.748, z = 0.321$) or mentions of empathy by characters ($U = 2864.0, p = 0.389, z = 0.862$). Previous studies have highlighted that Japanese parents often engage in more empathetic conversations, as seen in Clancy’s work on empathy training (1986), whereas American parents are thought to lean towards individualistic discussions. This led to the expectation that American parents might prioritize individualistic aspects of the story over empathizing with the characters. Contrary to these expectations, the findings from the Mann–Whitney U test indicate that both American and Japanese parents equally emphasized empathetic emotions and overall emotional content.

Additionally, no significant differences were observed in the four stages of scaffolding: recognizing emotions ($U = 2402.500, p = 0.290, z = -1.057$), understanding emotions ($U = 2626.500, p = 0.159, z = -1.407$), perspective taking ($U = 3168.500, p = 0.062, z = 1.867$), and expressing empathy ($U = 2191.500, p = 0.001, z = -3.403^{***}$). Although the difference in *expressing empathy* was statistically significant, the median for both the American and Japanese samples was zero, and as illustrated in Table 20, the instances were relatively rare (15 cases in the American sample and 7 in the Japanese sample). Consequently, despite the statistical significance, the practical significance of this difference is minimal.

These findings suggest that the frequency and intensity of emotional utterances during parental solo book readings are comparably similar for the American and Japanese samples. Nevertheless, some notable differences were observed. A significant disparity was found in the distribution of emic perspectives by parents across language categories ($U = 1739, p < 0.001, z = -3.618$). Figure 4

illustrates a boxplot comparing parental comments on emic perspectives by language, revealing that American parents talked about emotions from an emic perspective significantly more frequently than their Japanese counterparts. Conversely, Japanese parents demonstrated a greater tendency to use enactments when referring to both the characters' emotions and actions compared to American parents (for emotions: $U = 4006.0$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 5.601$; for actions: $U = 4030.0$, $p < 0.001$, $z = 5.295$). Figure 5 and Figure 6 depict the prevalence in Japanese households of enactments in describing actions and emotions, respectively. These figures highlight that, despite a significant number of outliers indicating a wide range of usage and individual differences, Japanese parents utilize substantially more enactments than their American counterparts.

Synthesizing the outcomes of the Mann–Whitney U test, it is observed that although American and Japanese parents mention emotions with comparable frequency and purpose, their approaches diverge significantly. American parents, while not adopting the characters' perspectives through enactments, tend to discuss emotions from an emic perspective, reflecting the characters' viewpoints. On the other hand, Japanese parents immerse themselves in the story by embodying the characters' actions and emotions, yet their commentary predominantly adopts an etic perspective, distinct from the emic perspective more common among their American counterparts. This observation underscores the similarity in the overarching goal of perspective-taking through book reading, with both American and Japanese parents placing equal importance on this aspect but employing differing expressive methods.

Table 20*U test for Code Distribution Across Languages in Solo Readings*

	<i>p</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>Md</i> (USA)	<i>Md</i> (Japan)
Empathy by the characters	.389	2864.00	0.862	0	0
Total emotion-related utterances	.748	2762.50	0.321	7	7
Etic emotions	.290	2402.50	-1.057	3	2
Emic emotions	.000***	1739.00	-3.618	3	1
Introspective empathy	.001***	2191.50	-3.403	0	0
Enactment of motion/voice	.000***	4030.00	5.295	0	2
Enactment of character emotion	.000***	4006.00	5.601	0	1
Recognizing emotions	.290	2402.50	-1.057	3	2
Understanding emotions	.159	2626.50	-1.407	0	0
Perspective-taking	.062	3168.50	1.867	4	5
Expressing empathy	.001***	2191.50	-3.403	0	0

Notes. *U* = Mann–Whitney *U* test. The *U* value is a measure of the difference in rank sums between the two groups being compared. The *U* value's range extends from 0 to the product of the sample sizes of both groups, with a maximum possible value of 5,356 in this context. A *U* value near the extremes of 0 or 5356 suggests a pronounced rank difference between the groups, implying significant disparity. The probability of *U* is shown in the *p* column; a probability of <0.05 is considered significant. *Z* = *Z* score. This quantifies how many standard deviations a data point is from the mean, with a higher absolute value indicating a greater deviation from the mean.

Significance levels are denoted as follows: **p* < .05, ***p* < .01, ****p* < .001

Figure 4

Boxplot for the Parental Comments on Emic Emotions per Language

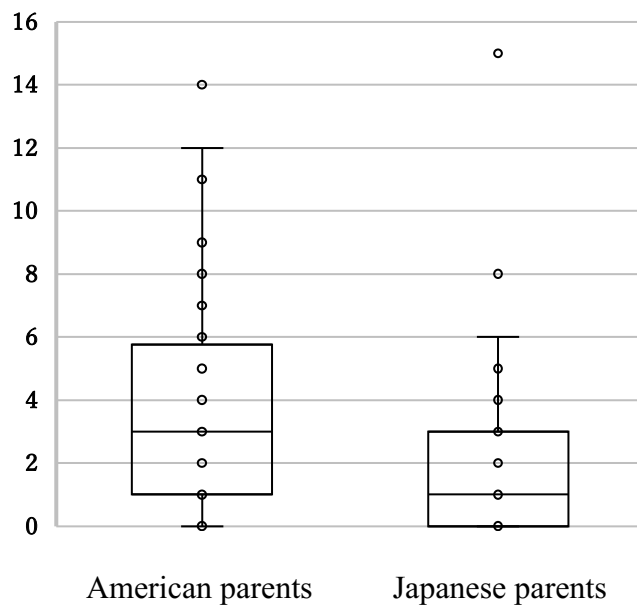


Figure 5

Boxplot for the Parental Use of Enactment of Actions per Language

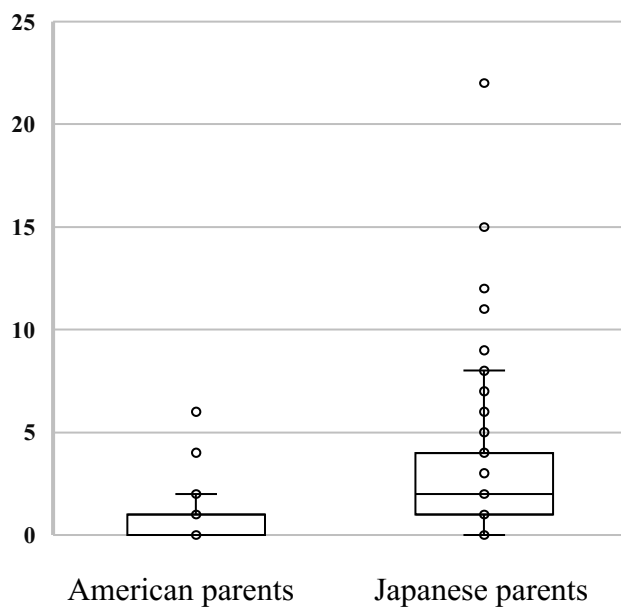
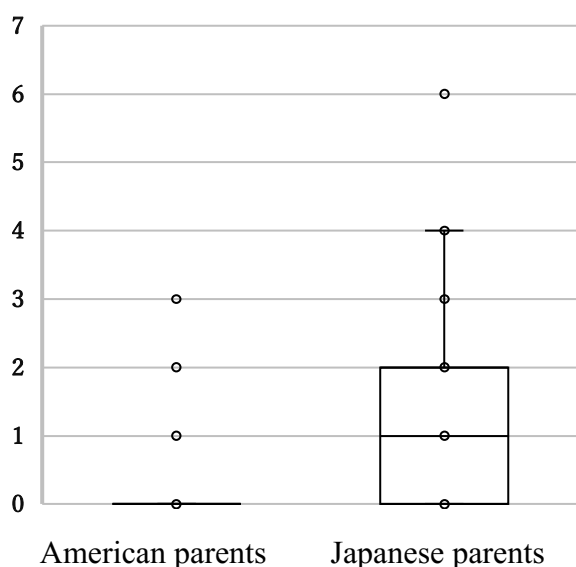


Figure 6

Boxplot for the Parental Use of Enactment of Emotions per Language



5.3.2.2 Qualitative Analysis of Parental Solo Reading in Japanese and English

The qualitative analysis corroborates the statistical evidence indicating that during book reading, Japanese parents are more inclined to use enactments to illustrate characters' feelings, whereas American parents tend to highlight emic emotions. Specifically, a significant 60.1% of Japanese respondents utilized enactments at least once for expressing the emotions of characters, in stark contrast to a mere 11.5% of American respondents. Conversely, a substantial 86.5% of American respondents commented on emotions from an emic perspective, a practice less prevalent among their Japanese counterparts, at 70.8%.

A prime example of this is observed in a book scene where the protagonist discovers that the dog she found is actually lost and has an owner searching for him. This realization and the subsequent internal debate she faces at night, pondering whether to return the dog, showcases a complex emotional journey. The scene's emotional depth is further highlighted when the protagonist, upon finding a lost dog

poster on a telephone pole while embracing the dog with her mouth agape (Figure 7), transitions to a state of restlessness in bed, depicted in her furrowed brows and a conflicted expression (Figure 8). The next day, as she approaches the dog's owner's door, hugging the dog in her right arm and knocking on the door with her left, her posture – facing the door with only the back of her head and right cheek visible – leaves the interpretation of her emotions open-ended (Figure 9) Although it is clear that the protagonist is surprised and distressed about returning the dog and wrestles with indecision overnight, the specific emotions she experiences are deliberately ambiguous, inviting readers to draw their own conclusions.

Figure 7

Illustration of Lost Dog Scene from Found.



Note. Adapted from *Found*. (pp. 33–34), by J. Newman and L. Day, 2018, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2018 by Jeff Newman. Adapted with permission.

Figure 8

Illustration of Restless-in-Bed Scene from Found.



Note. Adapted from *Found.* (pp. 35–36), by J. Newman and L. Day, 2018, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2018 by Jeff Newman. Adapted with permission.

Figure 9

Illustration of Returning-Dog Scene from Found.



Note. Adapted from *Found.* (pp. 37–38), by J. Newman and L. Day, 2018, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 2018 by Jeff Newman. Adapted with permission.

The enactments used by the Japanese participants observed in this scene were categorized into three primary types. The first type involved parents signaling a shift in voice and beginning to enact following a brief introduction. The second type was characterized by the absence of an introduction, with parents engaging in enactment from the beginning to the end. The third type saw a seamless transition between enactment and description, with no clear demarcation between the two as parents smoothly transitioned from one mode to the other.

An example of the first type, which includes a clear indication of the switch, is presented in Table 16. Initially, the parent describes a scene with a missing dog poster attached to a pole, highlighting a photograph of a girl clutching a dog – *Soko ni wa, onnanoko ga dakko shite iru wanko no shashin ga arimashita*. (There was a photo of a girl holding a dog in her arms.) (lines 1–2). The narration continues, adopting an objective viewpoint as the girl contemplates her next actions after sliding into bed – *Sono hi no yoru, onnanoko ga beddo ni mogurikomu to kangaemashita*. (That night, the girl crawled into bed and thought.) (lines 3–4). This sets the stage for the enactment that follows in lines 5–11, where the narrator assumes the first-person perspective, stating, “The pet’s owner must be feeling lonely right now. I felt the same way when Prudence went missing. It would be better to return it. But, we are finally together, and we are having a good time. I don’t want to part with him.” This enactment vocalizes the protagonist’s internal deliberations, revealing her reluctance to separate from the dog yet acknowledging the owner’s likely distress, a sentiment she empathizes with due to her own past experience. This empathetic reasoning, while not explicitly stated in the text, was frequently enacted by Japanese parents, demonstrating a common thematic interpretation.

Excerpt 16

Japanese Parent's Solo Reading Using Clear Shift in Voice

- 1 そこには、
 Soko ni wa,
 There at,
 There

- 2 女の子が抱っこしているわんこの写真がありました。
 onnanoko ga dakko shite iru wanko no shashin ga arimashita.
 girl (subject marker) is holding in-arms dog's photo existed.
 Was a photo of a girl holding a dog in her arms.

- 3 その日の夜、
 Sono hi no yoru
 That day's night
 That night,

- 4 女の子がベッドにもぐり込むと考えました。
 onnanoko ga beddo ni mogurikomu to kangaemashita.
 girl (subject marker) into bed crawl-in and thought.
 the girl crawled into bed and thought.

- 5 この子の飼い主も、
 Kono ko no kainushi mo,
 This child's owner too,
 The pet's owner too,

- 6 きっと今ごろさみしがっているだろうな。
 kitto ima-goro samishigatte iru darō na.
 surely now about is-feeling-lonely probably is, eh.
 must be feeling lonely right now.

- 7 私も、
 Watashi mo,
 I too,
 Me too,

- 8 プルーデンスがいなくなったときと同じ気持ちのように。
 Purūdensu ga inaku natta toki to onaji kimochi no yō ni.

Prudence (subject marker) was-gone when and same feeling like.
The same way I felt when Prudence went missing.

- 9 返したほうがいいよね。
Kaeshita hō ga ii yo ne.
Returning (it) better is, eh.
It would be better to return it.
- 10 でも、やっと一緒になれて、楽しい時間をすごして。
Demo, yatto issho ni narete, tanoshii jikan o sugoshite.
But, at last together become-able, fun time spending.
But, we are finally together and we are having a good time.
- 11 離れるの、嫌だな。
Hanareru no, iyada na.
Parting (nominalizer), dislike, eh.
I don't want to part with him.
- 12 次の日、女の子は飼い主のもとへやってきました
Tsugi no hi, onnanoko wa kainushi no moto e yatte kimashita.
Next day, girl (topic marker) owner's toward came.
The next day, the girl went to the pet's owner.

Another instance of parental enactment in solo readings, unique to the Japanese dataset, involved parents performing the entire book from beginning to end. In Excerpt 17, line 1, the parent exclaims *Ha* (Oh) upon noticing a missing dog poster, followed by *wan* (woof) to mimic the dog's bark, possibly conveying a sense of surprise or inquiry, such as "What?" She continues with *anata sagasareteru yo* (You are being searched for), switching voices and mimicking an animal to stage a monologue. This method of engaging in a one-sided conversation was exclusively observed in the Japanese data. Furthermore, the mother expresses a sense of conflict in line 2 by saying *ūn. wā, wā.* (Hmm. Ah, ah.) and then addresses the dog again in lines 3–4 by saying *anata mo dareka no inu na no ne. anata no koto suki na no ni, dō shiyō. ūn.* (You must belong to someone, too. I like you, but what should I do? Hmm.) Unlike Excerpt 1, which depicted an enactment of internal thought, this example

demonstrates conveying emotions through a solo performance of dialogue with the dog.

Excerpt 17

Japanese Parent's Solo Reading with Consistent Enactment

- 1 は、ワン。あなた探されてるわよ。
ha, wan. anata sagasareteru wa yo.
Oh, woof. you (subject) being-searched-for (assertive particle).
Oh! Woof. You are being searched for.
- 2 うーん。わー、わー。
ūn. wā, wā.
(thinking sound). Ah Ah
Hmm. Ah—
- 3 あなたも誰かの犬なのね。
anata mo dareka no inu na no ne.
you too someone's dog (explanatory particle) (assertive particle).
You must be someone's dog, too.
- 4 あなたのこと好きなのに、どうしよう。うーん。
anata no koto suki na no ni, dō shiyō. ūn.
about you like (despite that), what do (suggestion). Hmm.
I like you, but what should I do? Hmm.
- 5 コンコン。あの、はい、この犬あなたのかしら。
konkōn. ano, hai, kono inu anata no kashira.
knock-knock. um, here-you-are this dog yours I-wonder.
Knock-knock. Um, here you are, I wonder if this dog is yours?

The third type of enactment featured a fluid transition between enactment and description, without a clear boundary as parents naturally shifted from one approach to the other. In Excerpt 18, lines 1–2, the parent adopts an objective stance to explain that the dog actually belonged to someone else: *kono ko ni wa betsu de kainushi-san*

ga itan datte iu koto ga wakarimashita. (It became clear that he has another owner somewhere else.)

In line 3, the parent continues to describe the situation objectively, noting the girl's internal conflict. From lines 3 to 5, the narrative shifts to enactment: *a, dō shiyō tte. jibun to onajiku wanchan kaette kite hoshī na tte omotteru kainushi ga iru.* (Ah, what should I do? There's an owner who, just like me, wishes for the puppy to return.)

This mirrors the approach seen in Excerpt 1. However, the transition in line 6 is particularly noteworthy. The parent begins with *demo jibun mo* (but I've also), maintaining the protagonist's voice, yet the following statement shifts away from a first-person viewpoint. The phrase *kokoro no kyori mo chijimatte* (feeling closer to this little dog) in line 7 suggests a third-person perspective – the idiomatic translation is closer to “the emotional distance has narrowed” which shows an external observation of emotional distance.

This shift to a third-person perspective extends into *tabun ironna aijō toka mo mebaete kita naka de* (and probably various feelings of affection have begun to grow) in line 8 where *tabun* (probably) signifies a complete move to observing the character's emotions from an external viewpoint. Yet, in line 10, there is a brief return to the first-person perspective as the character is quoted, indicating her dilemma between not wanting to return the puppy and feeling obliged to do so. This transition highlights a sophisticated blending of narrative modes, where the line between describing and embodying the character's experiences becomes increasingly blurred.

Excerpt 18

Japanese Parent's Solo Reading with Blended Narrative Modes

1 この子には
kono ko ni wa
this child for,
this dog has

- 2 別で飼い主さんがいたんだっていうことがわかりました。
betsu de kainushi-san ga itan datte iu koto ga wakarimashita.
separately owner exists that (quotative) thing became known.
It became clear that he has another owner somewhere else.
- 3 女の子は悩むんだよね。あ、どうしようって。
onna no ko wa nayamun da yo ne. a, dō shiyō tte.
girl (topic marker) worries, right. ah, what do (quotation).
So the girl is conflicted. Ah, “What should I do?”
- 4 自分と同じく
jibun to onajiku
oneself with same,
Just like myself,
- 5 ワンちゃん帰ってきてほしいなって思ってる飼い主がいる。
wanchan kaette kite hoshī na tte omotteru kainushi ga iru.
puppy return and want (quotative) thinking owner exists.
There’s an owner who wishes for the puppy to return.
- 6 でも自分もなんか
demo jibun mo nanka
but oneself also
But I’ve well,
- 7 ようやくこのワンちゃんと心の距離も縮まってきて
yōyaku kono wanchan to kokoro no kyori mo chijimatte kite
somehow finally this puppy with heart distance also shortened
finally started to feel closer to this little dog,
- 8 たぶんいろんな愛情とかも芽生えてきた中で、
tabun ironna aijō toka mo mebaete kita naka de,
and perhaps various love etc. also sprouting amidst,
and probably various feelings of affection have begun to grow,
- 9 たぶん返したくない気持ちと
tabun kaeshitakunai kimochi to
perhaps not-want-to-return feeling and
so she’s probably torn between not wanting to return it and

- 10 返してあげなきゃみたいな気持ちを悩んでいます。
kaeshite agenakya mitai na kimochi o nayandemasu.
must-return like feeling (object marker) worrying.
feeling like “I must give it back.”

Although the styles of enactment vary among these examples, they share a common goal: To embody and articulate the protagonist’s emotions. Comparing these examples to American parents’ examples from the same scenarios, the contrast in techniques used to achieve this objective is pronounced. Unlike the approach observed with Japanese participants, the majority of American parents tended to describe emotions by using emic perspectives. For example, in Excerpt 19, line 4, the parent states, “Roscoe was so happy to see his owner,” and that his owner was also happy. Then in line 5, the parent mentions that “she felt sad.” From a general perspective, the parent could have described Roscoe and his owner as seeming happy, and the protagonist as seeming sad, but instead, she directly identifies and articulates the emotion from an internal perspective.

In other cases, the reference to emotion is more indirect. For example, in Excerpt 20, line 3, the parent says that since the protagonist remembers Prudence, her last dog, “she knows the feeling,” most likely referring to the sorrow and worry from losing a dog. The knowledge that the dog has an owner (line 2) and that she “knows the feeling” together suggest that, understanding how the owner probably feels now, she will return the dog. This level of contextualization is triggered by the parent’s perspective-taking of the protagonist and the emotions she is experiencing. Excerpt 21 provides a similar example, where the parent takes the perspective of the protagonist and mentions that she is “so very conflicted” (line 1), loving Roscoe but knowing someone else loves him too (lines 2–3). She maintains her stance of expressing emic emotions in lines 4–5 by mentioning that Roscoe is happy to be back but that the protagonist is a little sad. However, later, when she says “she knows she did the right thing,” the parent adds “I think,” which marks a shift to a more objective opinion.

This may suggest that while empathizing with emotions through perspective-taking can significantly enrich the narrative's emotional depth, judgments of right or wrong seem more impersonal and may not require an emic standpoint.

Excerpt 19

American Parent's Solo Reading with Direct Reference to Emic Perspectives

1 That night she couldn't sleep. She didn't know what to do.
2 She loved having Roscoe with her, but he wasn't her dog.
3 So the next morning she woke up and knocked on the door
4 and Roscoe was so happy to see his owner and his owner was
5 so happy to see him. Then she felt sad.
6 Sometimes it's hard to do the right thing.

Excerpt 20

American Parent's Solo Reading with Indirect Reference to Emic Perspectives

1 Someone's looking for Roscoe. Uh-oh.
2 Oh, she's got to think it over. She knows Roscoe has an owner.
3 She remembers Prudence, so she knows the feeling.

Excerpt 21

American Parent's Solo Reading with Reference to Emic Perspectives

1 So very conflicted. She loves Roscoe already,
2 but she knows someone else loves him.
3 Ah, she's doing the right thing, I think. Let's see.
4 Yep, yep. Roscoe's home. Roscoe's home, and he's so happy.
5 She's a little sad, but she knows she did the right thing,
6 I think.

Lastly, it is noteworthy that, although statistically rare, some American parents also employed enactments to express the protagonist's emotions in this scene. Out of 52 participants, only three adopted this approach. A particularly intriguing instance

involved an American parent introducing an imaginary character (the protagonist's parents) not present in the book, as shown in Excerpt 22. In lines 7–9, the parent adopts the voice of the protagonist's parent, saying, "You know it's up to you, honey. You've got to think about it. But think about how you felt when you couldn't find Prudence. How this poor kid must feel too." Interestingly, the parent does not directly enact the protagonist's internal thoughts as the Japanese participants did, but instead introduces an authoritative figure who encourages the protagonist to empathize with the original owner.

Excerpt 22

American Parent's Solo Reading with Enactments

1 And that's when she sees it. Her heart sinks.
2 She just found a new friend and only realizes that
3 this friend has a different home.
4 So she takes the number, she goes home,
5 she talks to her family.
6 Her mom and her dad think she should call the number but
7 you know, it's up to you, honey. You've got to think about it.
8 But think about how you felt when you couldn't find Prudence.
9 How this poor kid must feel too.
10 And she thinks about it because she loves Roscoe too.

5.3.3 Analysis of Shared Book Reading

5.3.3.1 Statistical Analysis of the Influence of Language

Similar to the parental solo readings, the hypothesis for the shared book readings suggests that reading interactions would vary by language. Therefore, the null hypothesis for each analysis presumed no difference in the distribution of reading behaviors between the Japanese and American samples. To evaluate this hypothesis, the Mann–Whitney *U* test was utilized, mirroring its application in the parental solo

readings. The rationale for selecting this statistical test aligns with the considerations for the parental solo reading analysis.

The significant findings are presented in Table 21. Additional codes demonstrate a weak correlation with the language of the readings; however, these are considered insignificant. This insignificance is due to the median frequency being zero for both Japanese and English, accompanied by only a minimal number of instances for each code. Consequently, these findings were excluded from the table.

Similar to the parental solo readings, the total number of parental references to emotions did not indicate any statistical significance in terms of language difference, as shown in Figure 10. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 11 and Figure 12, the use of enactments by Japanese parents (total frequency of enactments: $U = 5662.000$, $p < .001$, $z = 7.701$) and the emic perspective by American parents (parent's emic reference to emotions: $U = 1915.000$, $p < .001$, $z = -4.618$) were also prevalent in shared book readings as in the solo readings. The significant difference in the frequency of enactments between American and Japanese parents likely influenced the level of advanced scaffolding and its sub-code, the parent's level of perspective-taking, which was more frequent in the Japanese data (parent's level of scaffolding (advanced): $U = 4118.000$, $p = .008$, $z = 2.650$). Conversely, as illustrated in Figure 13, the findings indicate that American parents ask their children more questions than their Japanese counterparts ($U = 2065.500$, $p < .001$, $z = -4.216$), particularly regarding identifying characters' emotions ($U = 1982.500$, $p < .001$, $z = -4.644$). This emphasis on questioning likely influenced the basic level of American parents' scaffolding ($U = 2676.500$, $p = .040$, $z = -2.052$). The frequent inquiries about characters' emotions led to children often referring to emotions, especially when identifying emotions such as "The dog is feeling happy" in response to questions such as "Is the dog feeling happy or sad?" (child's total frequency of reference to emotions: $U = 2012.500$, $p < .001$, $z = -4.322$).

Table 21*U Test for Code Distribution Across Languages for the Shared Book Readings*

	<i>p</i>		<i>U</i>	<i>z</i>	US Md	Japan Md
Child's total frequency of reference to emotions	.000 ***		2012.50	-4.322	4	1
Child's basic level of utterance	.000 ***		1823.00	-5.144	2	0
Child recognizes emotion	.000 ***		1772.00	-5.360	2	0
Child's reference to emotions	.000 ***		1834.50	-5.102	2	0
Parent's emic reference to emotions	.000 ***		1915.00	-4.618	3	1
Parent's enactment of emotion	.000 ***		5108.50	6.112	0	2
Parent's enactment of action	.000 ***		5493.50	7.176	1	4
Parent's advanced scaffolding	.008 **		4118.00	2.650	6	8.5
Parent's basic scaffolding	.040 *		2676.50	-2.052	4	3
Parent's perspective-taking	.001 ***		4294.00	3.224	5	8
Parent's question about character's emotions	.000 ***		1982.50	-4.644	2	0
Parent's total frequency of enactments	.000 ***		5662.00	7.701	1	6
Parent's total frequency of questions	.000 ***		2065.50	-4.216	3	0

Notes. U = Mann–Whitney *U* test. The *U* value is a measure of the difference in rank sums between the two groups being compared. The *U* value's range extends from 0 to the product of the sample sizes of both groups, with a maximum possible value of 6608 in this context. A *U* value near the extremes of 0 or 6608 suggests a pronounced rank difference between the groups, implying significant disparity. The probability of *U* is shown in the *p* column; a probability of <0.05 is considered significant. *Z* = *Z* score. This quantifies how many standard deviations a data point is from the mean,

with a higher absolute value indicating a greater deviation from the mean.

Significance levels are denoted as follows:

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 10

Boxplot for the Parental Total Reference to Emotions

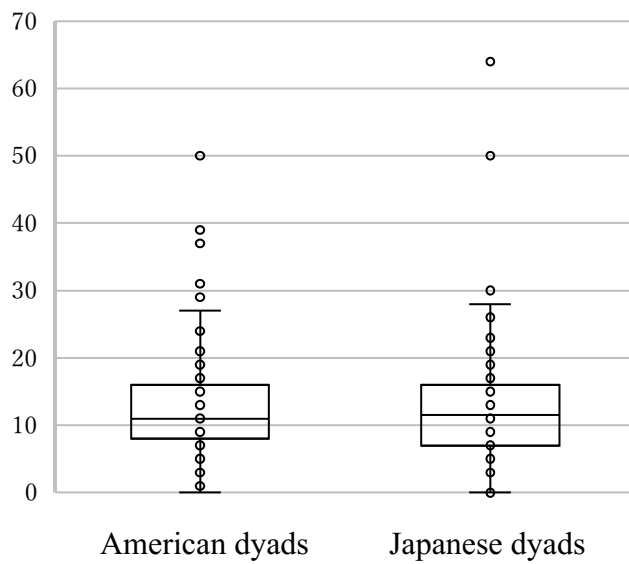


Figure 11

Boxplot for the Parental Use of Enactments per Language

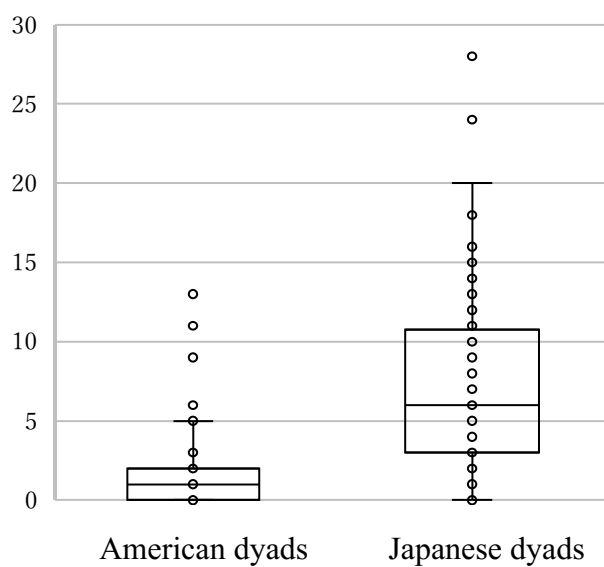


Figure 12

Boxplot for the Parental Emic Reference to Emotions per Language

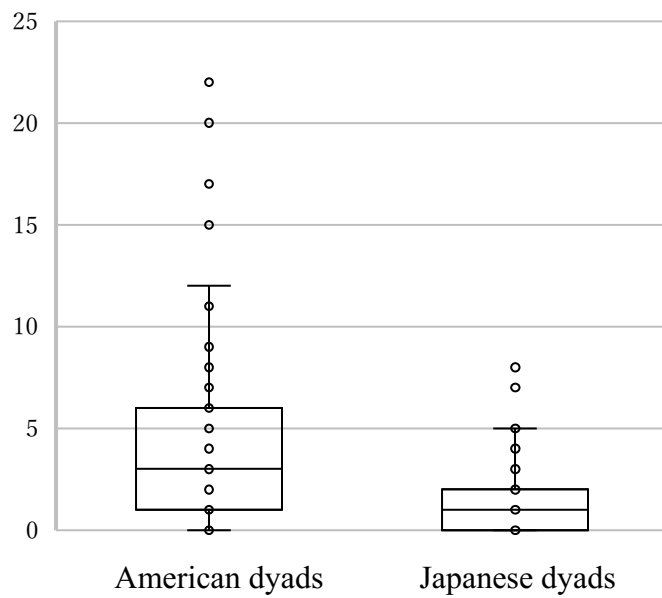
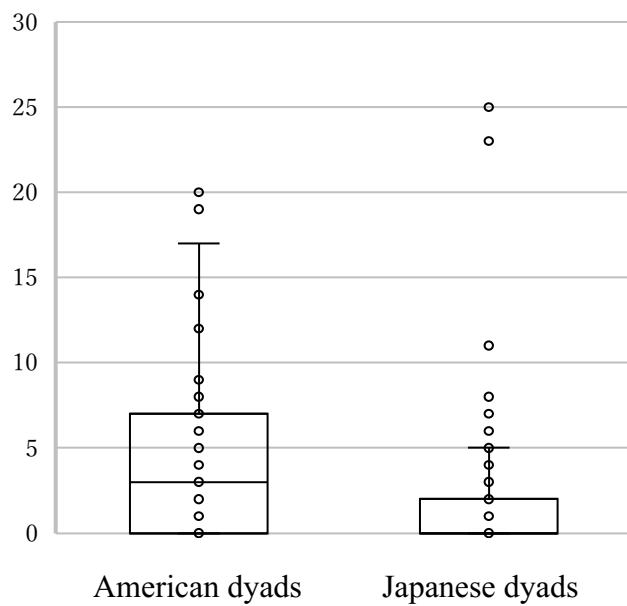


Figure 13

Boxplot for Parental Questions per Language



Another notable discovery pertains to the balance between basic-level and advanced-level scaffolding. In Figures 14 to 17, the vertical axis represents the frequency of utterances, while the horizontal axis shows the child's age. As illustrated in Figure 14, Japanese parents predominantly engaged in advanced-level scaffolding, such as fostering perspective-taking and empathy, rather than basic-level scaffolding, which involves recognizing and understanding emotions consistently from ages 3 to 7. By contrast, American parents employed a combination of both advanced and basic levels of scaffolding across all ages, as shown in Figure 15. However, this trend was inverted in the children's utterances. As depicted in Figure 16, Japanese children tended to blend both advanced-level and basic-level utterances, whereas American children more frequently referenced basic emotions over advanced emotions at all ages (Figure 17).

Figure 14

Scatter Plot of Japanese Parents' Scaffolding Levels (Basic and Advanced)

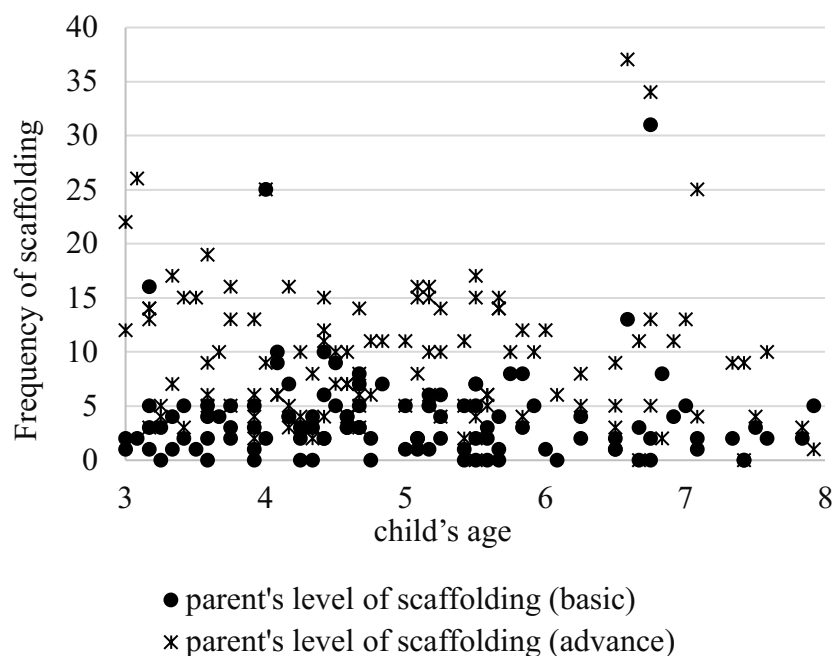


Figure 15

Scatter Plot of American Parents' Scaffolding Levels (Basic and Advanced)

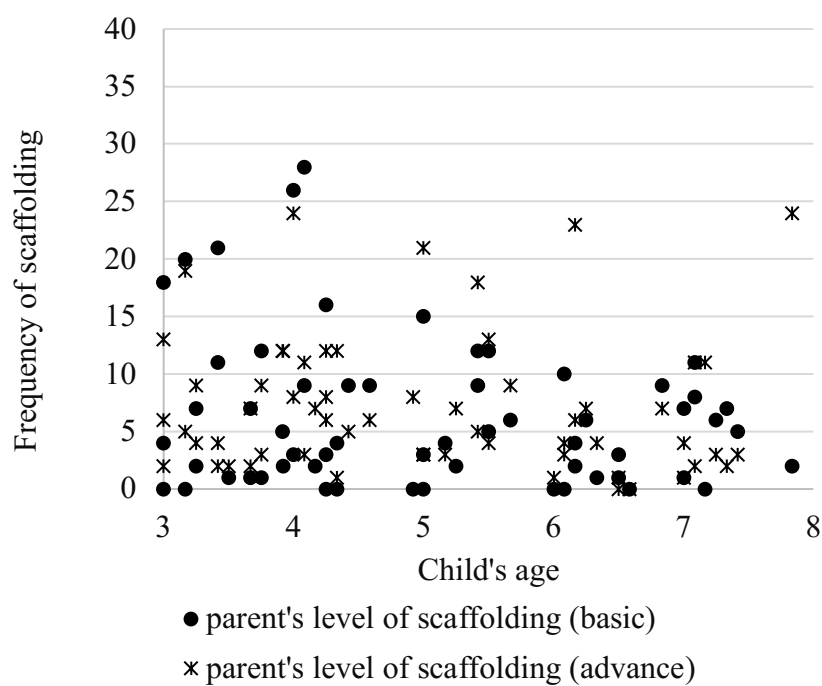


Figure 16

Scatter Plot of Japanese Children's Scaffolding Levels (Basic and Advanced)

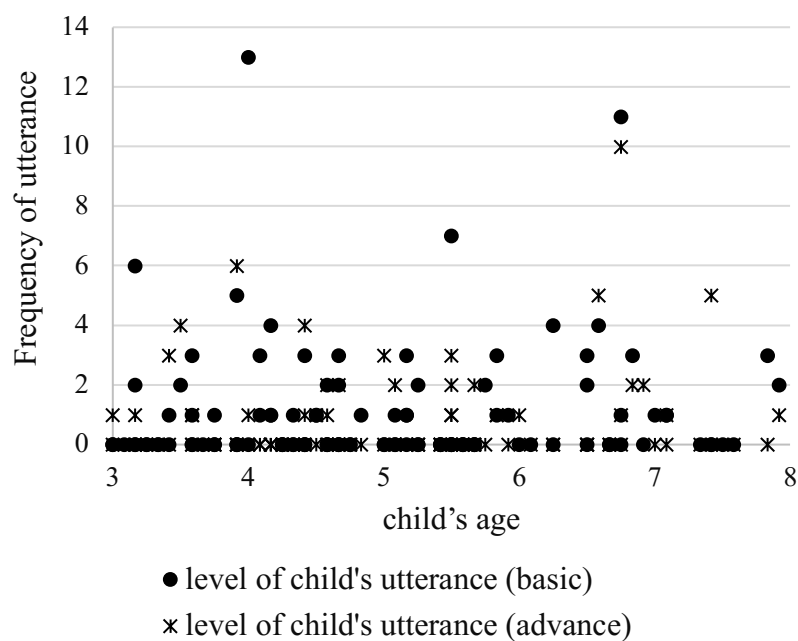
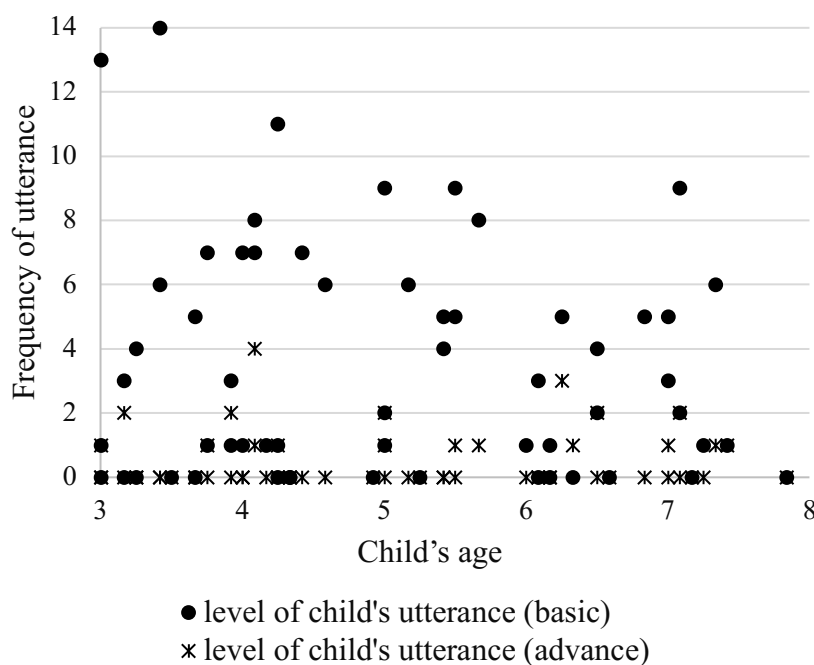


Figure 17

Scatter Plot of American Children's Scaffolding Levels (Basic and Advanced)



5.3.3.2 Qualitative Analysis of Dyad Reading in Japanese and English

As previously noted, Japanese parents tend to employ more advanced levels of scaffolding than basic scaffolding across all age groups during shared picture book readings, while American parents often utilize a mix of both. Commonly, American parents begin with basic enquiries about the characters' emotions and progressively develop the dialogue towards understanding the characters' empathy or the child's emotional response to the story. An illustration of this approach is provided in Excerpt 23. Initially, the mother enquires about the boy's feelings – the original owner of the dog – after the protagonist returns his pet, as shown in line 1. The child responds with “happy” in line 2, prompting the mother to pose another question about the protagonist's feelings, aiming to draw the child's attention to the emotional juxtaposition of the two characters. In line 4, the child replies with “sad,” leading the mother to further question how the child feels about the situation. This strategy

encourages the child to adopt the perspectives of the characters, engage in reflection, and articulate their feelings after considering the depicted emotions.

Excerpt 23

American Parent's Shared Book Reading (child's age = 7;4)

- 1 MOT: Yeah? How does that make the boy feel?
- 2 CHI: Happy.
- 3 MOT: How does it make her feel?
- 4 CHI: Sad.
- 5 MOT: How do you feel?
- 6 CHI: Um, both, kinda.

Another example of this progressive layering of questions occurs when the parent expands the dialogue to encourage their child to take on the perspectives of the characters and connect with their feelings. This is particularly apparent when the child's initial responses do not adequately convey an understanding of the storyline. In Excerpt 24, lines 1–2, similar to Excerpt 23, the mother asks about the characters' feelings. It depicts the same scene, where the mother observes that both the dog and the boy appear joyous in their reunion, but then probes into the protagonist's emotions.

When the child responds with “uh no (she's not happy)” in line 3, the mother enquires “why?” in line 4. The child's answer in line 5, that the protagonist is unhappy because she wants the dog back, might seem incomplete from an adult's viewpoint. While it is accurate that the protagonist is saddened by parting with the dog, it was a considered decision made after much deliberation – she is sorrowful, yet does not literally wish to keep the dog. To address this, the mother suggests, “It's a hard choice, right?” in line 6, using a tag question to verify comprehension and accord.

Concluding the narrative in line 7, the mother says, “So the story is about making hard choices,” and then engages the child by asking if they have ever faced a difficult decision like the protagonist. This question aims to connect the character’s feelings with the child’s personal experiences, fostering empathy for the characters.

However, when the child responds with a simple “no” in line 9, the mother echoes this answer in line 10 and deliberately recalls a pertinent instance where the child had to make a difficult decision. She brings up the time the child reluctantly gave away their toys, paralleling the protagonist’s dilemma in the story. Pursuing this comparison, the mother asks, “What did the toy do for the person I gave it to?” When the child replies nonchalantly “play with it,” the mother reframes the question in line 17: “So how do you think they felt when I gave that toy away?” The child recognizes that it made the recipient happy, which the mother affirms with “yeah” in line 19.

The mother then elucidates that although parting with the toy saddened her child, it brought joy to the recipient, highlighting the emotional conflict inherent in difficult choices. This extensive conversation revolves around fundamental emotional scaffolding, such as identifying and understanding feelings, but, cumulatively, it underscores the child’s development of perspective-taking and empathy. Through such narratives, many American parents intertwine both elementary and advanced scaffolding to facilitate empathy training in their children.

Excerpt 24

American Parent’s Shared Book Reading (child’s age = 4;3)

- 1 MOT: So you think the boy looks happy, the dog looks happy,
- 2 What about her?
- 3 CHI: Uh, no.
- 4 MOT: Why?
- 5 CHI: Uh, because she wants a doggie back.
- 6 MOT: She wants a doggie, yeah, it’s a hard choice, right?

7 (ellipsis) So the story is about making hard choices.
8 Have you ever had a hard choice like she did?
9 CHI: No.
10 MOT: No. Let me think. Uh, there's been a time,
11 a couple of times when mommy gave your toys away but you,
12 you didn't want mommy to give it away.
13 But you were not playing with it.
14 Wasn't, isn't that a hard choice? But what, what did the
15 toy do for the person I gave it to?
16 CHI: Um, play with it.
17 MOT: So how do you think they felt when I gave that toy away?
18 CHI: Happy.
19 MOT: Yeah, you're not happy, right, because you want to play
20 with that toy. you have so many other toys so we got rid
21 of those toys and we got a new one, right?
22 CHI: Uh-huh.
23 MOT: Yeah, so that was a hard choice but, but other people
24 were able to enjoy our gift, right? So we made someone
25 else happy. All right, I think that's enough for the
26 story today.

Layered questioning can also be employed with younger children, utilizing simpler questions while still serving the same purpose of cultivating empathy. In Excerpt 25, the mother begins by noting that the protagonist faces a choice and asks her child on whether the protagonist should keep the dog out of love or return it because the original owner misses it (lines 16). This either/or question brings the characters' emotions into focus and simplifies the decision-making process for the child. At the same time, it places the child in the protagonist's situation, challenging them to contemplate the same dilemma. When the child responds in line 7 that the dog should be "given back to the owner that misses it," the mother refrains from confirming the answer, instead suggesting they continue reading to discover the protagonist's ultimate decision. In lines 12 to 14, the mother and child engage in a dialogue similar to those in Excerpts 8 and 9, acknowledging the characters' mixed emotions. In line 15, the mother empathizes by saying "I would feel sad too" and

personalizes the emotion by adding, “Now that’s two dogs that I love that I can’t have.” She briefly resumes her role as the narrator to describe the protagonist’s melancholic walk home. She reiterates her hypothetical sadness if she were in the character’s place, eliciting agreement from the child with a “me too” in line 18. In this scenario, the parent opts not to draw upon the child’s past experiences to parallel the character’s feelings but instead models an emotional response, guiding the child on how they might feel by expressing her own emotions.

Excerpt 25

American Parent’s Shared Book Reading (child’s age = 3;11)

- 1 MOT: Yeah, so she has a decision to make.
- 2 She knows that the dog’s owner misses it a lot,
- 3 but she likes the dog. So what should she do?
- 4 She’s really worried about this.
- 5 Should she keep the dog because she loves it
- 6 or should she give it back to its owner who misses it?
- 7 CHI: Give it back to the owner that misses it.
- 8 MOT: Let’s see what she decides to do. What is she doing?
- 9 CHI: Giving the dog back.
- 10 MOT: Yup. Oh, and what happens?
- 11 CHI: The owner is very happy.
- 12 MOT: And look at Roscoe. Roscoe is very happy too. How does
- 13 she feel?
- 14 CHI: A little bit sad.
- 15 MOT: Yeah, I would feel sad too.
- 16 Now that’s two dogs that I love that I can’t have.
- 17 Oh, so now she has to walk home and she feels very sad.
- 18 I’d feel sad too.
- 19 CHI: Me too.

For the Japanese participants, a distinct pattern emerged. In Excerpt 26, the mother initiates the conversation in line 1 by asking her child, *Wan-chan, donna kimochi na no kana?* (What is the puppy feeling?) The child responds with *Iyana*

kimochi (Doesn't feel happy), mirroring the exchanges observed with American parents. However, the interaction takes a unique turn in line 3. Without a preceding marker, the mother embodies the protagonist's feelings of reluctance and hesitation towards the dog by saying, *E*: *Mada, anata no koto yoku shiranai shi*. (Well, I still don't know you well.) The initial *E*: (elongated well) is not a sign of disagreement with the child's response but rather part of the enactment, illustrating the protagonist's hesitation to interact with the dog due to their unfamiliarity.

Excerpt 26

Japanese Parent's Shared Book Reading (child's age = 5;2)

- 1 MOT: わんちゃん、どんな気持ちなのかな。
Wan-chan, donna kimochi na no kana.
Puppy, what kind of feeling Q Q.
What is the puppy feeling?
- 2 CHI: 嫌な気持ち。
Iyana kimochi.
Unpleasant-GEN feeling.
Doesn't feel happy.
- 3 MOT: えー。まだ、あなたのことよく知らないし。
E: *Mada, anata no koto yoku shiranai shi*.
We:ll Yet, you-GEN thing well not-know and.
Well, I still don't know you well.

The employment of enactments to explore character emotions and foster perspective-taking was a prevalent method among the Japanese parents. In Excerpt 27, the mother describes a scene where the girl contemplates the decision of whether to return Roscoe, the new dog, while looking at a photo of her lost dog, Prudence, in bed. The mother notes the girl's sad expression and enquires as to the reason from her child (lines 1–3). The child speculates in line 4 with a sentence with final rising

intonation, *Wanwan ga inaku naru no sabishikara?* (Because she's sad that the puppy is going to be gone?) – a response that shows a basic level of understanding. However, the protagonist's sadness is multifaceted; it's not just about returning the dog but also reflects her sorrow over Prudence, her empathy towards Roscoe's owners, and the anticipated loss of Roscoe. To elucidate this complex mix of emotions, the mother adopts the character's perspectives through enactment. Initially, she affirms the child's answer in line 5 with *Ne*: a Japanese particle that signifies agreement when used at the beginning of a sentence as a standalone particle. She then delves deeper into the girl's thought process. In line 6, she suggests that the protagonist is thinking *Kaeshite ageta hō ga ī ka na to omotte n janai?* (Maybe it would be better to return it), enacting the protagonist's internal conflict. Later, in lines 9–10, she articulates, *kaette kite hoshī tte omotteru papa to mama ga iru no kana tte* (Maybe it has a mom and dad who want it to return home), projecting the protagonist's empathy towards the real owners.

This approach of using enactment to scaffold perspective-taking demonstrates a unique aspect of the interactions in the Japanese samples. Such exchanges facilitated advanced forms of scaffolding, unlike the step-by-step emotion recognition scaffolding seen with American parents. This led to a noticeable difference in the sophistication of scaffolding techniques employed by American and Japanese parents, with Japanese parents often bypassing more basic emotional scaffolding in favor of directly engaging with more complex emotional and empathetic understanding.

Excerpt 27

Japanese Parent's Shared Book Reading (child's age = 4;8)

- 1 MOT: 前飼ってたワンちゃん、
Mae katteta wan-chan,
Previously owned-CONJ puppy,
The puppy she used to own,

- 2 迷子になったワンちゃんの写真も見てる。
maigo ni natta wan-chan no shashin mo miteru.
lost became puppy-GEN photo also looking-at.
She's looking at the photo of that puppy that got lost
- 3 ちょっと悲しそうだね。どうしてだ？
Chotto kanashi-sōda ne. Dōshiteda?
A little sad-seems COP right? Why COP?
She looks a bit sad, doesn't she. Why is that?
- 4 CHI: ワンワンがいなくなるの寂しいから？
Wanwan ga inaku naru no sabishikara?
Puppy NOM disappear becomes GEN lonely because?
Because she's sad that the puppy is going to be gone?
- 5 MOT: ねー、こっちのワンちゃんさ、パパとママ探しててさ、
Ne:, kotchi no wan-chan-sa, papa to mama sagashi tete sa,
Yeah, this-NOM puppy EMPH, daddy and mommy looking for
Yeah, this puppy, you know, it's looking for its dad and mom,
- 6 返してあげたほうがいいかなと思ってんじゃない？
Kaeshite ageta hō ga ī ka na to omotte n janai?
return-CAUSATIVE gave side NOM good Q think-PROG COP Q?
Maybe she's thinking "Maybe it would be better to return it"
- 7 返したくないけどさ、
Kaeshitakunai kedo sa,
Return-NEG want but EMPH,
She doesn't want to give it back but,
- 8 きっと自分の前のワンちゃん探してるみたいに
kitto jibun no mae no wan-chan sagashiteru mitai ni
surely self-GEN previous NOM puppy looking-for seems like
Just like she was searching for her own dog,
- 9 帰ってきてほしいって思ってる
kaette kite hoshī tte omotteru
return-TE come want QUOT thinking
(connected in line 10)

10 パパとママがいるのかなって。
 papa to mama ga iru no kana tte.
 daddy and mommy NOM exist Q Q.
 She's thinking, "Maybe it has a mom and dad who want it to return home."

5.4 Discussion

The results of this study offer several insights into how empathy is scaffolded by parents in children aged 3 to 7 years. First, an interesting observation is that the age of the children did not significantly correlate with the dynamics of either dyad shared picture book readings or the parental solo book readings. Second, the frequency of emotion-related utterances by parents was comparable for both American and Japanese participants across both dyad shared picture book readings and solo book readings. These findings challenge previous assertions that scaffolding decreases as a child ages and that the extent of empathy training varies significantly across cultures. Furthermore, the study revealed distinct approaches to scaffolding perspective-taking between American and Japanese parents. The Japanese parents predominantly utilized enactments, while the American parents were more inclined to engage in question–answer sequences that emphasized emic emotions. The significance of these findings and their potential impact on the development of empathy in children will be explored in the sections that follow.

5.4.1 Consistent Scaffolding Regardless of Child's Age

The statistical analysis revealed no significant correlation between the child's age and any of the coded utterances. Several factors might contribute to this observation. First, individual differences may have played a considerable role. As illustrated in the scatterplots in Figure 14 and Figure 15 (section 5.3.3.1), there was notable variance in the frequency of parental emotional scaffolding among younger children, which gradually became more consistent among older children. This indicates that individual variations in the data might have obscured a clear correlation

between a child's age and utterance frequency. Indeed, it is well understood that there is significant variation in the speed of language development from the onset of first words, not only in linguistic skills but also in the pace of emotional growth among children (Cutting & Dunn, 1999; Dunn et al., 1991; Frank et al., 2021).

These rates of growth tend to converge and homogenize over time albeit at an older age than the scope of this study, potentially influencing the observed results. Thus, it is conceivable that the children have yet to reach a developmental stage where empathy is fully acquired, and the ages of 3 to 7 do not necessarily mark a period where parents begin to reduce their scaffolding efforts. This assumption aligns with findings suggesting empathy is fully acquired around the ages of 13 to 15 (Goleman, 2006). If so, it implies that the scaffolding of empathy begins well before the skill is fully acquired, possibly as early as 3 years of age, and continues until the child reaches full empathy acquisition around adolescence. However, it seems improbable that parents expect their efforts to enhance a 3 or 4 year-old's empathy towards others immediately. It is more likely that parents continually scaffold empathy to foster emotional awareness, preparing the children to grasp empathy when they are cognitively ready. In this context, parents may be considered to scaffold the zone of next development, as Smagorinsky (2018) suggests, focusing on long-term developmental trajectories rather than immediate outcomes.

5.4.2 Consistent Reference to Emotions Regardless of Language

In both shared and individual book reading sessions by parents, the frequency of emotion-related references remained consistent across the two languages. This consistency underscores the universal nature of empathy, a phenomenon further validated by neurological research indicating the universal activation of specific brain regions during both personal and observed emotional experiences. Such evidence supports the notion of a biological foundation for empathy, establishing it as a

fundamental human trait (Decety & Jackson, 2004; Singer et al., 2004; Iacoboni, 2009).

However, research also points to a gap in understanding of how cultural differences influence the expression of empathy (Matsumoto, 2013; Wierzbicka, 1999; Elfenbein & Ambady, 2003). This is echoed in studies highlighting the divergent communication preferences between Japan and the United States, with Japan valuing interpersonal relationships and the US focusing on information-oriented communication. Markus and Kitayama (1991) have suggested that this difference stems from Americans' tendency towards an independent self-construction, which prioritizes self-expression, autonomy, and personal achievement. This independent orientation is reflected in the education system's emphasis on fostering self-reliance and confidence from a young age. By contrast, Japanese culture promotes an interdependent self-construction that values social harmony, empathy, and connectedness, viewing these traits as crucial social skills. Consequently, Japanese educational systems emphasize group cohesion and sensitivity to others, nurturing these attributes early on. This contrast in cultural values sheds light on the varied approaches to communication and education, illustrating how societal norms shape individual and collective identities.

Yet, this study's findings in the context of book reading present a different picture, showing that American and Japanese parents reference emotions with equal frequency, and the depth of their emotional engagement – through recognizing, understanding, perspective-taking, and expressing empathy – remains consistent during solo readings. This suggests that, despite previous research suggesting a stronger orientation towards empathy in Japanese culture, when employing a unified research methodology using picture books, the cultural divide may not be as significant as believed. Specifically, because the present study utilized a wordless picture book, it seems reasonable to propose that the focus of both American and

Japanese parents on the scenarios presented might not differ greatly. When faced with the same situations depicted in the book, individuals from both cultures could interpret the emotions and exhibit similar empathetic responses.

It is still conceivable that the observed phenomenon is specific to the context examined, suggesting that the ways empathy is perceived and expressed during contexts other than shared book reading could vary significantly between Japan and the US. The primary reason for this is that interactions with a book do not carry the same concern for potentially influencing the reactions of conversational partners through one's expressions. In essence, individuals can freely articulate their thoughts without the apprehension that their remarks could lead to face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Therefore, while American and Japanese parents might interpret emotions similarly, they might not express these interpretations as openly in regular conversations as they do during book reading. Despite questions about whether these expressions would be as forthcoming in everyday interactions, this finding remains significant in terms of educational scaffolding. It implies that while American and Japanese parents may adopt varied approaches to scaffold empathy, when faced with comparable circumstances, their overarching objective concerning the desired degree of empathy their children should grasp and develop seems to be consistent across both cultures.

5.4.3 Perspective-Taking Through Enactments or Emic Emotions

While the occurrence of emotional references was equally frequent among both American and Japanese parents, the nature of their utterances diverged significantly. Japanese parents often employed enactments to convey emotions, while American parents utilized emic perspectives, adopting the viewpoints of the characters. Moreover, American parents were noted for their method of layering questions, starting from the basic emotions of characters to fostering an empathetic

response in their children. This raises an intriguing question: If both cultures aim for a similar level of empathy in their children, why do they adopt different approaches?

One possible explanation is that while both American and Japanese parents value perspective-taking, the degree of integration or immersion into the perspective might vary. Considering the Japanese emphasis on interpersonal relationships versus the American focus on information-oriented communication, Japanese parents might prefer a deeper immersion into others' emotions. By contrast, American parents might encourage adopting another's perspective while maintaining a distinct identity from the character. American parents' approach of beginning with the identification of characters' emotions, exploring the reasons behind these emotions, and subsequently encouraging perspective-taking may stem from the belief that understanding another's perspective requires a logical and thorough comprehension of their experiences. Thus, perspective-taking becomes a higher-order form of empathy. Conversely, Japanese parents might not always prioritize identifying the characters' emotions, sometimes choosing to reenact the entire plot instead. Recognizing emotions and discerning their causes are not seen as essential for understanding the story, and empathy can arise even without full awareness of the characters' emotions.

For example, in Excerpt 28, when the mother describes a girl looking sadly out of the window on a rainy day in lines 1–4, the child spontaneously mentions *Asobitakatta no ka na* (I wonder if she wanted to play) in line 5, which is a good opportunity for the parent to discuss the character's emotions and the cause of it. In lines 6–7, the mother mentions *Nande, nande darou ne, nande kon'na kanashi-sōna kao shite ndarou ne*. (Why, I wonder why, I wonder why she has such a sad face.) To this, the child responds with most likely some kind of reasoning in line 8 – *Wan-chan ga (word) natchatta kara* (Because the puppy got (?)), which is unintelligible from the video data. However, the mother does not digress further on this and continues to read, saying *On'nanoko wa futo soto no jimen o mite mimashita*. (Suddenly, the girl

looked at the ground outside) in line 9. The mother's continuation of the story without further exploration of this emotional enquiry reflects a common pattern in the Japanese data, suggesting a form of empathy that does not rely on explicit evidence. By contrast, American parents' readings of books often build empathy on a foundation of logical understanding of the characters' emotions. This difference underscores a cultural variance in the approach to empathy during reading, with Japanese practices accepting an evidence-independent form of empathy, while American practices cater more to logical understanding as a prerequisite for empathy development.

Excerpt 28

Japanese Parent's Shared Book Reading (child's age = 4;5)

- 1 MOT : あるところに小さな女の子がいました。
Aru tokoro ni chīsana on'nanoko ga imashita.
A certain place at small girl NOM existed.
There was a little girl.

- 2 その女の子は浮かない顔をして
Sono on'nanoko wa ukanai kao o shite
That girl TOP glum face ACC doing
The girl, with a glum face,

- 3 窓越しに外を見えています。
Mado-goshi ni soto o mite imasu.
window through outside ACC looking at is.
is looking outside through the window.

- 4 この日、外は大雨でした。
Kono hi, soto wa ōamedeshita.
This day, outside TOP heavy rain was.
On this day, it was raining heavily outside.

- 5 CHI : 遊びたかったのかな。
Asobitakatta no ka na.
Wanted to play Q Q.
I wonder if she wanted to play.

- 6 MOT : なんて、なんでだろうね、
 Nande, nande darou ne,
 Why, why would it be Q,
 Why, I wonder why,
- 7 なんてこんな悲しそうな顔してんだらうね。
 Nande kon'na kanashi-sōna kao shite ndarou ne.
 why such sad looking face doing would be Q.
 I wonder why she has such a sad face.
- 8 CHI : ワンちゃんが(word) なっちやったから
 Wan-chan ga (word) natchatta kara
 Puppy borrowed, wanted NOM good NOM (word) became because
 Because the puppy got (?)
- 9 MOT : 女の子はふと外の地面を見てみました。
 On'nanoko wa futo soto no jimen o mite mimashita.
 Girl TOP suddenly outside GEN ground ACC tried to look.
 Suddenly, the girl looked at the ground outside.

5.5 Summary

This chapter discussed methods employed by parents from Japan and the US to foster empathy in children aged 3 to 7 years, using the wordless picture book *Found.* as a central tool for analysis. The study hypothesizes differences in the emotional scaffolding strategies between American and Japanese parents, particularly in how they discuss and enact emotions with their children during book-reading sessions. The findings suggest cultural distinctions in parental approaches to scaffolding empathy and perspective-taking, but an overall similarity in the number of emotion-related utterances in parental solo readings.

Methodologically, the study employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative analyses of parent-child interactions during book reading. Participants included American and Japanese parents and their children, with videos of parental solo and parent-child shared reading sessions

analyzed for utterances related to emotions and empathy during the book reading activity.

The quantitative analyses reveal no significant differences in the overall mention of emotions between American and Japanese parents. This finding challenges previous assumptions about cultural differences in empathy between American and Japanese parents during book reading sessions. Despite earlier research indicating a stronger emphasis on empathy in Japanese culture, this study reveals that when using picture books, both American and Japanese parents reference emotions with similar frequency and show comparable depth in emotional engagement. This includes recognizing, understanding, taking perspective, and expressing empathy, especially during parental solo readings. The findings suggest that the cultural gap in empathetic responses may not be as wide as previously thought, with individuals from both cultures likely to interpret emotions and exhibit similar empathetic responses when presented with the same scenarios in the book.

Meanwhile, the qualitative analyses highlight cultural variations in enactment and discussion of emotions, with Japanese parents often using enactments to embody characters' emotions and actions, facilitating a form of immersive emotional scaffolding. By contrast, American parents were more inclined to engage in explicit question-and-answer dialogues focusing on character emotions and moral reasoning, reflecting a more analytical approach to emotional scaffolding. This distinction highlights a cultural difference in how empathy is fostered during reading, where Japanese customs embrace a form of empathy that does not rely on evidence, whereas American customs prioritize logical comprehension as a foundation for developing empathy.

The study's findings contribute to understanding the role of cultural practices in the development of empathy in children, demonstrating that while the overarching goal of fostering empathy through book reading is common across cultures, the

methods and emphases differ significantly between American and Japanese parents. This chapter underscores the importance of considering cultural contexts in the study of emotional development and the scaffolding of empathy and perspective-taking in early childhood.

Chapter 6 Discussion

This chapter will first summarize and synthesize the findings from the two studies in the previous chapters, highlighting the distinctions in scaffolding techniques such as American parents' preference for opinion-asking and Japanese parents' use of enactments, and reflecting on the broader implications these have on cultural norms and the dynamic, long-term aspects of scaffolding theory. Section 2 advocates for a two-tier scaffolding model, elaborating on how scaffolding strategies evolve in response to a child's developmental stage and age. In the third section, the concept of the ZPD is reexamined, advocating for a broader interpretation informed by the study's outcomes. The concluding section addresses the role of these insights in the context of emotion socialization, weaving the study's conclusions into the wider narrative on methodological approaches and the treatment of cultural differences within emotion socialization research.

6.1 Synthesis of Findings from the Previous Chapters

To explore how cultural norms shape parental methods for teaching empathy, two distinct studies were conducted. The first study, detailed in Chapter 4, focused on observing American and Japanese parents as they read picture books to their children aged 0–4 years. This investigation revealed unique approaches during the book-reading sessions: American parents commonly asked for their children's opinions to encourage the expression of thoughts, whereas Japanese parents opted for enactments, imitating characters or actions from the story to foster a deeper immersion into the narrative.

The method of data collection included video recordings of these parent–child pairs reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969), aiming to capture linguistic and social conventions imparted during these interactions. The analysis indicates that

enactments were predominantly used by Japanese parents to express the emotional and sensory experiences linked to the story, indicating a focus on fostering empathy and the ability to assume roles. By contrast, the scaffolding approach of American parents was characterized by soliciting opinions, thus promoting self-expression and critical thinking. These differences mirror larger cultural values: American methods prioritize the formation of individual opinions, whereas Japanese techniques emphasize empathy and communal harmony. Furthermore, the study observed a change in scaffolding strategies based on the children's age – Japanese parents reduced enactments and American parents increased opinion-asking notably by the age of 3, but decreased them thereafter. This adjustment suggests that as children's capacities for empathy and opinion formation evolve, parents modify their techniques to nurture these sophisticated cognitive and social abilities.

Despite these cultural variances, both American and Japanese parents began using these respective methods from when their children were pre-verbal, setting the groundwork for preliminary support, equipping children for later communication and intellectual development by introducing them to different modes of expression.

Chapter 5 adopted a similar method as Chapter 4, but observed children aged 3 to 7 years. As Chapter 4 suggested that Japanese parents emphasize emotional connections and American parents focus on information sharing and self-reliance, as indicated also by previous studies, the study hypothesized that Japanese parents would be more likely to discuss emotions and express empathy towards characters in books, whereas American parents would focus more on the characters' actions and interpret them from an objective standpoint. However, the results reveal that both American and Japanese parents show similar frequencies in their emotion-related utterances, challenging prior assumptions about the variations in empathy training across cultures.

It was also anticipated that the frequency of parental scaffolding would decrease in both languages, building on the findings from Chapter 4, which reveal a reduction in parental scaffolding starting when the children were 3 years old. However, the key findings from the second study reveal that the age of the children does not significantly impact the dynamics of empathy scaffolding during book reading sessions. Previous research has suggested that as children's skills develop, parents tend to provide less scaffolding. Yet, based on the findings from these studies, the following considerations emerge: (1) The acquisition of empathy may still be underway, suggesting that the appropriate moment to reduce scaffolding has not been reached. (2) Significant individual differences exist, highlighting the need for additional data. (3) The reduction in scaffolding might not be as substantial as previously thought. However, given the age correlation observed in the first study and the visual yet statistically insignificant decline noted in Figure 14 and

Figure 15 (section 5.3.3.1), the likelihood of (3) being a valid explanation appears to be low, meaning parents most likely begin scaffolding empathy from an earlier age than previously thought.

At the same time, a significant divergence was noted in the methodologies of empathy scaffolding: Japanese parents predominantly utilize enactments to express emotions, whereas American parents lean towards question–answer dialogues emphasizing *emic* emotions. This difference might reflect varying cultural preferences in terms of the depth of perspective-taking, with Japanese parents favoring a deeper emotional immersion and American parents adopting a more analytical stance towards understanding others' emotions.

6.2 Emergence of a Two-Tier Scaffolding Approach

The results from the two studies discussed in this dissertation add to our understanding of scaffolding theory, highlighting its dynamic and long-term aspects in ways not fully explored in earlier research.

The initial study corroborates existing research, demonstrating that American approaches emphasize the development of personal opinions, while Japanese methods prioritize empathy and social cohesion, both starting from when the children are pre-verbal. However, the subsequent study, focusing on older children, reveals that, despite the cultural variances in communication styles and social values, both American and Japanese parents similarly prioritize emotional discussions in their interactions. This suggests a potentially similar strategy in the cultivation of empathy by both American and Japanese parents. This observation is particularly intriguing given the fundamental cultural differences, with Japan leaning towards interpersonal harmony and the US towards an information-centric approach. Although at first glance these findings might appear contradictory, they can be reconciled by considering self-expression and critical thinking as foundational to parents and children engaging in deeper emotional dialogues. This progression hints at a more complex form of perspective-taking that emerges as children mature.

This perspective may initially seem speculative. The routine of parents soliciting opinions from their children aged 0 to 4 in the United States might not represent a deliberate strategy of scaffolding for empathy. It is likely that parents do not consciously employ opinion-asking with the objective of fostering empathy in their children for later life stages. Instead, these enquiries could merely serve to conclude the book reading session, enriching the experience with a dialogic element rather than keeping it as a unidirectional narrative from the parent. Nonetheless, irrespective of parental intentions, such interactions could be viewed as laying the foundation for more advanced forms of scaffolding in the future.

For instance, in Excerpt 29, the mother concludes the book reading session by stating “the end,” signaling its closure, at which point the child independently expresses his emotional response to the story, stating, “That was sad.” in line 2. The mother then inquires why he found the book sad in line 3, leading the child to explain his empathy for the protagonist’s situation of having to return the dog to its rightful owner (lines 4–5). This interaction is predicated on several assumptions: First, that expressing opinions at the conclusion of a reading session is appropriate and expected within the context of shared reading; and second, that this represents an opportune moment for the parent to deepen the conversation by asking the child to articulate why the story elicited sadness, thereby necessitating perspective-taking.

Without these assumptions in place, a child might believe they are expected to remain silent instead of “interrupting” the book-reading session, potentially preventing this type of exchange from happening. Consequently, for these interactions to take place, there needs to be an underlying scaffolding that establishes the expectation for children to articulate their thoughts, thereby fostering an environment conducive to the development of critical thinking and empathy.

Excerpt 29

American Parent’s Solo Book Reading (child’s age = 6;4)

- 1 MOT: She just said, hello to the dog. The end.
- 2 CHI: That was sad.
- 3 MOT: Why was it sad?
- 4 CHI: Because she had to give away her-- Their puppy to the
- 5 people that-that the lost their puppy.

Therefore, although at first glance the results from the initial study might suggest that American parents predominantly engage in information-seeking interactions, if we interpret such interactions as foundational skills aimed at

scaffolding empathy in later stages, their significance extends beyond mere evidence of information-seeking. This insight is applicable to the Japanese participants as well. Japanese parents were observed to use enactments more frequently than their American counterparts, superficially indicating a consistent engagement in perspective-taking. Yet, the nature of these enactments evolved with the child's age: In the study involving younger children in Chapter 4, only 12% of enactments depicted characters' emotional expressions (such as crying), whereas in the subsequent study with older children in Chapter 5, this figure rose to 27%, with a notable shift towards representing more complex emotions that required a nuanced understanding of other characters' feelings.

It should be noted that differences in plot complexity and character count between the books *Found.* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* play a significant role. *Found.* was specifically selected for the second study due to its detailed exploration of character emotions, naturally leading to an expected emphasis on emotional content in the analysis. This deliberate choice reflects the broader principle that parents tailor their selection of reading material to suit their children's developmental stages. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, aimed at a younger audience, serves as an introductory level of emotional engagement, whereas *Found.*, catering to older children, represents a more advanced stage of emotional complexity.

This variance in book choices is likely a significant factor influencing the types and frequencies of utterances used by both parents and children. However, at the same time, it also reflects the progression in book selection by parents that mirrors the scaffolding process observed in parent-child interactions. Japanese parents also lay foundational work through enactments in early reading sessions, which prepares the ground for more intricate expressions of emotion in later readings, such as those seen in *Found.* This progression in enactment – from basic actions to elaborate expressions of internalized feelings – indicates a deepening of the scaffolding technique. It moves

from explaining surface-level events to engaging with the nuanced, often invisible emotions of characters, suggesting a sophisticated approach to developing empathy and understanding through shared reading experiences.

When do parents transition from scaffolding aimed at establishing foundational skills to directly supporting more advanced emotional skills? It might be suggested that there is no clear boundary, but rather, it is a gradual process that involves meticulous observation of the child by the parent, not just during book reading but also in everyday interactions. However, the findings from this study indicate that the age of 3 marks a critical juncture at which a notable shift in scaffolding strategies occurs among both American and Japanese participants. Specifically, this is the age when Japanese parents begin to reduce the use of enactments, while American parents show a peak in their practice of asking for opinions. Theoretically, at the age of 3, children reach significant developmental milestones across physical, cognitive, language, emotional, and social domains. Between the ages of 3 and 4, most neurotypical children develop the ability to detach from the immediate moment and empathize with the emotions of others (Hoffman, 2000; Rall & Harris, 2000). This cognitive shift is crucial for book reading, as it establishes the foundation for connecting with fictional characters and for forming independent opinions and perspectives. Additionally, children begin to grasp the concept of time and the sequence of future events, though they still cannot differentiate the near future from the distant future (Friedman, 2000). Given these developmental trajectories, it is plausible that parents modify the nature of their scaffolding around this time, transitioning to a more advanced level of support.

Up to the age of 3, scaffolding during book reading primarily focuses on readiness, setting the stage for more purposeful engagement in terms of emotional development. As evidenced in the initial study, parents engage even their infants in opinion-seeking, asking questions such as “What did you think?” or “Five stars?” at

the end of reading a book. Although they do not expect a coherent verbal response, such interactions serve as precursors to more complex question-and-answer sequences that evolve during toddlerhood. Similarly, Japanese parents might enact characters' actions without expecting infants to fully comprehend these gestures. This approach serves as auxiliary support to book reading, with the primary aim being to immerse children in specific speech patterns rather than to convey specific content.

However, from the age of 3, these interactions – be it the question-and-answer sequences by American parents or character enactments – shift towards practical scaffolding. Without grasping the scaffolded content, children may find it challenging to understand the book's content, potentially leading to an unsuccessful reading experience. At this stage, scaffolding becomes essential, facilitating not just the understanding of the story but also shaping children's interpretations and emotional responses to the narrative. This transition marks a pivotal point in scaffolding, moving from mere preparation to actively shaping how children engage with and interpret stories.

This distinction between scaffolding for readiness and practicality offers a crucial perspective that enriches the existing research on scaffolding. Van de Pol, Volman, and Beishuizen (2010) have noted that despite the varied definitions of scaffolding present in the literature, certain common traits are identifiable: "The teacher's support must be adapted to the current level of the student's performance and should either be at the same or a slightly higher level" (pp. 274–75). However, beyond adapting scaffolding to the learner's current level, this study suggests the possibility of scaffolding as a preparatory stage, looking beyond the immediate to forecast and prepare for future developmental stages. In essence, parents may not only scaffold towards achievements children can reach with support in the present but also engage in scaffolding aimed at long-term readiness, spanning years ahead in the child's development.

If this is indeed the case, it prompts the question as to why parents opt for a two-tiered scaffolding approach involving preparation and practicality. Two primary considerations emerge in this context. First, there is the possibility that Vygotsky, along with his predecessors and the researchers that followed, did not fully recognize the developmental capabilities inherent in children, thereby underestimating the velocity of their developmental trajectories. Even though Jean Piaget's pioneering work posited that children actively construct their understanding of the world through interaction with it (Piaget, 1954) – a concept that marked the beginning of acknowledging children's proactive engagement in their own development – and Vygotsky's subsequent emphasis on the paramount importance of social interactions and the cultural context from the late 1960s onward, it is clear that the autonomy of children in their developmental journey has been largely overlooked for a considerable time. After approximately 30 years of silence following the international recognition of Vygotsky, in 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was adopted, which brought to the forefront the critical importance of acknowledging children's perspectives and ensuring their active participation in decisions that affect their lives. Consequently, the spotlight on the autonomous development of children has only intensified in recent decades.

Considering this relatively brief period dedicated to a deeper understanding of children's development, it stands to reason that the full breadth of children's developmental potentials may have been underestimated. Research findings are increasingly revealing that even very young children possess the ability to display complex behaviors indicative of empathy. Furthermore, contemporary research endeavors challenge previously held views of young children as being predominantly egocentric, illuminating instead the diverse array of social competencies they exhibit. From as young as 2 years of age, children have been observed to possess the cognitive ability to grasp, albeit in rudimentary forms, the mental and physical states of others,

the emotional capacity to vicariously experience the conditions of others, and a behavioral repertoire that enables them to engage in actions aimed at mitigating discomfort in others (Zahn-Waxler & Radke-Yarrow, 1990). This body of evidence points to a rich interplay of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions within young children's social interactions. Given these findings, it is plausible to suggest that parents are, perhaps subconsciously, aware of their children's developmental potential, and therefore they provide scaffolding for more sophisticated emotional expressions from an earlier age than current studies might anticipate.

The second potential explanation for why parents adopt a two-tiered scaffolding approach could stem from their awareness that the initial phase – scaffolding for readiness – is likely beyond the child's immediate grasp, yet they proceed with the scaffolding regardless. This perspective does not necessarily presuppose an underestimation of the child's developmental potential but rather suggests that parents intentionally scaffold beyond the child's ZPD. Acknowledging the varied interpretations of what constitutes the ZPD, as discussed in Chapter 2, if we adopt Vygotsky's definition of the ZPD as "what the child is able to do in collaboration today, he will be able to do independently tomorrow" (Vygotsky, 1934/1987, p. 211), dismissing the literal interpretation of *today* and *tomorrow*, it remains a significant leap to assert that parents scaffold empathy in infants with the expectation that such specific parental inputs will directly enhance the child's empathy that is due to occur a few years later into their development. However, parents might scaffold regardless, holding the belief that the routine, daily repetition of such expressions will lay the groundwork for more focused educational scaffolding in the future.

A notable aspect of this scaffolding approach, as evidenced by the first study discussed in this thesis, is that parents do not adopt a gradual method. Instead, they *plunge* their children into interactions that are beyond the child's current capacity,

such as posing questions to 2-month-old infants or enacting characters at a frequency higher than when the children are older and more capable of understanding their parents' communications. This *plunging* technique might be predicated on the belief that developmental appropriateness is not crucial. The primary objective is to familiarize children with hearing such expressions, placing emphasis on repeated exposure rather than on the specificity of the utterances. Hence, the two-tiered scaffolding approach differs not only in the perceived intent behind the scaffolding but also in its implementation with the child.

Consolidating these findings, this dissertation argues that scaffolding that falls outside a child's ZPD – that is, beyond what the child can achieve even with support – is aimed at preparing the child for future learning (readiness scaffolding). Conversely, scaffolding that directly supports the child's current understanding is designed for immediate applicability (practicality scaffolding). Thus, scaffolding for readiness is not limited to infancy. For instance, in Excerpt 30, in which a mother and her 3-year-2-month-old child is reading from *Found.*, illustrates this point well. In lines 1–7, the mother explains to the child that the protagonist feels sad because a dog is playing with her lost dog's ball. While a child of this age can grasp the concept of sadness, comprehending the protagonist's complex feelings requires a sophisticated cognitive leap. The child must mentally navigate from the present to a past event of loss, and then back to the present, where the sight of the ball triggers memories of the lost dog and mixed feelings about the new dog playing with it, unaware of its significance. This complex interplay of remembering the past, dealing with symbolic objects, and reconciling current emotions is challenging for a 3-year-old. This scene is important because it highlights the protagonist's difficulty in feeling emotionally attached to the new dog and establishes a poignant context for later events in the story. Therefore, this emotionally complex scene is important in terms of plot comprehension.

Despite the child's apparent misunderstanding, as evidenced by their remark "No, I think she doesn't [want to help this dog]" in line 8, the mother continues reading. This indicates a focus on continuing the story rather than ensuring the child comprehends the plot. This example underscores that the necessity for two-tier scaffolding – preparing for future understanding and supporting current developmental needs – is determined not by age but by the child's developmental stage and the complexity of the subject matter being introduced.

Excerpt 30

American Parent's Solo Book Reading (child's age = 3;2)

1 MOT: The new dog has pulled out Prudence's old collar and
 2 Prudence's old leash, and he has Prudence's ball.
 3 He's not supposed to have that. Yeah, and that makes
 4 Jenny sad, and she's not quite sure why, but it also
 5 makes the doggy sad, doesn't it? Yeah, it makes her sad
 6 because I think- I think she misses Prudence, but she
 7 also wants to help this doggy.
 8 CHI: No, I think she doesn't.
 9 MOT: Yeah. So, Jenny heads to bed because it's bedtime, and
 10 oh, look at the doggy. What's the doggy doing? The doggy
 11 wants to sleep with Jenny, but Jenny says, "No, no, no,
 12 you have to sleep down there in the bed."

6.3 Reconceptualization of the Zone of Proximal Development

As discussed in the previous section, this dissertation posits that scaffolding represents a continuum between task completion and long-term skill development, significantly enriching the debate on the relationship between the ZPD and scaffolding. Contrary to a one-size-fits-all approach, this thesis argues that the scaffolding provided by parents varies, reflecting diverse expectations for its purpose. This variability aligns with the parents' subjective evaluation of their child's long-term potential for acquiring fundamental skills, as well as their immediate capability

to learn. Thus, scaffolding transcends mere task completion or skill enhancement; it should be more finely categorized to reflect the parental expectations and objectives behind the scaffolding.

When assessing whether a parent is providing scaffolding for readiness or practicality, it is crucial to include the child's developmental potential in the evaluation, as it lays the foundation for parental expectations. In order to recognize children's long-term development, according to Smagorinsky (2018), the ZPD might be more accurately envisioned as the zone of next development (ZND). This reconceptualization shifts the focus from immediate, task-oriented achievements to foreseeing *soon in the future* developmental paths. However, the term *next* remains ambiguous regarding the specific duration it implies. Smagorinsky has elucidated that the ZND suggests children are partaking in a prolonged process of becoming acculturated to communication practices. These practices are intended not just for developing competencies, such as literacy in hand-based writing and reading, but also for these competencies to facilitate progress toward achieving culturally valued conceptual goals. However, stretching Vygotsky's original ZPD concept to encompass all types of guidance risks diluting the theory's core strength and purpose.

Instead, this dissertation argues for a reinterpretation of the ZPD, especially when discussing emotional states and cognitive developments that transcend task-based learning, such as emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills. To more accurately reflect the scope of emotional and cognitive development and align with parental expectations, this paper introduces the *ARC model* – a novel tripartite framework of developmental zones that refers to assisted comprehension, reflective application, and creative engagement (ARC). These designations correspond to the three developmental zones it encompasses, each tailored to facilitate distinct phases of children's emotional and cognitive development:

(1) *The Zone of Assisted Comprehension (ZAC)*: This initial stage is where a child, with assistance from more knowledgeable individuals, begins to grasp basic concepts, such as identifying emotions. The focus here is on comprehension and laying the foundational blocks of understanding. The guidance provided at this stage is aimed at establishing a bedrock of fundamental knowledge and skills. For instance, during book reading, parental inquiries such as “Is the girl happy or sad?” direct the child’s attention to the emotions of the characters, aiding the child in recognizing fundamental emotions.

(2) *The Zone of Reflective Application (ZRA)*: At this intermediate stage, a child is capable of applying the insights gained during the ZAC phase and reflecting upon them with support. This stage extends beyond simple comprehension, encouraging the application of knowledge in novel contexts and fostering reflection on these experiences. Support at this level may include helping the child draw connections between different concepts, deepening their understanding of emotional causes and effects, applying skills in practical scenarios, and promoting metacognitive abilities such as self-reflection. For instance, building on the understanding that their child can now autonomously attend to characters’ emotions and accurately discern the nature and reasons behind these emotions, parents might encourage the child to reflect on a comparable personal experience or to consider how they would react in the character’s circumstances.

(3) *The Zone of Innovative Application (ZIA)*: The final stage represents a point where a child independently applies and innovates based on their accumulated knowledge. It signifies a high degree of proficiency and the capacity to venture beyond the learned material. At this level, children may autonomously display empathy towards others’ distress, make decisions independently, and take action based on those decisions. For example, during book reading, children might spontaneously empathize with the characters, expressing sadness for them or offering

a thoughtful remark about the story, such as “that was sad, I felt sorry for her,” without needing any prompts from their parents.

These proposed categories aim to differentiate the various stages of learning and development as children transition from dependency to independence. This model not only aligns with Vygotsky’s foundational theory of the ZPD but also expands upon it by providing a comprehensive view of the progression from basic comprehension and utilization to independent creative innovation in terms of emotional and cognitive development.

The intricate relationship between the three distinct zones is illustrated in Figure 18. At the epicenter of this model is the ZAC, which is foundational, providing the essential skills that form the basis for all subsequent development. Surrounding this core is the ZRC, with the ZIA enveloping the two inner circles as the most external layer. The transition from the ZAC to the ZRC and from the ZRC to the ZIA are visually represented by dashed lines, indicative of their permeable and flexible boundaries. This design choice adeptly reflects the dynamic nature of childhood development, where the acquisition of basic concepts and emotions and their practical application in daily life occur simultaneously. Thus, these zones are not rigid or hierarchical stages through which children must pass; instead, they symbolize developmental milestones as recognized by caregivers, offering a malleable framework that highlights the complexity of the learning processes being facilitated.

In this model, scaffolding helps to ensure a seamless transition for children as they navigate through these zones. Scaffolding for readiness occurs when a child, stationed within one zone, is gently introduced by their caregiver to the possibilities that lie ahead in the next zone. Employing the swimming pool analogy for clarity, the act of scaffolding readiness can be likened to a parent who, recognizing their child’s current position in the pool, guides them to the diving board to grant them a comprehensive view before momentarily dipping them into the forthcoming zone. To

provide a practical example, this corresponds to the immersion of Japanese infants in enactments and the engagement of American infants in question–answer sequences.

This method, however, is not without its challenges, as it risks the child feeling “drowned” by the sudden shift – potentially leading to feelings of being overwhelmed, disengagement, or confusion. To counteract this, caregivers often explicitly demonstrate that immediate mastery or response is not anticipated, either by revisiting an earlier activity or, as in reading exercises, by progressing to the next page.

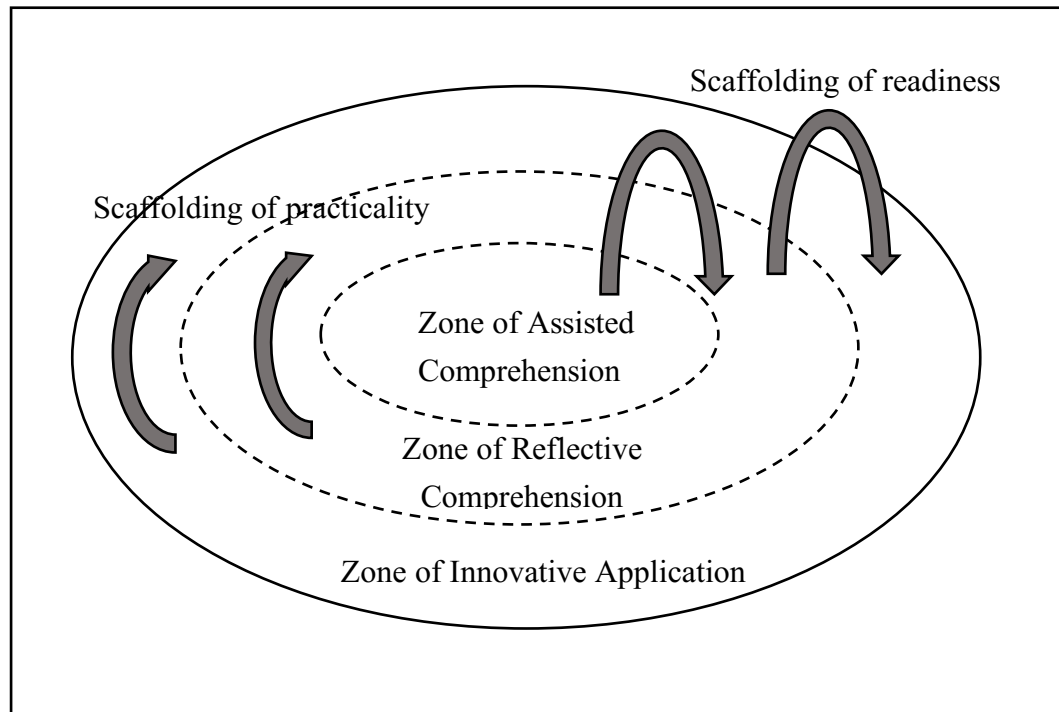
Extending the pool metaphor to practical scaffolding, this type of scaffolding is akin to teaching children how to swim adeptly within their designated zones. Here, *competence* is interpreted relative to the child’s current zone; for instance, in the ZAC, basic flotation aids and the ability to dog paddle may suffice, whereas in the ZIA expectations might extend to swimming considerable distances at a competitive standard. It is crucial to recognize that perceptions of *competence* are culturally contingent. In the context of the book reading sessions in this study, distinct differences were noted between American and Japanese parental strategies. American parents predominantly used question-and-answer techniques to elicit empathetic reactions from their children, while Japanese parents leaned towards role-playing to foster a deeper emotional connection with the story’s characters. Despite these methodological variances, the ultimate goal – cultivating an appropriate level of emotional insight and empathy within each zone – remains consistent across both American and Japanese cultures.

Analyzing the divergent strategies employed by American and Japanese parents through a deductive lens might initially suggest that these differences are purely cultural. However, a deeper understanding of the scaffolding’s objectives and parental intentions reveals a more complex picture, suggesting that not every distinction can be directly attributed to cultural differences. This approach opens the

possibility of a more nuanced analysis that avoids reducing the findings to a singular narrative of cultural variation.

Figure 18

The ARC Model and the Two-Tier Scaffolding Model



6.4 Implications for Emotion Socialization

As outlined in Chapter 2, the study of emotion socialization examines in detail the mechanisms by which emotional competence is both manifested and acquired within distinct cultural milieus (Cole & Tan, 2007). Studies on emotion socialization have greatly benefited from conversation analysis and ethnomethodological research, which rigorously scrutinize segments of daily discourse (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002; Sandlund, 2004). These methodological approaches yield indispensable insights into the idiosyncratic conversational practices that characterize different cultures, thereby facilitating a deeper understanding of cultural divergences. However, they

also face the risk of potentially oversimplifying these insights as broad cultural stereotypes. This dissertation advocates for an integrated approach that combines discourse analysis and statistical methods with existing ethnomethodological techniques, aiming to diminish the propensity towards oversimplified cultural stereotypes.

It is imperative to underscore that cultural distinctions are indeed a reality; this acknowledgment does not aim to diminish their significance. Rather, it is crucial to assess whether the phenomena observed serve as mechanisms towards a higher objective or signify inherent differences in the objectives themselves. By merging an inductive strategy from conversational analysis with a deductive approach grounded in quantitative methods, it becomes possible to differentiate whether strategies used in conversation are scaffolding toward an overarching aim, or whether they indicate a deeper cultural variance in objectives. Often, the ultimate goal – or, within the context of the ARC model, what children are expected to grasp upon reaching the ZPD and moving beyond the need for scaffolding – remains consistent across cultures, while the specific scaffolding techniques to achieve this end may vary.

The value of this perspective becomes evident through the findings of this study, which reveal that when parents were instructed to read the book *Found*, as though they were narrating the story to an adult, parents from both American and Japanese backgrounds mentioned emotions with equal frequency. Moreover, the ratio of acknowledging emotions, understanding emotions, and displaying empathy was consistent among them. These outcomes imply that, when given the same context and asked to communicate with competent members of society such as adults, the emphasis placed on emotions and empathy is comparable for Japan and the US, in terms of both quantity and quality.

This finding challenges the conventional dichotomy of individualism versus collectivism that has long framed comparisons between American and Japanese

cultures, as described in previous studies. Prior research has indicated that Japanese parents emphasize emotional connection and relational dynamics, in contrast to American parents who focus more on education and cultivating independence. Central to this cultural distinction are the Japanese values of *omoiyari* (empathy) and *amae* (dependence on others), which underscore the cultural divergence in parenting strategies and child-rearing values (Crane & Fernald, 2016; Hess et al., 1980; Ishizaki, 1996; Lebra & Lebra, 1986; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Doi, 1973; Lebra, 1976; Matsumoto, 1989). Related research emerged as critical during a period when linguistic studies focused on identifying universal aspects of language, highlighted by Chomsky's concept of universal grammar (1957). Yet, the binary classification of cultures into individualistic and collectivistic is increasingly recognized as theoretically narrow and, in some cases, misleading (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2008). In their comprehensive review of 20 empirical studies, Takano and Osaka (2018) challenged the long-standing view of Japan as collectivist and the United States as individualist, suggesting that this perspective is outdated.

One factor contributing to the diminished prominence of the individualism/collectivism divide today may be globalization, which has narrowed the cultural distances, rendering cultures more alike and less segregated than during periods dominated by the individualism/collectivism narrative. Simplifying the complex and dynamic interplay of cultural influences on parenting and child development into a binary framework does not adequately serve contemporary research needs.

Consequently, this dissertation suggests that employing the ARC model and two-tier scaffolding described above offers a more comprehensive approach. By delineating between types of scaffolding and expectations for development the model affords a comprehensive understanding that acknowledges the intricate influence of culture on development. Such insights are invaluable to the discourse on language socialization, especially concerning emotion socialization. It offers an in-depth

examination of how cultural and emotional development are intertwined, facilitated by interactions between parents and children. The consideration of long-term scaffolding beyond the ZPD broadens the scope of understanding for seemingly minor interactions, which are often overlooked or dismissed as inconsequential or unrelated to cultural differences. Under the ARC model and two tier scaffolding, these interactions are recognized as meaningful, linking them to broader developmental trajectories and overarching goals without hastily attributing such phenomena to cultural differences. Thus, this framework emphasizes the importance of maintaining a long-term view, offering fresh perspectives on emotion socialization.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Concluding Remarks

This thesis explored the impact of cultural norms in Japan and the United States on the socialization of language and emotions among children. The results enhance our comprehension of the ways in which parents modulate the quantity and nature of verbal interactions with their children as a means of support, introducing a two-tier scaffolding framework alongside a tripartite model of developmental zones (the ARC model). These models serve to distinguish the objectives of scaffolding, the anticipations parents hold concerning their children's growth, and the speech styles utilized for scaffolding.

To explore the differences in how American and Japanese families scaffold their children's emotional development, this research utilized a controlled approach involving picture books. In the two studies detailed in this thesis, parents were instructed to read a designated book to their children within the comfort of their own homes. This approach afforded participants the comfort and reassurance of engaging from their homes, which, from a research perspective, offered the benefit of collecting more authentic examples of natural conversations than would be possible in a laboratory setting.

Chapter 4 examined the initial study, which investigated how parents in American and Japanese families scaffold their children's emotional readiness through shared book reading sessions. This comparative study involved 105 Japanese and 165 American parent-child pairs, with children ranging from 2 months to 4 years old. Parents were instructed to read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969) or its Japanese equivalent *Harapeko Aomushi* (1976) to their children. These interactions were recorded, transcribed, and subsequently analyzed.

The research uncovered culturally specific approaches to nurturing empathy and self-expression that were distinct. Japanese parents frequently utilized enactments as a tool for emotional scaffolding, particularly with younger children. They gradually shifted their focus towards empathetic expressions and social routines as their children aged. This type of scaffolding tended to taper off by the age of 5, suggesting an early intensive engagement with empathetic experiences that decreased as the child's cognitive abilities matured. Conversely, American parents fostered self-expression by encouraging their children to share their thoughts after reading, cultivating a style of communication that prioritized individual viewpoints. For American dyads, enactments served more to enhance the excitement of the story than to offer instruction on emotions or dialogue.

Interestingly, the study found that a significant proportion of the parents in both cultures communicated in ways that exceeded their child's developmental stage. For example, American parents frequently asked infants for their opinions. At 3 years of age, both cultures recognize a developmental milestone where children can understand others' emotions and express their own, which is a crucial point for parents to scaffold independence in opinion-forming and social interaction.

Chapter 5 explored the second study, which focused on the methods American and Japanese parents use to encourage the development of empathy in children aged 3 to 7 through the shared activity of reading a wordless picture book, specifically *Found.* by Newman and Day (2018). This study examined the impact of cultural factors on scaffolding children to understand and empathize with emotions during these reading sessions. The initial hypothesis had suggested that Japanese parents would be more inclined to discuss and empathize with the characters' emotions, reflecting cultural tendencies towards emotional connectedness. Conversely, American parents, influenced by values of individualism and self-expression, were expected to concentrate on the characters' actions and analyze these from an objective

standpoint. Employing both quantitative and qualitative research methods, the study analyzed recordings of solo readings by parents and shared parent–child reading sessions to assess the frequency of and manner in which emotions were discussed, as well as the different scaffolding strategies employed by parents.

Quantitative findings show no strong correlation between participants’ demographics and their approaches to solo reading, with both cultures displaying a similar frequency of emotional references. This suggests a comparable emphasis placed on emotional engagement during book reading in both American and Japanese contexts. However, qualitative analysis revealed clear cultural differences: Japanese parents often use enactments to enhance emotional comprehension, whereas American parents employ structured questioning to help children in recognizing and discussing emotions.

The results highlight that despite differences in communication styles and pedagogical values, the aim to cultivate empathetic understanding in children may be similar among American and Japanese households. Meanwhile, the study reveals that Japanese enactments and American question-based scaffolding offer diverse paths to achieving this shared goal. Furthermore, it indicates that these socialization practices are dynamic, adjusting to the child’s developmental stage, emphasizing the parental need to tailor strategies to the evolving emotional and cognitive capabilities of the child.

Chapter 6 presented a comprehensive discussion that integrated the findings from two studies on the book-reading strategies employed by American and Japanese parents with their children, examining how these strategies socialized emotions across different cultural contexts. The findings expand the understanding of emotion socialization, demonstrating that both American and Japanese parents value emotional connections equally, which may indicate a more universally applied strategy in nurturing empathy than previously recognized. This observation challenges the

conventional cultural dichotomy of individualism versus collectivism, indicating a more intricate interplay between culture, parenting, and child development.

The dissertation elaborates on the finding that, while different cultures share the overarching objective of fostering empathy, they employ varied methodologies to attain this aim. It introduces the concept of two-tier scaffolding to encapsulate the diversity in approaches. This concept not only acknowledges the presence of multiple avenues of scaffolding but also highlights those that are designed to stretch beyond a child's present competencies. This concept comprises *readiness scaffolding*, aimed at preparing children for future developmental milestones, and *practical scaffolding*, focused on facilitating immediate learning. This differentiation highlights how parents tailor their strategies to meet both cultural and individual needs, broadening the scope of scaffolding to encompass wider developmental objectives.

Furthermore, the dissertation sought to reconceptualize Vygotsky's ZPD to better address the varying expectations parents have for their children. The introduction of the two-tier scaffolding approach demonstrates how the ZPD could *expand* or *contract* based on parental expectations. The proposed *ARC model* includes the zone of assisted comprehension (ZAC), the zone of reflective application (ZRA), and the zone of innovative application (ZIA), offering an alternative framework for applying ZPD theory to emotional and cognitive development. This model provides a more comprehensive perspective on development, challenging and extending Vygotsky's original theory to more accurately reflect the diversity of parental expectations and the complex nature of child development across cultures.

By emphasizing both the similarities and the differences in parenting practices between the American and Japanese contexts, the research highlights the common goal of American and Japanese parents to raise empathetic, understanding, and emotionally intelligent children, while also acknowledging the cultural nuances that influence these developmental paths. The introduction of two-tier scaffolding and the

ARC model contributes to the existing literature on emotion socialization by offering a framework that distinguishes parents' intentions, children's developmental stages, and the methods of scaffolding, thereby organizing and clarifying the discussion.

7.2 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study has several limitations, particularly in terms of its scope and methodology. First, various factors that significantly influence language socialization practices and emotional development were not covered. These include parental emotional expressiveness, beliefs about education and child-rearing, and the dynamics within bi- or multi-cultural families. These elements profoundly affect parental book-reading behaviors but fall outside this study's focus. Additionally, the role of non-verbal communication in book reading, such as physical positioning, facial expressions, and physical interaction, warrants further exploration to fully understand multimodal emotional expression during these activities.

Methodologically, the study's reliance on a standardized approach using picture books presents both strengths and limitations. While it facilitated controlled examination of parent-child interactions, it also overlooked the broader context of emotional socialization occurring within everyday interactions such as play and meal-time conversations. Consequently, this approach may only provide a partial view of the socialization process. Furthermore, assigning a specific book might not align with the child's reading level, potentially affecting the quality of interaction and scaffolding during the reading session. Previous studies have indicated that parents tailor their book choice, reading frequency, and linguistic expressions to their children's ages (Iwasaki et al., 2010; McArthur et al., 2005; Togami & Sugawara, 2018). Future research should consider allowing families to choose books freely and include a broader range of interaction analyses. Additionally, despite significant recruitment efforts, the study would have benefited from a larger participant pool,

which could notably impact findings related to how parental scaffolding varies with the child's age. Enlarging the scale of future research to include more participants could facilitate a more robust quantitative analysis of these dynamics.

When comparing American and Japanese households, this study encountered the challenge of defining who qualifies as American or Japanese amidst increasing globalization. Assembling a participant pool that accurately reflects the diversity inherent within each country has proven to be exceptionally challenging. Although statistical analysis indicated no correlation between family demographics and the study's findings, it is plausible that certain influential factors remained undetected in the statistical review. Investigating the experiences of bi- or multi-cultural families could offer deeper insights into how cultural backgrounds influence book reading and emotional development.

Future research could benefit significantly from more extensive longitudinal studies on emotional development during book reading. Collaborative efforts in larger-scale projects could facilitate the tracking of a broader participant base over extended periods, enriching our current understanding. Such studies would enable the integration of qualitative, case-study-based observations with quantitative analytical techniques, offering a more nuanced view of emotional development processes.

Additionally, investigating the impact of digital picture books and interactive e-books on reading interactions presents a promising avenue for future research. Some participants expressed a preference for e-books over traditional printed books during data collection. This preference underscores the necessity of considering digital mediums in future studies, as the exclusive use of printed books, due to the controlled nature of this study, may not accurately reflect the dynamics of reading interactions in families accustomed to digital formats.

Chapter 8 References

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Appendices

Appendix A

Demographics Questionnaire (Chapter 4 study, English version)

Note. Spacing and layout have been adapted to fit the format of this paper.

Questionnaire Regarding Shared Book Reading

Thank you very much for taking the time to support this academic project. Please answer the questions below in regard to your shared book reading experience with your child(ren). In addition, please answer the demographic information questions.

Note: If you do not feel comfortable answering a particular question, please leave the response blank. All your responses in this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Shared book reading

1. Who is the main person in charge of book reading in your home?
(a) Father (b) Mother (c) Both father and mother (d) Other (_____)
2. How often do you read to your child(ren)?
(a) Every day (b) 3–4 times/week (c) 1–2 times/week
(d) once every other week (e) None
3. Have you ever read the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to your child(ren)?
(a) Yes (approximately _____ times) (b) No
4. Was this (*study*) reading different from your usual reading sessions?
(a) Yes (Reason: _____) (b) No
5. Did the camera/audio recording interfere with your reading?
(a) Yes (Reason: _____) (b) No

Child's demographic background

6. Age: _____ years _____ months
7. Sex: (a) female (b) male (c) other

8. History of overseas residence:

(a) Place:_____ Period: _____years _____months (b) None

Guardian's demographic background

9. Who is the person reading the book in the video (henceforth "Reader")?

(a) Father (b) Mother (c) Both father and mother (d) Other (_____)

10. Reader's history of overseas residence:

(a) Place:____Period: ____years ____months (b) None

11. Reader's educational background:

(a) PhD (b) MA (c) Undergraduate (d) High school
(e) Junior high school (f) Other_____

12. Reader's age: _____

13. Reader's occupation: _____

14. Reader's partner's history of overseas residence:

(a) Place:_____ Period:____years____months (b) None

15. Reader's partner's educational background:

(a) PhD (b) MA (c) Undergraduate (d) High school
(e) Junior high school (f) Other_____

16. Reader's partner's age: _____

17. Reader's partner's occupation: _____

18. Place of residence (State only): _____

19. Would you be willing to participate in similar research projects in the future?

(a) Yes (b) No (c) Maybe

20. Please provide your name and address below if you would like to receive a small gift (*caterpillar made with Japanese origami paper*) as a token of my gratitude.

Name: _____Address: _____

Thank you very much for your cooperation. It is greatly appreciated.

Appendix B

Demographics Questionnaire (Chapter 4 study, Japanese version)

Note. Spacing and layout have been adapted to fit the format of this paper.

絵本の読み聞かせに関するアンケート

このたび読み聞かせデータの収録にご協力いただきありがとうございます。調査にご協力下さった方々について、差支えのない範囲で、以下の項目にお答えくださるようお願いいたします。ここに記入される個人情報については学会発表や執筆以外の目的で利用されることはありません。

<読み聞かせについて>

1. 日常的に読み聞かせを行なっているのは主にどなたですか？
(a) 父親 (b) 母親 (c) 父母両方 (d) その他
2. 日常的に読み聞かせを行なっている頻度：
(a) 毎日 (b) 週に3～4回 (c) 週に 1～2回
(d) 2週間に1回 (e)行なっていない
3. これまでに『はらぺこあおむし』をお子さんに読み聞かせたことはありますか？
(a) ある (_____ 回くらい) (b)ない
4. 普段の読み聞かせと今回の調査での読み聞かせに何か違いはありましたか？
(a)あった (自由回答： _____) (b) ない
5. 撮影・録音していることによって何か支障はありましたか？
(a) あった (自由回答： _____) (b) ない

<お子さんについて>

6. お子さんの年齢： _____ 歳 _____ ヶ月
7. お子さんの性別： (a) 女兒 (b) 男児
8. お子さんの海外居住歴：
(a) あり (場所： _____ 期間： _____ 年 _____ ヶ月) (b) なし

<ご両親について>

9. お父様の海外居住歴：

(a) あり (場所： _____ 期間： _____ 年 _____ ヶ月) (b) なし

10. お母様の海外居住歴：

(a) あり (場所： _____ 期間： _____ 年 _____ ヶ月) (b) なし

11. お父様の学歴：

(a) 博士課程卒 (b) 修士課程卒 (c) 学士課程卒 (d) 高卒 (e) 中卒

12. お母様の学歴：

(a) 博士課程卒 (b) 修士課程卒 (c) 学士課程卒 (d) 高卒 (e) 中卒

13. お父様のご年齢： _____ 歳

14. お母様のご年齢： _____ 歳

15. お父様のご職業： _____

16. お母様のご職業： _____

17. ご自宅の所在地（都道府県）： _____

18. 今回と同様の調査を今後行なった場合、ご協力いただけますでしょうか？

(a) 協力する (b) 次回は協力したくない (c) どちらとも言えない

アンケートは以上です。ご協力いただきありがとうございました。

Appendix C

Screening Questionnaire (Chapter 5 study, English version)

Note. Spacing and layout have been adapted to fit the format of this paper.

Title: Screening questionnaire for book reading study

Explanation: This is a screening questionnaire for the book-reading study. Please be aware that completing this form does not guarantee a spot in the study. Upon reviewing your responses, I will contact you to inform you of your eligibility. If you are not eligible, I will delete your answers to maintain confidentiality.

1. Are you comfortable with video-recording you and your child(ren) during the book reading sessions? (Only participants that answer YES or MAYBE will be eligible for this study)
(Choose answer from Yes/ No/ Maybe)
2. Please provide your name.
3. Please provide your contact info so I can get in touch with you (e-mail, facebook messenger, etc.) (e-mail, facebook messenger, etc.)
4. Do you and your child(ren) both identify as Americans?
(Choose answer from Yes/ No/ Other)
5. Do both you and your child(ren) currently live in either the US or Japan?
(Choose answer from US/ Japan/ Neither)
6. Is your child(ren) between ages 3–7?
(Choose answer from Yes/ No/ Other)
7. Is American English the main language spoken at home?
(Choose answer from Yes/ No/ Other)
8. Do you agree to provide an address where I can send the book to you? (*note* Only US or Japanese addresses are eligible for this study)
(Choose answer from Yes/ No/ Maybe/Other)
9. If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to let me know.

Appendix D

Screening Questionnaire (Chapter 5 Study, Japanese Version)

Note. Spacing and layout have been adapted to fit the format of this paper.

Title: 絵本の読み聞かせ研究のスクリーニングアンケート

Explanation: これは絵本の読み聞かせ研究のためのスクリーニング・アンケートです。このフォームをご記入いただいても、研究への参加が確定するものではないことをご了承ください。ご回答を確認後、参加資格に関するご連絡を差し上げます。参加資格がない場合、秘密保持のためにご回答を削除させていただきます。

1. 絵本の読み聞かせ中に、ご自身やお子さんの様子を録画することに抵抗はありませんか？(この研究は録画が必須となっています。したがって、「抵抗ある」場合には、参加をご遠慮いただいております)
(抵抗ない・抵抗ある・わからない・その他 から回答を選択)
2. お名前を教えてください。
3. 連絡のつくご連絡先を教えてください（メール・電話・LINE・メッセージなど）
4. あなたとあなたのお子さんはどちらも日本人ですか？
(はい・いいえ・その他 から回答を選択)
5. 現在日本に住んでいますか？
(はい・いいえ・その他 から回答を選択)
6. お子さんの年齢は3から7歳の間ですか？
(はい・いいえ・その他 から回答を選択)
7. ご家庭で話している言語は主に日本語ですか？
(はい・いいえ・その他 から回答を選択)
8. 絵本を受け取ることができる住所を提供することに抵抗はないですか？（日本国内の住所のみ可です）
(抵抗ない・抵抗ある・わからない・その他 から回答を選択)
9. この研究に関してご質問等ございましたら、遠慮なくお聞きください。

Appendix E

Informed Consent (Chapter 5 Study, English Version)

Note. Spacing and layout have been adapted to fit the format of this paper.

You and your children are invited to participate in a research study. This form has information to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate—please review it carefully. Research studies include only people who choose to take part—your participation is completely voluntary and you can stop at any time.

Please ask the investigator any questions you have about the study or about this form before deciding to participate.

Title of Study: Cross-linguistic Study of Shared Book Reading

Investigator: Moeko Waga Ozaki (Keio University Graduate School of Letters)

Research Supervisor: Prof. Ippei Inoue, Ph.D. (Keio University)

Investigator contact information : email: moeko-ozaki@keio.jp telephone: +81-80-1077-0643

University contact information: 2-15-45, Mita, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan, 03-5427-1549

Approved by the Keio University Ethical Review Board

Please check the box under each section after reading its content. At the end of the informed consent form, you will be requested to provide your name, address, and contact information.

Eligibility to Participate

You are eligible to take part in this study if:

- Both you and your child(ren) identify as Americans and currently reside in Japan or the United States.
- You are the child(ren)'s parent/guardian.
- American English is the primary language spoken in your household.
- Your child(ren) fall within the age range of 3–7.
- You agree to video-recording yourselves during the book reading sessions.
- You are able to receive the picture book via mail.

To assess your eligibility, a screening questionnaire will be administered to confirm that you meet all of the aforementioned criteria. Please be aware that the screening process may lead to the exclusion of some participants.

Description of Study Procedures

You will receive a single picture book via mail. Here are the steps to follow:

1. Begin by reading through the picture book on your own.
2. Next, record yourself narrating the story as though you are sharing it with another adult who hasn't read the book before.
3. Afterward, record yourself reading the same picture book to your child or children at home, just as you typically would. If you have multiple eligible children, record separate videos with each child. Ensure that all participants are clearly visible in the frame. There are no specific requirements regarding camera angles or directions. If you are comfortable showing faces, it is preferred, as it allows for the analysis of facial expressions, gestures, and seating positions in addition to verbal expressions. However, if you prefer not to show faces, videos featuring only the backs of heads are also acceptable.

Once you've completed the recording process, please send the videos to the researcher, Moeko Ozaki, via email at moeko-ozaki@keio.jp. Additionally, complete the post-recording questionnaire through Google Forms.

Please note that the recorded data will be used for analyzing parent-child conversations and gestures during storytelling. Specific conversation content for analysis will not be disclosed in advance to prevent any influence on how you read the story. However, after receiving the data, the research's purpose and the content of the speech to be analyzed will be shared with you. If this disclosure affects your consent and you choose to opt out, all data provided by you will be discarded to protect your personal information.

Purpose of the Study

To shed light on how conversation patterns and styles may differ depending on the language employed, this study will examine conversations that take place during shared picture book readings between parents and their children.

This study is funded by the JST Doctoral Program Student Support Project [grant number: MKHQ2204].

Expected Duration of Participation

Filling out the screening questionnaire in advance typically requires 5 to 10 minutes.

The recording process for each video will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

Subsequently, allocating another 10 to 15 minutes is recommended for completing the post-recording questionnaire and sending the video back to the researcher.

Risks or Discomforts

While participating in this study, you and your child(ren) may encounter the following potential risks or discomforts:

Psychological Risks: You or your child(ren) may experience anxiety due to the recording of the book-reading activity. Your child(ren) may also feel discomfort if they do not enjoy the book being read. To alleviate potential discomfort, it is advised to position the camera at a distance from the participants that maintains video quality while minimizing intrusion. If your child(ren) do not enjoy the book and are unable to complete the book reading, you have the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

There may be other risks or discomforts that are currently unforeseeable at this time. I will tell you about any significant new information I learn that may relate to your willingness to continue participating in this study.

Benefits to You and to Others

It is hoped that the information gained from this study will help society by illuminating how individuals who speak different languages or dialects may also have diverse social communication styles. You are not expected to directly benefit from participation in the study.

Costs and Compensation

Participating in this study will not incur any costs for you. Monetary compensation will not be provided for your participation. However, you will have the opportunity to keep the picture book that is sent to you as part of the study.

Your Rights as a Research Participant

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have the freedom to decide whether or not you wish to participate, and you can opt out at any time, for any

reason, without facing any penalties or adverse consequences.

If you choose to withdraw from the study, all data collected up to that point will be deleted.

Additionally, if you or your child(ren) do not meet the inclusion criteria, your participation in the study may be discontinued. In such an event, all data collected from you up to the point of withdrawal will be deleted. Your decision to participate or withdraw will be fully respected throughout the study process.

Confidentiality

Research records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available without your permission. However, it is possible that other people and offices responsible for making sure research is done safely and responsibly will see your information. This includes government regulatory agencies and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy study records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To protect confidentiality of the study records and data, the following measures will be taken:

The original screening questionnaire (Google Forms) will be deleted after creating a single copy in Excel format. Personal information collected from the screening questionnaire, such as contact details, will be retained until the conclusion of the study to facilitate participant communication throughout the data collection period. This information will be securely stored in a password-protected computer file accessible exclusively by the lead researcher, Moeko Ozaki, on her password-protected computer.

All data collected for both the video recordings and post-questionnaires will be stored on a password-protected external hard drive. These files will be directly accessible only to the lead researcher, Moeko Ozaki. To maintain privacy, all files will be labeled with a control number, ensuring that no personal identifiers such as names, addresses, or contact information are linked to the videos. Any emails used during file transfers will be promptly deleted. Additionally, the original copies of the post-reading questionnaires (Google Forms) will be deleted as well.

To protect your confidentiality when results of the study are reported, the following

measures will be taken:

Prior to disclosure, all faces will be blurred and any identifying details, including names, residences, and other visible or audible identifiers, will be removed.

Future Use of Your Information

Information about you, including information obtained from video data collected for this study may be shared with other researchers. It may also be used for other research studies. These studies may be similar to this study or completely different. I will make sure that your identity cannot be linked to the information I share. I will not ask you for additional permission before sharing the information.

Questions

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study. For further information about the study, contact Moeko Ozaki (phone number: +81-80-1077-0643, e-mail: moeko-ozaki@keio.jp)

If you agree with the following statement, please provide your NAME below.

Dear Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Keio University,

I have received a written explanation from Moeko Ozaki about the study, “Cross-linguistic Study of Shared Book Reading,” understand the purpose, methods, and risks of the study, and give my consent to participate in the study.

Please provide your e-mail address below.

If you consent to the terms mentioned above, please provide your complete address below, ensuring it is accurate and detailed for the book delivery. Please be aware that the books will be dispatched from Japan through international courier services, so it is crucial to provide your full address.

Appendix F

Informed Consent (Chapter 5 Study, Japanese Version)

Note. Spacing and layout have been adapted to fit the format of this paper.

研究協力の説明書 及び 同意書

この文書には、本研究に参加するかどうかを決めるための情報が記載されていますので、よくお読みください。研究調査には、参加することを選択した人だけが参加します。参加は完全に任意であり、いつでも中止することができます。研究への参加を決定する前に、研究またはこの同意書について質問がある場合は、研究者に尋ねてください。

研究題目：絵本の読み聞かせにおける言語間比較

研究代表者：尾崎 萌子 (慶應義塾大学 文学研究科 博士課程 3 年)

研究責任者：井上 逸兵 (慶應義塾大学 文学研究科 教授)

主任研究者の連絡先：メール moeko-ozaki@keio.jp 電話番号 080-1077-0643

慶應義塾大学所在地：東京都港区 2-15-45 電話番号 03-5427-1549

慶應義塾文学研究科 研究倫理委員会 承認済み

各セクションをお読みいただいた後に、ボックスにチェックを入れてください。本説明書の最後には、お名前、住所、およびご連絡先を記入していただく欄がございます。

参加資格

以下の全ての項目に該当する方は、この研究に参加することができます。

- 親子共に日本人であり、現在日本もしくはアメリカに居住しており、日本語が母語である。
- 絵本を読み聞かせる大人は絵本を読み聞かせられる子の親権者である。
- 子は 3-7 歳である。
- 絵本を郵送にて受け取ることができる。
- 読み聞かせを録画し、データを送ることに抵抗がない。

研究参加の可否を判断するために、上記のすべてに該当するかどうかを尋ねるスクリーニング・アンケートを実施します。スクリーニングの結果、参加者が除外される場合があります。

研究目的

本研究では、使用言語によって会話のパターンがどのように異なるかを明らかにするために、親子による絵本の読み聞かせ中の会話について調査します。

本研究は、JST 博士課程学生支援プロジェクト〔助成番号：MKHQ2204〕の助成を受けて実施します。

研究の方法と手順

まず、一冊の絵本を郵送させていただきますので、お受け取りをお願いいたします。受け取り後、以下の手順に沿って録画をお願いいたします。

1. 絵本をまずは一人で一通り読んでください。
2. 次に、その絵本を読んだことのない大人に絵本を読むかのように、一人で絵本を読んでいるところを録画してください。
3. その後、同じ絵本をお子さんに読み聞かせてください。対象となるお子さんが複数いる場合は、それぞれの子どもにつき別々のビデオを録画してください。なるべく参加者全員がはっきりと映るようにしてください。カメラのアングルや方向に関しては自由です。表情や身振りも映っていると分析できる範囲が広がるため大変ありがたいですが、顔を映すことに抵抗がある場合には背面のみの動画でも問題ありません。

録画が完了したら、ビデオを研究代表者である尾崎萌子までメールで送ってください（moeko-ozaki@keio.jp）。さらに、Google フォームからアンケートにお答えください。なお、いただいたデータは、読み聞かせ中の親子の会話やジェスチャーを分析するために使用します。この研究がどのような会話を研究対象としているかは、あなたには事前に知らされません。データ収集後には研究目的と分析対象の発話内容を説明し、再度研究参加やデータ利用等について同意を取ります。非同意であればデータを廃棄します。

研究参加の時間

参加時間は、スクリーニング・アンケートを記載する時間が5-10分程度、読み聞かせが動画1本につき10-15分程度、事後アンケートを記載し、データを研究代表者に送る時間が10-15分程度です。

予測される負担およびリスク

この研究に参加している間、あなたやあなたの子どもは以下のようなリスクや不快感を経験する可能性があります。

心理的なリスク：絵本の読み聞かせを録画されることに不安を感じるかもしれません。不安や不快感を最小限に抑えるため、カメラは映像の質を保てる範囲内において、参加者から可能な限り離れて設置することをお勧めします。また、子どもが絵本を気に入らず、気分を害する可能性があります。子どもが絵本を楽しめず、絵本の読み聞かせを行

うことができない場合、いつでも研究参加を取りやめることができます。その他、現時点では予測できないリスクや不都合が生じる可能性があります。この研究への参加継続の意思に関係するような重要な新情報を知った場合は、適宜お伝えします。

予測される利益

本研究が、皆様に即座に有益な情報をもたらす可能性は、現在のところ低いと考えられます。しかしながら、この研究から得られる情報は、親子間のコミュニケーション・スタイルが使用する言語によってどのように異なるかを明らかにすることで異文化間コミュニケーションの理解やグローバル社会におけるコミュニケーションの円滑化に役立つことが期待されます。

経済的負担および謝礼

この研究に参加することによって、いかなる費用も発生することはありません。またこの研究に参加することによって、金銭的な補償を受けることはありません。データ収集のために送付させていただく絵本は差し上げます。

研究参加者としての権利

この研究への参加は完全に任意です。あなたは、いつでも、どんな理由でも、ペナルティや不利益を受ける事なく、この研究に参加しないこと、または参加をやめることを選択することができます。

参加をやめる場合には、得られたすべての情報が削除されます。

なお、あなたやあなたの子供が参加条件を満たさないことが判明した場合、私はあなたの研究への参加を取りやめることができます。この場合も、得られたすべての情報が削除されます。

情報の保管と個人情報の保護

参加者を特定しうるデータおよび情報は、適用される法律および規則で許可される範囲内で機密を保持し、本人の許可なしに一般に公開されることはありません。しかし、研究が安全かつ責任を持って行われることを確認する責任を負う個人や組織が、あなたの情報を見る可能性があります。これには、政府の規制機関および倫理委員会（人間を対象とした研究を審査・承認する委員会）が、研究記録を閲覧および/または複写する場合が含まれます。これらの記録には個人情報が含まれている場合があります。

研究記録およびデータの機密性を保護するために、以下の措置が取られます：

ご入力いただいたスクリーニング・アンケートの原本 (Google Forms)は excel 形式でコピーを一部取った上で削除します。参加者と適宜連絡が取れるように、データ収集が終了するまで連絡先などスクリーニング・アンケートで知り得た個人情報を保管します。これらの情報は、パスワードで保護されたコンピュータファイルに保存され、研究代表者

(尾崎萌子)のみがパスワードで保護されたパソコンからアクセスすることができ、機密が守られます。

動画及び事後アンケートで収集されたデータは全てパスワードで保護された外付け HDD に保存され、ファイルは研究代表者(尾崎萌子)と研究責任者(井上逸兵)のみが直接アクセスできます。なお、アンケートの回答から識別子(お名前やご連絡先など)を削除し、管理番号のみで動画との紐付けを行います。データの授受の際に使用するメールやアンケートの原本(Google Forms)は全て削除します。保管期間は20年です。保管期間終了後、最終的な廃棄は外付け HDD のデータの完全消去であり、研究代表者である尾崎萌子が外付け HDD を初期化して再フォーマットします。

研究結果を報告する際の秘密保持のため、以下の措置をとります：

調査結果を公表する前に、参加者全員の顔にボカシをかけ、氏名、住所、その他個人の特定につながりうる情報を削除します。

情報の使用

この研究のために収集されたデータから得られる情報を含む、あなたやあなたの子供に関する情報は、他の研究者と共有されることがあります。また、他の調査研究にも使用されることがあります。これらの研究は、本研究と類似している場合もあれば、全く異なる場合もあります。情報を共有する際には個人が特定されないようにします。なお、情報を共有する前に被験者に追加の許可を求めることはありません。

ご不明点がある場合の連絡先

本研究に関するお問い合わせは、尾崎萌子(電話番号：080-1077-0643、メール：moeko-ozaki@keio.jp)までお願い致します。

下記の内容に同意いただける場合には、お名前(姓名)をご記入ください。

慶應義塾大学文学部長殿 研究代表者 殿

私は 「絵本の読み聞かせにおける言語間比較」の研究について、尾崎萌子より説明書を用いて説明を受け、研究の目的と方法、私が協力して行う次の研究参加事項とその危険性について理解し、研究参加に同意します。

メールアドレスをご記入ください。

上記の説明に同意いただける場合には、絵本の郵送先の住所をご記入ください。なお、郵便番号・都道府県・宛名の記入もお願いいたします。

Appendix G

Regression Analysis: American Parents' Demographics and Opinion-Asking (Complete List)

		B	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Adj. R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>p (R</i> ² <i>)</i>
Japanese parents/ opinion asking					0.067	-0.004	0.941	.479
American parents/ opinion asking	Child's sex	-0.056	-0.704	.482	0.099	0.057	2.347	.027*
	Reading frequency	0.075	0.884	.378				
	History of reading	-0.325	-3.730	.000***				
	Child's age	-0.011	-0.134	.894				
	Reader	-0.004	-0.050	.960				
	Reader's education	0.186	2.267	.025*				
	Reader's age	0.040	0.467	.641				
Japanese parents/ enactments total					0.062	-0.010	0.858	.542
American parents/ enactments total					0.031	-0.015	0.677	.691
Japanese parents/ enacting a conversation					0.050	-0.023	0.686	.683
American parents/ enacting a conversation					0.039	-0.005	0.881	.523
Japanese parents/enacting a sensation					0.035	-0.040	0.466	.857

American parents/enacting a sensation	0.024	-0.022	0.526	.814
Japanese parents/enacting an action	0.062	-0.010	0.861	.541
American parents/enacting an action	0.027	-0.018	0.605	.751

Notes. R^2 = coefficient of determination. R^2 indicates how close the data are to the fitted regression line: $0.3 < R^2 < 0.5$ is considered mildly correlated, $0.5 < R^2 < 0.7$ is considered moderately correlated, and $R^2 > 0.7$ is considered strongly correlated. Adj. R^2 = Adjusted coefficient of determination. A value closer to 1 indicates that the model explains a large portion of the variance in the dependent variable, considering the number of predictors, while a value near or below 0 indicates that the model does not improve the prediction over the mean model. The probability of R^2 is shown in the p (R^2) column; a probability of <0.05 is considered significant. F = F test. A higher F -value indicates a greater degree of evidence against the null hypothesis. β = standardized coefficient. This indicates the correlation between the demographic factors and codes. The value ranges between $-1.0 < \beta < 1.0$. If a code is negatively correlated with a demographic detail, it means that the code increases when the demographic detail decreases. The correlation is stronger when it is closer to either end of the distribution. The probability of β is shown in the p column. t = t statistic. This measures the degree of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable. A higher absolute value of the t -statistic indicates a greater likelihood that the coefficient is significantly different from zero.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Appendix H
Effects of Japanese Parents' Demographics on Parental Solo Readings:
A Regression Analysis

<i>DV</i>	<i>VIF</i>
Reader is mother	1.191
Reader's age	1.120
Reader's education	1.321
Reader's neurodivergence	2.039
Overseas experience (lived in the US)	1.530
Overseas experience (lived in other country)	1.095
Speaks another language (English)	1.276
Speaks another language (other)	1.235
Child's age	1.167
Child is female	1.100
Child has experience living in the US	1.374
Child' neurodivergence	2.089
Reading frequency	1.202

<i>DV</i>	<i>F</i> (13,81)	<i>p</i>	<i>Adj. R</i> ²
Empathy by the characters	1.133	.345	0.018
Parent: total emotion-related utterances	1.227	.276	0.030
Parent: etic perspective	1.400	.178	0.052
Parent: emic perspective	0.607	.842	-0.057
Parent: expressing empathy	0.878	.579	-0.017
Parent: total frequency of enactments	1.036	.426	0.005
Parent: total action enactments	1.199	.295	0.027
Parent: total emotion enactments	0.695	.763	-0.044
Parent: level of emotion (basic)	1.400	.178	0.052
Parent: level of emotion (advance)	1.062	.403	0.009
Parent: purpose of utterance (recognizing emotions)	1.400	.178	0.052
Parent: purpose of utterance (perspective taking)	1.053	.411	0.007
Parent: purpose of utterance (expressing empathy)	0.878	.579	-0.017

Appendix I
Effects of American Parents' Demographics on Parental Solo Readings:
A Regression Analysis

<i>DV</i>	<i>VIF</i>
Reader is mother	1.554
Reader's age	1.403
Reader's education	1.615
Reader's neurodivergence	1.660
Overseas experience (lived in Japan)	7.059
Overseas experience (lived in other country)	1.816
Speaks another language (Japanese)	3.777
Speaks another language (other)	1.484
Child's age	1.757
Child is female	1.547
Child has experience living in Japan	2.852
Child' neurodivergence	1.673
Reading frequency	1.404
Has read the book before	1.216

<i>DV</i>	<i>F(14,26)</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Adj. R²</i>
Empathy by the characters	0.921	.550	-0.029
Parent: total emotion-related utterances	1.530	.169	0.157
Parent: total frequency of questions	0.861	.604	-0.051
Parent: etic perspective	0.583	.854	-0.171
Parent: emic perspective	1.795	.096	0.218
Parent: asking cause of character's emotions	0.861	.604	-0.051
Parent: expressing empathy	0.732	.725	-0.104
Parent: total frequency of enactments	0.854	.611	-0.054
Parent: total action enactments	0.918	.553	-0.030
Parent: total emotion enactments	0.428	.950	-0.250
Parent: level of emotion (basic)	0.546	.882	-0.189
Parent: level of emotion (advance)	1.702	.117	0.197
Parent: purpose of utterance (recognizing emotions)	0.583	.854	-0.171
Parent: purpose of utterance (understanding emotions)	0.861	.604	-0.051
Parent: purpose of utterance (perspective taking)	1.753	.105	0.209
Parent: purpose of utterance (expressing empathy)	0.732	.725	-0.104

Appendix J
Effects of Japanese Parents' Demographics on Parental Solo Readings:
A Regression Analysis

<i>DV</i>	<i>VIF</i>
Reader is mother	1.178
Reader's age	1.111
Reader's education	1.287
Reader's neurodivergence	2.037
Overseas experience (lived in the US)	1.414
Overseas experience (lived in other country)	1.093
Speaks another language (English)	1.247
Speaks another language (other)	1.163
Child's age	1.163
Child is female	1.087
Child has experience living in the US	1.331
Child' neurodivergence	2.081
Reading frequency	1.217

<i>DV</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Adj.</i> <i>R</i> ²
Empathy by the characters	0.736	.723	-0.035
Child: total frequency of dispreferred response	0.550	.886	-0.061
Child: total reference to emotions	1.260	.253	0.032
Child: reference to emotions	1.695	.076	0.081
Child: autonomous comment on emotions	0.522	.905	-0.065
Child: answering emotions in polar	0.324	.987	-0.094
Child: asking emotions	0.671	.786	-0.044
Child: emotions dispreferred response	0.852	.605	-0.019
Child: reference to cause of emotion	0.501	.918	-0.068
Child: autonomous comment on cause of emotion	1.153	.327	0.019
Child: asking cause of emotion	0.650	.806	-0.047
Child: answering cause of emotion in polar	0.468	.937	-0.073
Child: answering cause of emotion in dispreferred response	0.459	.941	-0.074
Child: reference to empathizing with the characters	0.739	.721	-0.034
Child: action enactment	0.583	.862	-0.056

Child: emotion enactment	0.669	.788	-0.044
Child: dispreferred enactment	0.220	.998	-0.110
Child: reference to own emotion	0.856	.601	-0.019
Child: autonomous own emotion	0.999	.459	0.000
Child: answering own emotion in polar	0.299	.991	-0.098
Child: answering own emotion in full sentence	1.085	.382	0.011
Child: answering own emotion with dispreferred response	0.761	.698	-0.031
Child: autonomous utterance	0.893	.563	-0.014
Parent: total emotion related utterances	0.539	.894	-0.062
Parent: total frequency of questions	1.126	.349	0.016
Parent: etic perspective	1.050	.412	0.006
Parent: emic perspective	0.822	.635	-0.023
Parent: asking cause of character's emotions	0.960	.497	-0.005
Parent: asking character's emotions	1.125	.349	0.016
Parent: prompting of empathy	0.677	.781	-0.043
Parent: direct empathy as reader	0.783	.676	-0.028
Parent: expressing empathy	0.693	.766	-0.041
Parent: total frequency of enactments	1.022	.438	0.003
Parent: total action enactments	0.552	.885	-0.061
Parent: total emotion enactments	1.720	.070	0.084
Child: level of emotion (advance)	0.883	.573	-0.015
Child: level of emotion (recognizes emotions)	1.815	.053	0.094
Child: level of emotion (understands emotions)	0.973	.484	-0.003
Child: level of emotion (perspective taking)	0.741	.718	-0.034
Child: level of emotion (expressing empathy)	0.939	.517	-0.008
Parent: level of emotion (basic)	1.031	.429	0.004
Parent: level of emotion (advance)	0.617	.834	-0.051
Parent: purpose of utterance (recognizing emotions)	1.004	.455	0.000
Parent: purpose of utterance (understanding emotions)	0.960	.497	-0.005
Parent: purpose of utterance (perspective taking)	0.646	.809	-0.047
Parent: purpose of utterance (expressing empathy)	0.681	.777	-0.042

Appendix K
Effects of American Parents' Demographics on Parental Solo Readings:
A Regression Analysis

<i>DV</i>	<i>VIF</i>
Reader is mother	1.435
Reader's age	1.558
Reader's education	1.606
Reader's neurodivergence	1.662
Overseas experience (lived in Japan)	7.454
Overseas experience (lived in other country)	1.648
Speaks another language (Japanese)	4.014
Speaks another language (other)	1.385
Child's age	1.581
Child is female	1.378
Child has experience living in Japan	3.022
Child' neurodivergence	1.615
Reading frequency	1.398
Has read the book before	1.130

<i>DV</i>	<i>F(14,26)</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Adj. R²</i>
Child: total reference to emotions	0.581	.860	-0.143
Child: autonomous comment on emotions	0.726	.734	-0.089
Child: answering cause of emotion in full sentence	1.392	.211	0.105
Child: answering cause of emotion in polar	0.510	.910	-0.171
Child: asking cause of emotion	0.726	.733	-0.089
Child: answering cause of emotion in dispreferred response	0.388	.969	-0.223
Child: answering own emotion in full sentence	0.508	.911	-0.172
Child: answering emotion in polar	1.298	.260	0.082
Child: autonomous own emotion	0.705	.754	-0.097
Child: dispreferred response	0.613	.835	-0.130
Child: dispreferred enactment	0.831	.632	-0.053
Child: action enactment	0.669	.786	-0.109
Child: answering own emotion in polar	0.302	.990	-0.262
Child: answering own emotion autonomously	0.374	.973	-0.229
Child: empathizing with the characters	0.859	.605	-0.044

Child: reference to cause of emotion	0.736	.724	-0.085
Child: reference to emotions	0.642	.810	-0.119
Child: reference to own emotions	0.666	.789	-0.110
Child: total dispreferred response	0.565	.872	-0.149
Empathy by the characters	1.008	.469	0.002
Parent: purpose of utterance (perspective taking)	1.538	.152	0.138
Parent: level of emotion (advance)	1.869	.069	0.206
Parent: level of emotion (basic)	0.637	.815	-0.121
Parent: purpose of utterance (expressing empathy)	0.254	.996	-0.286
Parent: purpose of utterance (recognizing emotions)	0.810	.653	-0.060
Parent: purpose of utterance (understanding emotions)	0.577	.863	-0.144
Child: level of emotion (advance)	0.879	.587	-0.037
Child: level of emotion (basic)	0.545	.887	-0.157
Child: level of emotion (expressing empathy)	0.666	.789	-0.110
Child: level of emotion (perspective taking)	0.669	.786	-0.109
Child: level of emotion (recognizes emotions)	0.683	.774	-0.104
Child: level of emotion (understands emotions)	1.205	.318	0.057
Parent: total emotion enactments	0.578	.863	-0.144
Parent: asking cause of character's emotions	0.577	.863	-0.144
Parent: asking character's emotions	0.736	.724	-0.085
Parent: direct empathy as reader	0.651	.803	-0.116
Parent: emic perspective	1.906	.063	0.213
Parent: total action enactments	1.397	.209	0.106
Parent: total frequency of enactments	0.859	.606	-0.044
Parent: etic perspective	0.761	.701	-0.077
Parent: prompting of empathy	0.241	.997	-0.292
Parent: total emotion related utterances	1.247	.291	0.069
Parent: total frequency of questions	0.416	.959	-0.211
