

## **How and why two strangers can co-create a story: An application of the ‘ba’-theory based approach to discourse**

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### **Abstract.**

This presentation addresses the question: how and why can a pair of teacher-student interactants co-create a story? In analyzing the discourse data taken while interactants try to achieve the task of making a coherent story by arranging cards, the ‘ba (filed)’ theory is employed. ‘Ba’ based approach is an innovating frame of thinking device that assumes 1) inside perspective of the subject, 2) dual mode thinking of the self, 3) a dynamic model like an improvised drama and 4) two modes of communication, i.e. overt and covert. The data have been analyzed into two phases of discourse: the dialogue discourse and the merging discourse. The former is indexed by the interpersonal modalities such as honorifics and sentence final particles, while the latter is characterized by dropping these linguistic features. The sudden drop of presupposed use of modalities by a teacher is obviously a deviation, but it would serve as a creative use (cf. Silverstein 1967). It is in this merging discourse that the discourse phenomena of repetition, simultaneous utterances, and chaining utterances occur. These phenomena would add no information to the conversation, but function to synchronize and to entrain the interactants. When synchronization and entrainment are maintained between the interactants, covert communication is to be maintained that would create a basis for smooth overt communication. I will argue that it is by the ‘ba’ theory based approach to discourse that we can illuminate the dynamic processes of co-creating a story by interactants.

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**Data**

01 T: hiro tte koo shi te koko de muki ga kawaru  
 pick-up CON this-way do CON here LOC direction NOM change

n desu ne  
 NOML HON-COP FP

"(He) picks up (the stick), this way, here, and turns around, right? "

02 S: soo na n desu yo ne  
 so COP-ATT NOML HON-COP FP FP

"Yes, that's right."

03 T: kore ja kono hen ni ire masu ka  
 this well this part LOC put HON Q

"This... well...why don't we put it here?"

04 S: soo desu ne  
 so HON-COP FP

"Yes, that's right."

05 T: soshitara ore te shima tte ochi soo ni-nat ta  
 then break CON end-up CON fall nearly become PAST

"Then (the stick) gets broken, and (he) nearly falls down."

06 S: ochi soo ni-nat ta  
 fall nearly become PAST

"(He) nearly falls down."

07 T: oo ni-nat ta  
 nearly become PAST

"Nearly (falls down)."

08 S: okot te ochi te  
 angry CON fall CON

"(He) gets angry, falls down..."

09 T: kore ga doko de naiteiru  
 this NOM where LOC crying

"Where is this crying?"

10 S: nai te ikinari demo kocchi ni watare ta  
 cry CON suddenly but here LOC can-cross PAST  
 "Crying, suddenly, but, (he) could jump over to this side."

11 T: kore wa demo  
 this TOP but  
 "This ...but."

12 S: ee  
 yes  
 "Sure."

13 T: nn  
 well  
 "Well."

14 S: nai ta ato warat te  
 cry PAST after laugh CON  
 "After crying, (he) laughs, and ..."

15 T: kore wa dakara koo iu fuu ni ki ta  
 this TOP therefore this say way in come PAST  
 "This...so he came in this way."

16 S: nn  
 Hmm  
 "Hmmm."

17 T: ka na  
 Q FP  
 "I guess?"

18 S: nan na n daro  
 what COP-ATT NOML I-wonder  
 "How does this work?"

19 T kore ga hen desu yo ne  
 this NOM strange HON-COP FP FP  
 "This looks strange, right?"

20 S: soo na n desu yo kono katachi ga  
 so COP-ATT NOML HON-COP FP this shape NOM  
 "Yes, it does, this shape."

. . . . skip . . . . .

21 T: soshitara koko ga tunagatteru no hen desu yo ne  
 then here NOM linking NOML strange HON-COP FP FP  
 "Then, the sequence of this part is strange, isn't it?"

22 S: soo na n desu yo ne  
 so COP-ATT NOML HON-COP FP FP  
 "Yes, it is."

23 T: dakara ni kai ni kai torai shi ta  
 therefore two time two time try do PAST  
 "So, (he) tried two, two times." {laugh}

24 T: suto koko de shippai  
 then here LOC failure  
 And then, here (he) fails.

25 S: aa so doo na n daro a wakat ta  
 hmm so how COP-ATT NOML I-wonder oh get PAST  
 "Hmm, so...how does this work? Oh, I got it."

26 T: hai  
 yes  
 "OK."

27 S: etto koko de ik kaime sagashi ni-it te  
 well here LOC one time search to-go CON  
 "Well, here, first (he) goes to search..."

28 T: a kore hai  
 oh this yes  
 "Oh, this, OK."

29 S: mituke te \_\_\_ eto \_\_\_ tonda \_\_\_ ra \_\_\_ ore \_\_\_ chat \_\_\_ te  
 find CON well jumped then break end-up CON  
 "(He) finds this...hmmm...jumps, and (the stick) gets broken..."

30 T: shippai shi te \_\_\_  
 failure do CON  
 "(He) messes up..."

31 S: mata modot te \_\_\_ tonda \_\_\_ ra  
 again return CON jumped then  
 "(He) comes back again, jumps, and..."

32 T: aa  
 hmm  
 "Hmm..."

33 S: are chigau a soo da  
 huh different oh so COP  
 "Huh? No! Oh, I got it."

34 T: n demo kore shippai ni ire chae ba ii n desu yo ne  
 well but this failure to put end-up if good NOML HON-COP FP FP  
 "Well, but, this, I can count this as a failure, right?"

#### Abbreviations

ATT: attributive

CON: conjunctive

COP: copula

FP: final particle

HON: honorific

LOC: locative

NOM: nominative

NOML: nominalizer

PAST: past

Q: question

TOP: topic