

Rhetorical Patterns in English and Japanese Prose

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INTRODUCTION

Japanese and English-speaking people have different rhetorical patterns. Many of us, the Japanese, do not seem to be aware of the fact, and unwittingly tend to follow Japanese rhetoric even when we are engaged in writing English prose. Consequently, it has been pointed out that English prose written by the Japanese is often hardly intelligible to native speakers of English. Sawada reports, for example, that a British scholar complains of incomprehensibility of most articles written in English by his Japanese counterparts (1989, p. 17). Although the language is English, the logic used is alien. Because the number of Japanese people is increasing who try to communicate with a foreign audience in English, I believe that more attention should be called to the difference between English and Japanese rhetoric. In this paper, I would like to study the outline of English rhetoric, and the acceptance and application of it in Japan. I will also take up paragraph, reviewing Alexander Bain's theory. Since Bain, a paragraph has been considered a miniature unit of a whole discourse. By looking over the paragraph structure, therefore, we will come to know the rhetoric of English discourse in all. In comparison with an English paragraph, the structure of a Japanese paragraph (*danraku*) will be examined as well.

The word rhetoric, in its modern usage, mainly refers to the method of organizing and

presenting one's thought logically rather than the technique of decorating one's expression. We will use rhetoric in this sense, although, to most of us, the word may still be understood negatively as a means to gaudily adorn words and phrases. This negative interpretation might be natural because even to English-speaking people, rhetoric does not always seem to sound positive: "When we condemn a piece of writing as mere rhetoric, we are, as a rule, pointing to a disproportion between an ostentatious technique and a trivial theme. Thus it has come to be felt that rhetoric is the last bad resort of those who have nothing to say" (Nash, 1987, p. 8).

In American universities, a course of communication skills known as English composition, expository writing, or rhetoric is compulsory for all students, whatever their majors are (Kinosita, 1990, p. 22). Students receive solid and systematic instruction based on the tradition of Western logic since Aristotle. One of the composition textbooks informs: "The introduction, body, and conclusion — or, if you like, the beginning, middle, and end — are the natural divisions of a discourse" (Brooks and Warren, 1979, p. 21). Japanese students also learn this three-part division, together with *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* and other methods of developing a composition. However, the instruction of these methods in Japan is neither orderly nor practical, so it is rare for students to be benefited by such an instruction in the actual writing. There is even a teacher who advises his students to use

both *Ki - sho - ten - ketsu* and three-part division at the same time, which shows that the Japanese are not as strict with the methods of discourse development as Westerners.¹

The concept of paragraph was introduced into Japan during the Meiji era, when Alexander Bain's *English Composition and Rhetoric* (1866) was employed as a textbook at Tokyo Kaisei Gakko. As more and more people enjoyed the benefits of a modern education system, the concept of paragraph (with its Japanese translation *danraku*) became widespread.² Now every Japanese student is supposed to learn about paragraph at school. But we have some problems here. First, the use of paragraph in Japan has not yet been established because it is an imported concept. The nature and function of paragraph is still under discussion among scholars. Second, paragraph is the object of an argument, not the settled matter, even among English-speaking people. It seems that they have not reached a conclusion concerning how to analyze the internal structure of a paragraph. Finally, as we can assume now, the concept of paragraph prevailing in Japan does not necessarily coincide with that generally recognized in English-speaking countries. These issues will be discussed in this paper.

I. Rhetoric

A. Culture and Rhetoric

The difference between English and Japanese rhetoric directly reflects the difference between the two cultural traditions. While English rhetoric has its origin in Greek and Latin cultures, Japanese rhetoric has been much influenced by Chinese culture. We can see the authors touch upon, without fail, Aristotle, Cicero, or Quintilian in the textbooks on English rhetoric, whereas *Ki-sho*

-ten-ketsu, a typical Japanese rhetoric, comes from the form of classical Chinese poetry.

Aristotle, for example, is described as a man who advocated the four divisions of a discourse. It was Corax of Syracuse who first proposed that a discourse (what he particularly meant was a legal argument) has four parts. Aristotle adopted that division, that is, exordium (the introduction), narratio (the outline or narration of the subject), confirmatio (the proofs for and against the case), and epilogue (the summary)³. This division was later expanded to six by Cicero and then was settled to five parts by Quintilian, who divided Aristotle's third part into confirmatio (the proof) and refutatio (the refutation)⁴. It can be said that this five parts division has been succeeded by "the five-paragraph theme" used in the writing classes in English-speaking countries.⁵ English rhetoric is characterized by this rigid principle of discourse structure.

Japanese, on the other hand, do not have such a systematic rhetoric tradition. Rhetorical techniques of logic are most required in expository prose among other kinds of prose such as narrative or descriptive. And Teele remarks that Japanese have as long a history of expository prose as English-speaking people (1983, p. 20). Essays on poetry known as *karon* are the first examples of expository prose in Japanese. Since the preface to the *Kokinwakashu* (c. 913?) was written by Ki no Tsurayuki, the introductions to the anthologies of poetry and essays on poetry constituted the genre of prose in Japanese language, while Chinese continued to be the language for most other expository prose in Japan.⁶ It is interesting to note that even prose theory was written during the Edo period, whose discussion "centers both on different periods of Japanese prose and on

contrasting prose in Chinese with that in Japanese" (Teele, 1983, p. 21). But the question is what kind of rhetoric was known and used in those Japanese expository prose in those periods.

It seems that Japanese rhetoric of those days was not as methodical nor rigid as Western rhetoric. It was especially much less suited for argumentative purpose. It is said that Japanese Buddhist priests in the late 16th century could not argue satisfactorily a theological matter with Jesuits who were armed with classical Western rhetoric. They could not be the opponents of Jesuits who would claim the orthodoxy of their God by means of subtle argumentative techniques. This does not mean that Buddhist priests as well as other Japanese of those days were not accustomed to argument because they preferred harmony and silence to verbal dispute. It may be a myth that because Japanese were a homogeneous people and could communicate by tacit understanding (or *ishin - denshin*) they did not make much of verbal exchange.⁷ Pointing out, for example, that Buddhist priests were far from silence-loving, but were busy with sectarian confrontation, Sawada cites one of those religious controversies, called *Azuchi-shuron* (1579), between Hokkeshu-sect and Jodoshu-sect (1983, p. 182):

この宗論は、自由な論争ではなく、法華宗を抑えようとする信長の政治的圧力のもとで行なわれたものではあったが、とにかく激論であった。激論ではあったが、大前提、小前提、結論という筋に沿った議論があって、それに対して前提を論破しながら結論を批判するというたぐいの論争ではなかった。「法華は『妙』を否定するだろう」「いや、とんでもない。法華の根本は『妙』だから、その間は愚問だ」という調子で、相互に噛み合わない水かけ論、経典の字句の解釈をめぐるあげ足とり、揚句のはては暴

力沙汰に及ぶ、非論理的、非哲学的論争だった。

Thus, according to Sawada, Japanese, just as Westerners, involved themselves in arguments and dialogues with the help of "rhetoric." However, from the Western standpoint, Japanese "rhetoric" was not at all what they mean by the term rhetoric. While Western rhetoric was supported by logos, Japanese rhetoric, which was so emotional and ethical, did not seem to care for it.⁸ We can now understand why Jesuits who came to Japan in the 16th century could easily defeat Japanese Buddhist priests in their theological disputes.

Jesuits, incidentally, were the first Europeans who brought classical Western rhetoric to Japan (Sawada, 1983, p. 179). They built theological schools and monasteries in the western part of Japan, and there they taught Latin, humanities, rhetoric, philosophy, and theology to some Japanese people. Scholastic debate skills were also instructed. By 1623, it is said, about 20 Japanese Jesuits had completed the ten-year curriculum of these institutions. But the instruction of Western knowledge, including rhetoric, by Jesuits disappeared as Japan closed the door to foreigners later. Although the word rhetoric was found in some documents during the Edo period, the Western rhetorical pattern did not take root among Japanese people.⁹ The reason is attributed to lack of logicalness and abstractness in Japanese mentality:

日本の知的風土というのは、パドヴァ生まれのヒューマニストの宣教師ヴァリニヤーノが *Catechismus christianae Fidei* 『キリスト教信仰要理』(1586年リサボン刊)で述べているといわれるように、論理性と抽象性を欠く風土である。個々の事物、現象からその根源にある共通性を抽象し一般化、普遍化する力とか、三段

論法的弁証で既知から未知を論理的に推論して行く力が欠けているということである。

(Sawada, 1983, p. 181)

In this way, it was not until the Meiji period that Japanese in general encountered, on a full scale, Western rhetoric, which was introduced by way of English-speaking countries.

B. The acceptance of English rhetoric in Japan

Dairoku Kikuchi is known as the first translator of a Western rhetoric text in the Meiji period.¹⁰ His translation work titled *Shuji oyobi Kabun* is a part of the encyclopedia compiled by the Education Ministry in 1881. He is the man who gave rhetoric a Japanese name *shujigaku*. There are, however, some researchers who regard Yukio Ozaki as the pioneer of introducing Western rhetoric. Before Kikuchi's translation, Ozaki published a few books which accounted for traditional rhetorical theory, consulting American textbooks circulated at that time. Among other departments, he dealt with much of delivery techniques (or *Pronuntiatio*): pronunciation, gesture, utterance, and so on as we can suppose from his later career as one of the famous politicians (Sato, 1986, p.p.25-27).

Other Japanese who succeeded to Kikuchi and Ozaki's introductory work are said to have put emphasis on either *Pronuntiatio*, as Ozaki did, or *Elocutio* (ways of ornamenting discourse) among five departments of classical Western rhetoric. The other three are *Inventio*: invention/ ways of discovering relevant ideas and supporting evidence, *Dispositio*: arrangement/ ways of organizing the parts of a discourse, and *Memoria*: memory/ mnemonic techniques (Lindemann, 1987, p. 38). Our concern in this paper is *Dispositio*. The overemphasizing of *Pronuntiatio* and *Elo-*

cutio, which was because it was the politicians who actively made use of the newly imported Western rhetoric in their public speeches, caused the misunderstanding and criticism toward rhetoric. While they cared about the way of speaking and the gestures of various physical parts such as facial expression, posture, hand raising, and so on, the politicians decorated their speeches with a lot of flowery words. Those ornate words were mostly of Chinese origin. Such ornamental styles became popular not only in the speeches but also in the writings. Consequently, as time passed, people came to regard rhetoric as some technique to say something ostentatiously. In this way, unfortunately, the word rhetoric got a negative connotation. And rhetoric was considered as something deceptive that should be kept away by the modern intellectuals.¹¹

This restriction of the meaning of rhetoric happened in Europe in the first place. There, rhetoric eventually became equal to, in a negative sense, *Elocutio*, by which the users could resort to fallacious, empty talk as Sophists did in ancient Greece. Therefore, by the late 19th century, when empirical, scientific thought was being established, people in Europe began to neglect the teaching of rhetoric. To the people who made much of logical and exact description the technique of ornamenting discourse was no more than useless, or even harmful. Ironically, Japan started to import classical Western rhetoric via America in the Meiji era when it (rhetoric) was losing its position in Europe. For the same reason as in Europe, Western rhetoric (or English rhetoric because it was primarily introduced through America) was destined to be forgotten before it took root in Japan.¹² It was unfortunate that it left a bad impression on Japanese people.

Sawada explains the situation this way (1989, p.p.287-288). The understanding of Western rhetoric mainly as Elocutio (or *bibun-shuji-ho*) survived among Japanese public speakers until the end of World War II. The politicians after the war have ceased to ornament their speeches with numerous flowery words. But the common defect in those speeches, both before and after the war, has been lack of dialectical logic, resulting from neglect of the most important part of rhetoric, that is, Inventio (invention). The speakers do not have enough ability of demonstration nor refutation. Even the basic rhetorical pattern — introduction/ body/ conclusion — is not observed. Rather, surprisingly, there are some who advise city officials to follow the *rakugo* (or Japanese comical storytelling) pattern in their reply speech at the assembly. The pattern goes: *makurakotoba* (a set epithet)/*nakami* (contents)/ *ochi* (the point of a joke).

To sum up, Western rhetoric or English rhetoric was accepted in Japan, after all, in a distorted manner. People eventually restricted it to ways of ornamenting discourse, and often the use of rhetoric was regarded as overstating something dishonestly. On the other hand, the important aspects of Western rhetoric failed to be learned. Those aspects are (1) ways of discovering ideas and evidence, and (2) ways of arranging them in a logical order. Why was Western dialectical logic not established among Japanese people (at least among most of them)? This is a big question and beyond the scope of this paper. But, as a Catholic missionary in the 16th century did, only to blame Japanese mentality does not seem fair. As Sawada (1983) and Kinoshita (1990) point out, the problem might lie in the educational system. However, we do not discuss this further here.

C. Discourse development in expository prose and Japanese rhetoric

1. Expository prose

In this paper we are examining the discourse development of English rhetoric (i.e., Dispositio), the reflection of it in a unit called paragraph, and the difference between English and Japanese rhetoric concerning discourse development. The kind of discourse development we are concerned with is the one which is regulated by logic and reasoning. As I have mentioned, that kind of discourse development is observed in expository prose.

Expository prose is one of the four kinds of prose. The other three are narrative, descriptive and argumentative. Teele (1983) explains these four as follows: “expository prose explains, descriptive prose paints a picture with words, narrative prose tells a story, and argumentative prose argues for one position against another” (p.18). Brooks and Warren (1979) give us a more elaborate definition of expository prose or exposition in their terms:

In the first of these, exposition, the intention is to explain something, for instance, to make some idea clear to the reader, to analyze a situation, to define a term, to give directions. The intention, in short, is to inform. (p.40)

When we explain something or inform others, it is obvious that we should present our materials coherently and consistently. However, this does not seem so easy to foreign students who write expository prose such as term papers, theses, and dissertations in English. Kaplan reports that their American instructors have written such comments as: “‘The material is all here, but it seems somehow out of focus,’ or ‘Lacks organization,’ or ‘Lacks cohesion’ ” (1984, p.45). Those for-

foreign students are said to have mastered syntactic structures of English. So the problem is not on sentence-level but on discourse-level. In other words, the ways of discourse development of foreign students do not meet with those in English rhetoric. Kaplan continues to say: "The foreign-student paper is out of focus because the foreign student is employing a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native reader" (p.45)

As we have seen, the introduction, body, and conclusion are the basic rhetorical organization of English discourse. According to this organization, students in English-speaking countries are taught to develop their proposition in a straight line. There should be one central idea which a whole discussion is related to. After the central idea or the subject is presented in an introduction, all the following statements, which may be example, illustrations, data, and so on, must be relevant to it. Digression seems to be considered as something evil in English rhetoric.

In his well-known article Kaplan graphically shows English thought pattern as a linear line, whereas he illustrates the thought patterns of other races as various zigzag lines that indicate digressions (1984, p.52). And, although we cannot know what he exactly means by that, Kaplan uses a "whirlpool" to represent the Oriental one. In a note he states that "Oriental" here is intended to specifically refer to Chinese and Korean but not Japanese, but Teele suggests that western teachers of English in Japan "have concluded that Japanese compositions fit the pattern (of Kaplan) ... just as well as did those by Koreans and Chinese" (1983, p.14). Kaplan further describes Oriental writing in the following manner. Here we must remember a paragraph is a miniature unit of a whole dis-

course:

Some Oriental writing, on the other hand, is marked by what may be called an approach by indirection. In this kind of writing, the development of the paragraph may be said to be "turning and turning in a widening gyre." The circles or gyres turn around the subject and show it from a variety of tangential views, but the subject is never looked at directly. Things are developed in terms of what they are not, rather than in terms of what they are. Again, such a development in a modern English paragraph would strike the English reader as awkward and unnecessarily indirect. (p.49)

Because we do not have enough further evidence on this subject, we have no way to decide whether Kaplan's claim is correct or not. It may be approved to show English rhetorical pattern as a linear line when we recall the logical coherence has been made much of in English rhetoric. But, how about the Oriental pattern? Do we think in a circular way as he says, provided Japanese are included in his Oriental pattern? First of all, what does Kaplan precisely mean by (Oriental thinking is) "turning and turning in a widening gyre"? It seems to me that he implies Oriental rhetoric is ineffective and wasteful. However, as just mentioned, further discussion is meaningless unless we have discovered and established our rhetorical pattern. For a pedagogical purpose Kaplan himself points out the necessity of researching the rhetorical structures of non-English languages: "These patterns (in other languages) need to be discovered or uncovered and compared with the patterns of English in order to arrive at a practical means for the teaching of such structures to non-native users of the language" (p.53). In the next section, I would like to share what I have learned, so far, about Japanese rhetorical pattern (or discourse development).

2. Japanese rhetorical pattern (or discourse development)

Inspired by Kaplan's article, Achiba and Kuromiya investigate "whether or not there may be any rhetorical patterns unique to native speakers of Japanese" (1983, p.1). The subjects of their study were Japanese students of English as a second language enrolled in the language schools of two American universities and Japanese undergraduates at one of those universities. They examined 130 English compositions written by these subjects (all the compositions, they determined, could be classified as expository prose) and sorted them out into five categories. Category 1 corresponds to Kaplan's category for English rhetoric; that is, linear development. Category 4 is equal to Kaplan's Oriental rhetoric; a circular approach. Categories 2 and 3 are variations between linear and circular; either linear in the beginning and then circular, or circular in the beginning and after that linear. Category 5 represents a total mess. Achiba and Kuromiya state they discerned these five patterns in the 130 compositions. And the results are:

Category 1	↓	34%
Category 2	↓	19%
Category 3	↻	6%
Category 4	⊙	27%
Category 5	↪	14%

(p.4)

Interestingly, Category 1 (the linear approach which, according to Kaplan, ought to represent English rhetoric) scores the highest percentage (34%) and Category 4 (the circular approach) marks the second highest (27%). Achiba and Kuromiya interpret these results as follows:

This suggests two possible explanations. First, it has to be taken into consideration that all of these students had had formal English instruction in Japan, and at the time of this study they were receiving intensive English instruction in the United States. Thus, in their compositions both Oriental and Western patterns are to be expected. But it is also possible that the Japanese rhetorical pattern has both linear and circular aspects. (p.5)

(Emphasis, mine)

If their second explanation is correct, I am afraid it means that we are back again to the starting point. To say that "the Japanese rhetorical pattern has both linear and circular aspects" is nothing but to say Japanese, as a people, have no particular rhetorical pattern, each individual following his own style.

Then, they examined students' Japanese compositions, and found that both the linear and circular approaches score high percentages, as in the case of the English compositions. However, this time, it is Category 4 (the circular approach) which is the highest (46%) while Category 1 (the linear approach) comes second (29%). Achiba and Kuromiya understand this may have to do with the audience to whom the compositions were written. Expecting a native English teacher to read and grade their English compositions, more students employ the linear approach. But, in writing Japanese compositions, the number of students who use the circular approach increases because they know their readers will be Japanese natives who are familiar with the Japanese thought pattern. Before we accept Achiba and Kuromiya's conclusion that Japanese use both linear and circular approaches, we should take into consideration that the subjects in their study are not the average Japanese people. Their subjects have been trained in English rhetoric in American universities. If we

study Japanese in general, therefore, we must find much fewer of them resort to the linear approach. And also, we should not forget that the circular approach is not yet the approved expression to represent Japanese rhetorical pattern, although Achiba and Kuromiya seem to use it as such. We can only say, I believe, that, as the term "circular" implies, our discourse movement is not as straight as the English one and our approach to a topic is more indirect than direct. As mentioned before, we need further, comprehensive studies in order to get a more clear-cut view of Japanese rhetorical pattern.

We always come across *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* in the books and articles which discuss Japanese rhetorical structure. It is true that other methods of developing discourse, besides *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu*, are also dealt with in the composition textbooks in Japan. For example, according to Teele (1983, p.27), the following six methods are specified in one of those books:

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| 1. 序破急 | 4. 尾括式 |
| 2. 起承転結 | 5. 双括式 |
| 3. 頭括式 | 6. 序論 本論 結論 |

Concerning sources, Teele states: the first method *Jo-ha-kyu* comes from the structure of the Noh play. The second *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* (as mentioned earlier) originates in classical Chinese poetry, especially *zekku*. From method three to five are three of the five methods proposed by Igarashi Chikara who published *Shinbunshokowa* in 1909. The sixth method must be western in origin. Teele continues to mention that all except the first method *Jo-ha-kyu* are covered in high school and that introductions to the sixth method are found in the *kokugo* textbooks for junior high school students. Thus Japanese students today seem to be exposed to various rhetorical methods, but, as Kinoshita points out, tradi-

tionally many Japanese teachers have put emphasis on *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* in the teaching of composition (1990, p.100). In Japanese composition classes, students have been mostly required to write literary or narrative prose (rather than expository prose) that aims to move readers and the structure of *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* is fitted for such prose. Kinoshita claims that this might lead American rhetoric researchers such as Hinds and Dennett to the conclusion that *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* should be the typical structure of Japanese prose, and that, comparing it with their rhetorical structure, those American researchers must be perplexed at cultural friction. The following is a part of the translation of Hinds's article by Kinoshita:

……この種の表現形式は *ki-sho-ten-ketsu* と呼ばれる。'Ki' で話題 (トピック) を導入し、'sho' でそれを展開する。'Ten' で関連のはっきりしない論点に急に飛び移る。そして 'ketsu' で結ぶのである。第2言語として英語に習熟しようとする日本人にとっての陥穽 (落とし穴) は 'ten' と 'ketsu' というスタイルに馴れすぎていることだ。'Ten' で導入される情報は欧米の読者にとっては〈無関係〉としかみえないものだし、'ketsu' についていえば、日本語では〈結論〉の定義が英語とはちがうらしい。 (p.p.101-02)

As shown in the above quotation, the third unit *ten*, where a topic is twisted and another seemingly irrelevant topic is introduced, may puzzle native English readers who are accustomed to the consistent, linear discourse structure. From the standpoint of English rhetoric, *ten* may be nothing but a jump of logic. Achiba and Kuromiya interpret *ten* as the stage "where the main topic is finally introduced and developed," while "the topic of the initial unit (*ki*) is not the author's main topic" and "it is simply a subtopic that will lead into the main topic of the essay" (1983,

p.6) . In fact, we often find a long, unnecessary introductory remark in a composition written by Japanese. If, as Achiba and Kuro-miya explain, this reflects the influence of *ki*, then it may be *ki* which puzzles native English readers. *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* is definitely not for expository writing, but for a kind of writing which needs literary effects. So Kinoshita, who is a physicist, says it is a misunderstanding for Hinds and Dennett to regard *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* as a rhetorical structure of Japanese expository writing. He, however, also remarks that such a misunderstanding cannot be helped because, in addition to the reason already discussed (that is, the emphasis of it in Japanese junior and senior high schools), even in colleges some teachers of literature courses are said to recommend *Ki-sho-ten-ketsu* in writing theses (p.102) .

Through the discussion so far, we may conclude that in order to write clear expository prose in English we further need to learn and practise the linear development of English rhetoric. We need to keep away from Japanese rhetorical pattern while we are engaged in English composition writing. Here, too, the famous saying "Do in Rome as the Romans do" holds true. We can also say that more research is required on Japanese rhetorical structure, which is at present much less definite, compared to the English one. Unless we first identify our rhetoric, it will remain difficult to use a different rhetoric from our own. In the next part we move on to consider a paragraph. *Danraku*, Japanese counterpart of a paragraph, is also discussed so that we can have more understanding of Japanese discourse.

II . The Paragraph

A. The Emergence of Paragraph Theory

Most people seem to take the paragraph as

a matter of course, but "the paragraph as we know it today did not begin to emerge until the late seventeenth century, did not attain full development till the eighteenth," (Rodgers, 1965, p.399) . According to Teele, punctuation including *paragraphos*, from which the word paragraph comes, was used in ancient Greece. But the system disappeared, and "by the 6th century words were written in a continuous stream with only a gap between sentences" (Teele, 1983, p.23) . Yura, a scholar of English literature, refers to the state as follows:

…十三世紀以上の欧文を読みなれているわたしたちには、句読点の成立など、遙か後代の人為的なものであったに違いないことが類推できる。
(1986, p.43)

Quoting the OED, Teele continues that it was by the first quarter of the sixteenth century that paragraph was used in the sense of "a distinct passage or section of a discourse, chapter, or book." And he understands that by that time indentation had been used to indicate the first line of a paragraph.

Similarly, no punctuation appears to have been used in either ancient Chinese or Japanese, although in some Japanese texts a device to show sections of the text is observed.¹³ Sakuma, on the other hand, points out that the Japanese began to use various symbols to indicate *danraku* in old times so that they could make it easier to interpret the Buddhist scriptures written in Chinese and other Chinese classics (1983, p.22) . *Danraku* was termed in different ways such as *dan*, *setsu*, *bundan*, *kugiri*, and so on. Sakuma also remarks that we can find the concept and symbols of *danraku* in an old Chinese grammar book compiled in the end of the Ming dynasty. This Chinese concept of *dan-*

raku, Sakuma assumes, was consequently introduced to Japan in the Edo period.¹⁴ After all, however, it was not until the Meiji period or the late 19th century that the Japanese started to use *danraku* (or *paragurafu*) as we do now, being influenced by the paragraph theory which was introduced as a part of Western rhetoric. In Scotland, Alexander Bain proposed the first modern paragraph theory in 1866, which, interestingly, nearly coincides with the year of the Meiji Restoration (1868) when Japan reopened the door and began to take in foreign cultures.

B. Bain's Paragraph Theory

According to Rodgers's article (1965), we try to have a general view of Bain and his successors' paragraph theory in this section. Rodgers believes that "faults of disunity and incoherence occurred much more frequently in student writing during the nineteenth century than they had previously" (p.401). In English prose, "sentential simplification" had been in progress and "by 1860 the average English sentence contained only about half as many words as the average sentence of Shakespeare's day" (p.401). But the bulk of the paragraph, that is, the number of words in it, had not changed in the same period. Thus, whereas sentences became shorter and simpler, there were many more sentences in the paragraph, which resulted in the increasing difficulty of securing unity and coherence within the paragraph. This circumstance may have urged Bain, a composition teacher at the University of Aberdeen, to formulate paragraph theory in *English Composition and Rhetoric*, a manual prepared for use in his classes.

Concerning the problems of untrained student writers, Rodgers cites Bain as follows:

"perhaps the most prevalent fault of young writers is, leaving the topics of paragraphs indeterminate or too diffusive." The "confining of each paragraph to a distinct topic," said Bain, "avoids some of the worst faults of composition" — incoherence, irrelevancy, pointlessness, meandering illogic. (p.p.400-01)

Thus Bain defined the paragraph as "a collection of sentences with unity of purpose," an integrated, rationalized system of predications which 'handles and exhausts a distinct topic' " (p.403). This definition of Bain's was taken over by later rhetoricians, who paraphrased it into something like a collection of sentences unified by "some common idea," "one particular point," "a single topic," or "a single idea." We know this is not different from the definition of a paragraph we now see in a composition textbook. Bain's theory can be summarized into the six rules:

The first of these rules, which he illustrated at great length, was the familiar principle of coherence: "the bearing of each sentence upon what precedes shall be explicit and unmistakable." The second recommended use of parallel structure "when several consecutive sentences iterate or illustrate the same idea." The third called for a statement of the topic in the opening sentence, unless the sentence was obviously preparatory; the fourth, for logical ordering of the sentences; the fifth, for unity, "which implies a definite purpose, and forbids digressions and irrelevant matter." The sixth was a principle of proportion: "that everything should have bulk and prominence according to its importance." (p.404)

After Bain, the rhetoricians who tackled the problem of paragraphing regarded these rules as the basis for their discussion. In general, they made the rules more complicated by adding their own principles. In 1886, however, going against the trend toward complexity, John Genung reduced the rules to a triad:

“The topic statement now was subordinated to Unity; coherence and logical order were condensed under the rubric Continuity; parallel construction was included under Proportion” (p.404). Genung’s triad was first renamed Unity, Coherence, and Mass by Wendell, and then renamed again Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis by Carpenter and Baldwin. The notions of Unity and Coherence did not undergo a substantial change, but Emphasis was given a broader semantic sense than Proportion of Bain and Genung. Whereas Proportion meant emphasizing an important idea by giving it greater length within the paragraph, Emphasis utilized a “conspicuous position” such as the beginning or the end, as well as bulk treatment, in order to stress a crucial idea. Then, these three principles: Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis have now become standard in the present-day composition textbooks.

Rodgers next goes on to mention Bain’s influence on later rhetoricians who formed a view that each level of discourse, that is, the sentence, paragraph, and full discourse has an identical “organic” structure. Bain took notice of the commonality in the structures of a paragraph and a full discourse, stating that “he that fully comprehends the method of a paragraph, will also comprehend the method of an entire work” (p.405). His successors employed this view and treated the paragraph as “a discourse in miniature.” The discussion in this paper, as you may have noticed by now, is also based on such a view. Bain further pointed out that sentence and paragraph have a great deal in common as well. To Bain, a paragraph was “virtually an expanded sentence”:

The paragraph’s topic is broader than the relatively uncomplicated “affirmation” of the sentence, but

sentence and paragraph alike display an organic structure and employ the same means to secure it: unity of purpose, proportioned statement, parallel construction, avoidance of “dislocation” of elements. (p.406)

The rhetoricians such as Hunt and Wendell expressed this idea of Bain in their own words. Hunt stated that the paragraph “sustains the same relation to the sentence which this does to the clause or member” while Wendell observed that “a paragraph is to a sentence what a sentence is to a word” (p.406). This analogical treatment of sentence and paragraph, in other words, the application of the sentence-oriented rhetoric to the paragraph was later taken over by Francis Christensen and developed in his article “A Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph” (1965), which we will see afterward. Along this line Bain maintained that, just like the subject of the sentence, the statement of the paragraph’s subject (=the topic sentence) should be placed in a prominent position, at or near the beginning or at the end. To Bain there should be an explicit topic statement in every paragraph just as every English sentence, in principle, contains a subject. Thus Bain’s paragraph model was mainly a product of deductive reasoning from the sentence-oriented rhetoric, and later investigators who analysed actual paragraphs found that Bain’s principle concerning the topic statement was not necessarily effective. They noticed that in many paragraphs the topic was unstated and that there were diversified ways to indicate the topic, besides the explicit topic statement. It was pointed out:

that it (=the topic) may be merely hinted, or rendered figuratively, or conveyed indirectly by means of a question or exclamation; that it may be propounded in stages in a series of sentences scattered

through the paragraph, or broached in one sentence and then restricted or enlarged in a second; and that an effective statement of topic may prove, upon close inspection, not to be a sentence at all, but only a part of a sentence. (p.407)

Bain's narrow view, in this way, was modified by his successors who worked by induction so that it could meet the reality.

Even today, however, Bain's influence can be observed in the school situations where students are recommended to write a topic sentence and place it either at the beginning or at the end of their paragraph. This is probably because beginners can more easily realize the unity of a paragraph by the use of an explicit topic statement, no matter what kind of paragraph they will write in future. Rodgers illustrates the point: "the topic sentence could ease the labors of composition. The writer could test the unity of a draft paragraph by asking himself whether its topic sentence summed up its substance adequately" (p.407). Writing a topic sentence is then linked to the methods of paragraph development. Rodgers cites Bain's approach:

The leading form of the Expository Paragraph (and of Exposition generally) is the statement of a principle, followed by such a choice of Iterations, Obverse Statements, Examples, Illustrations, Proofs, and Applications, as the case may require. (p.407)

This idea that a paragraph is made up of a single topic and its amplification prevails in the composition classes of today. Brooks and Warren (1979), for instance, list five amplification methods such as Comparison and Contrast, Illustration, Classification, Definition, and Analysis. It is pointed out that this approach may make it easier to develop a paragraph without digression. The writer has

only to check (1) if each sentence has a bearing on the topic sentence and (2) if it is suited to the type of amplification used.

Thus far, we have seen Bain's paragraph theory illustrated in Rodgers's article. Although it is rather deductive and does not necessarily reflect actual paragraphs, his theory has been widely accepted and has become the basis of many composition textbooks for a century. I believe we now know the origin of the modern English rhetorical pattern we discussed in part I. We have seen Kaplan describe it as a linear line. English discourse has one central idea which is presented in an introduction, and all the following statements must be related to it. The statements which cannot be clearly connected with the central idea are detested as digression. This is identical with what Bain stated in his paragraph theory. So, if we also accept Bain's claim that the paragraph and the full discourse (and the sentence as well) have the same "organic" structure, we may safely say that the modern English discourse theory is the expansion of Bain's paragraph theory.

Francis Christensen's *Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph* is said to be today's version of Bain's theory. As Bain did, taking notice of the parallel between sentence and paragraph, Christensen considers a paragraph to be the expansion of a sentence. So he proposes thinking of "the topic sentence as parallel to the base clause of a sentence and the supporting sentences as parallel to the added single-word modifiers and clusters and subordinate and relative clauses" (1965, p.145). Then he analyses paragraphs in terms of the four principles which he has used to examine sentences: *addition, direction of modification, levels of generality, and texture*.¹⁵ In addition to this parallel approach toward sentence and

paragraph, Christensen has one more thing in common with Bain (Sakuma, 1978). That is the claim that the first sentence of a paragraph should be the topic sentence. Sakuma mentions, however, that other researchers criticize Christensen's remark on the topic sentence, pointing out that Christensen does not make clear what empirical research method he has used. Christensen himself is not consistent in his claim because his nine propositions concerning the paragraph include such items as "Some paragraphs have no top, no topic, sentence" and "Some paragraphing is illogical." Thus, some investigators regard Christensen's as only a second-hand theory of Bain.¹⁶ Christensen happens to remind us of a weakness of Bain's theory about the topic sentence, but Bain's theory in entirety is still the foundation to study the modern English paragraph and also full discourse.

C. Paragraph and *Danraku*

Whereas the structure of a paragraph can be theoretically explained, that of *danraku* is not so easy to define. As mentioned before, the word *danraku* was originally introduced to Japan as one of the rhetorical terms of classical Chinese, but today it is mainly used as a translation of paragraph. So we can at least say *danraku* is something similar to English paragraph as a scholar of Japanese language prescribes that *danraku* has two features: (1) it is unified by a single idea, and (2) the beginning of it is indicated by indentation (Sakuma, 1981, p.101). But, unlike the case of English-speaking people, the Japanese are not so sure when to indent and start new *danraku*, for they are not given, at school, systematic instruction about the structure and development of *danraku*. And in Japanese schools, the teaching of *danraku* or *paragurafu* has been done primarily for the

purpose of reading, rather than writing, although the paragraph theory was first conceived and has been developed for the composition classes, as we have just seen in the previous section. As a consequence, there seem to be many Japanese who somehow cannot be confident of the *danraku* division (or paragraphing) in their writing. Most Japanese seem to have no choice but to depend on their intuition when they start new *danraku* because the concept of *danraku* is not yet made clear. Sakuma says that there is even a textbook which draws a conclusion that one can make *danraku* "in one's own way" (1981, p.102). As to the difference between English and Japanese paragraphing, Teele remarks that while "in English, the reasoning given to changing paragraphs is simple: each paragraph contains one idea or part of a complex idea," in Japanese it appears to be more complex (1983, p.25). He cites Aihara who gives six reasons for beginning a new paragraph (*danraku*):

段落の切り方

話題の転換、内容・題材の転換、対象の転換、
表現目的の転換、場面の転換、視点の転換など
(p.25)

Teele comments that these different categories would point to the reason why there are many short paragraphs in Japanese expository prose, while most of the categories can be subsumed under the reasoning behind paragraphing in English. Thus, as Teele suggests, we would suppose that "paragraphs in Japanese expository prose may tend to be more interrelated than those in English" (p.26).

Besides *danraku*, the notion *bundan* is employed by the researchers of Japanese paragraphs. *Bundan* refers to a semantically di-

visible segment of discourse regardless of indentation, whereas the beginning of *danraku* is indented like an English paragraph.¹⁷ Because the structure of a paragraph, in English, is well established among the people, the gap between writers and readers is not so serious in terms of paragraphing. In Japanese, on the other hand, without distinct rhetorical rules most writers begin a new paragraph (*danraku*) according to their intuition, as already mentioned. It is pointed out that even a single sentence can be sometimes treated as a paragraph in Japanese. This lack of consistency often tends to cause Japanese writers and readers not to coincide in paragraphing. In her research, Sakuma has asked her subjects (university students) to segment into paragraphs a Japanese newspaper column presented with no indentation (1981). She has found that only a small percentage of the paragraphs divided by the subjects coincide with the original ones. Sakuma indicates that this may explain why the two notions, *danraku* and *bundan*, are needed in the analysis of Japanese paragraphs. That is, while the writer creates paragraphs almost arbitrarily, considering, for example, proportion rather than content, the reader perceives them primarily in terms of the unity of content. The former is called *danraku* or "the indented paragraph" in Sakuma's term and the latter is named *bundan* or "the grammatico-semantic paragraph." Hence it follows that a *danraku* can be made up of several *bundans* or on the contrary a *bundan* may include some *danrakus*. In addition to these two notions, we should pay attention to the influence of Japanese syntax on its paragraph structure. For instance, less frequency of a distinct topic sentence in a Japanese paragraph might be attributed to the fact that a subject is not always necessary in a Japanese sentence.

And it is said that the SOV word order of Japanese is fitted for inductive way of thinking, while the SVO of English is suitable to argue deductively.¹⁸ Thus, we can see that although it owes much to an English paragraph, a Japanese paragraph (*danraku*) is not at all identical with its English counterpart.

CONCLUSION

Looking back what may have motivated me to write this paper, I remember an American college textbook of Speech I happened to find on a bookstore's shelf when I was a college student. The textbook illustrated how to organize a speech so systematically and neatly that I was impressed. Until that time, I believe, I did not know that there was such a methodical way to construct either an oral or a written discourse. It was a kind of small culture shock. Another thing I recall is the encounter with the word "coherence" which an American composition instructor at our college repeatedly put emphasis on, writing the word on the board. These incidents remain in my subconsciousness, and they must have become a distant cause for planning this paper.

For pedagogical implications, I suppose this study has made it clear that more instruction on English rhetoric is needed for the Japanese students who will write expository prose such as reports, term papers, or theses in English. Rhetoric, in this case, exclusively means *Dispositio* among other aspects of it. We also have seen that further researches are required to identify what Japanese rhetoric is really like. Is it included in Oriental thought pattern shown as a "widening gyre" by Kaplan or does it have its own characteristic? If we could compare and contrast Japanese rhetoric with English one more accurately, it

would be easier for us, the Japanese, to stick to English rhetorical pattern while we are writing in English. And we now know that more time should be spared for paragraph writing. To learn the structure of a paragraph should be the short cut to understand English rhetoric in its entirety because, in English, a paragraph is "a discourse in miniature." It is hoped that more English compositions written by Japanese people will be accepted without difficulty by the people of other countries for the enhancement of mutual understanding.

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NOTES

1. I have found this in a handout prepared for thesis writing at a Japanese college.
2. Mayumi Sakuma, *Danraku to Paragurafu* (Nihongogaku 2, 1983), p. 23.
3. Erika Lindemann, *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers* (Oxford University Press, New York 1987), p. 38.
4. Roland Barthes, *The Semiotic Challenge* (Hill and Wang, New York 1988), p.76.
5. *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*, op. cit., pp. 37-38.
6. Nicholas J. Teele, *Paragraph Structure in Japanese and English Expository Prose* (Ronso Gengobunka 3, 1983), p.21.
7. Akio Sawada, *Nihonjin to Retorikku* (Gaikokugo Kyoiku Ronshu 3, 1983), pp.181-182.
8. *ibid.*, p. 184.
9. *ibid.*, p. 180.
10. *Danraku to Paragurafu*, op. cit., p. 23.
11. Nobuo Sato, *Retorikku Kankaku* (Kodansha, Tokyo 1986), pp.50-51.
12. *ibid.*, p.33.
13. *Paragraph Structure in Japanese and English Expository Prose*, op. cit., p.23.
14. *Danraku to Paragurafu*, op. cit., p.22.
15. Francis Christensen, *A Generative Rhetoric of the Paragraph* (CCC, 1965), p.145.
16. Mayumi Sakuma, *Topikku Sentensu Kou* (Ningen Bunka Kenkyu 1, 1978), p. 81.
17. Mayumi Sakuma, *Yomite no Danrakuishiki to Bundan no Kozo* (Kotoba 2, 1981), p. 101.
18. Koreo Kinoshita, *Repooto no Kumitatekata* (Chikuma Shobo, Tokyo 1990), p.130.

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