Chapter 4. Bi-modal introduction of animate referents in L1 and L2

4.0 Introduction

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 will present the results of the data analysis. The present chapter provides the results of analyses of linguistic and gestural (henceforth bi-modal) introduction of animate referents in L1 and L2. The chapter is divided into two large sections. In the first section, crosslinguistic analyses of speech and gesture production in L1 Dutch and Japanese narratives are presented. In the second section, analyses of speech and gesture production by the Dutch learners of Japanese are presented.

4.1 Introduction of animate referents in L1 speech production

For the analysis of the speech data, we examined newness marking at the local, word level and at the global, clause level.

4.1.1 Local marking of newly introduced referents

The Dutch and Japanese native speakers use NPs to introduce animate referents. Some speakers assign proper names (e.g., Jan in Dutch or Go in Japanese) to the main characters but rarely to the referents that do not assume an important role in the story. The rate of using NPs for the introduction of referents was 100% for both Dutch and Japanese. The use of an NP as a default referential form for newly introduced referents confirms the tight relationship between NP and the new information status of a referent suggested in the literature (see Chapter 1).

Speakers of different languages have various lexical means at their disposal for marking the newness of an introduced referent. Some are local and others are global in nature. In Dutch, newly introduced animate referents are systematically marked by the indefinite article Een, as in (1). In contrast, Japanese has no article system. Some Japanese speakers utilize other lexical means such as aru (‘a certain/ one’) and classifiers to mark the new information status of a referent as in (2).

(1) Er was een jongetje. Die had een kikker
    There was a boy. He had a frog

(2) aru otoko no ko to koinu ga kaeru o i-ppiki katteimashita
    a certain male GEN child and a puppy NOM frog ACC one-CLS keep-ASP:PAST
    A (certain) boy and a little dog kept a frog (as a pet)
However, the use of *aru* (‘a certain/one’) and classifiers are not obligatory. Interestingly, *aru* was only used for the introduction of the *boy* and the use of classifiers is only observed for the introduction of either the *boy*, the *dog* or the *frog* (see section 3.1.3. for further discussion) but not for the *peripheral* characters. In addition, individual differences are observed with respect to the active use of the lexical markers.

One of the local means used to mark newness of referents in Japanese narratives is the nominal particle *ga* (Hinds 1983; Iwasaki 2002; Nakahama 2003a; Nakamura 1993; Ono, et al. 2000). Nakahama (2003a) studied the use of post-positional particles in the introduction of referents also using retellings of the *Frog story*, the story used in the present work. Table 4.1 compares the frequency of local means used for newly introduced referents in Nakahama (2003a) and in the present study.

**Table 4.1.** Number of occurrences of the forms used to introduce referents in L1 Japanese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NP-ga (NOM)</th>
<th>NP-o (ACC)</th>
<th>NP-ni/kara (AGENTIVE)</th>
<th>NP-copula</th>
<th>NP-to (with)</th>
<th>NP-mo (also)</th>
<th>NP-wa (TOP)</th>
<th>NP-others 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nakahama (2003)</td>
<td>33 (45%) 2</td>
<td>15 (21%)</td>
<td>8 (11%)</td>
<td>4 (5%)</td>
<td>4 (5%)</td>
<td>3 (4%)</td>
<td>2 (3%)</td>
<td>4 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present work</td>
<td>68 (53%)</td>
<td>10 (8%)</td>
<td>13 (10%)</td>
<td>12 (10%)</td>
<td>17 (13%)</td>
<td>4 (3%)</td>
<td>1 (&lt;1%)</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that Japanese native speakers in both studies prefer *ga* with new referents to other post-positional markers. However, it is important to note that *ga* is actually multi-functional (Kuno 1973). Although new referents may be marked by *ga*, it is not necessarily the case that *ga* only marks new referents. For instance, *ga* is preferred in subordinate clauses irrespective of the information status of the referent in subject role. Observe (3).

(3) Shonen to inu *ga* okitara, kaeru *ga* inakunatteimashita.
   boy and dog NOM wake up:COND frog NOM exist:NEG-become-ASP:PAST
   When the boy and the dog woke up, the frog had gone.

In (3), the *boy* and the *dog* represent given information. However, the referents are marked by *ga*. Given its multiple usages, *ga* is thus not strictly a marker of a new referent. In fact, there are cases, particularly in novels, where the use of *wa* is observed to refer to a newly introduced main character. Thus, the particle *ga* is not as syntactically rigid a means as an article system in differentiating newly introduced referents from those that are not.

With respect to the use of other local means, Table 4.1 shows that the use of *o* (accusative) is higher in Nakahama (2003a) than in the present work. On the other

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1 *Others* include NP-ni (DAT) in Nakahama (2003a). In the present study, it also includes ellipsis.

2 The percentage is supplied by the current author for the purpose of comparison
hand, to (with) seems to be higher in the present study than in Nakahama (2003a). A possible reason for the discrepancies is that the narrators in the present study tend to present the main characters together using the connector to (with).

4.1.2 Semantic and syntactic roles of a new referent within the clause
Newly introduced referents were examined for their roles along the following two dimensions: (1) agent (AGT) vs. all other NPs (NAGT); (2) subject (SUB) vs. all other NPs (NSUB) (cf. Hickmann & Hendriks 1999). Subject (SUB) is further divided into two groups: as subject of a one-argument clause with an intransitive verb (coded SUB(int)), or of a two-argument clause with a transitive verb (coded as SUB(tran)). New referents in the data therefore belong to one of the following five categories: NAGT/NSUB, NAGT/SUB(int), AGT/NSUB, AGT/SUB(int), AGT/SUB(tran).

(4a)~(4g) are Dutch examples of such categories. NAGT/NSUB is expressed in speech as the object of a verb (4a) or a copula (4b). This category also includes the object of a preposition as in (4c). Existential expressions such as (4d) also belong to this category. NAGT/SUB(int) is an intransitive expression with a verb which does not represent an action. Examples found in the Dutch data are wonen (‘to live’), blijven (‘to stay’) or zitten (‘to sit’) as in (4e). AGT/NSUB consists mostly of passive structures where a newly introduced referent assumes the role of agent, as in (4f). AGT/SUB (int) is an intransitive expression with a verb that denotes an active motion, as in (4g). No Dutch speaker introduces a referent in AGT/SUB (tran) position.

(4a) Nou eh Jan (NAGT/SUB(tran)) had een kikkertje (NAGT/NSUB).
Well, Jan had a frog.

(4b) En steunt dus op een tak lijkt het om nog eens te kijken waar die kikker kan zijn)
Het is een rendier (NAGT/NSUB).
And so he leans on what looks like a branch, to see once more where the frog can be. It is a reindeer.

(4c) Het gaat over een jongetje (NAGT/NSUB). Die had een hond.
It’s about a young boy. He had a dog.

(4d) Er is een eh er is een jongetje (NAGT/SUB).
There is, eh, there is a boy.

(4e) eh achter een holle boomstam zit een hele kikkerfamilie (NAGT/SUB(int)).
Eh, behind a tree trunk (there) was a whole frog family (sitting).

(4f) Hij wordt belaagd door een uil (AGT/NSUB).
He is flapped at by an owl.

(4g) En daar komt dan een uil (AGT/SUB(int)) uit.
Then there, an owl came out.
The introduction of referents in Japanese narratives is also examined with the same coding scheme. Examples are provided in (5a) ~ (5e). Similar to Dutch examples, NAGT/NSUB is expressed as the object of a verb or a copula, as in (5a) and (5b). Existential expressions as in (5c) also belong to this category. Verbs of postures such as ‘to zit’ are rarely used in Japanese narratives to introduce referents. AGT/NSUB consists mostly of passive structures where a newly introduced referent assumes the role of agent, as in (5d). AGT/SUB (int) is an intransitive expression with a verb that denotes an active motion, as in (5e). A Japanese example of AGT/SUB (tran) is provided in (5a). Verbs in this category in the data denote low agency, such as *katteimasu* (‘to keep something as a pet’).

(5a) shonen Bob (AGT/SUB(tran)) wa John to yuu inu (NAGT/NSUB) o kattemasu
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{boy} \quad \text{Bob} \\
\text{TOP} \quad \text{John} \\
\text{QT} \quad \text{say dog} \\
\text{ACC} \quad \text{keep:TE-ASP:NONPAST}
\end{array}
\]
A boy, Bob, keeps a pet dog called John.

(5b) sono eda ga shika no tsuno (NAGT/NSUB) datta
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{that twig} \\
\text{NOM} \\
\text{deer} \\
\text{GEN} \\
\text{antlers} \\
\text{COP:PAST}
\end{array}
\]
Those twigs were antlers of a deer.

(5c) otoko no ko (NAGT/SUB(int)) to inu (NAGT/SUB(int)) ga ite,
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{male} \\
\text{GEN} \\
\text{child} \\
\text{NOM} \\
\text{exist:TE,} \\
\text{and dog} \\
\text{NOM} \\
\text{exist:TE,
\end{array}
\]
There is a boy and a dog, and

(5d) shonen wa ki ni ita fukuroo (AGT/NSUB) ni osowareta
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{boy} \\
\text{TOP} \\
\text{tree DAT} \\
\text{exist:PAST} \\
\text{owl} \\
\text{by} \\
\text{attack-PASS:PAST}
\end{array}
\]
The boy was attacked by an owl on a tree.

(5e) mogura (AGT/SUB(int)) ga detekimashita
\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{mole} \\
\text{NOM} \\
\text{exist:TE-come:PAST}
\end{array}
\]
A mole came out.

The total number of referents introduced in speech was 87 for L1 Dutch and 128 for L1 Japanese. Table 4.2 shows the distribution of semantic and subject roles of newly introduced referents in L1 narratives.

**Table 4.2. Distribution of semantic/syntactic roles of new referents in L1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>NAGT/NSUB</th>
<th>NAGT/SUB (int)</th>
<th>AGT/NSUB</th>
<th>AGT/SUB(int)</th>
<th>AGT/SUB(tran)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>L1D (N=12)</strong></td>
<td>49/87 (56%)</td>
<td>21/87 (24%)</td>
<td>8/87 (9%)</td>
<td>9/87 (11%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L1J (N=15)</strong></td>
<td>29/128 (23%)</td>
<td>47/128 (37%)</td>
<td>11/128 (8%)</td>
<td>37/128 (29%)</td>
<td>4/128 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.2.1 Semantic roles
Table 4.3 shows the semantic roles assumed by newly introduced referents in L1 Dutch and L1 Japanese narratives.

Table 4.3. Distribution of agent roles of new referents in L1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NAGT total</th>
<th>AGT total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1D (N=12)</td>
<td>70/87 (80%)</td>
<td>17/87 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J (N=15)</td>
<td>76/128 (59%)</td>
<td>52/128 (41%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that 80% of newly introduced referents assume non-agent position in the Dutch narratives. The figure is 59% for their Japanese counterparts. The general preference for assigning non-agent role to the newly introduced referents by both groups of speakers is in accordance with the previous findings in the literature (Bentivoglio 1993; DuBois 1985, 1987).

As mentioned in Chapter 3, for all analyses testing of the group effect, we will first include our three groups, L1 Dutch, L1 Japanese and L2 Japanese. A repeated measures analysis of variance was used with one 3-level between-subjects factor (language) and one 2-level within-subjects factor (agentive, non-agentive), showing a group effect for agency ($F(2, 39) = 12.03, p < .001$). We used Dunnett T3 for a multiple comparison because the assumption of equal variances was not met. We will only report the results related to cross-linguistic differences between the two native groups. Contrary to what was expected, the results in Table 4.4 show that the Dutch speakers introduce new referents in non-agentive roles more frequently than Japanese speakers.

Table 4.4. The role of agency in newly introduced referents (Dunnett T3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean difference</th>
<th>std. error</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1 Dutch</td>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>.019*</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>.021*</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.2.2 Syntactic roles
Table 4.5 shows the distribution of syntactic roles assigned to newly introduced referents.

Table 4.5. Distribution of syntactic roles of new referents in L1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NSUB</th>
<th>SUB(int)</th>
<th>SUB(tran)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1D (N=12)</td>
<td>57/87 (66%)</td>
<td>30/87 (34%)</td>
<td>17/87 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J (N=15)</td>
<td>40/128 (32%)</td>
<td>84/128 (65%)</td>
<td>52/128 (41%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that subject role with transitive verbs is rarely used to introduce new animate referents by either group of native speakers. In general, new referents are introduced either in non-subject role or in subject role with intransitive verbs. First, an omnibus repeated measures analysis of variance was used with one 3-level between-
subjects factor (language) and one 2-level within-subjects factor (subject, non-subject). The results show that there is a group effect for agency ($F (2, 39) = 10.03, p < .0001$). Post hoc analyses using the Dunnett T3 post hoc criterion for significance indicate that of the two native groups, the Dutch speakers assign non-subject role to newly introduced referents more frequently than their Japanese counterparts.

### Table 4.6. Role of subject role in newly introduced referents (Dunnett T3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean difference</th>
<th>std. error</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1 Dutch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>.280*</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>.017*</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.1.3 Referential importance

The literature suggests that the semantic/syntactic roles of referents may be influenced by how important a role a particular referent assumes in a story. Chafe (1994) gives an example of a story where a referent with primary importance is introduced with a proper name and a classifier, while the secondary referent is introduced with a classifier but without a proper name. A peripheral referent, termed a trivial referent by Chafe, is introduced without a name or a classifier. In other words, there is a tendency for speakers to attach more linguistic specification to referents with more importance. Furthermore, Chafe briefly mentions the possible effect of referential importance on syntactic position. He maintains that the subject in a clause tends to express a) information that is not new or b) new but trivial (1994: 91). Put differently, referents with less importance are more likely than those with more importance to appear in subject role as new information.

Although various characteristic features may distinguish major from peripheral characters (McGann and Schwartz 1988), ‘referential importance’ in the present study is measured by the number of appearances in the story and by whether the first mention of the referent is likely to be accompanied by a proper name or a classifier. According to these criteria, the referent with the highest referential importance is the boy. This referent is the only character that appears in all of the 24 different pictures that constitute the story. In addition, the referent is sometimes assigned a proper name or accompanied by a classifier upon its introduction. There are two other characters that assume relatively important roles (henceforth ‘secondary referents’), the dog and the frog, both pets of the main character. The former is important because it goes on a search for the lost frog with the main character. It appears in 23 pictures and is sometimes referred to with a proper name. These referents are indeed treated with extra attention. Example (6) is an excerpt from the Japanese data.

(6) mazu toojoo-jinbutsu ga ite
    first main characters NOM exist:TE

    Go-chan te yuu nto ne 5 sai gurai no chicchai otoko no ko to
    Go-dimunitative QT say INJ PP 5 years old about GEN small male GEN child and
Go-chan no aiken no Kiku tte yuu dakkusufundo ga ite, de sorede ne
Go-diminitutive GEN pet dog GEN Kiku QT say dachshund NOM exist:TE then then PP

First, there are main characters, and
there is a little boy called Go, well you see, about 5 years old,
and Go’s pet dachshund friend called Kiku, and then, you see

In (6), the speaker assigns proper names to both the boy and the dog. Furthermore, the speaker specifies that the boy is about 5 years old and the dog is a dachshund.

The other secondary referent, the frog, only appears in four pictures. However, this referent is just as important since the whole story revolves around the frog’s disappearance and the search undertaken by the boy and his pet dog. The rest of the animate referents that appear in the story are considered peripheral (henceforth ‘peripheral referents’) because they only briefly appear (ranging from two to five times). However, some peripheral referents such as bees and the deer assume more important roles than others such as the mole, by appearing more often in the pictures (five times each) and contributing more to the development of the storyline.

4.1.3.1 Referential importance and syntactic roles
In the data, the difference in referential importance is reflected in syntactic roles assumed by new referents. Table 4.7 shows the syntactic roles of various newly introduced animate referents in the L1 Dutch and the L1 Japanese narratives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>NSUB</th>
<th>SUB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1D boy</td>
<td>8/12 (67%)</td>
<td>4/12 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J boy</td>
<td>0/15 (0%)</td>
<td>15/15 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1D dog</td>
<td>9/10 (90%)</td>
<td>1/10 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J dog</td>
<td>4/15 (27%)</td>
<td>11/15 (73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1D frog</td>
<td>11/12 (92%)</td>
<td>1/12 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J frog</td>
<td>10/15 (60%)</td>
<td>6/15 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1D peripheral</td>
<td>32/53 (49%)</td>
<td>21/53 (51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J peripheral</td>
<td>36/83 (43%)</td>
<td>47/83 (57%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis was not performed on the differences here due to the fact that the number in each cell was too small. 67% of primary and around 90% of secondary referents in L1 Dutch assume non-subject roles. However, nearly half of the newly introduced peripheral referents assume subject role (cf. Chafe 1994). A different picture emerges in L1 Japanese. Except for the frog, which is often in non-subject role (60%), the Japanese speakers in the data tend to assign subject role to newly introduced referents irrespective of their referential importance (100% for the boy, 73% for the dog and 66% for the peripheral referents).

Figures 4.1a and 4.1b are figurative representations of syntactic roles and referential importance of the boy and the dog in the L1 Dutch and Japanese narratives.
As far as the boy and the dog are concerned, the assignment of syntactic roles shows almost an opposite trend between the two L1 groups. Incidentally, the current results in L1 Japanese correspond to Japanese speakers’ preference for using the nominal marker *ga* to introduce referents. Note that *ga* is a nominal marker used for referents in subject role. The relationship between referential importance and the use of *ga* has been noted by Nakahama (2003) as follows: 

Most speakers used NP-*ga* for the main protagonists, while the peripheral characters tended to be introduced with different types of particles due to their tangential role in the story. Given these results, selection of the forms for coding referent introduction seemed to be motivated by the discourse status the speaker wished to assign to the characters reflecting their perceived importance in the story

(Nakahama 2003: 22)

Figures 4.2a and 4.2b show the syntactic roles assigned to the *frog* and peripheral characters.
In comparison to the results obtained for the *boy* and the *dog*, the distribution of syntactic roles for the *frog* and the peripheral characters shows much less variation across the languages.

Thus, the data suggest that referential importance affects the syntactic role of newly introduced referents in both languages. In Dutch, the referents with primary and secondary importance are not likely to be introduced in subject role. On the other hand, Japanese speakers seem to prefer to introduce referents with a high degree of referential importance in subject role, with the exception of the *frog*. One possible reason why the *frog* is introduced in non-subject role in L1 Japanese may be the picture used in the book for the first scene, where the *frog* is in the *jar* watched by the *boy* and the *dog*. This picture may have encouraged the speakers to present the *frog* as the object of possession.

### 4.1.3.2 Referential importance and structure used in the introduction of animate referents

The variation in the choices of preferred syntactic roles indicates the possible effects of referential importance on structures utilized for the introduction of animate referents. We will first examine the introduction of the main characters, the *boy*, the *dog*, and the *frog*, which occurs at the very beginning of the narratives. According to Labov (1972), overall narrative structure contains both *abstract* and *orientation* elements. The *abstract* elements refer to the very beginning of narratives where the narrators summarize their story in one or two clauses. During the following *orientation* stage, the narrators identify the characters, the place and the situation of the story. In the Dutch data, the majority of introductions of the *boy* occur in the *abstract* stage. The *frog* and the *dog* are subsequently introduced into the narratives during the *orientation* phase. Observe (7).

(7) Het gaat over een jongetje.
    Die had een kikker gevonden, en eh heeft die in een pot gestopt.
    En eh heeft ook een beestje.
    It is about a boy.
    He has found a frog and eh (ø) put it in a jar
    And (ø) also has an animal.

In (7), the very first statement that the story is about the *boy* clearly and immediately establishes the *boy* as the main character of the story. In the following clauses, the *dog* (‘beestje’) and the *frog* are introduced as the *boy’s* pets. The two secondary referents are introduced as the objects of the verb *vinden* (‘to find’) or *hebben* (‘to have’). This is typical of the introductions of the three main characters observed in the Dutch narratives.

In contrast, in the Japanese narratives, the *dog* is often introduced not as a pet but as a companion to the *boy*. Accordingly, the structures used for the introduction of the referents differ from those used in the Dutch narratives. In general, speakers either introduce the *boy* and the *dog* together as the subject, as in (8) or separately, as in (9).
Of the 15 Japanese speakers, eleven introduced the dog in this manner. Four speakers introduced the dog as the object of the verb, *katteiru* (‘to keep something as a pet’).

(8) aru otoko no ko to koinu ga kaeru o i-ppiki katteimashita
    a certain male GEN child and puppy NOM frog ACC one-CLS keep:TE-ASP:PAST
    A boy and a puppy kept a frog.

(9) eto nanka mazu, hajimeni shonen ga ite
    INJ INJ in the first place the thing is boy NOM exist:TE
    de moo i-ppiki inu ga ita no
    then more one-CLS dog NOM exist:PAST SE
    de garasu no keesu no naka ni kaeru o katteta no
    then glass GEN case GEN inside DAT frog ACC keep:TE-ASP:PAST SE
    Eh, well, in the first place, the thing is, there was a boy, and then there was also a dog.
    And inside a glass case, (ø) kept a frog (lit. (ø) were in the state of owning a frog)

On the other hand, the frog is more likely to be introduced as the object of a transitive verb, as in (8) and (9), although some speakers introduce the three main characters together in subject role using an existential construction, as in (10).

(10) otoko no ko to inu to bin ni haitta kaeru ga ite
    male GEN child and dog and jar DAT place-ASP:PAST frog NOM exist:TE
    There is a boy, a dog and a frog in a jar, and

The frequent use of existential constructions for introducing referents in Japanese discourse is in accordance with the findings in the literature (Iwasaki 2002; Ono et al. 2001). The introduction of the frog as the object of a verb also replicates previous findings (Nakahama 2003a).

With respect to the introduction of the peripheral referents, the Dutch and Japanese speakers use similar constructions. Presentatives such as existential constructions and motion verbs are most commonly utilized. In the Dutch data, the existential expression *er* is much more frequently used with verbs of posture such as *zitten* (‘to zit’) than with a copula, as has been noted by Hendriks (1993). In addition to *er, daar* (‘there’) is often used with state verbs when a new referent is introduced into the story. Japanese speakers use the existential *iru* (‘exist/there is’). Observe (11) and (12).

(11) En die gaat naar een eh naar een boom met een groot gat erin
    Kijken of ‘ie misschien daar in zit
    Maar er zit er komt in een keer een uil uit
    And he goes to a, eh, to a tree with a big hole
    Watch to see whether he is in there
However, there is, an owl comes out all of a sudden
En dan kijken ze achter een stronk
And they look behind a tree trunk
there are two frogs

(12) de maruta no ura o mitara
then three trunk GEN behind ACC see:COND

nanka, kaeru-san no fuufu mitai no ga ite ne
INJ frog GEN couple like one NOM exist:TE PP
and when (ø) saw behind a log
well, there is a frog couple-like, you know

Motion verbs such as komen uit or dete kuru (‘to come out’) are commonly used for the introduction of peripheral referents as in (13) and (14).

(13) En het jongetje ziet dan in een holletje in de grond
Maar daar komt dan een andere beestje uit waarschijnlijk een mol of zo
and the boy then looks into the hole in the ground,
but another animal, most likely a mole or something like that comes out of there

(14) kondo sono ana ni mukatte sakenda no
this time that hole DAT toward shout:PAST SE

soshitara fukuroo ga detekitanda
that-do-COND owl NOM exit:TE-come:PAST-SE
This time, (he) shouted at the hole. Then an owl came out.

In the Dutch data, the majority of introductions of animate referents occur post-verbally (89%). Due to the verb-final rule, the newly introduced referents in Japanese narratives are located in pre-verbal position. In fact, none of the animate referents is introduced post-verbally in the Japanese native data.

4.1.4 Pragmatic marking of newly introduced referents
Many Japanese speakers in the present study highlight the new information status of referents pragmatically. For instance, fillers such as eeto (‘ehm’) or nanka (‘well’) and expressions such as mazu (‘first, at first, in the first place’), saisho ni (‘at first’) or toriaezu (‘the thing is’) are uttered before the introduction of the primary and secondary referents as if to prepare the listener for the new information that follows, as in (15).

(15) eeto, nanka, mazu, hajimeni shonen ga ite,
INJ INJ in the first place first of all boy NOM exist:TE
In addition, Japanese speakers often use the pragmatic particle to highlight newly introduced referents. The most frequently used particle is *ne*, which functions as a confirmation marker. The particle, appearing after the introduction of the primary and the secondary referents, prompts reactions from the listeners who express their active involvement by back-channelling, nodding or a combination of both. Observe (16).

(16) nanka, otoko no ko ga ne
   well, a boy, you see,
   ‘un’
   yeah
   bin no naka ni kaeru o katteta no
   kept a frog in a jar

In addition, speakers may insert brief pauses after introducing primary and secondary referents, which may also invite listeners’ nods, backchanellings or some verbal responses. These various pragmatic devices are used particularly when the main characters are introduced. In the later stages of the story, when the peripheral referents are introduced, such devices are less frequently used.

Furthermore, Japanese speakers often utilize repetition at the introduction of the referents. In the present data, some speakers repeat the introduction of the same referents as if a single mention of an NP does not seem to be enough to establish the identity of the newly introduced referent. The introductions of the primary and secondary referents in (17) exemplify the point.

(17) ohanashi yuuto
   story say-COND

   otoko no ko to sono inu ga iru no ne
   male GEN child and that dog NOM exist:NONPAST SE PP

   otoko no ko to inu ga ite
   male GEN child and dog NOM exist:TE

   sono otoko no ko wa kingyobachi mitaina kabin, kabin janai na, i, konguraino
   that male GEN child TOP aquarium look:COP vase vase COP:NEG i this about

   garasu no naka ni kaeru o i-ppiki katteta no
   glass GEN inside DAT frog ACC one-CLS keep-ASP:PAST SE
I shall tell you a story
There is a boy and ehm, a dog, you see
There is a boy and a dog,
and that boy keeps one frog inside an aquarium-like vase, no,
not a vase, i, in a glass jar about this big
There is a boy and a dog, and
The boy keeps that, a frog

During this sequence of utterances, the speaker in (17) mentions the boy five times, the dog three times and the frog twice, all with full NPs. The expression otoko no ko to inu ga ite (‘There is a boy and a dog, and’) is repeated twice before the introduction of the frog. After introducing the frog, the speaker introduces the three referents again. This repetitive mention of newly introduced referents in Japanese narratives has been noted previously (Clancy 1980). The use of pragmatic means to mark the newness of important characters may be a reflection of the fact that Japanese does not have explicit attenuated forms such as pronouns. The closest equivalent to using a pronoun would zero-marking (ø). However, there seems to be some reluctance among the speakers to use zero-marking until the identities of the referents are firmly established, and thus these pragmatic means in L1 Japanese may help the speakers to do exactly this. In comparison, the Dutch speakers do not utilize the pragmatic means mentioned above to mark newly introduced referents.

4.2 Gestural introduction of animate referents in L1 Dutch and Japanese narratives

4.2.1 Quantitative analysis of gesture accompanying introduced animate referents
We have tallied every gesture accompanying the introduction of a new animate referent in speech. A total of 82 gestures were found in the L1 narratives: 22 in L1 Dutch and 60 in L1 Japanese. Figure 4.3 presents the frequency of gestures accompanying the introduction of the new referents in the two groups. 25% of the introductions of animate referents in L1 Dutch are accompanied by gesture, while the figure for L1 Japanese is 46%.

A repeated measures analysis of variance was used with was used with one 3-level between-subjects factor (language groups) and one 2-level within-subjects factor (gestural marking). There is a group effect for the frequency of gesture ($F(2, 39) = 6.78$, $p < .003$). Post hoc analyses using the Dunnett T3 post hoc criterion for significance indicate that the difference in gesture frequency between L1 Dutch and L1 Japanese was on the borderline of significance.
Figure 4.3. Frequency of gesture accompaniment of newly introduced animate referents in L1 Dutch and Japanese narratives

Table 4.8. Gestural accompaniment of newly introduced referents (Dunnett T3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean difference</th>
<th>std. error</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1 Dutch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>-.364*</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>-.221</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in Figure 4.3 are further analysed to examine the association between gestures and referential importance. Figure 4.4 shows the results.

Figure 4.4. Gestural accompaniment of newly introduced referents in L1

In the Dutch narratives, 9% of the introductions of the primary and secondary referents are gesturally marked. In contrast, the figure is 64% in L1 Japanese production. In both L1 narrative data sets, around 35% of the introductions of peripheral referents are gesturally marked (35.8% in L1 Dutch and 36.5% in L1 Japanese). Firstly, an omnibus analysis of variance was run for testing a group effect. A repeated measures analysis of variance with one 3-level between-subjects factor (language group) and one 2-level within-subjects factor of character type (primary & secondary/ peripheral) revealed a significant main effect of group ($F(2, 39)=6.47$, $p < .005$) and interaction between character-type and group ($F(2, 39) = 8.10$, $p < .005$). When we compared the figures
for primary & secondary character types cross-linguistically by paired sample t-tests, a significant effect for group was only found for the primary and secondary characters, with speakers in L1 Japanese producing more gestures accompanying the introduction of primary and secondary characters than in L1 Dutch (Table 4.9).

**Table 4.9.** Gestural marking of primary/secondary vs. peripheral referents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>primary &amp; secondary</th>
<th>peripheral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1Dutch vs. L1 Japanese</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-4.423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1Japanese vs. L2 Japanese</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1Dutch vs. L2 Japanese</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-6.504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.2.2 Qualitative analysis of gesture accompanying introduced animate referents

According to Figure 4.4 the introduction of the referents with primary and secondary importance (i.e. the *boy*, the *dog* and the *frog*) in L1 Dutch is much less frequently accompanied by gesture in comparison to L1 Japanese. However, it must be added that although the introduction of the *frog* is not accompanied by gesture, the locus of the *frog* is frequently represented by the jar he is placed in. In contrast, there are only two Japanese speakers who did not gesture on any of the three main referents as they were introduced into the narratives. The rest of the speakers either gesturally marked the *boy* and the *dog*, the *dog* and the *frog* or all of the three referents, as in Figure 4.5.

**Figure 4.5.** Gesture accompanying the introductions of animate referents.

The speaker in Figure 4.5 first gesturally locates the *boy* in the right-centre of the gesture space in front of him with his right hand. The gesture stroke coincides with the introduction of the referent. After the gesture stroke, the position of the right hand is sustained, while the *dog* is localized in the left-centre of the gesture space with his left hand. The extremely long post-stroke hold on the right hand only ends when the next referent, the *frog*, is introduced in speech. The *frog* is located in the centre-centre of the gesture space, represented by a gesture depicting an entity, most likely the *jar*.

Some Japanese speakers use counting gestures when the *boy*, the *dog* and the *frog* are introduced. In Figure 4.6, the speaker performs a counting gesture as the three
main referents are introduced into the narrative. The introduction of the _boy_ is accompanied by a counting gesture made with an index finger (Figure 4.6:1). The introduction of the _dog_ is accompanied by a counting gesture made with the middle finger (Figure 4.6:2). When the _frog_ in mentioned, the referent is accompanied by a counting movement with the ring finger (Figure 4.6:3). Note that the speakers in Figures 4.5 and 4.6 use existential constructions to introduce the referents.

![Figure 4.6. Gestures accompanying the introductions of animate referents](image)

One of the most noticeable characteristics of the gestures accompanying the introduction of multiple referents such as the examples presented above is their ability to create physical contrasts between referents. This is particularly prominent with the loci assigned to the _boy_ and the _dog_ in Figure 4.5:1 and 4.5:2. The two referents are kept apart by occupying the right and left gesture spaces respectively. The height of the two loci is about the same and the hand orientation is symmetrical.

It is noteworthy that the Japanese speakers in the data rarely mark just the _boy_ or the _dog_ gesturally. They are either collectively marked or not marked at all. For instance, the speakers in Figures 4.7a and 4.7b only gesturally mark the introduction of the _frog_. Both speakers use similar structures in speech to introduce the _frog_. The referent assumes the object role of transitive verbs such as _tsukamaeru_ (‘to catch’) or _kau_ (‘to keep something as a pet’). The similarity of structures in speech is mirrored in gesture. The speakers gesturally locate the _frog_ in front of their bodies in the central gesture space. This location seems to mirror the original picture. The _jar_, where the _frog_ is kept, is located in front of the primary referent. The two hands used in the gestures may thus represent the _jar_ as well as the _frog_ itself. Since the first scene of the story contains no other important objects, it may also be possible that the _frog_ is located in the most generic position in the gesture space.
There was a boy and a puppy, and (NL: What?)

Then (ø) caught a frog

**Figures 4.7a.** Gestures accompanying introduction of the *frog*

**Figure 4.7b.** Gestures accompanying the introduction of the *frog*

Figure 4.8 shows a gesture by a Dutch speaker marking the introduction of the *frog*. The referent is introduced as an object of the verb *hebben* (‘to have’). The size and the location of the gesture are similar to its Japanese counterparts in Figures 4.7a and 4.7b.

**Figure 4.8.** Gesture accompanying the introduction of the *frog*

The gestural marking of the introduction of the referents with peripheral importance does not seem to vary much between the two language groups. We have already shown that there is no significant difference in the frequency of gestures accompanying the introduction of these referents in L1 Dutch and Japanese. The qualitative aspects of the gestures do not show much difference either. For instance, compare the gestures accompanying the introduction of the *owl* by the Dutch and
Japanese speakers Figure 4.9a and 4.9b. In the Dutch example in Figure 4.9a, the newly introduced referent assumes subject role of the motion verb *uitkomen* (‘to come out’). As the speaker introduces the *owl* in speech, he performs a one-handed gesture. The referent is located in his right periphery. In Figure 4.9b, the same referent is introduced in L1 Japanese production with a similar discourse structure. The referent assumes subject role of the motion verb *detekuru* (‘to exit and come’). As if to mirror the similarities in speech, the L1 Japanese speaker also gesturally locates the referent in his right periphery.

![Figure 4.9a](image1) Figure 4.9a. Gesture accompanying the introduction of the owl in Dutch

![Figure 4.9b](image2) Figure 4.9b. Gesture accompanying the introduction of the owl in Japanese

Figures 4.10a and 4.10b show gestures accompanying the introduction of the two frogs by a Dutch and a Japanese speaker. The Dutch speaker in Figure 4.10a performs a two-handed gesture as the two adult *frogs* are mentioned. The gesture accompanies the expression *twee volwassen kikkers* (‘two adult frogs’). The gesture stroke synchronizes with the word *twee* (‘two’) and is held in the same position until the end of the word *kikkers* (‘frogs’).

![Figure 4.10a](image3) Figure 4.10a. Gesture accompanying the introduction of the frog couple in Dutch

![Figure 4.10b](image4) Figure 4.10b. Gesture accompanying the introduction of the frog couple in Japanese
On the other hand, the Japanese speaker in Figure 4.10b locates the frog couple in the lower right periphery as the referents are introduced in speech. The gesture stroke synchronizes with the word *fuufu* (‘a couple’) and the post-gesture hold lasts until the end of the clause.

Many of the gestures accompanying the introduction of the deer occur during the post-stroke hold of a gesture with a character viewpoint (C-VPT gestures). The Dutch and Japanese speakers in Figures 4.11a and 4.11b organize their discourse in a similar way upon introducing the deer. The speakers first introduce the branches which the boy grabs, followed by the boy’s realization that they were indeed the antlers of the deer. The similarities of the discourse structure in speech are mirrored in the gestures. When the speakers mention the fact that the boy grabs the branches, both speakers perform gestures depicting the action. The C-VPT (character viewpoint) gestures are sustained until the antlers or the deer are mentioned in speech. Even though the languages are different, there are parallels in discourse and gesture.

**Figures 4.11a.** Gesture accompanying the introduction of the deer in Dutch

**Figures 4.11b.** Gesture accompanying the introduction of the deer in Japanese

### 4.3 Summary and discussion of bi-modal animate reference introduction in L1

The present section reported the results of the analyses of the introduction of animate referents in speech and gesture production by native speakers of Dutch and Japanese. The analyses reveal the shared dimensions of the narrative act. For instance, the information status of a referent is tightly linked with its referential form in the narratives, regardless of the language spoken. The newly introduced referents are most likely expressed by the least attenuated form of NP. The finding is in accordance with Givón’s *quantitative universal* (see Chapter 1). In addition, the speakers of both languages use various local means to distinguish the newness of the referents. The Dutch speakers use the article system to indicate the difference in informational status of referents, while the Japanese speakers may utilize expressions such as *aru* (‘a certain/one’), classifiers, or the use of nominal particle *ga*. However, unlike in L1 Dutch, the choice of these means in L1 Japanese is not obligatory and may be affected by individual variation and the referential importance of referents. The results further
indicate that speakers generally prefer non-agent role over agent role for the introduction of animate referents. The speakers of both languages systematically avoid using the subject role with transitive verbs for introducing new referents. On the other hand, some differences are observed between L1 Dutch and Japanese. For instance, the syntactic roles assigned to the boy and the dog contrast sharply between the two groups. While the Dutch speakers seem to prefer to assign subject role only to peripheral referents, the Japanese speakers tend to assign subject roles to newly introduced referents, and in particular to important characters. In addition, the Japanese speakers frequently utilize pragmatic particles and repeated NPs to identify these characters.

The quantitative analysis of the gestures accompanying the introduction of the animate referents shows that nearly 30% of the referents introduced in the Dutch narratives and 45% of new referents in the Japanese narratives are marked by gesture. The frequency of gestural marking of new referents by the two L1 groups supports the view that there is a relationship between the information status of a referent and gesture performance (McNeill 1992). However, Japanese speakers gesturally mark newly introduced referents significantly more frequently than their Dutch counterparts. Furthermore, the results indicate that the difference in frequency of gesture is only observed for the introduction of referents with high referential importance. The gestural marking of the peripheral referents by the two language groups does not differ either quantitatively or qualitatively. These results mirror the findings in speech, i.e. the differences between the Dutch and Japanese speakers are more apparent for the introduction of the boy and the dog than the peripheral referents.

In order to examine why the Japanese native speakers produce gestures more frequently on the important referents, further analysis of the gestures may be necessary. Let us briefly present some of the findings in the literature again with respect to referential gestures (gesture that accompanies introduction/tracking of referents). It has been suggested that gesture accompanying a new referent not only marks its introduction but also designates a particular locus in the gesture space for the referent (Gullberg 1998, 2003; Levy & McNeill 1992; Marslen-Wilson, et al. 1982; McNeill & Levy 1993). Thus when the same referent is mentioned later in the story, the speaker may anaphorically point to the location associated with the referent, as if to re-activate it. In addition, studies indicate that the speakers usually agree on the loci attributed to referents by such gestures (Gullberg 1998).

In the current data, the gestural performance with the peripheral referents supports this view. We have already shown the relative agreement of the handedness and the hand-shape of gestures among the L1 speakers for peripheral referents such as the owl and the frogs. This agreement extends to location in the gesture space. For instance, the majority of the speakers, in both L1 Dutch and Japanese, locate the frog’s family further to the right of the speaker upon their introduction, as seen in Figure 4.12.
However, there is little agreement in the loci attributed to the boy and the dog in the Japanese narratives. For instance, counting gestures do not place the referents in any particular locus. In addition, the locations of the boy and the dog during their introductions are not as consistent. Figure 4.13 shows where the boy and the dog are located in the gesture space among the Japanese narratives. Some speakers associate the boy with the gesture space to their right. Others used the gesture space in front. In some cases, the referents are simply not located in the gesture space but counted. Similar variety was observed with the relationship between the dog and the designated gesture space for the referent.

One might assume that the different loci given by speakers to the boy and the dog in L1 Japanese may reflect the fact that the positioning of these referents in the gesture space at the beginning of the story may not be particularly important for the development of the storyline. If so, why are the newly introduced referents accompanied by gestures in L1 Japanese? One possible interpretation is that they may not be motivated for the localization of referents in the gesture space for anaphoric purposes. Instead, gestures may be performed for the purpose of attracting listeners’ attention to the referents.

Clark (1996, 2003) illustrates two different ways in which an act of indicating can attract attention: One is to draw attention to the pointed object (‘origo’), and the other is to draw attention to the act itself. Exophoric pointing at a car accompanying an expression, ‘That is my car’, is an example of the former type of indicating. An
example of the latter is placing an empty glass on a counter at a pub to request for another glass of beer. In this case, the act of placing a glass is not necessarily performed to direct the attention to the object \textit{per se}. Instead, it is performed for the purpose of attracting attention. Clark refers to the former as ‘direction-to’ and the latter as ‘placing-for’ type of indicating. Although Clark’s two types of indicating refer only to concrete objects, we will try to apply his distinction to gestural marking of newly introduced referents in the data. The ‘directing-to’ type of gesture may be the one that allocates locus in the gesture space to referents for anaphoric purposes. In other words, the focus is on the location. On the other hand, the ‘placing-for’ type of gesture may be the one that is performed to heighten the attention of the listener. Given that gesturing itself may likely heighten the attention of the listeners, some gestures may be a combination of ‘placing-for’ and ‘directing-to’. That is, not only do these gestures attract the attention of the listeners but they also direct their attention to particular points in gesture space associated with referents. On the other hand, there may be a single type, where gestures only heighten the listener’s attention.

As for the gestures accompanying the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog}, they may be the ‘placing-for’ type. Note that the referents accompanied by gesture are usually introduced into the narratives with existential constructions. Existential verbs provide very little content in terms of advancing the storyline. It has been suggested that their purpose is to ensure an awareness of the referents (Bolinger 1977). Thus, the introduction of the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} may be highlighted in speech and gesture. In fact, if the gesture accompanying the introduction of the \textit{boy} is simply to locate the referent in the gesture space, the long post-stroke hold observed in some of the examples becomes uninterpretable.

One of the reasons why the Japanese speakers gesturally highlight the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} may be because these are the referents that are most likely to be associated with zero-marked subjects later in the story. The analysis shows that the Japanese speakers use various pragmatic means to firmly establish the identities of the main referents at the beginning of the narratives. Physical means, such as gesture, may enhance this effect. The other possible interpretation is that the gesture accompaniment may also be motivated to represent the distinction in referential importance between the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog}. We have observed that mention of the \textit{boy} is always associated with the dominant hand or the dominant finger when the two referents are introduced together. Unlike in L1 Dutch, the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} are frequently introduced in the same clause as a joint subject in L1 Japanese. Thus, the speakers may feel the need to clearly show the difference in referential importance between the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} by physical means. This may explain why the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} are rarely gesturally marked in the Dutch narratives. Since the difference in referential importance between the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} is clearly presented in speech, the speakers may not feel the need to make gestures for the purpose of distinguishing relative referential importance.

Despite all these possible interpretations, the function of the gestures accompanying the introduction of the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} in the Japanese narratives remains a matter of speculation without an examination of the gestural tracking of the referents. If the gestures on the \textit{boy} and the \textit{dog} are performed for the purpose of
highlighting their existence by attracting listeners’ attention, the loci assigned to these referents may not be used anaphorically later in the story. We will discuss this issue in the next chapter.

4.4 Linguistic introduction of animate referents in L2 Japanese

4.4.1 Lexical marking of newly introduced referents

As in L1 narratives, the preference for using NPs in introducing referents into narratives is also observed among L2 narrators. Nearly half the speakers give the boy either Dutch (e.g., Jan) or Japanese (e.g., Nakata) proper names. However, proper names are not used for other characters. Unfamiliar animal terms are replaced by generic expressions. For instance, bees are often described as chiisai doobutsu (small animals’) while the deer is frequently introduced as ookii doobutsu (‘big animals’). Numeral classifiers or an expression with aru (‘a certain/one’) are rarely supplied.

Table 4.10 compares the forms used for referent introduction in L1 and L2 narrative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NP-ga (NOM)</th>
<th>NP-o (ACC)</th>
<th>NP-ni/kara (AGENTIVE)</th>
<th>NP-copula (with)</th>
<th>NP-to (also)</th>
<th>NP-wa (TOP)</th>
<th>NP-others³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>68 (53%)</td>
<td>10 (8%)</td>
<td>13 (10%)</td>
<td>12 (10%)</td>
<td>17 (13%)</td>
<td>4 (3%)</td>
<td>1 (&lt;1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>25 (26%)</td>
<td>17 (18%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>17 (18%)</td>
<td>6 (6%)</td>
<td>23 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 (5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the striking differences between L1 and L2 is the use of the topic marker wa. The much more frequent use of wa for referent introduction by L2 narrators (24%) indicates that the learners do not differentiate between wa and ga with respect to their association with the informational status of referents. In (18), the newly introduced referent, ‘big bird’, is marked by a topic marker wa despite its new informational status.

(18) ookina tori wa ootoo o bikkuri *shimashita (sasemashita)
    big bird TOP little brother ACC surprise-PAST
    A big bird frightened my little brother

The frequent use of wa indicates the difficulty of learning the pragmatic use of the postpositional particle ga. The results reflect findings from studies of child L1 learners. For instance, Nakamura (1993) shows that 3-year-olds are likely to introduce referents without a particle, and the use of ga to mark the new information only stabilizes after the narrators reach the age of 7 (1993: 91-92).

³ Others include NP-ni (DAT) in Nakahama (2003a). In the present study, it also includes ellipsis.
Another difference between L1 and L2 Japanese speakers is the frequency of the use of agentive *ni*. Since *ni* is used in passive constructions, the fact that none of the L2 narrators use the particle may reflect avoidance or ignorance of this complex construction.

### 4.4.2 Semantic and syntactic roles of new referents within the clause

We used the same coding scheme as the one used in the analysis of L1 in the analysis of L2 narratives. Accordingly, newly introduced referents are examined for their roles along the following two dimensions: (1) agent (AGT) vs. all other NPs; (2) subject (SUB) vs. all other NPs. Altogether there were 95 cases of animate referent introductions in the L2 narratives. Table 4.11 shows the comparison of the distribution of semantic and syntactic roles over the newly introduced referents with results for the L1 narratives. The results were further examined in detail for semantic and syntactic roles.

#### Table 4.11. Semantic and syntactic roles of new referents in L1 and L2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAGT/NSUB</th>
<th>NAGT/SUB(int)</th>
<th>AGT/NSUB</th>
<th>AGT/SUB(int)</th>
<th>AGT/SUB(tran)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1D (N=12)</td>
<td>49/87 (56%)</td>
<td>21/87 (24%)</td>
<td>8/87 (9%)</td>
<td>9/87 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J (N=15)</td>
<td>29/128 (23%)</td>
<td>47/128 (37%)</td>
<td>11/128 (8%)</td>
<td>37/128 (29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2J (N=15)</td>
<td>37/95 (41%)</td>
<td>43/95 (43%)</td>
<td>1/95 (1%)</td>
<td>2/95 (2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.4.2.1 Semantic roles

Table 4.12 compares the semantic roles assumed by new referents in L1 Dutch, Japanese and L2 Japanese. Newly introduced referents are more likely to occur in non-agent than agent role in L2 narratives.

#### Table 4.12. Semantic role of new referents in L1 and L2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAGT total</th>
<th>AGT total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1D (N=12)</td>
<td>70/87 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J (N=15)</td>
<td>76/128 (59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2J (N=15)</td>
<td>80/95 (84%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

84% of the newly introduced referents in L2 narratives assumes non-agent role. The figure is slightly higher than when the same speakers narrate the story in their mother tongue (80%). These results support the claim that language learners avoid assigning the agentive role when introducing referents (cf. Clancy 2003 for L1, and Kumpf 1992 for L2).

#### Table 4.13. The role of agency in newly introduced referents (Dunnett T3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean difference</th>
<th>std. error</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>.021*</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L1 Dutch</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As reported in 4.1.2.1, the results of a repeated measures analysis of variance show a group effect for agency \( F(2, 39) = 12.03, p < .001 \). Post hoc analyses using the Dunnett T3 post hoc criterion for significance show that Dutch speakers of Japanese assign non-agentive role to newly introduced animate referents as in their L1 but more frequently than in L1 Japanese (Table 4.13).

### 4.4.2.2 Syntactic roles
Table 4.14 compares syntactic roles assigned to newly introduced referents in L1 and L2. Compared to L1 Dutch, speakers assign subject roles more often to newly introduced referents in their L2 narratives. However, the rate is not as high as that of L1 Japanese narrative production. In L1 Dutch narratives, 34% of the new referents are assigned subject role. In comparison, in L1 Japanese, the figure is 68% (65% for intransitive subject and 3% for transitive subject). In L2 Japanese, it is 60%, (47% for intransitive subject and 13% for transitive subject) somewhere between L1 Dutch and L1 Japanese.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NSUB total</th>
<th>SUB(int) total</th>
<th>SUB(tran) total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1D</td>
<td>57/87 (66%)</td>
<td>30/87 (34%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1J</td>
<td>40/128 (32%)</td>
<td>84/128 (65%)</td>
<td>4/128 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 J</td>
<td>38/95 (40%)</td>
<td>45/95 (47%)</td>
<td>12/95 (13%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is worth noting that the L2 speakers do assign subject role with transitive verbs to the new referents (13%). In contrast, native speakers of Dutch and Japanese rarely introduce referents with transitive verbs. The figure is 3% for the L1 Japanese narratives, while it is 0% for the L1 Dutch counterparts.

We have reported in 4.1.2.2 that the results of a repeated measures analysis of variance showed a group effect for agency \( F(2,39) = 10.03, p < .0001 \). Post hoc with the Dunnet T3 post hoc criterion for significance indicate that the Dutch speakers of Japanese assign non-subject role to newly introduced animate referents as in their L1 but more frequently than in L1 Japanese (Table 4.15).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean difference</th>
<th>std. error</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>.017*</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Dutch</td>
<td>L1 Dutch</td>
<td>-.012</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.4.3 Referential importance

#### 4.4.3.1 Referential importance and syntactic roles
As with the cross-linguistic analyses of introduction of the referents, we examined the effect of referential importance on the distribution of semantic and syntactic roles. Figures 4.14a and 4.14b show the comparison of the three language groups.
The L2 speakers show a preference for assigning subject role to the boy (74%). The figure is closer to the figure for L1 Japanese (100%) than for L1 Dutch (33%). On the other hand, unlike in L1 Japanese, they show a clear preference for assigning non-subject role to the dog.

Figures 4.15a and 4.15b show the association between syntactic roles and the introduction of the frog and peripheral characters. The syntactic role of the frog in L2 shows a pattern that is not similar to that of the native speakers of either language group. The distribution of syntactic roles for the peripheral referents are similar in all three language groups. However, more detailed analysis shows the differences in the preference for semantic/syntactic roles for the peripheral characters in the three language groups.

Figure 4.16 shows that the figures for AGT/NSUB and AGT/SUB (intransitive) are low in the L2 narratives. Since AGT/NSUB is manifested as the agent of passive constructions, the low figure may reflect the L2 speakers’ reluctance to use complex constructions (Yanagimachi 1997). On the other hand, AGT/SUB is manifested as the agent of intransitive verbs such as *detekuru* (‘exit and come’). Some peripheral referents are introduced as the subject of transitive verbs, which is reflected in the relatively high figure for AGT/SUB (transitive).
4.4.3.2. Referential importance and structures used in the introduction of animate referents

As in the analysis of L1 speech, we will first examine the introduction of primary and secondary referents, followed by the peripheral referents. In L2 Japanese, the boy and the frog are commonly introduced together in the very first utterance. Examples (19) and (20) exemplify the way such introductions are performed.

(19) Jan-san ga kaeru ga arimasu
Jan NOM frog NOM exist:NONPAST
Jan has a frog (lit: For Jan, a frog exists)

(20) eto ne ma, aru hi otoko no ko wa ano bin no naka de ma
INJ PP INJ a certain day male GEN child TOP INJ jar GEN inside DAT INJ
no naka ni chiisai kaeru ga imashita.
GEN inside DAT small frog NOM exist:PAST
Well, you see, um, one day, the boy has a small frog, at, well, in a jar.
(lit: Well, you see, um, one day, as for the boy, a frog existed).

In (19), the newly introduced boy and the frog are followed by the nominal marker ga. In (20), the newly introduced boy is marked by a topic marker wa, and the frog by ga. Note that both speakers introduce the boy and the propositional information about this referent in the same clause (i.e. He owns a pet). In order to express the ownership, the speakers begin their utterance with the boy and use the existential verbs iru (‘exist/there is’) or aru (‘exist/there is’) to introduce the frog. The argument structure adopted in (19) and (20) is grammatical but non-canonical in Japanese (e.g. ‘double nominative’, ‘existential,’ and ‘possessive construction’) (Iwasaki 2002).

We speculate that the use of the non-canonical structure may reflect the fact that the learners are not aware of how possession is expressed in Japanese. The concept of possession is differently manifested in linguistic constructions in Japanese and Dutch. In Dutch, similar to many Indo-European languages, possession is most generally expressed with the verb hebben (‘to have’). This useful formula can capture various relationships between entities, e.g. a) possession of an object by an animate entity (as...
in Jan heeft een auto (‘Jan has a car’) or by an inanimate entity (as in De bibliotheek heeft veel boeken (‘The library has many books’)); b) possession of an abstract entity (as in Ik heb een goed idee (‘I have a good idea’)); c) social relationship (as in Jan heeft twee kinderen (‘Jan has two children’)); d) ownership of pets (as in Jan heeft een hond (‘Jan has a dog’)).

In Japanese, the various meanings of hebben listed above are expressed differently. In general, possession of entities is expressed with existential constructions (Nakau & Nishimura 1998). The idea of ‘possession’ is often expressed in terms of ‘belonging’. In other words, rather than some things/persons ‘possessing’ some things, the same situation is expressed as some things ‘belonging’ to some things/persons. For expression possessions, Japanese has two types of existential verbs, iru and aru. Both mean ‘something exists/there is’. The former generally applies to animate entities and the latter to inanimate ones, although human relationships can be expressed with both verbs. When a referent assumes the subject role with no other referents in the clause, the existential verb simply expresses the ‘existence’ of the entity. The idea of ‘belonging’ is expressed when there is more than one entity in the clause (examples below).

Most of the meanings of hebben in Dutch described as a)~d) can be expressed with existential constructions. For instance, possession of a car is expressed as Jan ni wa kuruma ga aru which can be roughly translated as ‘As for Jan, there is a car/a car exists’. The following examples show how situations a) ~d) are expressed in Japanese.

(21a) Jan ni wa kuruma ga aru
     Jan for TOP car NOM exist:NONPAST
     Jan has a car [lit. As for Jan, a car exists]

(21a’) Toshokan ni wa hon ga takusan aru
     library DAT TOP book NOM many exist:NONPAST
     The library has many books [lit. As for the library, many books exist]

(21b) Ii aidea ga aru
     good idea NOM exist:NONPAST
     I have a good idea [lit. A good idea exists]

(21c) Jan ni wa imooto ga iru
     Jan ni wa imooto ga aru
     Jan for TOP younger sister NOM exist:NONPAST
     Jan has a younger sister [As for Jan, a sister exists]
     [As for Jan, a sister (as a permanent relationship) exists]

Because the constructions are based on the idea of ‘belonging’ rather than ‘possession’, an accusative particle o is not used. Instead, the construction requires a nominal particle ga. In other words, the objects of hebben in the Dutch examples are marked with a nominal marker ga in Japanese. For instance, in a), a possessed entity kuruma (‘a car’) is marked with a nominal marker ga instead of an object marker o.
Although there are indeed verbs in Japanese that distinguish the possessor/owner from the possessed/owned, their use is limited. For instance, a) can also be expressed with an aspectual expression of a transitive verb *motsumo* (‘to hold’), as in *motteiru* (‘in possession of’). However, the verb requires a human referent in subject position and its meaning is limited to possession of concrete objects. The other point to note about the use of the ‘possession construction’ is that the first argument is the established information.

With respect to the present data, one important point to note is that despite the general preference for using existential constructions for expressing possession/ownership, Japanese speakers do not commonly use these constructions to refer to ‘owning pets’. In fact, the use of ‘possession construction’ for pets seems questionable.

(21d)  
\[
\text{Jan ni wa inu ga iru}  \\
\text{Jan has a dog [As for Jan, a dog exists]}
\]

Instead, the situation is commonly expressed with the aspectual expression of the transitive *kau* (‘to keep something as a pet’), as in *katteiru* (in the state of owning a pet’). The avoidance of expressions such as d) by the Japanese speakers may reflect the difficulty in describing the status of pets. Pets are not possessions like inanimate objects. They are not usually tradable as objects. They are often the centre of affection. However, the relationship between the owner and their pets varies greatly among individuals. Some pets are treated as family members, while others are not recognized as such. This may be the reason why the Japanese speakers in the data use this expression to refer to owning the *frog*.

If we go back to the introduction of the *boy* and the *frog* by the L2 speakers, the constructions adopted by the L2 speakers to introduce them seem to reflect the transfer of the L1-based style of introduction to L2 speech. As we have discussed above, in their L1 Dutch, the speakers show a preference for introducing the *frog* as the *boy’s* pet as the object of verbs such as *vinden* (‘to find’) or *hebben* (‘to have’). The use of non-canonical argument structure by the L2 narrators for the introduction of the *boy* and the *frog* seems to reflect the characteristics of L1 Dutch reference introduction. As a result, the majority of the L2 speakers introduced the *boy* and the *frog* in one clause, a practice avoided by native speakers. Native speakers do not introduce a referent and propositional information about the referent in the same clause (Du Bois 1985; Lambrecht 1994). It is likely due to the fact that too much information will overload the processing capacity of the listener and put at risk the efficient delivery of information.

Some L2 speakers use other means to achieve their preferred style of introduction of the *boy* and the *frog*. One is to employ *motteiru* (‘in possession of concrete objects’).
Uh, a child, eh, eh, a child called Tanaka possesses an animal called a frog, in a glass jar.

Although semantically anomalous for the reasons mentioned above, the use of motteiru (‘in possession of’) establishes the relationship between the boy and the frog as the owner and the owned. No learner uses the aspectual verb katteiru (‘in the state of owning pets’). It is possible that the learners are not familiar with this highly specialized item.

Peripheral referents are often introduced with existential verbs. Both aru (existential verb for inanimate entity) and iru (existential verb for animate entity) are often used. It seems that the majority of the speakers in our sample do not distinguish the use of the verbs based on the animacy of the target. Examples (23) and (24) show that both types of existential verbs are used to introduce the deer in L2 Japanese.

(23) ookii shika ga arimasu
big deer NOM exist:NONPAST
*There is a big deer

(24) ookii doobutsu ga imasu
big animal NOM exist:NONPAST
There is a big deer

Some L2 speakers introduce referents into the narratives as the subject of the transitive verbs with the boy as the object, as in the following example.

(25) eh, ehm, ookii tori wa ootoo o bikkuri shimashita* (sasemashita)
INJ INJ big bird TOP little brother ACC surprise:PAST
atode, ookii doobutsu wa ootoo o ike no naka ni ehm, ehm,
later big animal TOP little brother ACC pond GEN inside DAT INJ INJ

(NL: tsukiotoshimashita)
push-drop:PAST
tsukiotoshi, otonashita
push drop:PAST
Eh, ehm, a big bird surprised my little brother.
Later, a big animal ehm, ehm, (NL: push down) push, push my little brother down into a lake.
The *peripheral* referent in (25) may be introduced as the subject because the scene description from the viewpoint of the *boy* requires passive constructions. Passives are complex constructions for the non-native narrators in the present work. The assignment of agent position to the newly introduced referent may thus reflect the L2 speaker’s avoidance of using the difficult constructions, because the erroneous use of the forms may jeopardize the otherwise smooth flow of the narrative.

### 4.4.4 Pragmatic marking of newly introduced referents

In L2 speech production, the learners rarely use pragmatic means to mark the introduction of new referents. For instance, expressions such as ‘the first’ or ‘the thing is’ are rarely used. In addition, hesitation markers tend to occur throughout the story. However, most of these are related to lexical search rather than marking the new information status of the referents. Many of the L2 narrators do not use the discourse particle, *ne*. Nonetheless, there is wide individual variation as to how often such markers occur. Unlike L1 Japanese, the L2 speakers do not utilize extensive repetition to establish the identities of the new referents. Repetition occurs after the new lexical item is supplied by the native listener as a confirmation check.

### 4.5. Gestural introduction of animate referents in L2 Japanese

In the following, we compare gesture accompanying the introduction of L1 Dutch and Japanese, and L2 Japanese in narratives.

#### 4.5.1 Quantitative analysis of gesture accompanying introduced animate referents

For the analysis, we have tallied every gesture accompanying the introduction of a new referent in speech. A total of 59 gestures occurred with introduced referents in L2 production. Figure 4.17 presents the results in comparison to the results for L1 Dutch and Japanese. 62% of referent introductions are accompanied by gesture in L2.

![Figure 4.17](image)

**Figure 4.17.** Frequency of gestural accompaniment of newly introduced animate referents

Recall that a repeated measures analysis of variance showed that there was a group effect for the frequency of gestural marking of newly introduced animate referents (*F*(2, 39) = 6.78, *p* < .003). Post hoc analyses using the Dunnett T3 post hoc criterion for significance indicate that the average frequency of gestural
accompaniment of newly introduced animate referents is significantly higher in L2 Japanese than in L1 Dutch, but no significance is observed in the frequency of gestural marking between L1 Japanese and L2 Japanese (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16. Multiple comparison of gestural accompaniment of newly introduced referents (Dunnett T3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mean difference</th>
<th>std. error</th>
<th>sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 Japanese</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.364*</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Japanese</td>
<td>.412 (n.s.)</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Dutch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, when gestural markings by the three groups of speakers are compared in detail, a different pattern emerges. Figure 4.18 shows the effect of referential importance on the frequency of gesture accompanying the introduction of the referents.

Figure 4.18. Gestural accompaniment of newly introduced referents in L1 and L2

Recall the significant interaction between character types and groups in the omnibus analyses of variance reported in 4.1 2. In order to address the question of whether L2 group differ from L1 groups, we compared primary/secondary vs. peripheral characters using paired samples t-tests. However, the frequency of gestural marking of primary and secondary characters was significantly different between L1 Dutch and L2 Japanese but not between L1 Japanese and L2 Japanese. On the other hand, the frequency of gestural marking of new referents in L2 Japanese is significantly higher than both L1 Dutch and L1 Japanese (Table 4.17).

Table 4.17. Gestural marking of primary/secondary vs. peripheral referents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>primary &amp; secondary</th>
<th>peripheral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Japanese vs. L2 Japanese</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Dutch vs. L2 Japanese</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-6.504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2 Qualitative analysis of gesture accompanying introduced animate referents

Unlike in L1 Dutch, some speakers gesturally mark the introduction of the boy in L2 Japanese narratives. A gesture accompanying the boy only occurs among the speakers
who introduce the *boy* with another referent in the same clause using non-canonical constructions. The speaker in Figure 4.19 introduces the *boy* and the *frog* in one clause using a non-canonical construction. We have shown before that this structure is not seen in the introduction of the referents in L1 Dutch or L1 Japanese. When the speaker introduces the referents, each referent is accompanied by a separate gesture. When the *boy* is introduced, a right-handed gesture locates the referent in the centre-centre gesture space. After the introduction of the *boy*, the speaker mentions the *jar*. Subsequently, the *frog* is introduced. The newly introduced referent is accompanied by a gesture which iconically depicts an entity with the thumb and the index finger.

Figure 4.19. L6 producing gestures accompanying the introductions of the *boy* and the *frog*

Figure 4.20. Gestures accompanying the introduction of the *boy* and the *frog*

Following is another example. The speaker in Figure 4.20 introduces the *boy* (named *Jan* in her narrative) in the same clause as the *frog* in speech. The speaker uses an existential to describe the fact that *Jan* owns the *frog*. As the *boy* is mentioned, the speaker performs a gesture swinging her right arm to her left, seemingly pointing to the side where she put the storybook before beginning her narrative. The pointing
establishes the identity of ‘Jan’, a name that she uses without any proper introduction. When the frog is mentioned in speech, an accompanying one-handed gesture locates the frog in the speaker’s centre gesture space. The gestures accompanying the introduction of the boy and the frog do not show any contrast, unlike in L1 Japanese. Following is another example: The L2 speaker in Figure 4.21a introduces the boy and the frog.

![Figure 4.21a. Gestures accompanying the introduction of the boy and the frog](image)

In L2, the speaker uses the non-canonical ‘possessive construction’ to describe the same idea that the boy owns the frog. The speaker performs a gesture on the introduction of both the boy and the frog. Figure 4.21b shows that, in Dutch, the same speaker introduces the boy in the abstract part of the narrative where the speaker mentions that the story is about the boy. The succeeding clause is narrated from the viewpoint of the boy. The frog is thus introduced as the object of the verb hebben (‘to have’). When the same speaker introduces the referents in L1, he only performs a gesture accompanying the frog.

![Figure 4.21b. Gesture accompanying the introduction of the same referent in L1](image)

There is variation among the L2 speakers as to how the dog is introduced in speech. Some speakers introduce the referent in object position as one of the pets.
Others introduce the referent in an adverbial phrase, as in *ini to isshoni kaeru o sagashite-imasu* (‘is looking for the *frog* together with the *dog*’). The gestures accompanying the *dog* also vary across the L2 speakers.

Last night my little brother saw a frog in a room with a dog, with a dog frog with the child’s dog

**Figure 4.22a.** Gestural marking of the *dog* with the right hand

He has a dog (lit. He is in possession of a dog)

**Figure 4.22c.** Gestural marking of the *dog* with a counting gesture

The variations can be observed in the handedness (right, left or both), form and the gesture space allocated to the *dog*.

In contrast, there is relative agreement among the speakers with regard to the gestures accompanying the introduction of the *frog*. The majority of these gestures iconically represent an entity with one or both hands. The hand usually shows a slight curve. The entity expressed by the gestures in the examples may represent the *frog* as well as the *jar*, reflecting the picture where the *frog* is located in the *jar*.
CHAPTER 4

Figure 4.23a.  Gestural marking the frog with both hands

Figure 4.23b.  Gestural marking of the frog with both hands

Figure 4.23c.  Gestural marking of the frog with both hands

The differences in the degree of agreement between the gestures accompanying the *dog* and the *frog* may be due to the ways the referents are introduced in the picture of the story. In contrast to the location of the *frog*, the location of the *dog* is less important. The difference in the importance of the location may be reflected in the variety vs. similarity of gestures accompanying the two referents.

Some of the words for the peripheral characters are unknown to the L2 speakers. In such cases, the learners commonly utilize general expressions such as *ookii doobutsu* (‘big animal’) or *chiisai mushi* (‘small insect’). Figures 4.24a, b, and c show that as the animals are introduced in speech, the speakers move their hands to depict the entities in the gesture space.

Figure 4.24a.  Gestural marking of the big animal

Figure 4.24b.  Gestural marking of the big animal

...
but, this was the head thing of a big animal

Figure 4.24c. Gestural marking of the big animal

Although the gesture stroke of the accompanying gestures often occurs on the adjective, there is usually a post-gesture hold until doobutsu (‘animal’) or tori (‘bird’) is uttered. The post-gesture hold suggests that the compound expression may be treated as a single entity, ‘big-animal’ rather than with the emphasis on the adjective ookii (‘big’). In contrast, the speaker in Figure 4.25 uses the proper animal term shika (‘deer’) at its introduction. Although the speaker uses an adjective to modify the noun in speech, the gesture only synchronizes with the introduction of the referent. The speaker moves both hands slightly upward as the referent is introduced in speech. The absence of gesture on the adjective ookii (‘big’) contrasts sharply with the gestures by the learners who label the deer a ‘big animal’ in Figures 4.24a, b and c.

Figure 4.25. Gesture accompanying the adjective ookii (‘big’)

4.6 Summary and discussion of bi-modal animate reference introduction in L2

This section reports the results of the analyses of the introduction of animate referents in L2 speech and gesture production. As the findings in the literature have suggested, the L2 narrators show a preference for using NPs over other referential forms in referent introduction. Proper names are also used by some L2 narrators to refer to the main characters of the story. However, the use of other local means for marking the
informational status of referents seems to be absent. For instance, classifiers or aru (‘one/certain’) are not commonly used. The nominal marker ga is used as frequently as the topic marker wa, reflecting the absence of association between the choice of particle and the informational status of the referents in L2 Japanese.

With respect to global means of marking newness, some similarities and differences between L1 and L2 were observed. As in L1, agentive roles are not preferred for the newly introduced animate referents in L2. However, there were cases, in particular for the introduction of the deer, where agentive roles was used for reference introduction. The syntactic role of the boy assigned by L2 narrators shares similarities with the pattern observed in the L1 Japanese narratives. However, the structures used by L2 narrators for the introduction of the boy differ from both L1 Dutch and Japanese. It seems that the L2 narrators use L1-based strategies of referent introduction within the morphological forms permitted by the target language. Due to the lack of a verb that is equivalent to hebben (‘to have’) in Japanese, the L2 speakers use the non-canonical ‘possessive construction’ when introducing the boy and the frog.

Analyses show that some of the referents are oddly positioned when introduced as new information in comparison to L1. For instance, as a consequence of the use the ‘possessive construction’, the boy was frequently introduced in subject role in the clause as the owner of the frog. However, introducing and providing the propositional information about a referent in one clause is cognitively highly demanding for the listener. In fact, various findings suggest that (native) speakers usually avoid this conflation (Lambrecht 1994). Some of the peripheral referents are introduced in subject role with transitive verbs, as in Ookii doobutsu wa otoko no ko o mizu ni ootoshimasu (‘A big animal drops a boy into the water’). However, this role is hardly ever assigned to new referents in either L1. The introduction of referents in agent position may have occurred due to the avoidance of seemingly complex constructions. For instance, in order to introduce ookii doobutsu (‘a big animal’) in the previous example in non-agentive role, learners are required to use a passive construction, which is considered difficult for the learners in the present study, given their proficiency.

The new referents are not particularly highlighted or firmly established at the beginning of the narratives. The various pragmatic measures taken by the Japanese native speakers, such as insertions before the introduction, extensive repetition of the information about the new referents, and discourse particles are not observed. There are some possible reasons for these results. For instance, pragmatic means for marking newness are not obligatory. Such devices are unlikely to be taught in the classroom, and little negative feedback is likely to come from the native interlocutors because of their lack of use by the L2 speakers. Even when the L2 learners are exposed to such devices, they may not notice their important effects. In addition, their use may not be necessary for learners who tend to rely heavily on NPs as the referential form.

The analyses of gesture show that a larger number of gestures accompany the introduction of referents when the Dutch learners of Japanese narrate a story in L2 than in their L1. This finding is in accordance with many of the previous findings (Gullberg 1998; Nobe 1993). In addition, the overall frequency of gestural marking of
new referents is higher in L2 Japanese narratives than in their L1 native counterparts. However, the current findings differ from Gullberg’s (Gullberg 2003), whose subjects do not show any statistical difference in the frequency of gesture accompanying the introduction of the referents in L1 or L2. One possible reason for the discrepancy between the results may be the differences in the languages used in the two studies in terms of marking the information status of referents. Gullberg (2003) examined the gestures made by L1 and L2 speakers of Swedish and French. Both languages have article systems whereby the speakers can clearly distinguish the new informational status of referents. However, the target language of the present study does not have such linguistic measures. We speculate that the absence of linguistic means to highlight new information may have motivated the Dutch learners to rely on the other mode of expression, the manual mode, to mark the newness of referents.

The analyses of gesture show that the difference in the use of discourse structure in speech between L1 and L2 is mirrored in gesture. For instance, some of the learners introduce the boy in speech with the non-canonical ‘possession construction’, a construction that is not used by L1 speakers to introduce the referent. Interestingly, gestures that accompany the introduction of the boy show a pattern that is not observed in L1 Japanese gesture production. Note that none of the speakers made any gesture accompanying the boy in L1 Dutch. Unlike in L1 Japanese where the gesture accompanying the boy is contrasted with other gestures, gestures accompanying the boy in L2 are not in contrast with other gestures.

It is worth noting that the use of post-stroke hold by learners reveal that gesture holds may have some semantic relationship with speech in L2 as in L1 (Duncan 1996). For instance, the post-stroke holds that overlap with doobutsu (‘animal’) in expressions such as ookii doobutsu (‘big animal’) or chiisai doobutsu (‘small animal’) in L2 production seem to suggest that learners produce gestures not only to describe the size of the entity but also to represent the animate entities whose lexical terms are not available to the learners. Thus, the post-stroke hold may reveal that what is meant by the learners is a ‘big animal’ and not a ‘big’ animal.

In this chapter, we have described and analysed the linguistic and gestural introduction of animate referents in L1 Dutch and L1 Japanese, followed by analyses on L2 Japanese narrative production. In the following chapter, we will focus on linguistic and gestural tracking of animate referents.