

“Congratulations!”: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Responses to Another’s Happy News

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Introduction

When good fortune befalls an acquaintance it is customary in both Japan and America to remark upon it. Failure to do so may suggest feelings of resentment and ill will. However, the patterns of responses in such situations are not necessarily the same between the two cultures.

Congratulations fall into Austin’s (1962) speech act category of expressives, which express a psychological state, such as thanking or apologizing. Searle (1969: 67) delineates the following rules for congratulations:

- 1) There is some event that is related to the hearer.
- 2) The event is in the hearer’s interest and the speaker believes the event is in the hearer’s interest.
- 3) The speaker is pleased at the event.
- 4) It counts as an expression of pleasure at the event.

Wierzbicka (1987: 229) further specifies the act of congratulating in the following way, focusing more specifically on the speaker’s intention in the use of the speech act verb “congratulate” and also suggesting that congratulations are used particularly in situations in which the hearer has

achieved something through his or her own action:

I know that something good has happened to you.

I think it wouldn't have happened if you didn't do something.

I assume that you feel something good because of that.

I want to say that I feel the same because of that.

I say: I feel something good because of that.

I say this because I want you to know how I feel because of it.

I assume that you would want me to say this.

In examining the speech act of congratulations cross-culturally, differences in what types of events warrant the speech act and how the speech act is realized clearly exist. Coulmas (1979) focused on the "situational frames" of participants, setting, why and wherefore, contextual restrictions, and concomitant activity for the English "Congratulations" (1) and the Japanese *omedetō gozaimasu* (2). His specifications of the frames for the two expressions differ in the following ways:

- 1) Why and wherefore: (2) may be used for a seasonal holiday but (1) may not. Therefore, (2) includes events that are happy not only for the receiver of the congratulations, but for others as well.
- 2) Contextual restrictions: (1) may only be uttered once in referring a given event unless explicit reference is made to the repetition, such as by adding "again" or "once again". However, repetition of (2) is possible and the second person may reply to (2) with the same expression if the event is a happy one for the speaker as well as him/herself.

The speaker, moreover, may not be sincere in his or her congratulations. Isaacs and Clark (1990) point to the possibility of "ostensible congratulations", for example those in which serious but friendly rivals compete in a race and the loser congratulates the winner. Here, it is understood that the

loser is not wholly glad at the other's good fortune but conveys respect and a lack of resentment through the congratulations, and the recipient also has a social requirement to collude in the ostensible congratulation.

Similarly, Leech (1983) classifies congratulations as "convivial" (Leech: 104) and includes this type of expression in his approbation maxim.

It is also important to note that the speech act of congratulating may not necessarily be realized by an illocutionary force indicating device, rendering it difficult to distinguish between congratulations and other types of approbation. In her analysis of the differences between the Greek "Congratulations" and "Bravo!" Makri-Tsilipakou (2001) notes that approving expressions such as praising or complimenting often merge with congratulating so that without reference to the context it is impossible to assess their function.

The above studies generally focus on an analysis of what constitutes an act of congratulation and the function of congratulations in society. There has been much less study of what types of verbal strategies beyond illocutionary force indicating devices fulfill the function of congratulations in English or other languages. However, just as the boundaries of the function of the illocutionary force indicating device "congratulations" may differ, the ways in which the speech act of congratulating is realized verbally may vary. Moreover, a culturally inappropriate act of congratulating may conversely suggest resentment or a lack of respect, failing to fulfill the act's convivial function. Therefore, analysis of the strategies used to realize congratulations is vital.

The study

Forty-five Americans students writing in English, 45 Japanese students writing in Japanese, and 45 Japanese students writing in English filled in a discourse completion test consisting of seven situations, three related to responding to happy news, three related to responding to unhappy news, and one in which the response required is ambiguous. This study will look

at the three situations dealing with happy news:

Situation 1: You've been working for a company for three years. It is announced that a colleague with the same level of experience has just been promoted.

You say to the colleague:

Situation 2: While shopping at a department store you run into someone you used to live near two years ago.

You: How have you been doing?

Former neighbor: Well, my big news is that I got married last month.

You say:

Situation 3: Your professor has won a prestigious research grant.

You say:

Each situation has its particular characteristics, resulting in a wide variety of patterns of responses across the situations. However, the following are the response types that appeared in at least 20% of at least one group of responses in at least two of the situations. The response types are listed in order of frequency:

1. Illocutionary force indicating device (IFID)
2. Expression of happiness
 - a) expressions of personal happiness
 - b) statements assessing the situation positively

3. Request for information

- a) specific questions
- b) general requests for information

4. Expression of validation

- a) statements indicating the situation was warranted
- b) praise
- c) statements of prior certainty

"Illocutionary force indicating device" is the most basic formulation of a given speech act, in which the illocutionary force is completely unambiguous. For these situations, the IFID was "Congratulations" or "Congrats" in English or 「おめでとう」 / 「おめでとうございあます」 (*omedetō, omedetō gozaimasu*) in Japanese. This response type was used by at least 44% of every group of respondents for every situation. It was the only response type used by at least 20% of the respondents of every group for every situation.

"Expression of happiness" refers to expressions of personal happiness at hearing the good news, as well as statements assessing the situation as a positive one. Expressions of personal happiness included such expressions as "I'm so happy for you". This type of expression was used by the Americans as well as the Japanese writing in English but not by the Japanese writing in Japanese. The statements assessing the situation as a happy one were more common among all groups and were typically expressions like, "That's great" or "That's exciting" in English. Japanese expressions like 「よかったね」 (*yokatta ne*) or 「すばらしいですね」 (*subarashii desu ne*) were also included in this category. However, expressions of praise such as the JE response "You are great" or the JJ response 「さすが」 (*sasuga*) were not included here, but rather as expressions of validation. The "expression of happiness" response type was the second most prevalent pattern following use of an illocutionary force indicating device. However, it was used by fewer than 20% of the JJ respondents in two situations.

"Request for information" was used extensively by all groups in the situa-

tion in which the former neighbor has gotten married. This type includes questions like “Who’s the lucky guy/girl?” or 「どんな人と結婚したんですか」 (*donna hito to kekkon shitan desuka*) as well as more general requests for information such as “So tell me about it” or 「いろいろ聞かせてほしいわ」 (*iroiro kikasete hoshii wa*). The general requests for information always followed a more specific question. In addition to the wedding situation, this type of response was used by 38% of the American respondents in the situation in which the professor receives a grant. However, it was not used frequently by the JJ or JE groups in this situation nor by any of the groups extensively in the promotion situation.

“Expression of validation” includes all expressions related to the idea that the happy situation was warranted, for example, “You have earned this promotion” or “You deserve it”, among the English examples, or Japanese expressions like 「当然です」 (*tōzen desu*) or 「あなたが頑張った結果でね」 (*anata ga ganbatta kekka de ne*). This category also includes praises like “Great job!” or 「さすが」 (*sasuga*) and statements of prior certainty like “I knew that you would get it!” or Japanese statements using 「やはり」 (*yahari*). “Expressions of validation” were used by more than 20% of the JE group in the promotion situation as well as by more than 20% of the AE group in the grant situation.

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the manifestation of these types in the three different situations.

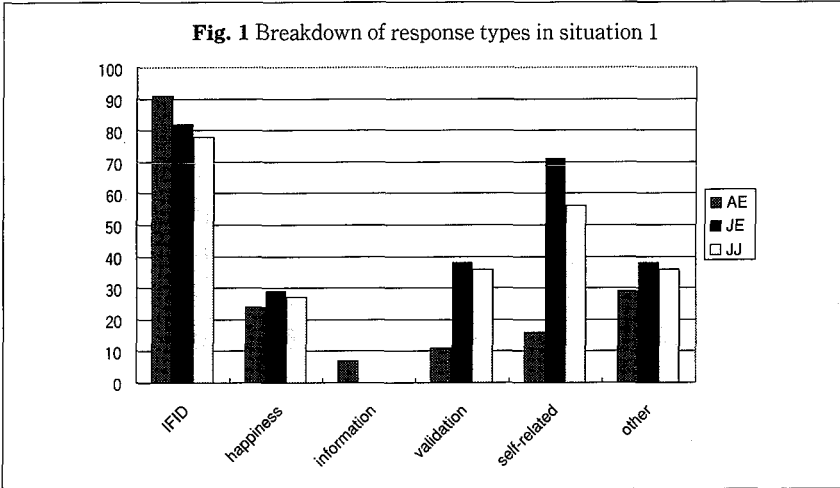
Table 1: Breakdown of occurrence of response types

type	promotion	wedding	grant
IFID	O	O	O
Expression of happiness	O	O	O
Request for information	X	O	O
Expression of validation	O	X	O

Results and analysis

Situation 1

Figure 1 represents the breakdown of response types used in situation 1.



1. Illocutionary force indicating device

Ninety-one percent of Americans writing in English (AE) used the illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) "Congratulations" or "Congrats" in situation 1, as did 82% of Japanese writing in English (JE). Seventy-eight percent of Japanese writing in Japanese wrote either 「おめでとう」 (*omedetō*) or 「おめでとうございます」 (*omedetō gozaimasu*).

2. Expression of happiness

Twenty-four percent of the AE respondents used an expression of happiness. Of these, two respondents (4%) used two expressions of happiness in their responses. Thirty-six percent of the expressions of happiness were expressions of personal happiness, with the most frequent type of formulation using "glad", and 64% of the expressions of happiness were statements as-

sessing the situation positively, with virtually all using the word “great” except one in which “excellent” was used.

Twenty-nine percent of JE responses used an expression of happiness. No JEs used two expressions of happiness. Fifty-four percent of the expressions of happiness were expressions of personal happiness, of which two-thirds used “happy” and one-third used “glad”. The remaining 46%, statements assessing the situation positively, were more diverse than those of the AE group. “Great”, “good”, and “You did it!” were used in roughly equal percentages.

Twenty-seven percent of the JJ responses used an expression of happiness. These were all statements assessing the situation positively; no expressions of personal happiness were used. No JJ used more than one expression of happiness. Sixty-seven percent of the formulations used 「よかった」 (*yokatta*). Twenty-five percent used 「やった」 and 8% used 「すごい」.

3. Request for information

Requests for information were rare in this situation. No JEs or JJs used this type of response and only 7% of AEs (three respondents) did. Of these, two asked about the promoted person’s new office and the other asked when the new position would begin. No general requests for information were made.

4. Expression of validation

Eleven percent of the AEs made an expression of validation. Of these, 80% (four respondents) were statements indicating that the promotion was warranted. The formulations included: “You really deserved the position”, “You have earned this promotion”, “They picked the right person for the job”, and “I know you’ve worked hard for this promotion.” Twenty percent of the expressions of validation (one respondent) was praise: “Great job!” No statements of prior certainty were used.

Both the JE and JJ groups used expressions of validation considerably more often than the AE group. Thirty-eight percent of the JEs used an expression of validation, of which 82% were statements indicating the promotion was warranted. Among these, 43% used the word "effort" or "efforts." Others included the idea that the company had recognized the promoted person's work or assured him/her that the speaker knew he/she had been working hard for the past three years. The remaining 18% were expressions of praise, complimenting the promoted person: "You are great", "You are the ace in my colleagues", or "You are nice businessman."

Only slightly fewer JJs, 36%, used an expression of validation. Sixty-three percent of these were statements indicating that the promotion was warranted. Forty percent used the word 「がんばった」 (*ganbatta*) and 20% used the word 「努力」 (*doryoku*) with a variety of formulations for the remainder. Of the 37% that were expressions of praise, half used the word 「やる」 (*youtu*) in the formulations 「やるな」 (*youtu na*), 「なかなかやるな」 (*nakanaka youtu na*), and 「やるね」 (*youtu ne*). Thirty-three percent (two respondents) used 「さすが」 (*sasuga*) and 17% (one respondent) used 「すごい」 (*sugoi*).

5. Self-related comment

The most frequent category after the illocutionary force indicating device for the JE and JJ groups was making a comment related to the speaker's own life, for example her or her own career. The self-related comments fall into three sub-types:

- a) an expression of envy, longing, or chagrin
- b) a comment on one's future effort
- c) a prediction of one's own future success

The AE's use of the response type "self-related comment" was much less frequent than that of the JEs and JJs. Only 16% used this type of expression and among these all fall into the first sub-type, an expression of

envy, longing, or chagrin. Of these, slightly less than half (43%) used a formulation with “hopefully” or “hope” like “Hopefully I’ll be next”. Other expressions included “Keep your fingers crossed for me” and “What I wouldn’t give to be in your shoes”.

On the other hand, more than four times as many JE respondents, 71%, made a self-related comment. In addition, two respondents used more than one expression of this type. Of the three sub-types, a comment on one’s future effort was most frequent. This sub-type was used by 33% of the respondents. These expressions typically included the phrases “work hard/harder/more” or “do my best”. These phrases were used in 89% of this sub-type. The remainder made reference to “effort” or to the need to “stick out”. Many of the responses also included an explicit linking of the effort with its desired outcome: 67% made reference to catching up or being promoted and 7% mentioned overtaking the other person.

Eleven percent of JE responses were related to an expression of envy, longing, or chagrin, slightly lower than the AE response rate for this type. Forty percent of these used the formulation “I hope” and another 40% used an expression related to regret. The remainder used the formulation “I wish”.

The JE sub-type of prediction of own future success, used by 31% of JE respondents, resembles the future effort sub-type in that 71% made reference to catching up or being promoted. In addition, 21% of the JE respondents using this sub-type did not merely predict equivalent success but suggested that in time he/she would surpass the colleague. The difference between the effort and prediction sub-types is that in the formulations in the prediction sub-type the focus is not on the effort to attain the goal but rather on the conviction that the colleague moving ahead is only a temporary situation. Thirty-six percent used the word “soon” and an additional 21% used the phrases “in a few days”, “within near days”, or “at once”. Ninety-three percent used “I’ll” or “I will” with no limiting adverbs such as “hopefully” or “probably”. The remaining 7% (one response) was “The next promotion is my turn”.

Fifty-six percent of JJ responses included a self-related comment and seven used more than one. Among these, the effort sub-type was most prevalent, used by 42% of the respondents. Eighty-four percent of these responses used some form of 「頑張る」 (*ganbaru*): 「頑張る」 (*ganbaru*); 「頑張ります」 (*ganbarimasu*); 「頑張らなくちゃ」 (*ganbaranakucha*); 「頑張らなければ」 (*ganbaranakereba*) or 「頑張らないと」 (*ganbaranaito*). The remainder were more indirect, relying on the idea of not wanting to be outdone and thus implying that an effort would be made: 「負けずに自分も追いつかないと」 (*makezuni jibun mo oitukanaito*); 「まだまだ負けなけれど」 (*madamada makenai kedo*) or 「俺も負けてられないよ」 (*ore mo maketerarenaiyo*). Thirty-two percent made explicit reference to the promotion or catching up.

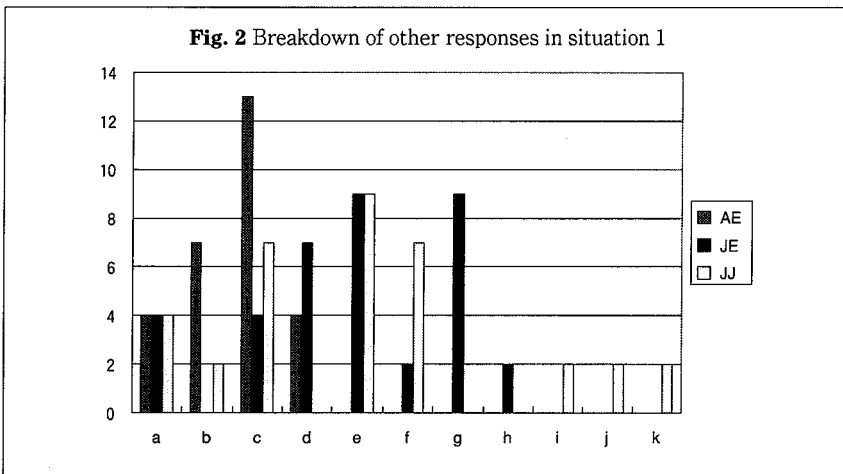
The second most frequent sub-type for the JJ group was an expression of envy, longing, or chagrin. Twenty-four percent used this sub-type. The most common formulation of this sub-type was by using the word 「くやしい」 (*kuyashii*), a word meaning something like vexing or mortifying, which was favored by 36% of the respondents using this sub-type. Twenty-seven percent plainly stated that they also wanted to be promoted: 「昇進したい」 (*shōshin shitai*) and 18% alluded to having been left behind, adding verb endings that intensify the sense of regret: 「先こされちゃった」 (*sakikosarechatta*) and 「先こされちゃったね」 (*sakikosarechimatta*). Of the remaining two responses, one laughingly complained that the speaker had been put in an awkward position: 「同僚のオレの立場がないじゃないかよ！！」 (*doryō no ore no tachiba ga nai ja nai ka yo!!*) and the other simply said 「ええな」 (*ee na*), an expression of envy.

While predictions of one's own future success were frequent among the JE group, only 9% of JJ respondents used this type. Of these, 50% wrote 「すぐに追いつく」 (*sugu ni oitsuku*) and the remaining two responses were 「昇進するから待ってろよ」 (*shōshin suru kara matte ro yo*) and 「5年後にはおれの方が昇進しとるけどね」 (*go nen go ni ha ore no hō ga shōshin shitoru kedo no*). This last response was the only response that suggested the speaker would not only catch up but surpass the other person.

6. Other types

Twenty-nine percent of AEs, 38% of JEs, and 36% of JJs made use of a response type not included in the above five. The other types of responses included:

- a) a prediction regarding the promoted person’s future
- b) a request for advice
- c) an offer of good luck
- d) a related comment
- e) a suggestion to celebrate
- f) an expression of surprise
- g) an expression of pride
- h) a joke
- i) an offer of help
- j) a request for continuing friendliness
- k) a request to improve the company



When making another type of response, the AE group either made a prediction regarding the promoted person’s future, like “I think you will do

an excellent job", made a request for advice like "Any advice for a slacker like me?", wished the colleague good luck, or made a background comment like "You've waited a long time for this." These comprised 15%, 23%, 46%, and 15% of the AE "other" responses respectively.

The JE other types of responses were a prediction regarding the promoted person's future (representing 12% of JE other responses) like "I'm sure you will do good job in that position (sic)", wishing the colleague good luck (12% of all JE other responses), suggesting going out drinking or having a party (24%), expressing pride in the promoted person (24%), expressing surprise at the promotion (6%), making a related comment like "I think promotion in three years is really fast" (23%), or humor in one instance: "And if you would be much higher position, please buy house for me (sic)!"

The JJ other types of responses were a prediction regarding the promoted person's future (representing 13% of JJ other responses), a request for advice (6%), wishing the colleague good luck (19%), suggesting going out drinking or having a party (25%), offering to help (6%), expressing surprise (19%), asking the colleague to work to improve the company (6%), and a request that the colleague remain friendly even after being promoted: 「課長になっても冷たくしないでね。」 (*kachō ni natte mo tsumetaku shinaide ne*) (6%).

What was different about these predictions regarding the colleague's future compared to those of the AE group was that while the AE predictions focused on the colleague's future good performance, the JJ responses dealt with the notion that the colleague would become busier: 「責任が重くてこれから大変だろうけど」 (*sekinin ga omokute kore kara taihen darō kedo*); 「これからますます忙しくなると思うが」 (*kore kara masumasu isogashikunaru to omō ga*). (The JE predictions regarding the colleague were one of each of these two types.)

Fig. 3 Breakdown of AE other responses in situation 1

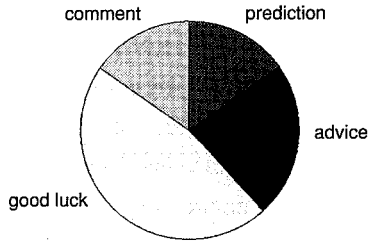


Fig. 4 Breakdown of JE other responses in situation 1

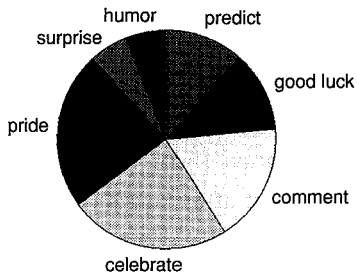
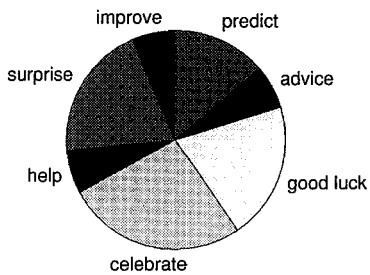
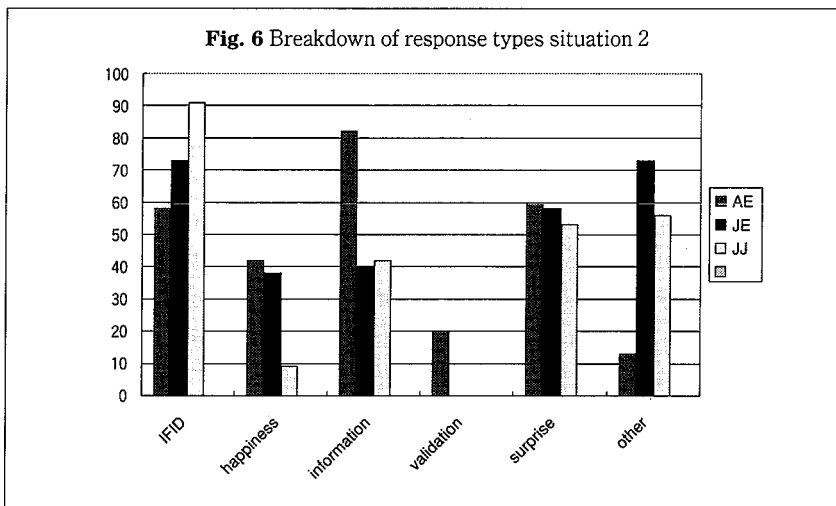


Fig. 5 Breakdown of JJ other responses in situation 1



Situation 2

Figure 6 represents the breakdown of response types used in situation 2.



1. Illocutionary force indicating device

58% of Americans writing in English (AE) used the illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) “Congratulations” or “Congrats” in situation 2, as did 73% of Japanese writing in English (JE). Ninety-one percent of Japanese writing in Japanese wrote either 「おめでとう」 (*omedetō*) or 「おめでとうございあます」 (*omedetō gozaimasu*).

2. Expression of happiness

Forty-seven percent of the AE respondents used an expression of happiness and three used this type twice in their responses. Of these, 88% were statements assessing the situation positively. “Great” was the most common word used in this sub-type, at a frequency of 68%, Other choices included “wonderful” which was used twice, as was “Good for you”. “Cool”,

“awesome”, “good news”, and the expression “That’s really something”, were each used once. Expressions of personal happiness were much rarer than among the AE responses in situation 1, accounting for only 12% of the expressions of happiness. Of these, all were the formulation, “I’m so happy for you.”

Slightly fewer JE respondents used an expression of happiness compared to the AE group. Thirty-eight percent used this type and one person used it twice. Among these, 67% were expressions of personal happiness. “Glad” was used most commonly, by 50% of the respondents using this sub-type. “Happy” was used 25% of the time and other expressions of personal happiness included “Your marriage brought happiness to me” and “It’s good news for me too.” Statements assessing the situation positively accounted for 33% of the responses for this type. Among these, “great” was used by half of the respondents (three respondents). “That’s nice to hear” and “How nice” were also used by one respondent each. Interestingly, 44% of the JE respondents used “...to hear” in their responses, for example, “I’m glad to hear that.” Another respondent said “That sounds great.” No AE respondents used this type of formulation.

Expressions of happiness were used much less frequently by the JJ group. Only 9% (four respondents) used this response type, all of them of the positive statements sub-type. The following are the formulations used: 「それはよかったですね」 (*sore ha yokatta desu ne*); 「よかったですね」 (*yokatta desu ne*); 「それはめでたいな」 (*sore ha medetai na*) and 「すごい」 (*sugoi*).

3. Request for information

All of the groups used this response type in high percentages. Eighty-two percent of the AE group requested information, which was the highest frequency, followed by the JJ group at 42% and the JE group at 40%.

Of the 82% in the AE group who made a request for information, 14 used this type more than once, with one person making seven requests for information and another making six, for a total of 62 tokens for this type.

Table 2: AE question content in situation 2

Question content	frequency
Identity of spouse	24
Where living	8
Honeymoon	5
Married life	7
General	1
Length of marriage	2
Wedding	6
Initial meeting	3
How long dating	1
Plans for future	1
Spouse characteristics	2

Of these, only two were general requests for information: "Tell me about your wife/husband" and "So tell me about it." Both of these were used as a preface for more specific questions.

By far, the most common question asked by the AE group concerned the identity of the spouse. Fifty-three percent of the AE respondents asked this type of question, three people asked the neighbor two questions in succession of this type, and it comprised 39% of the total specific questions asked. The most common formulations of this type were questions using "lucky", like "Who's the lucky man/woman?" and questions that invited the neighbor to reveal the spouse's identity by asking whether the speaker had met him/her, like "Do I know him/her?"

Other common questions concerned where the couple was living, asked by 18% of respondents; how married life was (16%); about the wedding (13%); and about the honeymoon (11%).

Forty percent of the JE group made a request for information. Of these, one was a general request for information and the rest were specific questions. No one asked more than one question.

Only 4% of the JE respondents asked a question about the identity of

Table 3: JE question content in situation 2

Question content	frequency
Identity of spouse	2
Where living	2
Honeymoon	1
Married life	5
Wedding	2
Spouse characteristics	3
Initial meeting	1
Why not informed	1

the spouse. The most common question was about married life, asked by 11% of the respondents and accounting for 29% of the specific JE questions. The second most frequent specific question was about the spouse's characteristics, like "What kind of person is your partner?" However, only 7% asked this type of question. The general request for information was not accompanied by a specific question and unlike the AE general requests, information was not expected to be supplied then and there. Rather, it followed a suggestion to have dinner the following Saturday at which time the speaker would hear more about the marriage.

Forty-two percent of the JJ group made a request for information. Three people used this response type twice. Of the 19 JJs who responded in this way, two made general requests for information. These were made in tandem with specific questions, but unlike the AE general requests, they were made

Table 4: JJ question content in situation 2

Question content	frequency
Identity of spouse	2
Where living	3
Honeymoon	1
Wedding	3
Initial meeting	3
Spouse characteristics	9

after, not before the specific questions. Also, like the JE general request, both were requests to hear more about the wedding in the future, not on the spot.

The most common type of JJ specific question was about the characteristics of the spouse. This type of question made up 43% of the specific questions and was asked by 20% of the JJ respondents. All of these questions about the characteristics of the spouse included the phrase 「どんな人」 (*donna hito*), as in 「どんな人と結婚したの？」 (*donna hito to kekkon shita no?*) Inquiries about where the couple was living, about the wedding, and about the initial meeting were the next most common questions, each asked by 7% of the respondents.

4. Expression of validation

Often, embedded in the most frequent question asked by AE respondents, the identity of the spouse, was the word "lucky", as in "Who's the lucky man/woman?" Of the 24 respondents who asked a question about identity, 33%, or 18% of total respondents, used "lucky" in their question. In addition, one person (2%) made the comment "Well jeez... your husband/wife is a lucky man/woman." It can be claimed that asserting that the partner is lucky is an expression of validation because it suggests that neighbor is considered a "catch", therefore deserving of his/her good fortune in marrying. Accepting this premise, 20% of AE respondents made an expression of validation.

No one in the JE or JJ groups made an expression of validation.

5. Exclamation / Expression of surprise

More than half the people in each of the three groups made an exclamation or expression of surprise in their response. Sixty percent of the AE group used responses of this type, with five people using it more than once for a total of 32 tokens. "Wow", "Oh wow" or "Woah" were the most common, used by 27% of the AE respondents and comprising 41% of the exclamations or expressions of surprise. One respondent used "wow" twice.

The next most common expression of surprise was “Really?!” or “Oh really?!” used by 16% of respondents and making up 22% of the responses in this category. Other responses included “Oh my gosh” and “No way!”, which were used by 7% and 4% of the AE group respectively.

Fifty-eight percent of the JE group made an exclamation or expression of surprise with eight people using this category more than once for a total of 34 tokens. Among these, “Really?!” or “Oh really?!” were most common, used by 24% of all JE respondents and representing 32% of JE responses of this type. This was followed by “Wow”/ “oh wow” used by 13% of the respondents or simply “oh” used by the same percentage.

Fifty-three percent of the JJ group made an exclamation or expression of surprise and three made more than one for a total of 27 tokens. Twenty percent of the total JJ group used an expression with 「本当」(*hontō*) or 「ほんと」(*honto*), making up 33% of the responses of this type. This was followed by formulations using 「まじ」(*maji*); 「あら」(*ara*); or 「そうですか」(*sō desu ka*)/ 「そうなんですか」(*sō nan desuka*); which were each used by 7% of the respondents and each represented 11% of the responses in this category.

6. Other types

Thirteen percent of the AE group made a response that does not fit into any of the above categories. These included a remark on the passage of time, expressing a desire to meet the spouse, a comment on the neighbor's condition (“You wear marriage well”), a request to see the wedding pictures, and self-related comments like “I've been seeing someone.”

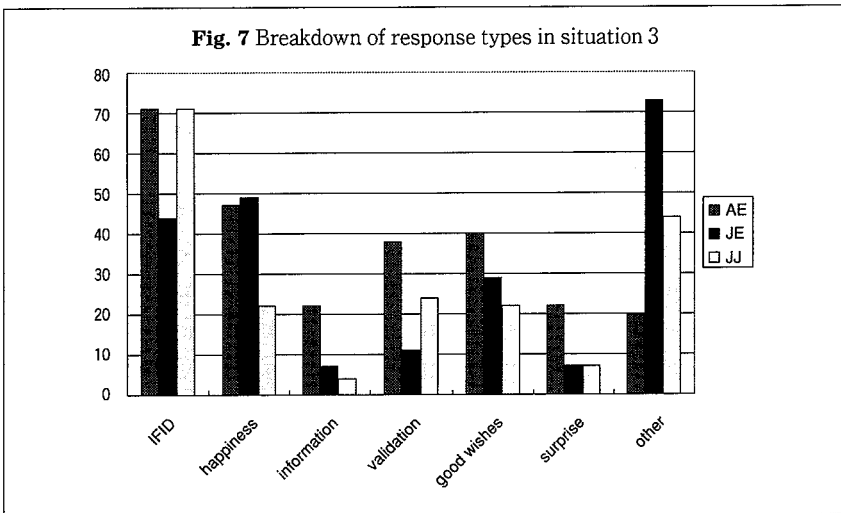
In contrast, 73% of the JE group made a remark that does not fit into the main categories and six made more than one. Of these, the most common type of remark was to extend good wishes for the couple's future happiness, which was used by 19% of all JE respondents, amounting to 21% of all JE remarks on this category. Expressing envy and indicating a desire to meet the spouse were each used by 9% of the total respondents.

Fifty-six percent of the JJ group almost made other types of remarks.

In the JJ group, too, extending good wishes for the couple's future happiness was the most common type, used by 16% of the total JJ respondents and representing 28% of all "other" JJ remarks. Similarly, a wish to meet the spouse was the second most frequent type of "other" remark, making up another 16% of the remarks in this category.

Situation 3

Figure 7 represents the breakdown of categories used in situation 3 by the three groups.



1. Illocutionary force indicating device

Seventy-one percent of the AE group used the illocutionary force indicating device "Congratulations", "Congrats", or "I just wanted to congratulate you" in situation 3. The figures for the JE group were significantly lower; only 44% used an IFID. However, like the AE group, 71% of the JJ group also used an IFID.

2. Expression of happiness

Forty-seven percent of the AE group made an expression of happiness about the professor receiving the prestigious grant. Of these, 95% were statements assessing the situation positively. Just one response (5%) was an expression of personal happiness at the news: "I am so excited for you." No respondent made more than one expression of happiness for this situation. The most common formulations of positive statements included the words "great" or "wonderful", making up 24% and 19% of the AE expressions of happiness respectively.

In the JE group slightly more, 49%, used an expression of happiness than in the AE group. No respondent used more than one expression of happiness. Unlike the AE group, the JE group used more expressions of personal happiness than statements assessing the situation positively. Sixty-four percent of the JE expressions of happiness were personal expressions of happiness and of those, 71% used the word "happy." Among the remaining 36%, making a statement assessing the situation positively, "great" was used more often, making up 63% of all positive JE statements.

The lowest incidence of expressions of happiness occurred in the JJ group, which used this category less than half as often as the AE or JE groups. Twenty-two percent of the JJ made an expression of happiness. Of these, 90% were a statement assessing the situation positively and the remainder (one response) was an expression of personal happiness, 「私もとてもうれしいです」(*watashi mo totemo ureshii desu*). Of the positive statements, 67% used the word 「すごい」(*ugoi*). The others used 「すばらしい」(*subarashii*); 「やりましたね」(*yarimashita ne*); or 「よかったですね」(*yokatta ne*).

3. Request for information

Twenty-two percent of the AE group made a request for information. All of these were specific questions. The most common type of question concerned the professor's research plans like, "What do you plan to research?" or "What do you plan to use the money for?" Ninety percent of the AE ques-

tions were of this type. The remainder (one response) asked whether the professor was excited.

JE requests for information were far fewer than the number in the AE group, with a frequency of 7% (three responses). These also were all related to the professor's research plans.

Only two JJs (4%) made a request for information. Both of these also asked about what kind of research the professor would be undertaking.

4. Expression of validation

Thirty-eight percent of the American group used an expression of validation. Three AE respondents used more than one of this type for a total of 20 tokens. Of the three sub-types, statements indicating the situation was warranted accounted for 70% of the responses of this type. Praises made up 15% of these responses and statements of prior certainty were the remaining 15%. Among the statements indicating the situation was warranted, the word "deserve" was used in 50% of the responses and "earned" was used in 21% of the responses. The remaining responses for this sub-type focused on the professor's effort or used the word "worthy". The statements of certainty all used the phrase "I knew..." like "I knew that you would get it!" The praise (three respondents) was "Excellent work!"; "You're the best professor I know"; and "That's a great accomplishment."

Eleven percent of JE respondents used an expression of validation. Eighty percent of these were a statement that the situation was warranted and the remainder (one response) was praise. The statements that the situation was warranted included sentences like "I believe your research is worth getting such a grant." The praise was "You've done a good job."

Twenty-four percent of JJ respondents used an expression of validation. Forty-five percent of the JJ responses in the validation category were praise. Of these, 40% used the word 「さすが」 (*sasuga*) and another 40% used 「すばらしい」 (*subarashii*). It is also interesting to note that the adverb 「やはり」 (*yahari*), which is used when something corresponds to expectation, was

also used in 40% of the responses, paired with「すばらしい」(*subarashii*) and「すごい」(*sugoi*). Another 55% were a statement that the situation was warranted. All of except one of these included the word「認められた」(*mitomerareta*), which means the professor's work was recognized, suggesting that the speaker believes that the work was worthy of acknowledgment. The remaining one dealt with a positive evaluation of the professor's usual work:「先生の普段の行いが評価されたおかげですね」(*sensei no fudan no okonai ga hyōka sareta okage desu ne*).

5. Offer of good wishes / encouragement

Of the 45 AE respondents, only two made an offer of good wishes, saying, "Good luck on your research" and "Have fun with that." On the other hand, 29% of the JE group made offers of good wishes or encouragement. Slightly more than half were good wishes (54%) and the rest were encouragement. The good wishes typically included the phrase "I hope...", for example, "I hope you to flourish more". Only one response used a different formulation, "I wish...". The offers of encouragement were various formulations, focusing on the professor's future effort like "From now on, please continue your wonderful research."

Twenty-two percent of the JJ group used this category. Of the responses of this type, only one was an offer of good wishes:「今後もますますのご活躍をお祈り申し上げます。」(*kongo mo masumasu no gokatsuyaku wo oinori mōshiagemasu.*) All the rest of the JJ responses in this category were offers of encouragement and all used the formulation「頑張ってください」(*ganbatte kudasai*), as in「これからも頑張ってください」(*kore kara mo ganbatte kudasai*).

6. Exclamation / expression of surprise

Twenty-two percent of the AEs made an exclamation or expression of surprise. Of these, exactly half were the word "Wow". "Hey" was used in 30% of the exclamations. The remainder were the exclamation "Ooooooh!" and the expression of surprise "Are you serious?!"

Only three JE respondents (7%) made an exclamation or expression of surprise. They were "I'm so surprise! (sic)"; and "Oh" (used by two respondents).

Similarly, an exclamation or expression of surprise was used by only three JJ respondents (7%). One wrote in apparent disbelief about the amount of the grant: 「そんなにもらったんですか?」 (*sonna ni morattan desuka?*) Two other respondents used exclamations: 「へえ」 (*hee*) and 「いやー」 (*iyaa*).

7. Other types

Twenty percent of the respondents in the AE group (9 respondents) made another type of response. Of these 67% were a request or offer to help the professor like "So, do you need any research assistants?" The remainder were an offer to buy the professor a beer; and two forward-looking remarks: "You can finally do that research you were trying to do for so long"; and "Now you have the chance to show all your work and knowledge in this field of study."

Almost four times as many respondents in the JE group, 73%, made a response that could not be included in any of the previous categories. Five people made two other types of responses for a total of 38 tokens.

Forty-four percent of the Japanese writing in Japanese made an "other" response and four made more than one for a total of 24 tokens. Of these,

Table 5: JE other responses in situation 3

Response content	frequency
Prediction	8
Celebrate	4
Pride/respect	9
Offer to help	2
Self-related comment	6
Background comment	4
Request	2
Other	3

Table 6: JJ other responses in situation 3

Response content	frequency
Prediction	5
Celebrate	2
Pride/respect	3
Offer to help	7
Self-related comment	1
Background comment	1
Request	1
Other	2
Humor	2

the most common was an offer to help, like 「何かお手伝いすることがあれば是非おっしゃってください」 (*nanika otetsudai suru koto ga areba zehi osshatte kudasai*). This sub-type accounted for 29% of the “other” responses. The next most common sub-type was a prediction regarding the future, which made up 21% of the responses in this category. These typically noted that the professor would be able to do more satisfying research with the grant, as in 「これで思う存分研究できますね」 (*kore de omō zōbun kenkyū dekimasu ne*) but one predicted that the professor would be even busier: 「本当に大変なのはこれからですよ」 (*hontō ni taihen na no wa kore kara de yō*).

Three responses (13%) expressed pride or a feeling of honor. Two of these were related to sharing the feeling with the professor: 「僕も誇りに思います」 (*boku mo hokori ni omoimasu*) and 「僕にとっても鼻が高いと思います」 (*boku ni totte mo hana ga takai desu*). The remaining response dealt with feeling honor in knowing the professor: 「先生と出会えて光栄です」 (*sensei to deaete kōei desu*).

Discussion

Differences between the groups

Several differences were observable between the groups. First, the JJ group was much less likely to use an expression of happiness in situations

2 and 3 compared to the AE and JE groups. Only 9% of JEs used this category in situation 2 compared with 47% of AEs and 38% of JEs. In situation 3, 22% of the JJ group used this type of response, which was less than half of the AE or JE responses, which were 47% and 49% respectively.

Another difference between the groups was that the Americans were much more likely to make requests for information in situations 2 and 3. Eighty-two percent of the AE group made a request for information in situation 2. Only roughly half of the JE and JJ groups, 40% and 42% respectively, did the same. The AE group used this type of response less frequently in situation 3, with a frequency of only 22%, but this was nonetheless much higher than the JE or JJ groups. Seven percent of the JE group made a request for information in situation 3 and only 4% of the JJ group did.

In situation 1 a significant difference was the frequency of the category "self-related comment". This was an important response pattern for the JE and JJ groups. Seventy-one percent of the JE group made this type of comment and 56% of the JJ group did. On the other hand, only 16% of the Americans did. Of the 16% of the Americans who did use this category, all expressed envy. On the other hand, the other two groups were more likely to make a comment about their own future effort.

Differences between the groups in the category of offer of good wishes/encouragement in situation 3 were also great. Only 4% of the AE group use this category. However, it was used by 29% of the JE group and 22% of the JJ group. While the percentages were not large enough to warrant its inclusion as a main category in situation 2, 19% of the JE respondents extended their good wishes to the newly married neighbor as did 16% of the JJ group. However, none of the Americans used this type of expression in this situation.

Additionally, a significant difference between the groups was regarding the use of responses other than those in the main categories. In situation 1, all of the groups used other types of responses with approximately the same degree of frequency, 29% for the AE group, 38% for the JE group and

36% for the JJ group. However, while the frequency of other responses decreased in the other two situations for the Americans to 13% for situation 2 and 20% for situation 3, it increased for both of the other groups. In situation 2, 73% of the JE group made a response that was not one of the main categories and 56% of the JJs did. This was similarly true for situation 3 in which 73% of the JEs made an "other" response as did 44% of the JJs.

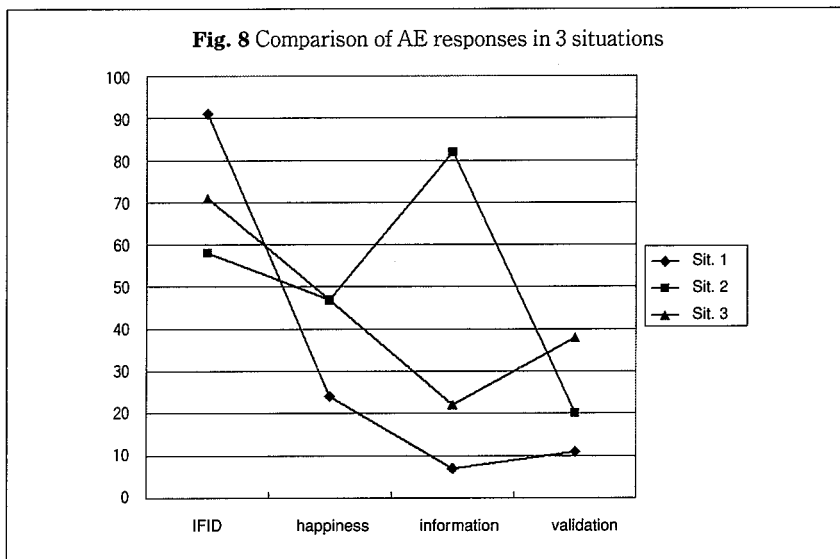
Part of the reason for the high frequency of the other responses for these two groups in situation 2 was the frequency of expressions of good wishes. Twenty-one percent of the other JE responses and 28% of the JJ responses were of this type in situation 2. In situation 3, 24% of the JE other responses were expressions of pride. Twenty percent of the JE group made this kind of comment.

Differences between the situations

Figure 8 shows a comparison of the AE responses across the three situations. The biggest divergence was in the category of requesting information. In situation 2, AE use of this category was much higher than in either of the two other situation. Eighty-two percent of AEs made a request for information in situation 2 but only 7% in situation 1 and 22% in situation 3 did.

AE use of an illocutionary force indicating device was high in all three situations but it was highest in situation 1 (91%) and roughly a third of that in situation 2 (58%), with the response frequency for situation 3 (71%) in the middle of these. While the occurrence of expressions of happiness in situations 2 and 3 coincided exactly with a frequency of 47%, it was much lower roughly half that (24%) in situation 1. The validation category was highest for situation 3 at 38% but was only 11% in situation 1, with situation 2 between them at 20%.

Figure 9 shows a comparison of the JE responses in the three situations. As with the differences between the AE responses in the three situations, a significant difference is the percentage of JEs making a request for infor-

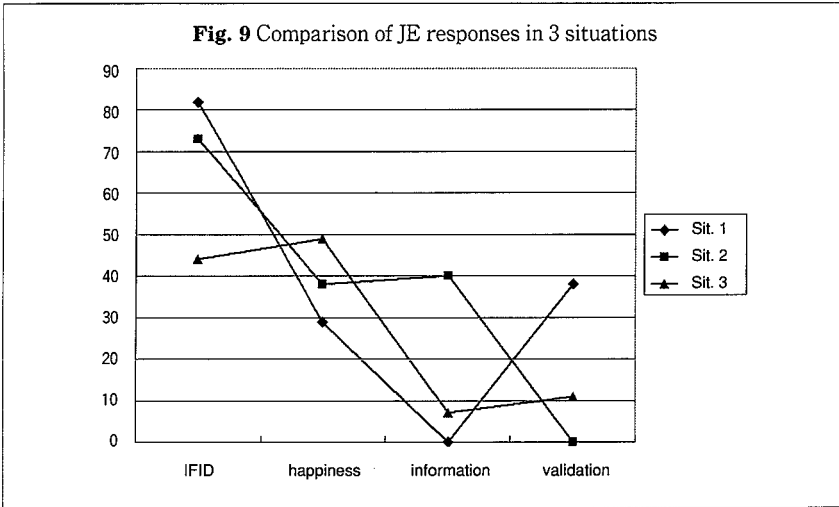


mation in situation 2. 40% of JEs used this category in this situation but only 7% in situation 3 and no JEs used it in situation 1.

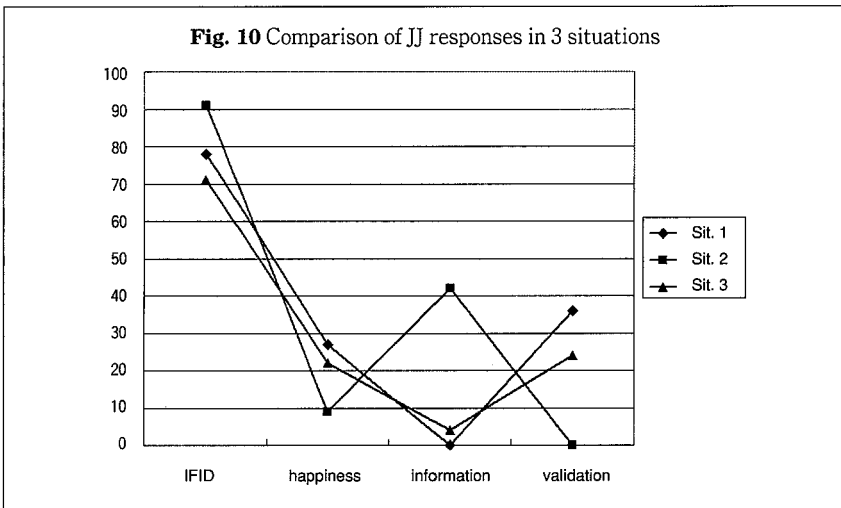
JE expressions of validation were particularly high for situation 1, with a frequency of 38%, but were much lower for the other two situations. Only 11% of JEs made an expression of validation in situation 3 and none did in situation 2.

Frequency of JE use of IFIDs was quite close in situations 1 (82%) and 2 (73%) but fell dramatically in situation 3 to 44%. Frequencies of expressions of happiness were most consistent across the situations. Situation 3 had the highest frequency at 49%, situation 2 was in the middle (38%) and situation 1 was lowest at 29%.

Figure 10 shows the comparison of JJ responses across the three situations. Frequencies for the IFID and expressions of happiness categories were quite consistent across the categories. Use of an IFID was most frequent in situation 2, at 91%. It was slightly lower in situation 1 (78%) and a little bit lower than that in situation 3 (71%).



Conversely, the incidence of expressions of happiness was lowest in situation 2 at 38%. However, the frequencies of this category for situations 2 and 3 were also not high, at 9% and 22% respectively. As with the AE and



JE groups, there was a much higher frequency of requests for information in situation 2. Forty-two of the JJ group made such a request. On the other hand, only 4% made a request for information in situation 3 and none did in situation 1.

As with the JE group, expressions of validation were most frequent in situation 1, at 36%. They were also fairly frequent in situation 3 at 24% but were not used at all in situation 2.

Conclusion

While the speech act of congratulating exists in both Japan and America, the patterns that are used in response to the news of another person's good fortune can vary greatly. Four patterns — use of an illocutionary force indicating device, an expression of happiness, a request for information, and an expression of validation — were found to be the most basic types of congratulation responses. Nonetheless, there were some significant differences.

In particular, Americans were more likely to ask questions, and at least in the case of congratulating a colleague, Japanese people writing in Japanese and English appeared to be more likely to make an explicit comparison between themselves and the person they are congratulating, using a self-related comment.

There was significant variation in the frequencies of the response types among the different situations as well. Situation 2 showed the most divergence, with all groups making many requests for information. More research on other situations is necessary before it is possible to make any general conclusions about the nature of congratulations in Japan and America. As congratulations serve a basic "convivial" function they are worthy of careful examination.

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