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Citation	乳幼児発達臨床センター年報, 25, 25-48
Issue Date	2003-03
Doc URL	https://hdl.handle.net/2115/25356
Type	departmental bulletin paper
File Information	25_P25-48.pdf



VOICES OF TV COMMERCIALS AS THE REFLECTION OF CULTURAL MENTALITY: A JAPAN-U.S. COMPARISON

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify some of the salient features of Japanese persuasive communication as exemplified in TV commercials through a contrastive analysis of Japanese and American ones. The protocol analysis indicated that there was a marked difference in the strategy of persuasion employed in TV commercials in Japan and the United States. The Japanese strategy is to approach consumers in an indirect way by appealing to the Pathos by loading the greatest part of information in the visual message. The American strategy, on the other hand, is the direct approach to consumers by repeating basic information and reasoning logically in the spoken message. The Japanese strategy might be termed "indirect persuasion through affective visual information," while the American strategy will be summarized as "direct persuasion through verbal reasoning." The origin of this difference as a reflection of the cultural mentality of the people of the two countries was discussed.

Key words : Persuasive communication, Intercultural communication, Multivoicedness, Cultural mentality

One of the fundamental issues in developmental psychology is how social processes are related to psychological processes (Wertsch, 1998). In fact, human cognitive activity has been considered to be both embedded and constituted within sociocultural activities, and most of us seem to agree that the analysis of social factors play an important role in attempts to explain the emergence of individual psychological phenomena. In spite of that notion, we have often failed to comprehend the psychological processes as the result of their interaction with social factors.

The purpose of this study is to examine and identify some of the salient features of persuasive communication as exemplified in TV commercials through a contrastive analysis of Japanese and American TV commercials. It will also lead to some insights about the cross-cultural communication between Japan and the United States (or more broadly the Western countries).

TV commercials are mode of persuasive communication in its most sophisticated form. They are intended to achieve the greatest effect with minimum cost. Within a limited amount of time TV commercials attempt to communicate manufacturers' messages to consumers in a most impressive manner. TV commercials are a powerful medi-

um of persuasion, but expensive. For this reason advertising agencies responsible for creating TV commercials use utmost care in their analysis of consumer behavior. This means that the persuasive approach used in TV commercials reflects the cultural values and orientations of the people in the society.

Consequently, we would get insights about the features of persuasive communication in each culture in its most distinctive form by analyzing TV commercials in different countries.

Method

Data Collection

A total of six-hour programming from a major nation-wide network was videotaped from 5:00 p.m. through 11:00 p.m. on a weekday respectively in Japan and the United States. This resulted in the collection of approximately seventy commercials in each country. From this collection of data, commercials that advertised the same type of product were picked out so that they would make a pair between Japan and the United States. Five sets of commercials, i.e. five commercials from each country, were finally selected for analysis: (1) credit card, (2) public message, (3) automobile, (4) wristwatch, and (5) cosmetics.

Procedure of Data Analysis

1. Transcription

Messages communicated in TV commercials are three-fold: Visual, Spoken, and Written. The visual message is information that is imparted on the TV screen. This, however, does not include linguistic messages that appear as words. The spoken message is the kind of information that is transmitted aurally. This includes songs and instrumental music for convenience. The written message appears on the screen as linguistic representation.

The three types of information that was transcribed for each commercial made the data for our research. This information is provided in the Table 1 to 5.

2. Formulating Categories for Analysis:

After viewing each TV commercial several times the two researchers shared their overall impressions and discussed their observations. During this process a list of features that should contribute to our impressions was formulated to exhaust possible categories for analysis. From this list the following four major categories were set up for our analysis. The first three dimensions of categories are compatible to Aristotle's rhetoric of persuasion.

Ethos: appealing to the authority of the speaker.

AU: Professional Authority

CE: Celebrated People

FO: Foreigners

GO: Group Oriented

Pathos: appealing to the sentiments and emotions.

PA: Appeal to Emotions

- ME: Metaphor
- MU: Music (including songs)
- BA: Background Information
- FA: Fantasy
- IM: Impression of Product
- IN: Indirect Message
- Logos: appealing to logical reasoning.*
- LO: Logical Reasoning
- OR: Ordinary People
- C1: Comparison with the Company's Previous Products
- C2: Comparison with Other Company's Products
- RE: Realistic Situation
- FE: Features of Product
- CR: Credibility
- DI: Direct Message

In addition to the three dimensions above the Basic was set up to accommodate the types of information that are likely to appear in every commercial.

Basic: product name, company name and related announcements

- NA: Product Name
- PI: Picture of Product
- CO: Company Name and Logo
- AN: Announcement (of Phone Number, Address, etc.)

3. Coding Procedure

According to the schematic categories set up above, codes were assigned to each unit of information respectively for visual, spoken and written messages. Then the number of codes were counted for each category. Specifically the procedure was divided in the following steps:

(A) Unitization

The smallest unit of information was identified for each protocol. This served as the basic unit of analysis.

(B) Categorization and Comparison

Categories for analysis were assigned to each unit. A single unit may be categorized in more than one way.

(C) Counting of Codes

The number of codes were counted for each category of persuasion after being classified according to the type of messages. Codes that relate to overall feature like [Realistic Situation], [Background Information], [Ordinary People] and [Fantasy] were counted only once for each category of Visual, Spoken, and Written. In order to compare the number of direct and indirect messages the Ethos and the Pathos were grouped together to represent indirect messages. The Logos was used to represent direct messages. The number of codes that appeared in each category was used as an index to represent directness and indirectness of persuasion.

The coding was independently done by the two researchers and this procedure was

repeated until they agreed in more than 90% of the total coding.

Results

OVERALL ANALYSIS

After coding each unit of the message, the number of codes were compared between Japanese and US commercials for all the cases in order to view the general tendency. The comparison was made according to the medium of information, the modes of persuasion, and directness and indirectness. The length of commercials differed in Japan and the United States. For making comparisons the number of codes was transformed to percentages.

Medium of Information

Fig. 1 shows the amount of information as measured by the number of category codes communicated in visual, written, and spoken messages. Japanese commercials communicate the greatest amount of information in the visual message (38.6%) even though the difference from the spoken message (35.1%), the second highest, is small. The written message communicate 26.3% of information. This contrasts sharply with the American TV commercials, where the greatest amount of information is communicated in the spoken message (54.7%). The visual and written message communicate respectively 27.7% and 17.6% of information. American TV commercials rely heavily on the spoken information whereas in Japanese commercials this tendency is not as clear and it seems to rely more on the visual side.

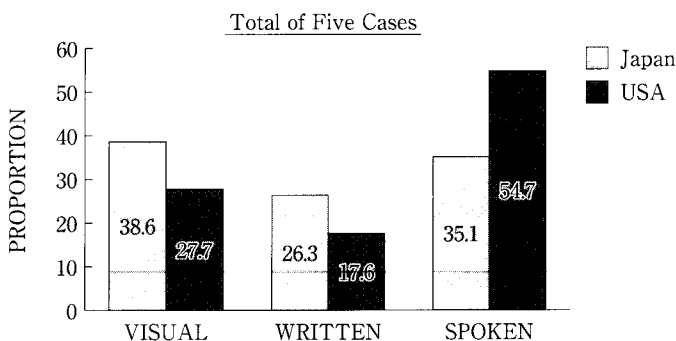


Fig. 1 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

Mode of Persuasion

Fig. 2 shows the result of comparison in terms of the mode of persuasion. American TV commercials provide more information (35.8%) than Japanese commercials (19.3%) about the Basic, which is the basic requirement of commercials covering the names of manufactures and products. Excepting the Basic, the amount of information for the mode of persuasion for the Japanese commercials is, in the descending order, the Pathos (41.2%), the Logos (19.3%), and the Ethos (11.4%). The American data, on the other hand, is 35.8% for the Logos, 22.3% for the Pathos, and 6.1% for the Ethos. The emphasis in the Japanese TV commercials is in the Pathos while it is in the Logos in the

American commercials. This tendency will become more marked when we compare dimensions including the Basic side of information.

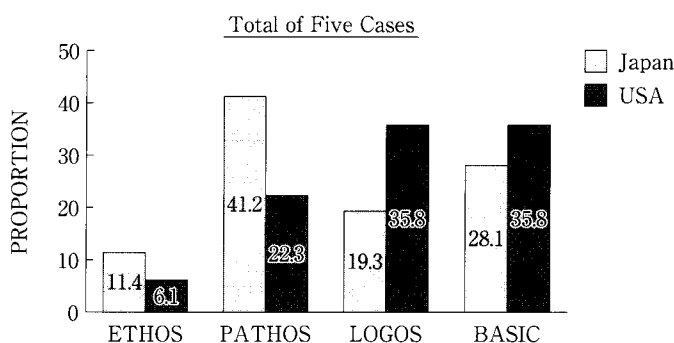


Fig. 2 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

Directness of Persuasion

Fig. 3 is the result of comparison in terms of directness and indirectness of persuasion. The difference between Japan and the United States is also marked here. The Japanese TV commercials rely heavily on indirect persuasion (73.2%) whereas The American persuasion is more inclined to direct orientation (55.8%).

The observation above indicates that there is a difference in the persuasive approach as used in the TV commercials in Japan and the United States. The Japanese strategy is to appeal to visual impression and affective side of communication in an indirect manner whereas in the United States TV commercials are intended to be more direct, appealing to logical reasoning by means of spoken messages.

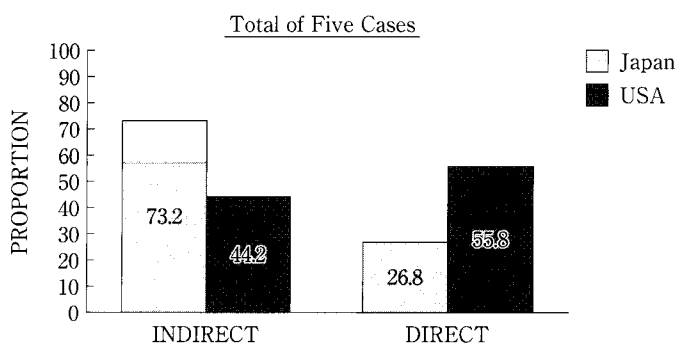


Fig. 3 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

CASE ANALYSIS

The following sections present the result of analysis of each commercial used for our data. Refer to the Table 1-5 for the details of protocols and their coding.

Credit Card

This is one of the most typical examples that represent the overall tendency. The

result of analysis is shown in Fig. 4, 5, 6, and Table 1. The Japanese commercial is intended to project the internationality and “strength” of the card by presenting visual information depicting the practice of Kungfu. It does not provide any practical information, i.e. the Logos, as to how the card is international and strong. Instead it appeals to the Ethos and Pathos by entering a well-known actor and emphasizing the visual effect of communication.

The American commercial, on the other hand, is more direct, appealing primarily to the Logos. The situation presented here is realistic, something everybody experiences in their shopping. It provides detailed information and reasoning about the utility of the CITIBANK card by means of spoken messages.

Table 1 CREDIT CARD

V:Visual Information, W:Written Message, S:Spoken Message

<p><u>Japanese Case: DC Card (15 sec)</u></p> <p>MALE: International!</p> <p>(S) Music</p> <p>(V) A group of American men and women with Kiichi Nakai (Japanese actor) in front practicing Kungfu on a street in New York City. Everybody has a DC Card on their fists.</p> <p>ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! (Shouts in Kungfu)</p> <p>(V) Everybody practicing Kungfu.</p> <p>ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha!</p> <p>(V) A DC Card lands on a fist in a close-up.</p> <p>(V) Nakai shows his left fist on which we see a DC Card.</p> <p>MALE: International!</p> <p>(V) Nakai puts his fists on his eyes. We see two DC Cards on top of Nakai's fists.</p> <p>MALE: Hahahaha. (Laugh)</p> <p>(V) Nakai runs on the street with his right fist on his left shoulder. Three bombs exploding after him. Smoke.</p> <p>(W) International.</p> <p>(V) Nakai raises his right arm with his hand holding a DC Card with skyscrapers in the background.</p> <p>NAKAI: International Card. The name is ...</p> <p>(V) Nakai about to fly up in the air.</p> <p>FEMALE: DC Card. (in a jingle).</p> <p>(V) DC Card with skyscrapers in the background.</p> <p>(W) WHAT'S NEXT? DC CARD!</p> <p>(V) Visual Message</p> <p>(W) Written Message</p>
<p><Visual Information></p> <p>(V) A group of American men and women with Kiichi Nakai (Japanese actor) in front practicing Kungfu on a street in New York City. Everybody has a DC Card on their fists. Everybody practicing Kungfu. (ME/PA/CE/FO/FA/GR)</p> <p>(V) A DC Card lands on a fist in a close-up. (PI)</p> <p>(V) Nakai shows his left fist on which we see a DC Card. (PI)</p> <p>(V) Nakai puts his fists on his eyes. We see two DC Cards on top of Nakai's fists. (PI/ME)</p> <p>(V) Nakai runs on the street with his right fist on his left shoulder. Three bombs exploding after him. Smoke.</p> <p>(ME)</p> <p>(V) Nakai raises his right arm with his hand holding a DC Card with skyscrapers in the background. Nakai about to fly up in the air. (PI/ME/PA)</p> <p>(V) DC Card with skyscrapers in the background. (PI/ME)</p>
<p><Written Message></p> <p>(W) International. (FO)</p>

(W) WHAT'S NEXT DC CARD (C1/FO/NA)

<Spoken Message>

MALE: International! (FO)
 MUSIC: (MU/PA)
 ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! (Shouts in Kungfu) (ME/PA)
 ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha! (ME/PA)
 MALE: International! (FO)
 MALE: Hahahaha. (Laugh)
 NAKAI: International Card. The name is ... (NA)
 FEMALE: DC Card. (in a jingle). (MU)

U.S. Case: CITIBANK Card (15 sec.)

(At a camera shop)

(V) Customer looking at a camera on the counter with a hesitating look.
 MALE STORE OWNER: You can see the hesitation in my customers' faces.
 (V) Store owner showing a camera to his customer.
 OWNER: I mean I know I'm giving them the best prices.
 But how can I prove it?
 So I suggest the use of CITIBANK VISA.
 OWNER: Just a moment.
 (V) Smile on the customer's face reflected on the glass.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card returned to the customer.
 (W) CITIBANK Price Protection
 (MUSIC)
 OWNER: Here you go, Walter.
 Enjoy your camera.
 OWNER: When they see they could have purchased at approved ad or for less, CITIBANK refunds the difference up to one hundred and fifty dollars.
 (V) Female customer inspecting a camera.
 (V) Store owner looks toward his customer.
 OWNER: May I help you?
 (V) Customer asking for help of the store owner.
 FEMALE CUSTOMER: Yes, please.
 OWNER: That's CITIBANK price protection.
 If getting the right price is important, this is the right card.
 (V) Store owner shows a CITIBANK VISA card to us.
 MALE: Not just VISA, CITIBANK VISA.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card.
 (W) NOT JUST VISA, CITIBANK VISA.

<Visual Message>

(OR/MU/RE/BA/IM/PI/BA/CO)
 (V) Customer looking at a camera on the counter with a hesitating look.
 (V) Store owner showing a camera to his customer.
 (V) Smile on the customer's face reflected on the glass.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card returned to the customer.
 (V) Female customer inspecting a camera.
 (V) Store owner looks toward his customer.
 (V) Customer asking for help of the store owner.
 (V) Store owner shows a CITIBANK VISA card to us.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card.

<Written Message>

(W) CITIBANK Price Protection (FE/CO)
 (W) NOT JUST VISA, CITIBANK VISA. (CO/NA/C2)

<Spoken Message>

(BA/NA/LO/FE/CO/FE/CO/FE/LO/CO/NA/C2)

MALE STORE OWNER: You can see the hesitation in my customers' faces.

OWNER: I mean I know I'm giving them the best prices.

But how can I prove it?

So I suggest the use of CITIBANK VISA.

OWNER: Just a moment.

(MUSIC)

OWNER: Here you go, Walter.

Enjoy your camera.

OWNER: When they see they could have purchased at approved ad or for less, CITIBANK refunds the difference up to one hundred and fifty dollars.

OWNER: May I help you?

FEMALE CUSTOMER: Yes, please.

OWNER: That's CITIBANK price protection.

If getting the right price is important, this is the right card.

MALE: Not just VISA, CITIBANK VISA.

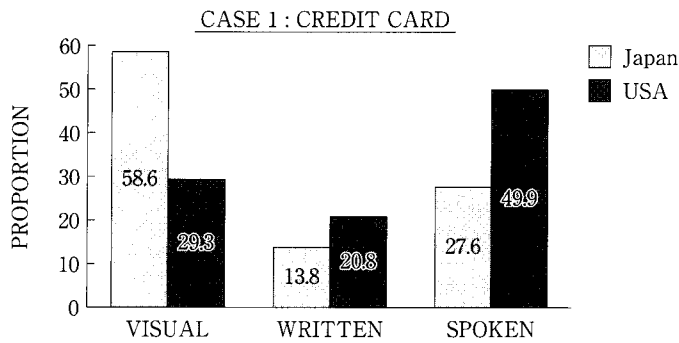


Fig. 4 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

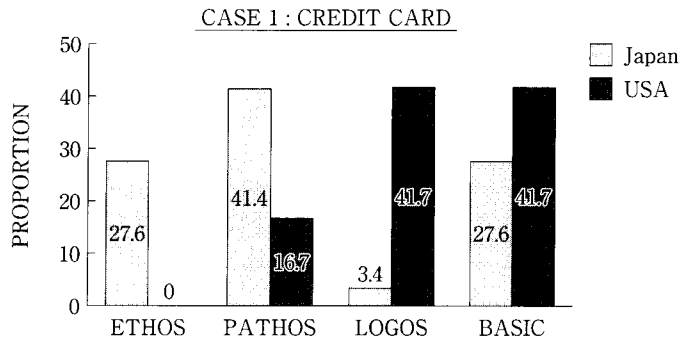


Fig. 5 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

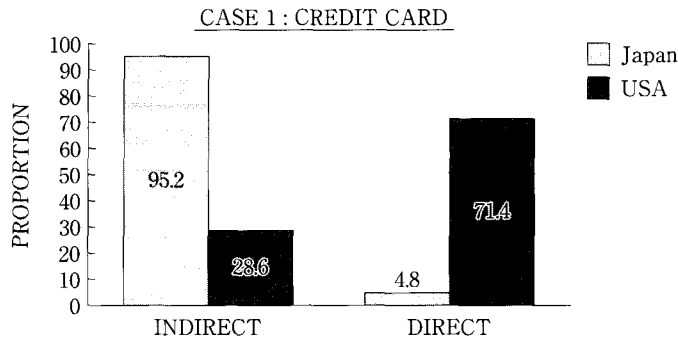


Fig. 6 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Public Message

This is another example that typically exemplifies the overall tendency. Fig. 7-9 and Table 2 are the result of analysis. The topic of the Japanese public message is the illegal parking that might result in a loss of life. The American public message emphasizes the danger of alcoholism and drugs. In both announcements the greatest amount of information is communicated by the spoken message probably because they are intended to be informative. They also show the same tendency in the amount of information used in the Visual and Written (Fig. 7). Yet they show a marked difference in the mode of persuasion (Fig. 8).

In the Japanese work the face or the body of a patient is not shown on the screen. Instead the film shows anxious faces of the members of the rescue crew and the neighbors in order to imply the emergency of the situation. In the end of the story we know from the happy faces of the doctors and the patient's family that the patient was saved. During this process the message "If it had been fifteen minutes late, ..." is repeated. The message does not say what would have happened if it had been fifteen minutes late. It tells us in an indirect way that the patient's life might have been lost. It does not directly touch upon the theme of death. Both the Visual and Written messages are intended to be indirect and more affective.

In the American film the focus of attention is the patient himself, who dies at the end of the short story. He repeatedly tells the viewers that he failed to listen to other people's advice and how he is sorry about it. At the end of the story a white piece of cloth is placed over the patient's face, telling that he is dead. It directly deals with the theme of death. The strategy used here is the logic and direct approach to the theme.

Table 2 PUBLIC MESSAGE

Japanese Case: Illegal Parking (30 sec.)

(V) A doctor, two nurses and a patient's family look down (at a patient who is not shown on the screen) with a relieved look and smile.

MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ...
 (V) An ambulance speeding on a city street.
 MUSIC: Warning signal from the ambulance and music that makes you uneasy.
 (V) The ambulance stops. Concerned look on the driver.
 (V) The ambulance obstructed by an illegally parked automobile.
 (V) Close-up shot of the illegally parked automobile.
 Chalked line on the street and a sticker on the side rearview mirror indicating illegal parking.
 (V) Pedestrian looking around the illegally parked automobiles with a concerned look on his face.
 (V) Officer in the ambulance with a concerned look.
 MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ...
 (V) Door to an operation room
 MALE: Due to illegal parking, a life that could be saved ...
 It might happen to you tomorrow.
 (V) A doctor talking to a patient and his family on the lawn of the hospital yard. Smiles on everybody.
 MALE: AC Public Message Organization.
 (V) An ambulance speeding on the street with cars parking on each side.
 (W) Stop Illegal Parking
 FEMALE: AC. (in a jingle)
 (W) Consideration for Everybody.
 AC Public Message Organization.

<Visual Message>

(PA/OR/RE/BA/LO/IN)
 (V) A doctor, two nurses and a patients family looks down (at a patient who is not shown on the screen) with a relieved look and smile.
 (V) An ambulance speeding on a city street.
 (V) The ambulance stops. Concerned look on the driver.
 (V) The ambulance obstructed by an illegally parked automobile.
 (V) Close-up shot of the illegally parked automobile.
 Chalked line on the street and a sticker on the side rearview mirror indicating illegal parking.
 (V) Pedestrian looking around the illegally parked automobiles with a concerned look on his face.
 (V) Officer in the ambulance with a concerned look.
 (V) Door to an operation room
 (V) A doctor talking to a patient and his family on the lawn of the hospital yard. Smiles on everybody.
 (V) An ambulance speeding on the street with cars parking on each side.
 (W) Stop Illegal Parking
 (W) Consideration for Everybody.
 AC Public Message Organization.

<Written Message>

(W) Stop Illegal Parking (NA)
 (W) Consideration for Everybody. (PA)
 AC Public Message Organization. (CR)

<Spoken Message>

MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ... (PA/LO/IN)
 MUSIC: Warning signal from the ambulance and music that makes you uneasy. (MU/PA)
 MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ... (PA/LO/IN)
 MALE: Due to illegal parking, a life that could be saved ...
 It might happen to you tomorrow. (NA/PA/LO)
 MALE: AC Public Message Organization. (CR)
 FEMALE: AC. (in a jingle) (CR/MU)

U.S. Case: COALESCE (30 sec.)

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL.

PATIENT (MALE): I thought I had control.

(V) A patient taken in on a stretcher to an operation room of a hospital.

PATIENT: I drank some. I smoked now and then.

First I lost my job.

They offered help, but I thought I had control.

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL.

PATIENT: Then my wife left.

I didn't care because I thought I had control.

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL.

PATIENT: I needed money. Anywhere I can get it.

(V) The patient given treatment in the operation room.

PATIENT: I learned a valuable lesson.

I didn't have control.

(V) A white piece of cloth is put on the face of the patient, indicating that he died.

MALE: Drugs and alcohol destroy lives.

COALESCE restores them.

If you know anyone you know has problems with drugs and alcohol, call COALESCE at 874-CARE.

(V) An ambulance speeding on the street.

(W) 874-CARE

PATIENT: I thought I had control.

Man, I was wrong.

(W) COALESCE

Drug & Alcohol Treatment Facility 874-CARE

<Visual Message>

(BA/PA/OR/RE/DI)

(V) A patient taken in on a stretcher to an operation room of a hospital.

(V) The patient given treatment in the operation room.

(V) A white piece of cloth is put on the face of the patient, indicating that he died.

(V) An ambulance speeding on the street.

<Written Message>

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL. (BA)

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL. (BA)

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL. (BA)

(W) 874-CARE (FE/AN)

(W) COALESCE (CO/AN)

<Spoken Message>

PATIENT (MALE): I thought I had control. (BA)

PATIENT: I drank some. I smoked now and then.

First I lost my job.

They offered help, but I thought I had control.

(BA/DI)

PATIENT: Then my wife left.

I didn't care because I thought I had control. (BA/DI)

PATIENT: I needed money. Anywhere I can get it. (BA/DI)

PATIENT: I learned a valuable lesson.

I didn't have control. (BA/DI)

MALE: Drugs and alcohol destroy lives.

COALESCE restores them.

If you know anyone you know has problems with drugs and alcohol, call COALESCE at 874-CARE. (CO/FE/AN)

PATIENT: I thought I had control.

Man, I was wrong. (BA/DI)

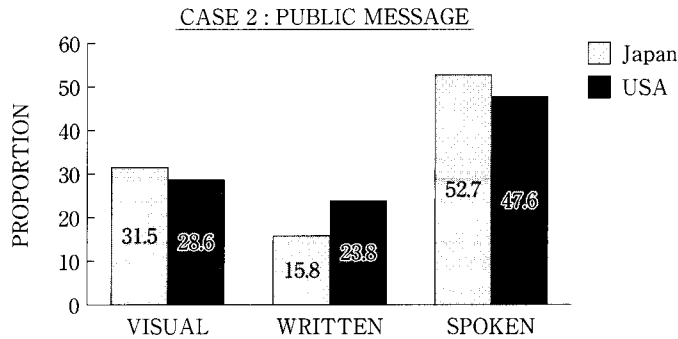


Fig. 7 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

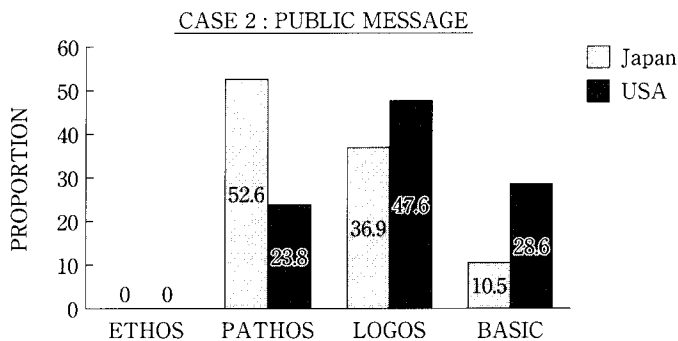


Fig. 8 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

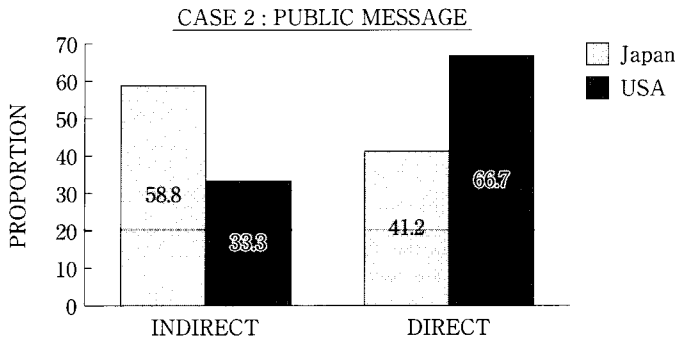


Fig. 9 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Automobile

This example shares a number of similarities with the overall tendency. The result of analysis is presented in Fig. 10-12, and Table 3. In the Japanese commercial the focus of attention is a graceful woman who stands on the dune. She is modeled after a woman that appears in the well-known ukiyoe painting by Utamaro. Two automobiles gracefully pass her on the dune. The pictures presented here are a fantasy intended to be affective. Through this fantastic description the commercial projects the image of graceful-

ness of the automobile. The most dominant feature here is the emotional, indirect approach to the theme. The total amount of information is small and the greatest part of information is communicated by the Written message.

The American commercial is a story about a rich gentleman who is stranded on a desert road and given a ride. He is fascinated by the car he happens to ride and craves to have it himself. The focus of the commercial is the luxurious equipments, which are ordinarily mounted on an expensive automobile. It tells the viewers how they can enjoy the luxury with a limited amount of money. The approach of persuasion is direct and logical. The total amount of information is not large. Except the Basic elements of information, there is no marked difference between the Pathos and the Logos and also between the directness and indirectness of persuasion.

Table 3 AUTOMOBIL

<p><u>Japanese Case: Presea by NISSAN (15 sec.)</u> FEMALE: Presea. (Song as in an opera)</p> <p>(V) A young woman in a kimono with her back toward us standing on a dune. A Presea gracefully appears in the upper right hand corner. (W) NISSAN.</p> <p>MALE: The most graceful sedan. (W) The most graceful sedan. (W) Options Equipped Version. (V) The sedan gracefully passes the screen. (V) The young woman gracefully looks back over her shoulder toward us (just like the beautiful woman in Utamaro's ukiyoe masterpiece "Woman Looking Back over her Shoulder").</p> <p>MALE: NISSAN Presea. (V) Two Preseas coming from right and left gracefully pass the woman. (W) Fasten Seat Belts.</p> <p>MALE: A debut. (W) A debut. Utmost grace. STYLISH 4 DOOR (in English). Presea.</p> <p>MALE: Visit your NISSAN dealer this weekend. (W) Meet the Presea this weekend. 6/30 Sat., 7/1 Sun. Preview. Visit your Sunny/Laurel dealer.</p>
<p><Visual Message></p> <p>(V) A young woman in a kimono with her back toward us standing on a dune. A Presea gracefully appears in the upper right hand corner. (PA/FA/PI) (V) The sedan gracefully passes the screen. (PI) (V) The young woman gracefully looks back over her shoulder toward us (just like the beautiful woman in Utamaro's ukiyoe masterpiece "Woman Looking Back over her Shoulder"). (ME/PA/CE) (V) Two Preseas coming from right and left gracefully pass the woman. (PI)</p>
<p><Written Message></p> <p>(W) NISSAN. (CO) (W) The most graceful sedan. (ME/PA) (W) Options Equipped Version. (CR) (W) Fasten Seat Belts. (CR) (W) A debut. Utmost grace. STYLISH 4 DOOR (in English). Presea. (NA/IM/PA/AN) (W) Meet the Presea this weekend. 6/30 Sat., 7/1 Sun. Preview. Visit your Sunny/Laurel dealer. (NA/AN)</p>

<Spoken Message>

FEMALE: Presea. (Song as in a opera) (MU/PA)

MALE: The most graceful sedan. (ME/PA)

MALE: NISSAN Presea. (NA)

MALE: A debut. (AN)

MALE: Visit your NISSAN dealer this weekend. (AN)

U.S. Case: NISSAN Sentra (15 sec.)

(MUSIC) Music intended to incite uneasiness.

(V) A gentleman standing beside his car that is stranded on the road in the desert due to some mechanical trouble.

(V) A Sentra comes by and he gets a ride.

(V) The Sentra runs swiftly on the desert road.

(V) The CD player functions automatically.

(V) The sun roof opens automatically.

GENTLEMAN: What kind of car is this?

(V) A close-up shot of the brief case on the lap of the gentleman.

DRIVER (MALE): A Sentra.

(V) A shot of the Sentra running swiftly on the desert road.

GENTLEMAN: Do you consider selling it?

DRIVER: No.

(V) The man opens his briefcase. It is full of bank notes.

GENTLEMAN: Do you sell it for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars?

DRIVER: Ah ...

(V) The gentleman looks at the driver.

GENTLEMAN: OK. Two fifty ...

(Loud sound of horn)

(V) A woman extending her hand. She has two one-dollar bills and two quarters in her hand.

WOMAN: Two fifty. Two fifty, sir, for your change.

(V) The Sentra beside the ticket booth of the toll gate.

MALE: Nissan Sentra GX-E because rich guys shouldn't have all the fun.

(W) NISSAN

BUILT FOR THE HUMAN RACE

<Visual Message>

(V) A gentleman standing beside his car that is stranded on the road in the desert due to some mechanical trouble. (BA/BA)

(V) A Sentra comes by and he gets a ride. (PI/BA)

(V) The Sentra runs swiftly on the desert road. (PI/BA)

(V) The CD player functions automatically. (FE)

(V) The sun roof opens automatically. (FE)

(V) A close-up shot of the brief case on the lap of the gentleman. (BA)

(V) A shot of the Sentra running swiftly on the desert road. (PI)

(V) The man opens his briefcase. It is full of bank notes. (BA)

(V) The gentleman looks at the driver. (BA)

(V) A woman extending her hand. She has two one-dollar bills and two quarters in her hand. (BA)

(V) The Sentra beside the ticket booth of the toll gate. (BA/PI/ME)

<Written Message>

(W) NISSAN (CO)

BUILT FOR THE HUMAN RACE (CR)

<Spoken Message>

(MUSIC) Music intended to incite uneasiness. (MU/PA)

GENTLEMAN: What kind of car is this?

DRIVER (MALE): A Sentra. (BA/NA)

GENTLEMAN: Do you consider selling it?
 DRIVER: No. (BA)
 GENTLEMAN: Do you sell it for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars? (BA)
 DRIVER: Ah ...
 GENTLEMAN: OK. Two fifty ... (ME)
 (Loud sound of horn)
 WOMAN: Two fifty. Two fifty, sir, for your change. (ME)
 MALE: Nissan Sentra GX-E because rich guys shouldn't have all the fun. (NA/PR/PA)

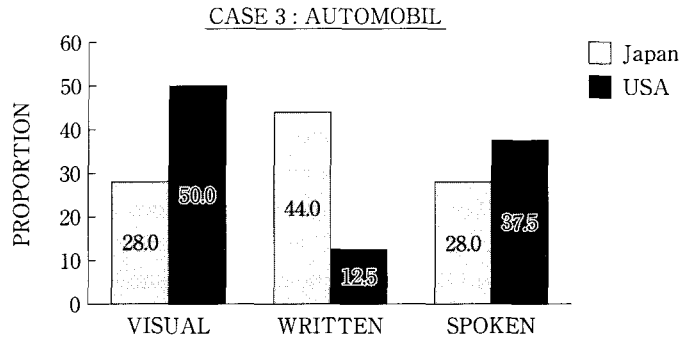


Fig. 10 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

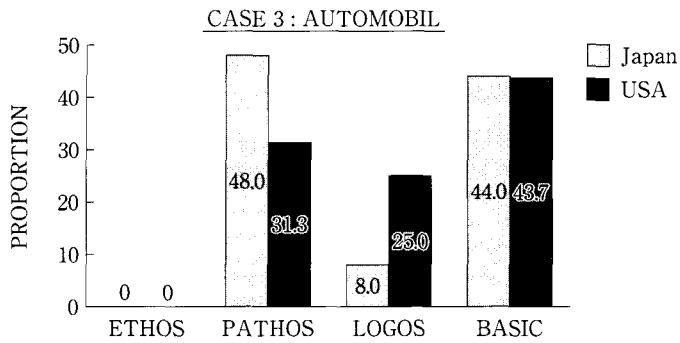


Fig. 11 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

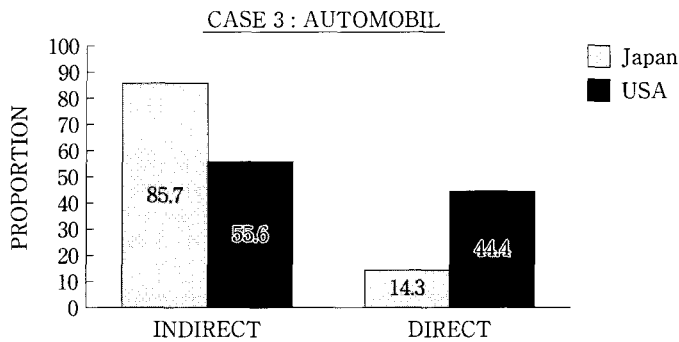


Fig. 12 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Wristwatch

This example also shows a close tendency to the overall result of comparison. The result of analysis is shown in Fig. 13-15 and Table 4. The two commercials are by the same manufacturer. In the Japanese commercial a young woman is the focus of attention. She is energetic and leads her colleagues in her office. No explanation is provided about the product. The only information about the product they provide in this commercial is the picture of the watch that appears in the background and the name of the watch that appears as the Written information. It does not tell the features of the product. Instead it tells us that it is a watch that is made for a young woman with a new vision and new look on life. The persuasive approach is affective and it is intended to appeal to the group-oriented mentality of Japanese. There is not marked difference observed among the Visual, Written, and Spoken.

The American commercial directly appeals to the advanced technology with which the watch is made. It projects the high-tech image by showing a computerized picture of a future plane. It also provides spoken information about the "intelligence" and advanced features of the watch. It relies on the Ethos by telling us that the manufacture is the authorized sponsor of the Olympic Games. This commercial is typically American in the sense that it directly describes the product. In terms of the mode of persuasion there is not much difference between the Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. The amount of direct persuasion is smaller than that of indirect use. For this reason this commercial also shares certain features with most other Japanese commercials.

Table 4 WRISTWATCH

<p><u>Japanese Case: Creo by SEIKO (15 sec.)</u></p> <p>(W) SEIKO</p> <p>(V) Japanese actress Washio Isako's face looking toward us in a close up.</p> <p>FEMALE: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. (in a jingle)</p> <p>FEMALE: How should I say? You are modern.</p> <p>WASHIO: OK. Let me do the job.</p> <p>(V) Conference room with ten or so male employees sitting at a table. Washio stands in front of the people, looking toward us and smiling.</p> <p>MALE: I am always impressed with your enthusiasm you show in your work.</p> <p>(V) Close-up shot of Washio's face. Washio with her hands on the back of her head with a coy look on her face.</p> <p>WASHIO: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo.</p> <p>(V) A watch appears on the screen with Washio's face in the background.</p> <p>(W) CREO. SEIKO. ¥37000 ¥40000.</p> <p>(V) Illustration of John Lennon and Yoko Ono.</p> <p>(W) Something to choose with your lover. SEIKO WATCH GIFT.</p>
<p><Visual Message></p> <p>(V) Japanese actress Washio Isako's face looking toward us in a close up. (CE)</p> <p>(V) Conference room with ten or so male employees sitting at a table. Washio stands in front of the people, looking toward us and smiling. (BA)</p> <p>(V) Close-up shot of Washio's face. Washio with her hands on the back of her head with a coy look on her face. (BA)</p> <p>(V) A watch appears on the screen with Washio's face in the background. (PI)</p> <p>(V) Illustration of John Lennon and Yoko Ono. (FO/CE)</p>

<Written Message>

(W) SEIKO (CO)
 (W) CREO. SEIKO. ¥37000 ¥40000. (NA/CO/PR)
 (W) Something to choose with your lover. SEIKO WATCH GIFT.
 (FO/ME)

<Spoken Message>

FEMALE: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career,
 SEIKO Creo. (in a jingle) (MU/ME)
 FEMALE: How should I say? You are modern. (BA)
 WASHIO: OK. Let me do the job. (BA)
 MALE: I am always impressed with your enthusiasm you show in your work. (BA)
 WASHIO: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. (FO/PA/NA)

U.S. Case: SEIKO (15 sec.)

(W) SEIKO FLIGHT COMPUTER
 (V) A close-up shot of the face of a watch.
 (MUSIC)
 MALE: You can fly.
 With your feet on the ground, you can soar.
 The most advanced type of technology on earth has an IQ.
 SEIKO Intelligent Quarts.
 (V) A shot of the watch in its whole view.
 MALE: So functions never dreamed of in a single watch are amazingly simple to understand.
 (V) A computer graphic image of a future airplane.
 MALE: SEIKO.
 (W) SEIKO THE FUTURE OF TIME.
 MALE: The future of time and the official timer of the games of the 25th Olympiad.
 (W) SEIKO THE OFFICIAL TIMER OF THE XXVth OLYMPIAD.
 (W) SEIKO.
 (V) Logo of the Barcelona Olympic Games.

<Visual Message>

(V) A close-up shot of the face of a watch. (PI)
 (V) A shot of the watch in its whole view. (PI)
 (V) A computer graphic image of a future airplane. (ME)
 (V) Logo of the Barcelona Olympic Games. (CE)

<Written Message>

(W) SEIKO FLIGHT COMPUTER (CO/ME)
 (W) SEIKO THE FUTURE OF TIME. (CO/ME/C1)
 (W) SEIKO THE OFFICIAL TIMER OF THE XXVth OLYMPIAD. (CE)
 (W) SEIKO. (CO)

<Spoken Message>

MUSIC: (MU)
 MALE: You can fly. (ME)
 With your feet on the ground, you can soar. (ME)
 The most advanced type of technology on earth has an IQ. (FE)
 SEIKO Intelligent Quarts. (CO/FE)
 MALE: So functions never dreamed of in a single watch are amazingly simple to understand.
 (FE)
 MALE: SEIKO. (CO)
 MALE: The future of time and the official timer of the games of the 25th Olympiad. (PA/C1/CE)

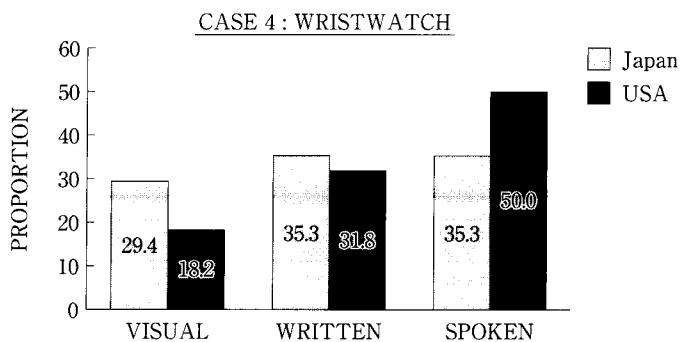


Fig. 13 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

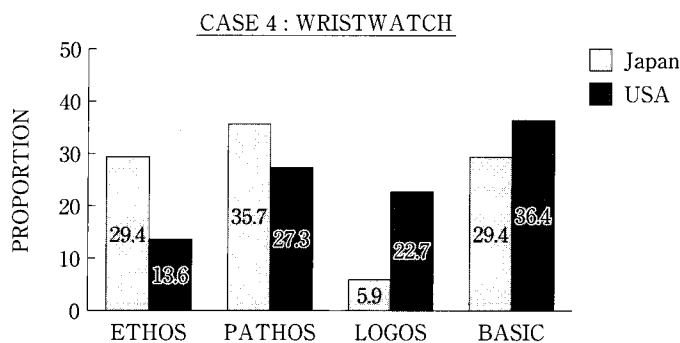


Fig. 14 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

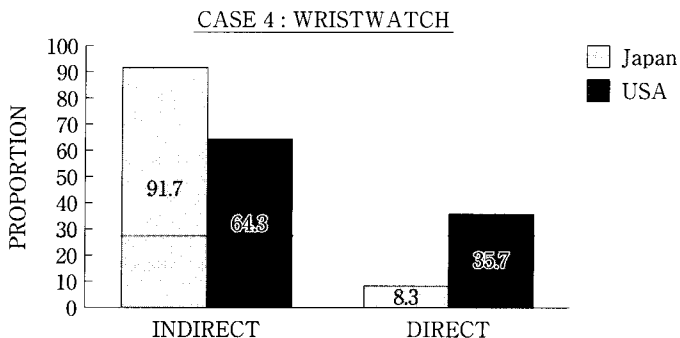


Fig. 15 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Cosmetics

This is the only example that deviates from the overall tendency of the Japanese and American approach. The result of analysis is presented in Fig. 16-18 and Table 5. In the Japanese commercial a young woman tell the features of the product. From the viewpoint that it depicts a young girl floating comfortably in the water, it is affective and indirect in impression. Yet the overall effect of the commercial is more inclined to the logical side. For this reason, in the persuasive mode we observe a number of similari-

ties with the American approach to commercials.

The American commercial describes a personified perfume bottle coming out of a luxurious car and walks into a hotel, which is probably the site of the Academy Award presentation. It tells us that she is often mistaken for an Italian movie star (which is actually a brand name of Italian perfume). The focus of the commercial is the quality of the product and the low price. This information is given in the spoken message. For this reason in terms of the medium it relies heavily on the spoken message, and in terms of the mode of persuasion the logical aspect is emphasized. It is a common feature observed in the American commercials. Yet in terms of directness and indirectness of persuasion the Japan-US difference is not clear because it uses the Ethos as an important part of persuasion.

Table 5 COSMETICS

<p>Japanese Case: She's Cleansing Cream by SHISEIDO (15 sec.) JINGLE: "She's" ! (V) A young lady looks up at the blue summer sky. (W) SHISEIDO FEMALE: Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (W) Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (V) Young lady standing on a city street. MALE: But "She's" mixes well with make-up and lets it wash off. (V) Woman puts cleansing cream on her finger and washes her face. FEMALE: Feels wonderful like this. (W) Feels wonderful like this. (V) Young woman on a float bathing in the sea with her arms spread out, expressing her delight. MALE: "She's" Make-up Cleansing. It washes away everything. (V) Picture of product. (W) Gentle to the skin. Contains Seaweed Extract. "She's" Make-up Cleansing. ¥1000.</p>
<p><Visual Message> (V) A young lady looks up at the blue summer sky. (OR/RE/BA) (V) Young lady standing on a city street. (RE/BA) (V) Woman puts cleansing cream on her finger and washes her face. (RE/PI/FE) (V) Young woman on a float bathing in the sea with her arms spread out, expressing her delight. (IM/PA) (V) Picture of product. (PI)</p>
<p><Written Message> (W) SHISEIDO (CO) (W) Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (FE) (W) Feels wonderful like this. (IM) (W) Gentle to the skin. Contains Seaweed Extract. "She's" Make-up Cleansing. ¥1000. (FE/NA/PR)</p>
<p><Spoken Message> JINGLE: "She's" ! (MU/NA) FEMALE: Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (FE) MALE: But "She's" mixes well with make-up and lets it wash off. (FE/C1/LO) FEMALE: Feels wonderful like this. (IM) MALE: "She's" Make-up Cleansing. It washes away everything. (FE/NA)</p>

<p>U.S. Case: PRIMO (15 sec.)</p> <p>(V) A bottle of PRIMO personified as a movie star comes out of a luxurious sedan. She walks toward the entrance of a hotel (which is probably a site of the Academy Award ceremony) as flashes camera shine on her way.</p> <p>PEOPLE: Who is it? Who is it?</p> <p>PRIMO: I'm always mistaken for Giorgio. I'm just as fabulous, but smarter. I'm PRIMO.</p> <p>PEOPLE: PRIMO!</p> <p>PRIMO: I'm mistaken for Giorgio and PRIMO costs just eighty dollars and lasts just as long as you do.</p> <p>MALE: If she likes Giorgio, she will love Primo.</p> <p>PRIMO: PRIMO. PRIMO. (W) Designer Impostor's PARFUMS de COEUR</p>
<p><Visual Message> (FA/CE/PI/FO/NA)</p> <p>(V) A bottle of PRIMO personified as a movie star comes out of a luxurious sedan. She walks toward the entrance of a hotel (which is probably a site of the Academy Award ceremony) as flashes camera shine on her way.</p>
<p><Written Message> (W) Designer Impostor's PARFUMS de COEUR (FE)</p>
<p><Spoken Message> PEOPLE: Who is it? Who is it? (BA) PRIMO: I'm always mistaken for Giorgio. (FA/CE) I'm just as fabulous, but smarter. (C1/IM) I'm PRIMO. (NA/NA) PEOPLE: PRIMO! (NA) PRIMO: I'm mistaken for Giorgio and PRIMO costs just eighty dollars and lasts just as long as you do. (PR/FE/LO/C2/NA) MALE: If she likes Giorgio, she will love PRIMO. (C2/NA) PRIMO: PRIMO. PRIMO. (NA/NA)</p>

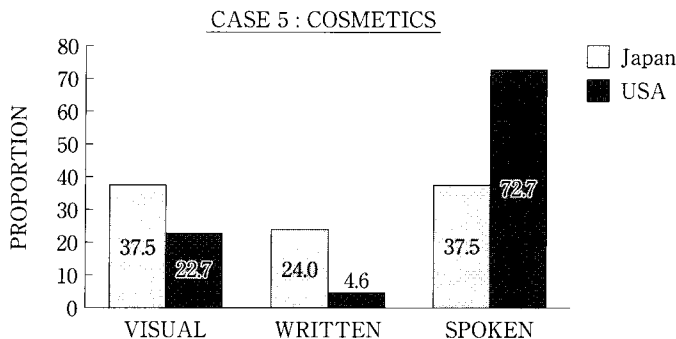


Fig. 16 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

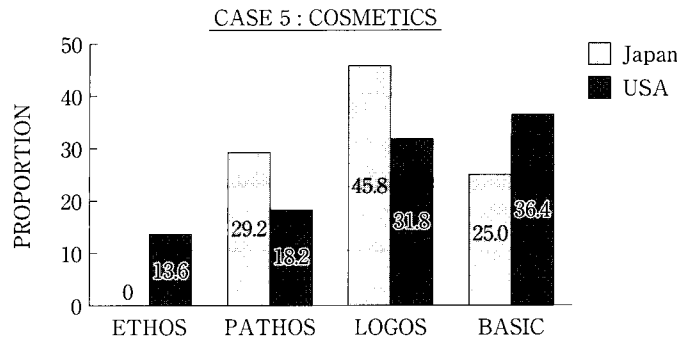


Fig. 17 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

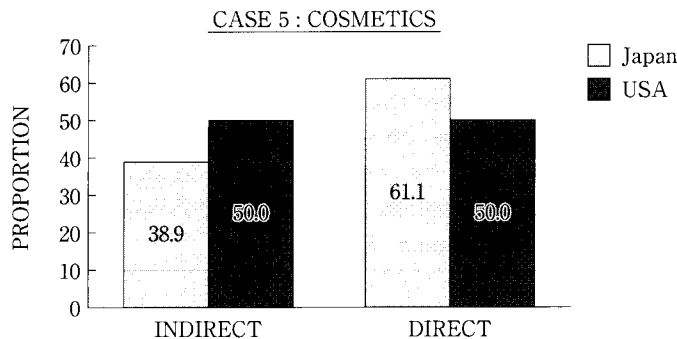


Fig. 18 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Discussion

What the result of the analysis indicates is that there is a marked difference in the strategy of persuasion employed in the TV commercials in Japan and the United States. The Japanese strategy is to approach consumers in an indirect way by appealing to the Pathos by loading the greatest part of information in the visual message. The American strategy, on the other hand, is the direct approach to consumers by repeating basic information and reasoning logically in the spoken message. The Japanese strategy might be termed "indirect persuasion through affective visual information" while the American strategy will be summarized as "direct persuasion through verbal reasoning."

This difference might be a reflection of the cultural mentality of the people of the two countries. TV commercials are a form of social persuasion directed to an indefinite number of people. For TV commercials to be effective they should appeal to the sentiments that are most vulnerable. For this purpose creators of TV commercials often make a large-scale marketing. The result of production is therefore a gist of psychology packed in a short program. In this sense TV commercials are a form of persuasion in its most sophisticated mode.

Japanese Society

What are the features that characterize Japanese society? First we will explore this theme by reviewing the work in sociology. Japanese society is often called a "network society" (Masuda Foundation, 1992). According to this view, Japanese society is defined as an insider society that bases its foundation on the mutual dependency among the members who shares common knowledge. Features that characterize a society like this are (1) autonomously distributed decision-making through concomitant communication and (2) corporationism. It will eventually lead to the principle of internal goals based upon "najimi" or familiarity. It is a society with situationism orientation characterized with homogeneity, closedness to outsiders, and flexibility.

In a society like this persuasive communication tends to be more subjective and affective in its value judgment rather than being objective and logical. People prefer to be use empathy in their communication because most of the communication takes place between people who can read other peoples' mind easily and comfortably. This mentality in turn helps to consolidate the sense of community and social solidarity. It is from these observations that Japanese society is defined as a society that consists of contextual rather than individual and regulate itself through information manipulation.

The United States and Europe, on the other hand, are societies that regulate themselves through "mutual control" by contract, which ultimately derives from individualism and legal control of mutual relations defined by rights and obligations, and authority and subordination (Masuda Foundation, 1992).

Japanese Society and its Mechanism of Formulation

We will now make a review of psychological findings concerning how the affective communication civilization is formulated in Japan.

Azuma (1991) reviews comparative studies on moral judgment, parent-child relations, and other social interactions in Japan and the United States. The study of moral judgment is pertinent to our present topic. For Japanese high school and college students the standard of moral judgment is primarily the sentiments of the person. For American students, however, it is the facts. From these observations Azuma defines Japanese culture as a society of "sentiments" that values consideration to other members. This mentality is formulated in the process of socialization such as mother-child relations. In such a society the most important principle is to read other peoples' mind and apply empathy.

This process first begins with the parent-child relations, where the parents create a feeling of one-ness. For this purpose parents avoid confrontation and even concede to or pamper their children in rearing them. Parents use this in-circle relationship in expressing their wish, expectations and values to their children. A typical approach is the persuasion which will be formulated as "You are a good boy (girl). A good boy (girl) doesn't do that." In this way parents attempt to transfuse the core image of a "ii-ko" or good child (White & LeVine, 1986).

The child, in turn, tries to regulate himself or herself using this image as a role model. He or she accommodates his or her behavior according to the expectations of the people important to them. This tendency, according to Azuma, is also observed in

the out-circle outside the mother-child relations. Japanese children already learn how to identify themselves with other people at the outset of their development. In the process of their development they extend and consolidate this mentality through interacting with teachers, friends, and all the people in the society. What is indispensable living in the Japanese society is "sasshi" or empathy which enables the members to share other people's thoughts and feelings.

On the other hand, Americans cope with child rearing in a different manner. Parents in the United States do not identify themselves with their children. They keep a certain distance apart from their children and thus attempt to regulate their behavior by exerting authoritative influence and imparting their expectations. American parents attempt to make their children conscious of the parental control and thus help make them independent.

These relations also hold in education (Azuma, 1991). For Japanese education is another symbiotic relation of teachers and students rather than communication from teachers to students as in the United States and Europe. In such interaction education is osmosis rather than instruction.

What the above discussion suggests is that the dominant mode of communication in Japan is empathy that is actualized in the affective and indirect manner. In the United States, however, communication is the imparting of logical reasoning through verbal exposition.

Japanese Society in Intercultural Communicative Perspective

The discussion above was mainly concerned with the features of groups that sociologically and psychologically characterize Japan and the United States. It does not necessarily indicate that the difference is greater than similarity in the two countries. Yet such difference is certainly an important element that might hinder intercultural communication between the two countries. Thus understanding the difference will help facilitate communication across cultures.

The factors that might hinder or facilitate communication between Japan and the United States should be summarized in the following two points. The Japanese empathy can be a source of trouble in intercultural communication. Such mentality as "I am certain that other people are aware of my need and expectation" does not work outside the Japanese society. In the same way Japanese might misunderstand Americans and Europeans when they attempt to understand them as they do in Japan. The second factor is the mutual dependence in the closed circuit. In a society like Japan tacit understanding is an important means of communication. However, outside Japan, this can cause unnecessary misunderstanding.

These factors are sources of miscommunication for Westerners. Yet they derive from the structure of Japanese society where mutual dependence and reliance is highly valued. In this sense these factors could be both sources of hindrance and facilitators of communication. The Western mode of communication is not the only solution to understanding. It is also one of the communicative modes that is based upon the social structure. In this sense it is important to bear in mind that the value of the communicative mode should be judged in the context of society.

Universal Mechanism of Communication

We have so far concerned ourselves with the difference in the communicative mode. We will now turn to the similarities in both modes of communication. The Russian linguist Mikhail Bakhtin presents a model of basic mechanism that describes how people's mentality is formed through social, cultural, and institutional/organizational communication (Wertsch, 1991).

Bakhtin notes the importance of the "voices" of utterance. According to Bakhtin the voices represent not only the speaker's intention (voice) but the intention (voice) of the listener (the target) and situation (context and social milieu). In this sense an utterance is always "multivoicedness" rather than a single voice. An utterance is not arbitrarily determined by the speaker but first begins by ventriloquating or borrowing another people's voice. The voice of the speaker meets the voice of another people and there begins a confrontation. Through this process of internal dialogicality the speaker's own voices are formulated.

Thus the speaker depends on another people and the context that surrounds him or her, and becomes one that is indivisible. The voices include not only the voice of the listener but more important voices originating from social language or social dialect, that is, usage and new words used by sources of authority such as certain social classes, circles, schools or governments. It also contains "speech genre" based on certain activities such as greetings or dialogue at table. The process of dialogicality that takes place between the speaker's voice and the social dialect helps the speaker to relate to social, cultural, and historical factors of the society he or she lives in.

Bakhtin's theory suggests that even in a context of a school where most of the information moves from the teacher to the students, the student's voice interact with the voice of the school and the dialogicality helps formulate knowledge in the students. In this sense what takes place when teachers interact with their students is actually osmosis rather than instruction. For education to take place in a most effective manner it is important to motivate the student to wish to belong to the world of school and to learn. The same process takes place when TV commercials are broadcast.

The discussion above indicates that the persuasive approach used in TV commercials should be judged in the context of the society. The Japanese approach of TV commercials are an example along with child-rearing practice and education that reflects the mentality of the society. However, as Bakhtin implied in his theory, it also shares similarities with the orientation in the Western culture in the deeper strata of cultural mentality. The superficial difference should not mislead us in the understanding of the Japanese and Western cultures.

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VOICES OF TV COMMERCIALS AS THE REFLECTION OF CULTURAL MENTALITY: A JAPAN-U.S. COMPARISON

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify some of the salient features of Japanese persuasive communication as exemplified in TV commercials through a contrastive analysis of Japanese and American ones. The protocol analysis indicated that there was a marked difference in the strategy of persuasion employed in TV commercials in Japan and the United States. The Japanese strategy is to approach consumers in an indirect way by appealing to the Pathos by loading the greatest part of information in the visual message. The American strategy, on the other hand, is the direct approach to consumers by repeating basic information and reasoning logically in the spoken message. The Japanese strategy might be termed "indirect persuasion through affective visual information," while the American strategy will be summarized as "direct persuasion through verbal reasoning." The origin of this difference as a reflection of the cultural mentality of the people of the two countries was discussed.

Key words : Persuasive communication, Intercultural communication, Multivoicedness, Cultural mentality

One of the fundamental issues in developmental psychology is how social processes are related to psychological processes (Wertsch, 1998). In fact, human cognitive activity has been considered to be both embedded and constituted within sociocultural activities, and most of us seem to agree that the analysis of social factors play an important role in attempts to explain the emergence of individual psychological phenomena. In spite of that notion, we have often failed to comprehend the psychological processes as the result of their interaction with social factors.

The purpose of this study is to examine and identify some of the salient features of persuasive communication as exemplified in TV commercials through a contrastive analysis of Japanese and American TV commercials. It will also lead to some insights about the cross-cultural communication between Japan and the United States (or more broadly the Western countries).

TV commercials are mode of persuasive communication in its most sophisticated form. They are intended to achieve the greatest effect with minimum cost. Within a limited amount of time TV commercials attempt to communicate manufacturers' messages to consumers in a most impressive manner. TV commercials are a powerful medi-

um of persuasion, but expensive. For this reason advertising agencies responsible for creating TV commercials use utmost care in their analysis of consumer behavior. This means that the persuasive approach used in TV commercials reflects the cultural values and orientations of the people in the society.

Consequently, we would get insights about the features of persuasive communication in each culture in its most distinctive form by analyzing TV commercials in different countries.

Method

Data Collection

A total of six-hour programming from a major nation-wide network was videotaped from 5:00 p.m. through 11:00 p.m. on a weekday respectively in Japan and the United States. This resulted in the collection of approximately seventy commercials in each country. From this collection of data, commercials that advertised the same type of product were picked out so that they would make a pair between Japan and the United States. Five sets of commercials, i.e. five commercials from each country, were finally selected for analysis: (1) credit card, (2) public message, (3) automobile, (4) wristwatch, and (5) cosmetics.

Procedure of Data Analysis

1. Transcription

Messages communicated in TV commercials are three-fold: Visual, Spoken, and Written. The visual message is information that is imparted on the TV screen. This, however, does not include linguistic messages that appear as words. The spoken message is the kind of information that is transmitted aurally. This includes songs and instrumental music for convenience. The written message appears on the screen as linguistic representation.

The three types of information that was transcribed for each commercial made the data for our research. This information is provided in the Table 1 to 5.

2. Formulating Categories for Analysis:

After viewing each TV commercial several times the two researchers shared their overall impressions and discussed their observations. During this process a list of features that should contribute to our impressions was formulated to exhaust possible categories for analysis. From this list the following four major categories were set up for our analysis. The first three dimensions of categories are compatible to Aristotle's rhetoric of persuasion.

Ethos: appealing to the authority of the speaker.

AU: Professional Authority

CE: Celebrated People

FO: Foreigners

GO: Group Oriented

Pathos: appealing to the sentiments and emotions.

PA: Appeal to Emotions

- ME: Metaphor
- MU: Music (including songs)
- BA: Background Information
- FA: Fantasy
- IM: Impression of Product
- IN: Indirect Message
- Logos: appealing to logical reasoning.*
- LO: Logical Reasoning
- OR: Ordinary People
- C1: Comparison with the Company's Previous Products
- C2: Comparison with Other Company's Products
- RE: Realistic Situation
- FE: Features of Product
- CR: Credibility
- DI: Direct Message

In addition to the three dimensions above the Basic was set up to accommodate the types of information that are likely to appear in every commercial.

Basic: product name, company name and related announcements

- NA: Product Name
- PI: Picture of Product
- CO: Company Name and Logo
- AN: Announcement (of Phone Number, Address, etc.)

3. Coding Procedure

According to the schematic categories set up above, codes were assigned to each unit of information respectively for visual, spoken and written messages. Then the number of codes were counted for each category. Specifically the procedure was divided in the following steps:

(A) Unitization

The smallest unit of information was identified for each protocol. This served as the basic unit of analysis.

(B) Categorization and Comparison

Categories for analysis were assigned to each unit. A single unit may be categorized in more than one way.

(C) Counting of Codes

The number of codes were counted for each category of persuasion after being classified according to the type of messages. Codes that relate to overall feature like [Realistic Situation], [Background Information], [Ordinary People] and [Fantasy] were counted only once for each category of Visual, Spoken, and Written. In order to compare the number of direct and indirect messages the Ethos and the Pathos were grouped together to represent indirect messages. The Logos was used to represent direct messages. The number of codes that appeared in each category was used as an index to represent directness and indirectness of persuasion.

The coding was independently done by the two researchers and this procedure was

repeated until they agreed in more than 90% of the total coding.

Results

OVERALL ANALYSIS

After coding each unit of the message, the number of codes were compared between Japanese and US commercials for all the cases in order to view the general tendency. The comparison was made according to the medium of information, the modes of persuasion, and directness and indirectness. The length of commercials differed in Japan and the United States. For making comparisons the number of codes was transformed to percentages.

Medium of Information

Fig. 1 shows the amount of information as measured by the number of category codes communicated in visual, written, and spoken messages. Japanese commercials communicate the greatest amount of information in the visual message (38.6%) even though the difference from the spoken message (35.1%), the second highest, is small. The written message communicate 26.3% of information. This contrasts sharply with the American TV commercials, where the greatest amount of information is communicated in the spoken message (54.7%). The visual and written message communicate respectively 27.7% and 17.6% of information. American TV commercials rely heavily on the spoken information whereas in Japanese commercials this tendency is not as clear and it seems to rely more on the visual side.

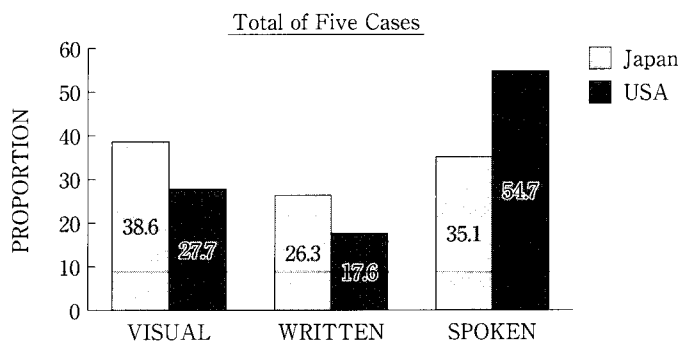


Fig. 1 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

Mode of Persuasion

Fig. 2 shows the result of comparison in terms of the mode of persuasion. American TV commercials provide more information (35.8%) than Japanese commercials (19.3%) about the Basic, which is the basic requirement of commercials covering the names of manufactures and products. Excepting the Basic, the amount of information for the mode of persuasion for the Japanese commercials is, in the descending order, the Pathos (41.2%), the Logos (19.3%), and the Ethos (11.4%). The American data, on the other hand, is 35.8% for the Logos, 22.3% for the Pathos, and 6.1% for the Ethos. The emphasis in the Japanese TV commercials is in the Pathos while it is in the Logos in the

American commercials. This tendency will become more marked when we compare dimensions including the Basic side of information.

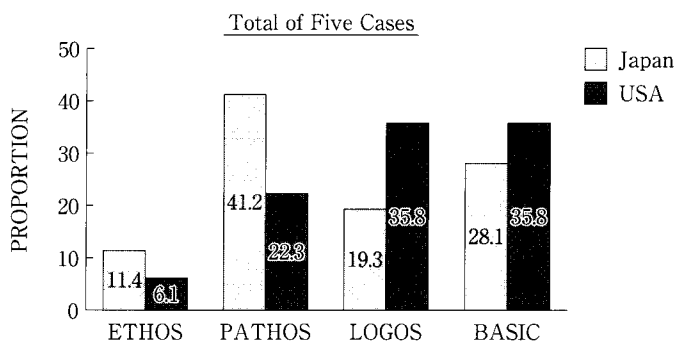


Fig. 2 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

Directness of Persuasion

Fig. 3 is the result of comparison in terms of directness and indirectness of persuasion. The difference between Japan and the United States is also marked here. The Japanese TV commercials rely heavily on indirect persuasion (73.2%) whereas The American persuasion is more inclined to direct orientation (55.8%).

The observation above indicates that there is a difference in the persuasive approach as used in the TV commercials in Japan and the United States. The Japanese strategy is to appeal to visual impression and affective side of communication in an indirect manner whereas in the United States TV commercials are intended to be more direct, appealing to logical reasoning by means of spoken messages.

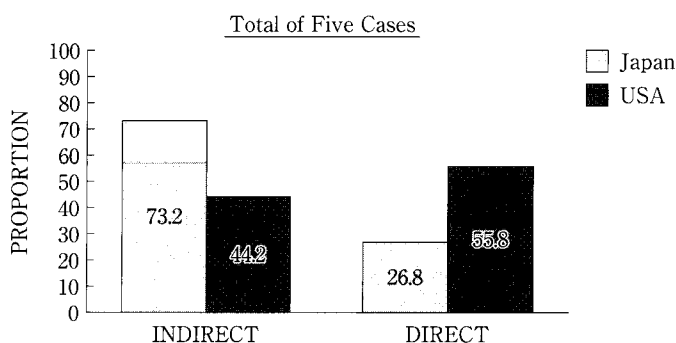


Fig. 3 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

CASE ANALYSIS

The following sections present the result of analysis of each commercial used for our data. Refer to the Table 1-5 for the details of protocols and their coding.

Credit Card

This is one of the most typical examples that represent the overall tendency. The

result of analysis is shown in Fig. 4, 5, 6, and Table 1. The Japanese commercial is intended to project the internationality and “strength” of the card by presenting visual information depicting the practice of Kungfu. It does not provide any practical information, i.e. the Logos, as to how the card is international and strong. Instead it appeals to the Ethos and Pathos by entering a well-known actor and emphasizing the visual effect of communication.

The American commercial, on the other hand, is more direct, appealing primarily to the Logos. The situation presented here is realistic, something everybody experiences in their shopping. It provides detailed information and reasoning about the utility of the CITIBANK card by means of spoken messages.

Table 1 CREDIT CARD

V:Visual Information, W:Written Message, S:Spoken Message

<p><u>Japanese Case: DC Card (15 sec)</u></p> <p>MALE: International!</p> <p>(S) Music</p> <p>(V) A group of American men and women with Kiichi Nakai (Japanese actor) in front practicing Kungfu on a street in New York City. Everybody has a DC Card on their fists.</p> <p>ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! (Shouts in Kungfu)</p> <p>(V) Everybody practicing Kungfu.</p> <p>ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha!</p> <p>(V) A DC Card lands on a fist in a close-up.</p> <p>(V) Nakai shows his left fist on which we see a DC Card.</p> <p>MALE: International!</p> <p>(V) Nakai puts his fists on his eyes. We see two DC Cards on top of Nakai's fists.</p> <p>MALE: Hahahaha. (Laugh)</p> <p>(V) Nakai runs on the street with his right fist on his left shoulder. Three bombs exploding after him. Smoke.</p> <p>(W) International.</p> <p>(V) Nakai raises his right arm with his hand holding a DC Card with skyscrapers in the background.</p> <p>NAKAI: International Card. The name is ...</p> <p>(V) Nakai about to fly up in the air.</p> <p>FEMALE: DC Card. (in a jingle).</p> <p>(V) DC Card with skyscrapers in the background.</p> <p>(W) WHAT'S NEXT? DC CARD!</p> <p>(V) Visual Message</p> <p>(W) Written Message</p>
<p><Visual Information></p> <p>(V) A group of American men and women with Kiichi Nakai (Japanese actor) in front practicing Kungfu on a street in New York City. Everybody has a DC Card on their fists. Everybody practicing Kungfu. (ME/PA/CE/FO/FA/GR)</p> <p>(V) A DC Card lands on a fist in a close-up. (PI)</p> <p>(V) Nakai shows his left fist on which we see a DC Card. (PI)</p> <p>(V) Nakai puts his fists on his eyes. We see two DC Cards on top of Nakai's fists. (PI/ME)</p> <p>(V) Nakai runs on the street with his right fist on his left shoulder. Three bombs exploding after him. Smoke.</p> <p>(ME)</p> <p>(V) Nakai raises his right arm with his hand holding a DC Card with skyscrapers in the background. Nakai about to fly up in the air. (PI/ME/PA)</p> <p>(V) DC Card with skyscrapers in the background. (PI/ME)</p>
<p><Written Message></p> <p>(W) International. (FO)</p>

(W) WHAT'S NEXT DC CARD (C1/FO/NA)

<Spoken Message>

MALE: International! (FO)
 MUSIC: (MU/PA)
 ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! (Shouts in Kungfu) (ME/PA)
 ALL: Ha, ha, ha, ha! (ME/PA)
 MALE: International! (FO)
 MALE: Hahahaha. (Laugh)
 NAKAI: International Card. The name is ... (NA)
 FEMALE: DC Card. (in a jingle). (MU)

U.S. Case: CITIBANK Card (15 sec.)

(At a camera shop)

(V) Customer looking at a camera on the counter with a hesitating look.
 MALE STORE OWNER: You can see the hesitation in my customers' faces.
 (V) Store owner showing a camera to his customer.
 OWNER: I mean I know I'm giving them the best prices.
 But how can I prove it?
 So I suggest the use of CITIBANK VISA.
 OWNER: Just a moment.
 (V) Smile on the customer's face reflected on the glass.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card returned to the customer.
 (W) CITIBANK Price Protection
 (MUSIC)
 OWNER: Here you go, Walter.
 Enjoy your camera.
 OWNER: When they see they could have purchased at approved ad or for less, CITIBANK refunds the difference up to one hundred and fifty dollars.
 (V) Female customer inspecting a camera.
 (V) Store owner looks toward his customer.
 OWNER: May I help you?
 (V) Customer asking for help of the store owner.
 FEMALE CUSTOMER: Yes, please.
 OWNER: That's CITIBANK price protection.
 If getting the right price is important, this is the right card.
 (V) Store owner shows a CITIBANK VISA card to us.
 MALE: Not just VISA, CITIBANK VISA.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card.
 (W) NOT JUST VISA, CITIBANK VISA.

<Visual Message>

(OR/MU/RE/BA/IM/PI/BA/CO)
 (V) Customer looking at a camera on the counter with a hesitating look.
 (V) Store owner showing a camera to his customer.
 (V) Smile on the customer's face reflected on the glass.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card returned to the customer.
 (V) Female customer inspecting a camera.
 (V) Store owner looks toward his customer.
 (V) Customer asking for help of the store owner.
 (V) Store owner shows a CITIBANK VISA card to us.
 (V) CITIBANK VISA card.

<Written Message>

(W) CITIBANK Price Protection (FE/CO)
 (W) NOT JUST VISA, CITIBANK VISA. (CO/NA/C2)

<Spoken Message>

(BA/NA/LO/FE/CO/FE/CO/FE/LO/CO/NA/C2)

MALE STORE OWNER: You can see the hesitation in my customers' faces.

OWNER: I mean I know I'm giving them the best prices.

But how can I prove it?

So I suggest the use of CITIBANK VISA.

OWNER: Just a moment.

(MUSIC)

OWNER: Here you go, Walter.

Enjoy your camera.

OWNER: When they see they could have purchased at approved ad or for less, CITIBANK refunds the difference up to one hundred and fifty dollars.

OWNER: May I help you?

FEMALE CUSTOMER: Yes, please.

OWNER: That's CITIBANK price protection.

If getting the right price is important, this is the right card.

MALE: Not just VISA, CITIBANK VISA.

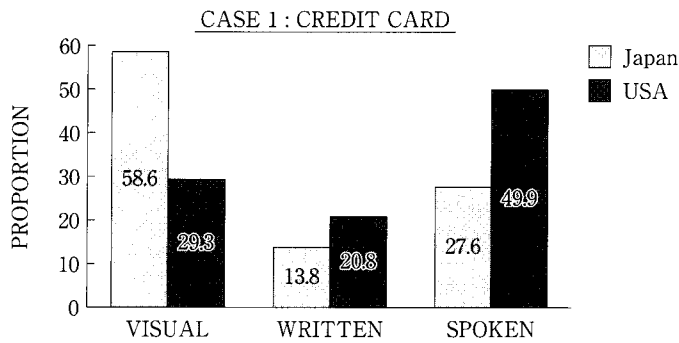


Fig. 4 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

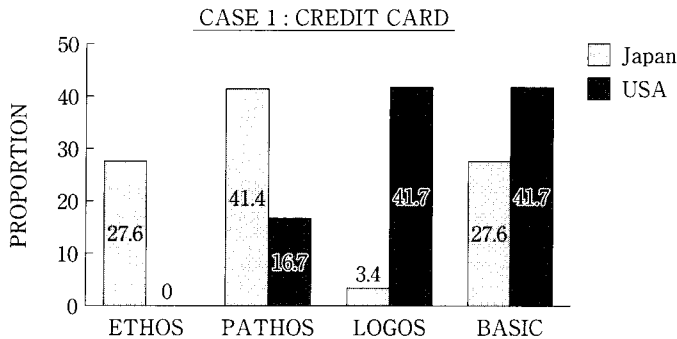


Fig. 5 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

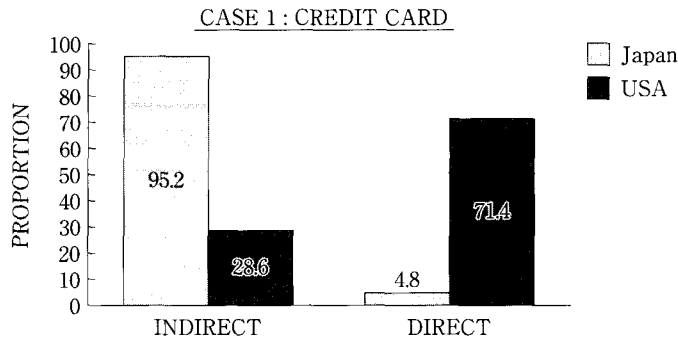


Fig. 6 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Public Message

This is another example that typically exemplifies the overall tendency. Fig. 7-9 and Table 2 are the result of analysis. The topic of the Japanese public message is the illegal parking that might result in a loss of life. The American public message emphasizes the danger of alcoholism and drugs. In both announcements the greatest amount of information is communicated by the spoken message probably because they are intended to be informative. They also show the same tendency in the amount of information used in the Visual and Written (Fig. 7). Yet they show a marked difference in the mode of persuasion (Fig. 8).

In the Japanese work the face or the body of a patient is not shown on the screen. Instead the film shows anxious faces of the members of the rescue crew and the neighbors in order to imply the emergency of the situation. In the end of the story we know from the happy faces of the doctors and the patient's family that the patient was saved. During this process the message "If it had been fifteen minutes late, ..." is repeated. The message does not say what would have happened if it had been fifteen minutes late. It tells us in an indirect way that the patient's life might have been lost. It does not directly touch upon the theme of death. Both the Visual and Written messages are intended to be indirect and more affective.

In the American film the focus of attention is the patient himself, who dies at the end of the short story. He repeatedly tells the viewers that he failed to listen to other people's advice and how he is sorry about it. At the end of the story a white piece of cloth is placed over the patient's face, telling that he is dead. It directly deals with the theme of death. The strategy used here is the logic and direct approach to the theme.

Table 2 PUBLIC MESSAGE

Japanese Case: Illegal Parking (30 sec.)

(V) A doctor, two nurses and a patient's family look down (at a patient who is not shown on the screen) with a relieved look and smile.

MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ...

(V) An ambulance speeding on a city street.

MUSIC: Warning signal from the ambulance and music that makes you uneasy.

(V) The ambulance stops. Concerned look on the driver.

(V) The ambulance obstructed by an illegally parked automobile.

(V) Close-up shot of the illegally parked automobile.

Chalked line on the street and a sticker on the side rearview mirror indicating illegal parking.

(V) Pedestrian looking around the illegally parked automobiles with a concerned look on his face.

(V) Officer in the ambulance with a concerned look.

MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ...

(V) Door to an operation room

MALE: Due to illegal parking, a life that could be saved ...

It might happen to you tomorrow.

(V) A doctor talking to a patient and his family on the lawn of the hospital yard. Smiles on everybody.

MALE: AC Public Message Organization.

(V) An ambulance speeding on the street with cars parking on each side.

(W) Stop Illegal Parking

FEMALE: AC. (in a jingle)

(W) Consideration for Everybody.

AC Public Message Organization.

<Visual Message>

(PA/OR/RE/BA/LO/IN)

(V) A doctor, two nurses and a patient's family looks down (at a patient who is not shown on the screen) with a relieved look and smile.

(V) An ambulance speeding on a city street.

(V) The ambulance stops. Concerned look on the driver.

(V) The ambulance obstructed by an illegally parked automobile.

(V) Close-up shot of the illegally parked automobile.

Chalked line on the street and a sticker on the side rearview mirror indicating illegal parking.

(V) Pedestrian looking around the illegally parked automobiles with a concerned look on his face.

(V) Officer in the ambulance with a concerned look.

(V) Door to an operation room

(V) A doctor talking to a patient and his family on the lawn of the hospital yard. Smiles on everybody.

(V) An ambulance speeding on the street with cars parking on each side.

(W) Stop Illegal Parking

(W) Consideration for Everybody.

AC Public Message Organization.

<Written Message>

(W) Stop Illegal Parking (NA)

(W) Consideration for Everybody. (PA)

AC Public Message Organization. (CR)

<Spoken Message>

MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ... (PA/LO/IN)

MUSIC: Warning signal from the ambulance and music that makes you uneasy. (MU/PA)

MALE: If it had been fifteen minutes late, ... (PA/LO/IN)

MALE: Due to illegal parking, a life that could be saved ...

It might happen to you tomorrow. (NA/PA/LO)

MALE: AC Public Message Organization. (CR)

FEMALE: AC. (in a jingle) (CR/MU)

U.S. Case: COALESCE (30 sec.)

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL.

PATIENT (MALE): I thought I had control.

(V) A patient taken in on a stretcher to an operation room of a hospital.

PATIENT: I drank some. I smoked now and then.

First I lost my job.

They offered help, but I thought I had control.

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL.

PATIENT: Then my wife left.

I didn't care because I thought I had control.

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL.

PATIENT: I needed money. Anywhere I can get it.

(V) The patient given treatment in the operation room.

PATIENT: I learned a valuable lesson.

I didn't have control.

(V) A white piece of cloth is put on the face of the patient, indicating that he died.

MALE: Drugs and alcohol destroy lives.

COALESCE restores them.

If you know anyone you know has problems with drugs and alcohol, call COALESCE at 874-CARE.

(V) An ambulance speeding on the street.

(W) 874-CARE

PATIENT: I thought I had control.

Man, I was wrong.

(W) COALESCE

Drug & Alcohol Treatment Facility 874-CARE

<Visual Message>

(BA/PA/OR/RE/DI)

(V) A patient taken in on a stretcher to an operation room of a hospital.

(V) The patient given treatment in the operation room.

(V) A white piece of cloth is put on the face of the patient, indicating that he died.

(V) An ambulance speeding on the street.

<Written Message>

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL. (BA)

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL. (BA)

(W) I THOUGHT I HAD CONTROL. (BA)

(W) 874-CARE (FE/AN)

(W) COALESCE (CO/AN)

<Spoken Message>

PATIENT (MALE): I thought I had control. (BA)

PATIENT: I drank some. I smoked now and then.

First I lost my job.

They offered help, but I thought I had control.

(BA/DI)

PATIENT: Then my wife left.

I didn't care because I thought I had control. (BA/DI)

PATIENT: I needed money. Anywhere I can get it. (BA/DI)

PATIENT: I learned a valuable lesson.

I didn't have control. (BA/DI)

MALE: Drugs and alcohol destroy lives.

COALESCE restores them.

If you know anyone you know has problems with drugs and alcohol, call COALESCE at 874-CARE. (CO/FE/AN)

PATIENT: I thought I had control.

Man, I was wrong. (BA/DI)

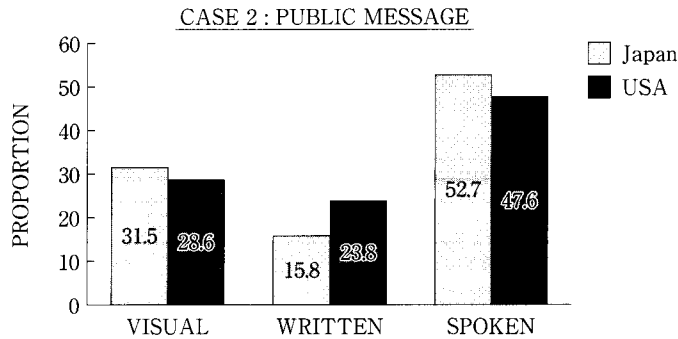


Fig. 7 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

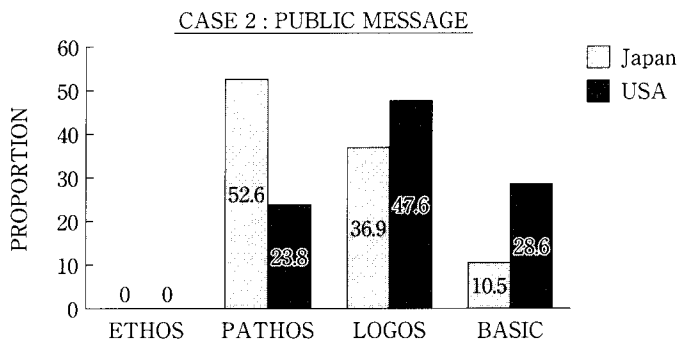


Fig. 8 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

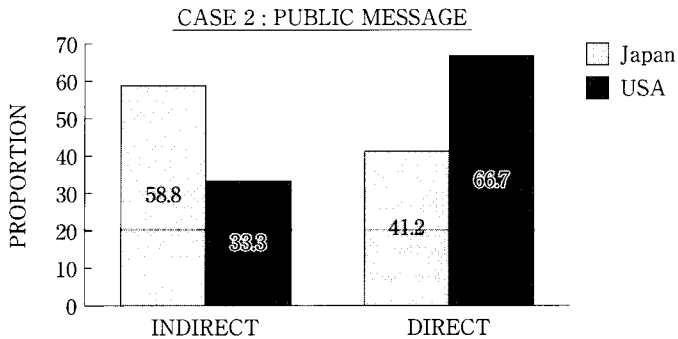


Fig. 9 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Automobile

This example shares a number of similarities with the overall tendency. The result of analysis is presented in Fig. 10-12, and Table 3. In the Japanese commercial the focus of attention is a graceful woman who stands on the dune. She is modeled after a woman that appears in the well-known ukiyoe painting by Utamaro. Two automobiles gracefully pass her on the dune. The pictures presented here are a fantasy intended to be affective. Through this fantastic description the commercial projects the image of graceful-

ness of the automobile. The most dominant feature here is the emotional, indirect approach to the theme. The total amount of information is small and the greatest part of information is communicated by the Written message.

The American commercial is a story about a rich gentleman who is stranded on a desert road and given a ride. He is fascinated by the car he happens to ride and craves to have it himself. The focus of the commercial is the luxurious equipments, which are ordinarily mounted on an expensive automobile. It tells the viewers how they can enjoy the luxury with a limited amount of money. The approach of persuasion is direct and logical. The total amount of information is not large. Except the Basic elements of information, there is no marked difference between the Pathos and the Logos and also between the directness and indirectness of persuasion.

Table 3 AUTOMOBIL

<p><u>Japanese Case: Presea by NISSAN (15 sec.)</u> FEMALE: Presea. (Song as in an opera)</p> <p>(V) A young woman in a kimono with her back toward us standing on a dune. A Presea gracefully appears in the upper right hand corner.</p> <p>(W) NISSAN.</p> <p>MALE: The most graceful sedan.</p> <p>(W) The most graceful sedan.</p> <p>(W) Options Equipped Version.</p> <p>(V) The sedan gracefully passes the screen.</p> <p>(V) The young woman gracefully looks back over her shoulder toward us (just like the beautiful woman in Utamaro's ukiyoe masterpiece "Woman Looking Back over her Shoulder").</p> <p>MALE: NISSAN Presea.</p> <p>(V) Two Preseas coming from right and left gracefully pass the woman.</p> <p>(W) Fasten Seat Belts.</p> <p>MALE: A debut.</p> <p>(W) A debut. Utmost grace. STYLISH 4 DOOR (in English). Presea.</p> <p>MALE: Visit your NISSAN dealer this weekend.</p> <p>(W) Meet the Presea this weekend. 6/30 Sat., 7/1 Sun. Preview. Visit your Sunny/Laurel dealer.</p>
<p><Visual Message></p> <p>(V) A young woman in a kimono with her back toward us standing on a dune. A Presea gracefully appears in the upper right hand corner. (PA/FA/PI)</p> <p>(V) The sedan gracefully passes the screen. (PI)</p> <p>(V) The young woman gracefully looks back over her shoulder toward us (just like the beautiful woman in Utamaro's ukiyoe masterpiece "Woman Looking Back over her Shoulder"). (ME/PA/CE)</p> <p>(V) Two Preseas coming from right and left gracefully pass the woman. (PI)</p>
<p><Written Message></p> <p>(W) NISSAN. (CO)</p> <p>(W) The most graceful sedan. (ME/PA)</p> <p>(W) Options Equipped Version. (CR)</p> <p>(W) Fasten Seat Belts. (CR)</p> <p>(W) A debut. Utmost grace. STYLISH 4 DOOR (in English). Presea. (NA/IM/PA/AN)</p> <p>(W) Meet the Presea this weekend. 6/30 Sat., 7/1 Sun. Preview. Visit your Sunny/Laurel dealer. (NA/AN)</p>

<Spoken Message>

FEMALE: Presea. (Song as in a opera) (MU/PA)

MALE: The most graceful sedan. (ME/PA)

MALE: NISSAN Presea. (NA)

MALE: A debut. (AN)

MALE: Visit your NISSAN dealer this weekend. (AN)

U.S. Case: NISSAN Sentra (15 sec.)

(MUSIC) Music intended to incite uneasiness.

(V) A gentleman standing beside his car that is stranded on the road in the desert due to some mechanical trouble.

(V) A Sentra comes by and he gets a ride.

(V) The Sentra runs swiftly on the desert road.

(V) The CD player functions automatically.

(V) The sun roof opens automatically.

GENTLEMAN: What kind of car is this?

(V) A close-up shot of the brief case on the lap of the gentleman.

DRIVER (MALE): A Sentra.

(V) A shot of the Sentra running swiftly on the desert road.

GENTLEMAN: Do you consider selling it?

DRIVER: No.

(V) The man opens his briefcase. It is full of bank notes.

GENTLEMAN: Do you sell it for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars?

DRIVER: Ah ...

(V) The gentleman looks at the driver.

GENTLEMAN: OK. Two fifty ...

(Loud sound of horn)

(V) A woman extending her hand. She has two one-dollar bills and two quarters in her hand.

WOMAN: Two fifty. Two fifty, sir, for your change.

(V) The Sentra beside the ticket booth of the toll gate.

MALE: Nissan Sentra GX-E because rich guys shouldn't have all the fun.

(W) NISSAN

BUILT FOR THE HUMAN RACE

<Visual Message>

(V) A gentleman standing beside his car that is stranded on the road in the desert due to some mechanical trouble. (BA/BA)

(V) A Sentra comes by and he gets a ride. (PI/BA)

(V) The Sentra runs swiftly on the desert road. (PI/BA)

(V) The CD player functions automatically. (FE)

(V) The sun roof opens automatically. (FE)

(V) A close-up shot of the brief case on the lap of the gentleman. (BA)

(V) A shot of the Sentra running swiftly on the desert road. (PI)

(V) The man opens his briefcase. It is full of bank notes. (BA)

(V) The gentleman looks at the driver. (BA)

(V) A woman extending her hand. She has two one-dollar bills and two quarters in her hand. (BA)

(V) The Sentra beside the ticket booth of the toll gate. (BA/PI/ME)

<Written Message>

(W) NISSAN (CO)

BUILT FOR THE HUMAN RACE (CR)

<Spoken Message>

(MUSIC) Music intended to incite uneasiness. (MU/PA)

GENTLEMAN: What kind of car is this?

DRIVER (MALE): A Sentra. (BA/NA)

GENTLEMAN: Do you consider selling it?
 DRIVER: No. (BA)
 GENTLEMAN: Do you sell it for a hundred and fifty thousand dollars? (BA)
 DRIVER: Ah ...
 GENTLEMAN: OK. Two fifty ... (ME)
 (Loud sound of horn)
 WOMAN: Two fifty. Two fifty, sir, for your change. (ME)
 MALE: Nissan Sentra GX-E because rich guys shouldn't have all the fun. (NA/PR/PA)

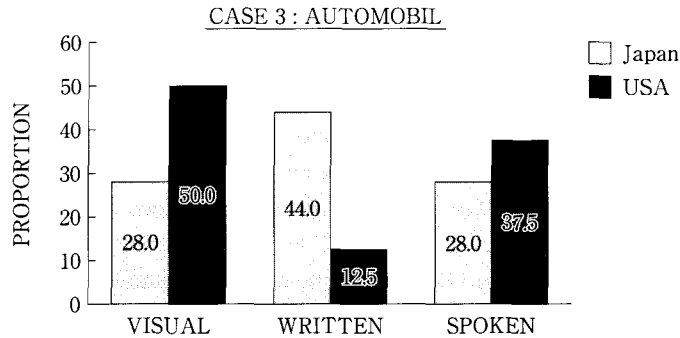


Fig. 10 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

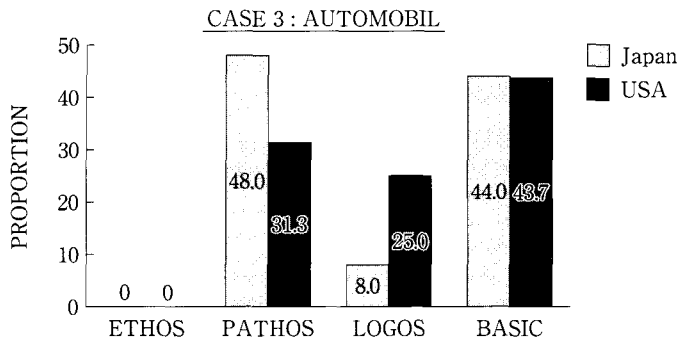


Fig. 11 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

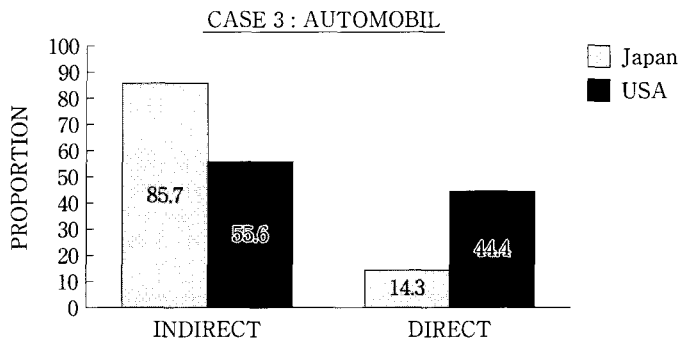


Fig. 12 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Wristwatch

This example also show a close tendency to the overall result of comparison. The result of analysis is shown in Fig. 13-15 and Table 4. The two commercials are by the same manufacturer. In the Japanese commercial a young woman is the focus of attention. She is energetic and leads her colleagues in her office. No explanation is provided about the product. The only information about the product they provide in this commercial is the picture of the watch that appears in the background and the name of the watch that appears as the Written information. It does not tell the features of the product. Instead it tells us that it is a watch that is made for a young woman with a new vision and new look on life. The persuasive approach is affective and it is intended to appeal to the group-oriented mentality of Japanese. There is not marked difference observed among the Visual, Written, and Spoken.

The American commercial directly appeals to the advanced technology with which the watch is made. It projects the high-tech image by showing a computerized picture of a future plane. It also provides spoken information about the "intelligence" and advanced features of the watch. It relies on the Ethos by telling us that the manufacture is the authorized sponsor of the Olympic Games. This commercial is typically American in the sense that it directly describes the product. In terms of the mode of persuasion there is not much difference between the Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. The amount of direct persuasion is smaller than that of indirect use. For this reason this commercial also shares certain features with most other Japanese commercials.

Table 4 WRISTWATCH

<p><u>Japanese Case: Creo by SEIKO (15 sec.)</u></p> <p>(W) SEIKO</p> <p>(V) Japanese actress Washio Isako's face looking toward us in a close up.</p> <p>FEMALE: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. (in a jingle)</p> <p>FEMALE: How should I say? You are modern.</p> <p>WASHIO: OK. Let me do the job.</p> <p>(V) Conference room with ten or so male employees sitting at a table. Washio stands in front of the people, looking toward us and smiling.</p> <p>MALE: I am always impressed with your enthusiasm you show in your work.</p> <p>(V) Close-up shot of Washio's face. Washio with her hands on the back of her head with a coy look on her face.</p> <p>WASHIO: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo.</p> <p>(V) A watch appears on the screen with Washio's face in the background.</p> <p>(W) CREO. SEIKO. ¥37000 ¥40000.</p> <p>(V) Illustration of John Lennon and Yoko Ono.</p> <p>(W) Something to choose with your lover. SEIKO WATCH GIFT.</p>
<p><Visual Message></p> <p>(V) Japanese actress Washio Isako's face looking toward us in a close up. (CE)</p> <p>(V) Conference room with ten or so male employees sitting at a table. Washio stands in front of the people, looking toward us and smiling. (BA)</p> <p>(V) Close-up shot of Washio's face. Washio with her hands on the back of her head with a coy look on her face. (BA)</p> <p>(V) A watch appears on the screen with Washio's face in the background. (PI)</p> <p>(V) Illustration of John Lennon and Yoko Ono. (FO/CE)</p>

<Written Message>

(W) SEIKO (CO)
 (W) CREO. SEIKO. ¥37000 ¥40000. (NA/CO/PR)
 (W) Something to choose with your lover. SEIKO WATCH GIFT.
 (FO/ME)

<Spoken Message>

FEMALE: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. Handsome career,
 SEIKO Creo. (in a jingle) (MU/ME)
 FEMALE: How should I say? You are modern. (BA)
 WASHIO: OK. Let me do the job. (BA)
 MALE: I am always impressed with your enthusiasm you show in your work. (BA)
 WASHIO: Handsome career, SEIKO Creo. (FO/PA/NA)

U.S. Case: SEIKO (15 sec.)

(W) SEIKO FLIGHT COMPUTER
 (V) A close-up shot of the face of a watch.
 (MUSIC)
 MALE: You can fly.
 With your feet on the ground, you can soar.
 The most advanced type of technology on earth has an IQ.
 SEIKO Intelligent Quarts.
 (V) A shot of the watch in its whole view.
 MALE: So functions never dreamed of in a single watch are amazingly simple to understand.
 (V) A computer graphic image of a future airplane.
 MALE: SEIKO.
 (W) SEIKO THE FUTURE OF TIME.
 MALE: The future of time and the official timer of the games of the 25th Olympiad.
 (W) SEIKO THE OFFICIAL TIMER OF THE XXVth OLYMPIAD.
 (W) SEIKO.
 (V) Logo of the Barcelona Olympic Games.

<Visual Message>

(V) A close-up shot of the face of a watch. (PI)
 (V) A shot of the watch in its whole view. (PI)
 (V) A computer graphic image of a future airplane. (ME)
 (V) Logo of the Barcelona Olympic Games. (CE)

<Written Message>

(W) SEIKO FLIGHT COMPUTER (CO/ME)
 (W) SEIKO THE FUTURE OF TIME. (CO/ME/C1)
 (W) SEIKO THE OFFICIAL TIMER OF THE XXVth OLYMPIAD. (CE)
 (W) SEIKO. (CO)

<Spoken Message>

MUSIC: (MU)
 MALE: You can fly. (ME)
 With your feet on the ground, you can soar. (ME)
 The most advanced type of technology on earth has an IQ. (FE)
 SEIKO Intelligent Quarts. (CO/FE)
 MALE: So functions never dreamed of in a single watch are amazingly simple to understand.
 (FE)
 MALE: SEIKO. (CO)
 MALE: The future of time and the official timer of the games of the 25th Olympiad. (PA/C1/CE)

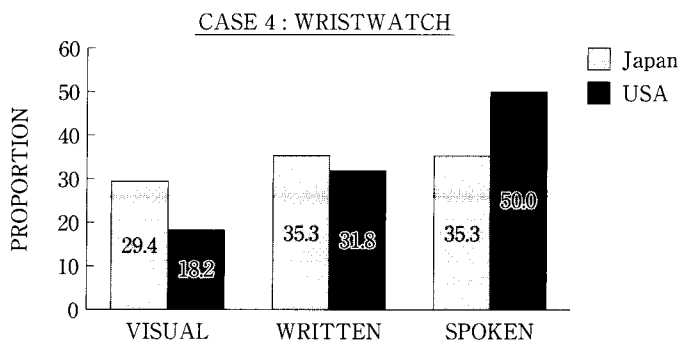


Fig. 13 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

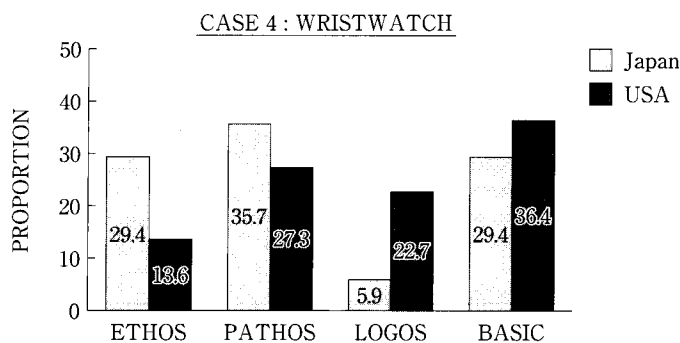


Fig. 14 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

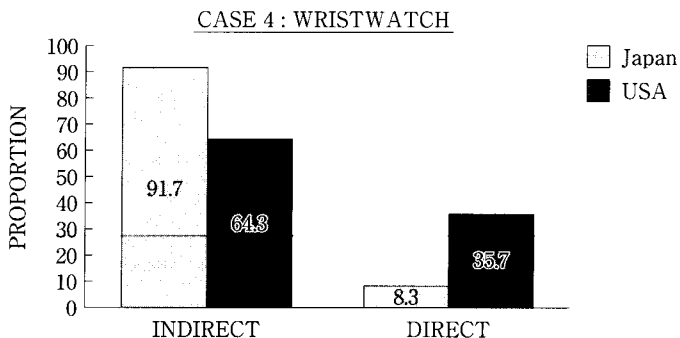


Fig. 15 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Cosmetics

This is the only example that deviates from the overall tendency of the Japanese and American approach. The result of analysis is presented in Fig. 16-18 and Table 5. In the Japanese commercial a young woman tell the features of the product. From the viewpoint that it depicts a young girl floating comfortably in the water, it is affective and indirect in impression. Yet the overall effect of the commercial is more inclined to the logical side. For this reason, in the persuasive mode we observe a number of similari-

ties with the American approach to commercials.

The American commercial describes a personified perfume bottle coming out of a luxurious car and walks into a hotel, which is probably the site of the Academy Award presentation. It tells us that she is often mistaken for an Italian movie star (which is actually a brand name of Italian perfume). The focus of the commercial is the quality of the product and the low price. This information is given in the spoken message. For this reason in terms of the medium it relies heavily on the spoken message, and in terms of the mode of persuasion the logical aspect is emphasized. It is a common feature observed in the American commercials. Yet in terms of directness and indirectness of persuasion the Japan-US difference is not clear because it uses the Ethos as an important part of persuasion.

Table 5 COSMETICS

<p>Japanese Case: She's Cleansing Cream by SHISEIDO (15 sec.) JINGLE: "She's" ! (V) A young lady looks up at the blue summer sky. (W) SHISEIDO FEMALE: Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (W) Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (V) Young lady standing on a city street. MALE: But "She's" mixes well with make-up and lets it wash off. (V) Woman puts cleansing cream on her finger and washes her face. FEMALE: Feels wonderful like this. (W) Feels wonderful like this. (V) Young woman on a float bathing in the sea with her arms spread out, expressing her delight. MALE: "She's" Make-up Cleansing. It washes away everything. (V) Picture of product. (W) Gentle to the skin. Contains Seaweed Extract. "She's" Make-up Cleansing. ¥1000.</p>
<p><Visual Message> (V) A young lady looks up at the blue summer sky. (OR/RE/BA) (V) Young lady standing on a city street. (RE/BA) (V) Woman puts cleansing cream on her finger and washes her face. (RE/PI/FE) (V) Young woman on a float bathing in the sea with her arms spread out, expressing her delight. (IM/PA) (V) Picture of product. (PI)</p>
<p><Written Message> (W) SHISEIDO (CO) (W) Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (FE) (W) Feels wonderful like this. (IM) (W) Gentle to the skin. Contains Seaweed Extract. "She's" Make-up Cleansing. ¥1000. (FE/NA/PR)</p>
<p><Spoken Message> JINGLE: "She's" ! (MU/NA) FEMALE: Make-up does not come off easily in summer. (FE) MALE: But "She's" mixes well with make-up and lets it wash off. (FE/C1/LO) FEMALE: Feels wonderful like this. (IM) MALE: "She's" Make-up Cleansing. It washes away everything. (FE/NA)</p>

<p><u>U.S. Case: PRIMO (15 sec.)</u></p> <p>(V) A bottle of PRIMO personified as a movie star comes out of a luxurious sedan. She walks toward the entrance of a hotel (which is probably a site of the Academy Award ceremony) as flashes camera shine on her way.</p> <p>PEOPLE: Who is it? Who is it?</p> <p>PRIMO: I'm always mistaken for Giorgio. I'm just as fabulous, but smarter. I'm PRIMO.</p> <p>PEOPLE: PRIMO!</p> <p>PRIMO: I'm mistaken for Giorgio and PRIMO costs just eighty dollars and lasts just as long as you do.</p> <p>MALE: If she likes Giorgio, she will love Primo.</p> <p>PRIMO: PRIMO. PRIMO. (W) Designer Impostor's PARFUMS de COEUR</p>
<p><Visual Message></p> <p>(FA/CE/PI/FO/NA)</p> <p>(V) A bottle of PRIMO personified as a movie star comes out of a luxurious sedan. She walks toward the entrance of a hotel (which is probably a site of the Academy Award ceremony) as flashes camera shine on her way.</p>
<p><Written Message></p> <p>(W) Designer Impostor's PARFUMS de COEUR (FE)</p>
<p><Spoken Message></p> <p>PEOPLE: Who is it? Who is it? (BA)</p> <p>PRIMO: I'm always mistaken for Giorgio. (FA/CE) I'm just as fabulous, but smarter. (C1/IM) I'm PRIMO. (NA/NA)</p> <p>PEOPLE: PRIMO! (NA)</p> <p>PRIMO: I'm mistaken for Giorgio and PRIMO costs just eighty dollars and lasts just as long as you do. (PR/FE/LO/C2/NA)</p> <p>MALE: If she likes Giorgio, she will love PRIMO. (C2/NA)</p> <p>PRIMO: PRIMO. PRIMO. (NA/NA)</p>

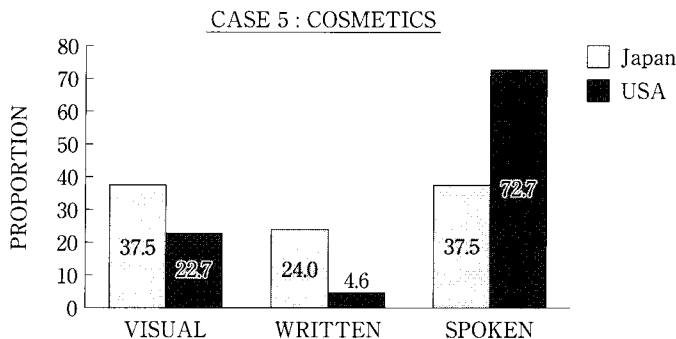


Fig. 16 Proportions of Visual, Written & Spoken Messages

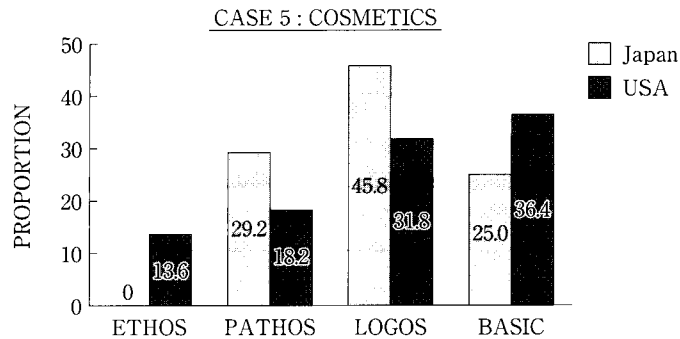


Fig. 17 Proportions of Means of Persuasion

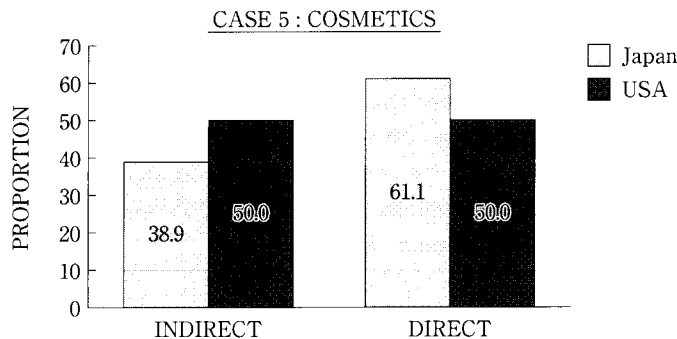


Fig. 18 Proportions of Indirect-Direct Messages

Discussion

What the result of the analysis indicates is that there is a marked difference in the strategy of persuasion employed in the TV commercials in Japan and the United States. The Japanese strategy is to approach consumers in an indirect way by appealing to the Pathos by loading the greatest part of information in the visual message. The American strategy, on the other hand, is the direct approach to consumers by repeating basic information and reasoning logically in the spoken message. The Japanese strategy might be termed "indirect persuasion through affective visual information" while the American strategy will be summarized as "direct persuasion through verbal reasoning."

This difference might be a reflection of the cultural mentality of the people of the two countries. TV commercials are a form of social persuasion directed to an indefinite number of people. For TV commercials to be effective they should appeal to the sentiments that are most vulnerable. For this purpose creators of TV commercials often make a large-scale marketing. The result of production is therefore a gist of psychology packed in a short program. In this sense TV commercials are a form of persuasion in its most sophisticated mode.

Japanese Society

What are the features that characterize Japanese society? First we will explore this theme by reviewing the work in sociology. Japanese society is often called a “network society” (Masuda Foundation, 1992). According to this view, Japanese society is defined as an insider society that bases its foundation on the mutual dependency among the members who shares common knowledge. Features that characterize a society like this are (1) autonomously distributed decision-making through concomitant communication and (2) corporationism. It will eventually lead to the principle of internal goals based upon “*najimi*” or familiarity. It is a society with situationism orientation characterized with homogeneity, closedness to outsiders, and flexibility.

In a society like this persuasive communication tends to be more subjective and affective in its value judgment rather than being objective and logical. People prefer to be use empathy in their communication because most of the communication takes place between people who can read other peoples' mind easily and comfortably. This mentality in turn helps to consolidate the sense of community and social solidarity. It is from these observations that Japanese society is defined as a society that consists of contextual rather than individual and regulate itself through information manipulation.

The United States and Europe, on the other hand, are societies that regulate themselves through “mutual control” by contract, which ultimately derives from individualism and legal control of mutual relations defined by rights and obligations, and authority and subordination (Masuda Foundation, 1992).

Japanese Society and its Mechanism of Formulation

We will now make a review of psychological findings concerning how the affective communication civilization is formulated in Japan.

Azuma (1991) reviews comparative studies on moral judgment, parent-child relations, and other social interactions in Japan and the United States. The study of moral judgment is pertinent to our present topic. For Japanese high school and college students the standard of moral judgment is primarily the sentiments of the person. For American students, however, it is the facts. From these observations Azuma defines Japanese culture as a society of “sentiments” that values consideration to other members. This mentality is formulated in the process of socialization such as mother-child relations. In such a society the most important principle is to read other peoples' mind and apply empathy.

This process first begins with the parent-child relations, where the parents create a feeling of one-ness. For this purpose parents avoid confrontation and even concede to or pamper their children in rearing them. Parents use this in-circle relationship in expressing their wish, expectations and values to their children. A typical approach is the persuasion which will be formulated as “You are a good boy (girl). A good boy (girl) doesn't do that.” In this way parents attempt to transfuse the core image of a “*ii-ko*” or good child (White & LeVine, 1986).

The child, in turn, tries to regulate himself or herself using this image as a role model. He or she accommodates his or her behavior according to the expectations of the people important to them. This tendency, according to Azuma, is also observed in

the out-circle outside the mother-child relations. Japanese children already learn how to identify themselves with other people at the outset of their development. In the process of their development they extend and consolidate this mentality through interacting with teachers, friends, and all the people in the society. What is indispensable living in the Japanese society is "sasshi" or empathy which enables the members to share other people's thoughts and feelings.

On the other hand, Americans cope with child rearing in a different manner. Parents in the United States do not identify themselves with their children. They keep a certain distance apart from their children and thus attempt to regulate their behavior by exerting authoritative influence and imparting their expectations. American parents attempt to make their children conscious of the parental control and thus help make them independent.

These relations also hold in education (Azuma, 1991). For Japanese education is another symbiotic relation of teachers and students rather than communication from teachers to students as in the United States and Europe. In such interaction education is osmosis rather than instruction.

What the above discussion suggests is that the dominant mode of communication in Japan is empathy that is actualized in the affective and indirect manner. In the United States, however, communication is the imparting of logical reasoning through verbal exposition.

Japanese Society in Intercultural Communicative Perspective

The discussion above was mainly concerned with the features of groups that sociologically and psychologically characterize Japan and the United States. It does not necessarily indicate that the difference is greater than similarity in the two countries. Yet such difference is certainly an important element that might hinder intercultural communication between the two countries. Thus understanding the difference will help facilitate communication across cultures.

The factors that might hinder or facilitate communication between Japan and the United States should be summarized in the following two points. The Japanese empathy can be a source of trouble in intercultural communication. Such mentality as "I am certain that other people are aware of my need and expectation" does not work outside the Japanese society. In the same way Japanese might misunderstand Americans and Europeans when they attempt to understand them as they do in Japan. The second factor is the mutual dependence in the closed circuit. In a society like Japan tacit understanding is an important means of communication. However, outside Japan, this can cause unnecessary misunderstanding.

These factors are sources of miscommunication for Westerners. Yet they derive from the structure of Japanese society where mutual dependence and reliance is highly valued. In this sense these factors could be both sources of hindrance and facilitators of communication. The Western mode of communication is not the only solution to understanding. It is also one of the communicative modes that is based upon the social structure. In this sense it is important to bear in mind that the value of the communicative mode should be judged in the context of society.

Universal Mechanism of Communication

We have so far concerned ourselves with the difference in the communicative mode. We will now turn to the similarities in both modes of communication. The Russian linguist Mikhail Bakhtin presents a model of basic mechanism that describes how people's mentality is formed through social, cultural, and institutional/organizational communication (Wertsch, 1991).

Bakhtin notes the importance of the "voices" of utterance. According to Bakhtin the voices represent not only the speaker's intention (voice) but the intention (voice) of the listener (the target) and situation (context and social milieu). In this sense an utterance is always "multivoicedness" rather than a single voice. An utterance is not arbitrarily determined by the speaker but first begins by ventriloquating or borrowing another people's voice. The voice of the speaker meets the voice of another people and there begins a confrontation. Through this process of internal dialogicality the speaker's own voices are formulated.

Thus the speaker depends on another people and the context that surrounds him or her, and becomes one that is indivisible. The voices include not only the voice of the listener but more important voices originating from social language or social dialect, that is, usage and new words used by sources of authority such as certain social classes, circles, schools or governments. It also contains "speech genre" based on certain activities such as greetings or dialogue at table. The process of dialogicality that takes place between the speaker's voice and the social dialect helps the speaker to relate to social, cultural, and historical factors of the society he or she lives in.

Bakhtin's theory suggests that even in a context of a school where most of the information moves from the teacher to the students, the student's voice interact with the voice of the school and the dialogicality helps formulate knowledge in the students. In this sense what takes place when teachers interact with their students is actually osmosis rather than instruction. For education to take place in a most effective manner it is important to motivate the student to wish to belong to the world of school and to learn. The same process takes place when TV commercials are broadcast.

The discussion above indicates that the persuasive approach used in TV commercials should be judged in the context of the society. The Japanese approach of TV commercials are an example along with child-rearing practice and education that reflects the mentality of the society. However, as Bakhtin implied in his theory, it also shares similarities with the orientation in the Western culture in the deeper strata of cultural mentality. The superficial difference should not mislead us in the understanding of the Japanese and Western cultures.

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