

KANSAI GAIDAI UNIVERSITY

Lighting thE FLame : Schema Theory Re-applied

メタデータ	<p>言語: eng</p> <p>出版者: 関西外国語大学・関西外国語大学短期大学部</p> <p>公開日: 2016-09-05</p> <p>キーワード (Ja):</p> <p>キーワード (En):</p> <p>作成者: Cohen, Tamarah</p> <p>メールアドレス:</p> <p>所属: 関西外国語大学</p>
URL	https://doi.org/10.18956/00006293

Lighting thE FLame: Schema Theory Re-applied

Tamarah Cohen

*When asked, "Why don't you write the way you talk?"
Gertrude Stein replied, "Why don't you read the way I write" (9)*

Abstract

By highlighting the dialectical nature of reading and writing practices, schema theory promotes a pedagogy of situatedness. This paper offers a framework for applying such theory by performing collaborative critical analysis of collectively-determined "relevant" text. Sample pedagogical materials are included.

Introduction

Schema theory reaffirms the innate meaning-making powers of the individual; it clarifies the dialectical relationship between situated writer and situated readership; and it urges us to produce a pedagogy connecting the two. Too often, however, teaching methodologies concentrate on (student-oriented) cognitive reorientation in the hope that by forcing students to work within instructor-selected authors' schemata, they will eventually come to appreciate the significance of content that would otherwise remain untapped. Such negligence of the reader-centered selection process strains the relevance of the texts in question and highlights the importance of (re)directing the schemata theory that, ironically, it undermines.

The author argues that despite the socio-political implications of schema theory, many among us still continue to rely on remediation rather than the problematization of knowledge as the ba-

sis of reading-writing instruction. Beginning with a brief theoretical overview (of the distinction between content schemata and formal schemata, micro-level and macro-level schemata, and schema activation and schema construction), the paper then examines the interconnectedness of schema theory, text selection and student motivation, and concludes with a framework for performing critical analysis of student-generated text in the EFL university classroom.

Schema Theory: An Overview

Schema theory posits that meaning is to be found in the efficient interaction between text and readers' background knowledge, not from text itself. In other words, it is readers who ultimately bring meaning to text (Bartlett, 1932; Rumelhart and Octony, 1977; Rumelhart, 1980). According to Goodman (1983), there is an unwritten contract between readers and writers: From the writer's point of view, readers will actively attempt to make sense of text; and from the reader's point of view, writers will attempt to convey something meaningful in a meaningful manner. An effective text, then, must "be a full enough representation of the meaning to suit the needs, background, schemata, and interests of the readers" (Goodman, 1983, 1104).

Schemata are differentiated into content schemata and formal schemata. The former consists of cultural knowledge, topic familiarity and field-specific experience, and the latter – its theoretical complement – knowledge of text types, rhetorical conventions and the structural properties of prose. The combination is considered fundamental to comprehension, inferential elaboration, ideational scaffolding and orderly searches of memory – in a word, learning (Floyd and Carrell, 1987). Schemata are likewise conceptualized on micro- and macro-levels. The former is an organized, abstract structure of interrelated knowledge, ideas, emotions and actions that has been internalized, and that guides an individual's use of information and response to experience (Goodman and Goodman, 1983). It is "organized," says Wilson and Anderson (1994), in the sense that it "indicates relations among constituent concepts," and "abstract" in the sense that "one schema has the potential to cover a number of texts that differ in particulars" (33). On the macro level, schemata are collective "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992) or household/community-based bodies of information that function like an "operations manual of essential information and strategies" (Greenberg, 1989). Whether residing in the individual or the community, these stores of knowledge (or schemata) represent "social capital" (Coleman, 1988) that, when mobilized, provide socio-cultural affirmation by linking smaller scale community language

routines and with larger ones.

Schemata are both activated and constructed, drawing on preexisting knowledge as well as introducing and developing more sophisticated schemata. Bransford (1994) describes the relationship of schema activation and schema construction as a dialectical process of “reassembly.” He hypothesizes that learners “activate various preexisting ‘pockets’ of knowledge that previously had been unrelated” and “reassemble these ‘pockets’ of knowledge into an integrated schema. This schema . . . then provides support for comprehending and remembering subsequent events” (1994: 488). Old and new cognitive events draw on each other and thereby promote intellectual transformation and development distinct to each learner.

Situated in the individual and qualitatively differentiated on that basis, schema does not exist in a generic state. Not only do different schemata result in different interpretations of text, but when a text has an identifiable cultural loading there is a pronounced effect on comprehension (Anderson, 1994). Textual accessibility in schema theoretic terms, then, means that the implicit cultural values presupposed by a text match those of its readers. As a result, the text is relatively easy - easier than syntactically and rhetorically equivalent texts based on less familiar content - to read and understand (Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983: 561). In other words, information is more assimilatory when it is embedded in a conceptual framework; and a contextual framework develops in tandem with genuine interest in more cognitively challenging (less familiar) material (Wilson and Anderson, 1994; Bransford, 1994; Ruddell, Pearson and Camperell, 1994; Anderson, 1994; Tierney and Pearson, 1994; Singer and Donlan, 1994; Bower, Black and Turner, 1994; Hull and Rose, 1994). As Silberstein and Clarke (1979: 52) put it, “a student with the requisite amount of knowledge and interest in a subject is more likely to force himself [*sic*] through a difficult passage than through a relatively easy selection in which he [*sic*] has no interest.” Conversely, inaccessible text is that which results in a mismatch in content knowledge between writer and reader - an experience common to non-native English speakers, who, as a rule, are not members of the intended audience of “authentic” English-medium text (Fairclough, 1992). This mismatch brings about cognitive dissonance that makes text more difficult to process.

Practical implications

The implications of schema theory have had little apparent impact on ESL/EFL praxis. While there is considerable talk about getting students to “work within authors’ schemata,” so that they might come to understand the significance of content that might otherwise remain irrelevant, little effort is spent attempting to problematize the relevance of such content in light of schemata theory (i.e., the writer’s assumptions – values, concepts, experiences, and the schemata they have built of them – do not coincide with those of the students). Commonly deployed therapeutic strategies include training in text structure and sentence combining, providing precise elaborations which clarify the relevance of facts, posing questions that build prerequisite knowledge when it cannot be safely presupposed, and developing external criteria of importance in students. But all knowledge needs to be problematized – to be situated in classroom relationships that allow for communication and debate – not simply that of second language learners. This includes, of course, text-based knowledge and knowledge about teaching itself.

Teachers are central to the reading-writing processes, no matter how student-centered we aspire to be. This is inevitable. The act of reading student-generated text, for example, never fully responds to an objective reality in, or absent, from the text. Nor can we entirely put aside our own schemata and see through neutral lenses. To some degree, we cannot completely avoid manipulating, appropriating, even co-creating student work. As Tobin (1993) explains in *Writing Relationships*:

The problem with admitting our role as co-author is that it violates most of our fundamental beliefs about the objectivity of the teacher, the integrity of the text, and the rights of the individual author . . . If a teacher is reading a text that was written specifically for him [*sic*], with revisions that are a direct result of his [*sic*] suggestions, how can he [*sic*] possibly have any clear sense of where the text stops and his [*sic*] reading begins?”

Readings pose similar challenges. When teachers, for example, make materials selections, do we pause to remember that it is the integration of culturally loaded funds of preexisting knowledge and new schema (activation + construction) that are crucial to cognitive and intellectual development? ‘Relevance’ is a loaded term. As Giroux (1983) put it, in order for educators to avoid imposing their values on students, we need to acknowledge that “all choices made con-

cerning the facets of curriculum and pedagogy are value laden.” Because there is no set truth awaiting discovery, everyone’s reality, teachers’ included, has to be analyzed and questioned in conscientious critical discourse.

The *WomanSword* Project

I selected as project prompt a book that explores the Japanese language, albeit through English: Kittredge Cherry’s (1980) *Womansword: What Japanese Words Say about Women*. It is written by a non-Japanese (Japanese-speaking) feminist woman. My aim in choosing a text that is so overtly marked by difference but that explores a domain familiar to the learners is to problematize the reading/writing process; that is, first, to make plain that all language, not just English, is comprised of institutionalized constraints within which they must learn to negotiate their meanings. (Some awareness of linguistic sexism in English is common among adult second language learners in Japan; how the problem manifests itself in *Japanese*, however, remains for most a mystery.) It is also to encourage students to assert themselves against the power of text – after all, what does this white woman *really* know about Japanese? - and to see themselves as both producers and receivers of discourse. In the process, students can learn that the rules of accuracy, standards of comprehension and proscriptions of appropriacy (all ideological categories in themselves) are not fixed, but subject to social forces (Fairclough, 1992).

Each student is asked to choose at least one subsection from the collection (see Appendix, Text A) and to extract content from the language that expresses it. They are to exercise their interpretative skills, including reconstructing text-based presuppositions and drawing text-based inferences. To the extent that comprehension depends upon readers’ ability to relate information from the text to pre-existing background knowledge, they are encouraged to consciously explore their own individual schemata. They are also invited to contest, modify and update the material. They are then to write one multiply-drafted exposition, the theme of which relates, however indirectly, to their *Womansword* subsection(s) of choice. It is from among these essays that I harvest the materials that form the basis of the project.

I transform select essays, submitted to me by email attachment, into exercises that are designed to be subsequently, collaboratively completed, but that also provide opportunities for individual follow-up work (see Appendix, Text B). By relying on student-generated and culturally self-

referential academic text, my aim is three-fold: first, to reconceptualize the concept of relevance, such that it is interactively and dialectically determined; second, to give learners an opportunity to develop critical distance on academic literacy, so that elements from their native discourse community can be granted legitimacy in the new academic community; third, to role-model the critical self-examination process, in which I am inviting students to engage (Auerbach and Burgess, 1985).

Conclusion

In keeping with hooks' (1994) views on pedagogical theory, this paper posits that despite schema theory's transformational potential, it is not "inherently healing, liberatory, or revolutionary. It fulfills this function only when we ask that it do so, and only when we direct our theorizing towards this end" (61). Before teachers can make efficient use of schema theory, we need to acknowledge our own inevitable subjectivity, as reflected in our value laden choices concerning curriculum and pedagogy.

All text and its interpretation are invested with political and ideological processes, emerging as it does from individuals' positions in time and culture. It is placed, positioned and situated. This phenomenon can be used to engage and empower learners, and can be made transparent by exploiting one of the richest and most abundant resources teachers have access to, namely, student-generated texts.

Notes

I would like to acknowledge my debt to my Kansai Gaidai University students, whose words form the substance of my work. I am also grateful to Kerstan B. Cohen for his generous input in this project. All limitations are, of course, my own.

References

- Auerbach, E., and Burgess, D. (1985). "The hidden curriculum in survival ESL." *TESOL Quarterly*, 19, 475-494.
- Anderson, Richard, C., (1994). "Role of the reader's schema in comprehension, learning, and memory." In

- M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Bartlett, F. C. (1932). *Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bower, G. H., Black, J. B., and Turner, T. J. (1994). "Scripts in memory for text." In M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Bransford, J. D. (1994). Schema activation and schema acquisition: Comments on Richard C. Anderson's remarks." In M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Carrell, P. L., and Eisterhold, J. C. (1983). "Schema theory and ESL reading pedagogy." *TESOL QUARTERLY*, 17, 553-569.
- Coleman, J. S., (1988). "Social capital in the creation of human capital." *American Journal of Sociology*, 94 (Suppl.), 95-120.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). "The appropriacy of 'appropriateness.'" In N. Fairclough (ed.), *Critical language awareness*. Real Language Series, Longman.
- Floyd, P. and Carrell, P. L. (1987). Effects on ESL reading of teaching cultural content schemata. *Language Learning* 37, 89-108.
- Giroux, H. (1988). "Boarder pedagogy in the age of postmodernism." *Journal of Education*, 170 (3), 162-181.
- Goodman, Y. and Goodman, K. (1983). "Reading and writing relationships: Pragmatic functions." *Language Arts*, 60, 590-599.
- Greenberg, J. B. (1989, April). "Funds of knowledge: Historical Constitution, social distribution, and transmission." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, Sante Fe, NM.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress; Education as the practice of freedom*. New York, Routledge.
- Hull, G. and Rose, M. (1994). "'This wooden shack place': The logic of an unconventional reading." In M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Moll, L. C. (1992). "Literacy research in community and classrooms: A sociocultural approach." In M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Pearson, D. P., and Camperell, K. (1994). "Comprehension of text structures." In M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Richards, J. C. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rumelhart, D. E., and Ortony, A. (1977). The representation of knowledge in memory. In R. C. Anderson,

- R. J. Spiro and W. E. Montague (eds.), *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge*. (99-136). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Rumelhart, D. E. (1980). *An introduction to human information processing*. New York: Wiley.
- Silberstein, S. and Clarke, A. (1979). "Toward a realization of psycholinguistic principles in the ESL reading class." In *Reading in a second language: Hypotheses, organization and practice*, R. Mackay, B. Barkman, and R. R. Jordan (eds.), Newbury House, 1979.
- Singer, H. and Donlan, D. (1994). "Problem-solving schema with question generation for comprehension of complex short stories." In M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Stein, G. (1974). *Writings and Lectures 1909-1945*. Edited by Patricia Meyerowitz. Penguin Books.
- Tierney, R. J., and Pearson, D., P. (1994). "Learning to learn from text: A framework for improving classroom practice." In M. R. Ruddell, R. B. Ruddell and H. Singer (eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*. Newark, Delaware, IRA.
- Tobin, L. (1993). *Writing relationships: What really happens in the composition classroom*. Portsmouth, NH. Heinemann Boynton/Cook.
- Wilson, P. T. and Anderson, R. C. (1986). "What they don't know will hurt them: The role of prior knowledge in comprehension." In J. Orasanu (ed.), *Reading Comprehension: From Research to Practice*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Earlbbaum.

Appendix

Text A

WomanSword: What Japanese Words Say about Japanese Women and Men

Author: Kittredge Cherry, Publisher: Kodansha International: Tokyo and New York

Date of Publication: 1988

SIGN-UP SHEET

(1) IDENTITY

- a) Amaterasu Omikami – Great Heaven-Shining Mother, 16 _____
- b) Anegohada – Big Sister Types, 16 _____
- c) Anne no Hi – Anne's Day, 17 _____
- d) Bijin - Beauties – Beauties, 19 _____
- e) Busu – Uglies, 22 _____
- f) Danjo – Male-Female, 23 _____
- g) Hinoeuma no Onna – Fiery Horse Woman, 24 _____
- h) Kashimashi – Noisy, 25 _____

- i) Ko Itten – A Touch of Scarlet, 26 _____
- j) Nyōnin Kinzei – No Females Allowed, 27 _____
- k) Onna – Women, 29 _____
- l) Onna Moji – Female Lettering, 31 _____
- m) Onna-Rashisa – Femininity, 32 _____
- n) Otoko Masari – Male Surpassers, 33 _____
- o) Otoko Yaku – Male Impersonators, 34 _____
- p) Ryōte ni Hana – Flowers in Both Hands, 35 _____
- (2) GIRLHOOD- ADOLESCENCE
- a) Atashi/Boku – I-Woman/I-Man, 38 _____
- b) Burikko – The Pretenders, 39 _____
- c) Deeto O Suru – To do a Date, 40 _____
- d) Hako-Iri Musume – Sheltered Maidens, 41 _____
- e) Hanayome Shugyo – Bridal Training, 43 _____
- f) Hina Matsuri – Doll Festival, 44 _____
- g) Joshidaisei – Female University Students, 46 _____
- h) Ojasama – Debutantes, 47 _____
- i) Ryōsai Kenbo – Good Wives and Mothers, 48 _____
- j) Seijin no Hi – Coming of Age Day, 50 _____
- k) Sukeban – Boss Girls, 51 _____
- l) Tekireiki – The ‘Right’ Age to Marry, 52 _____
- (3) MARRIED LIFE
- a) Demodori – Female Divorcees, 56 _____
- b) Gokiburi Teishu – Cockroach Husbands, 58 _____
- c) Kafu Ni Somaru – The Symbolic Colors of Marriage, 60 _____
- d) Meoto-Jawan – His-and-Hers Teacups, 61 _____
- e) Meshi! Furo! Neru! – Food! Bath! Bed! 62 _____
- f) Mukoyoshi – Family Naming, 63 _____
- g) Naijo No Ko – The Backbone of the Japanese Economy, 64 _____
- h) Nomi No Fufu – A Wife Standing Taller Than Her Husband, 65 _____
- i) Okusan – Mrs. Interior, 66 _____
- j) Oshidori Fufu, Mandarin Duck Couples, 68 _____
- k) Oshikake Nyōbo – Intruder (Assertive) Wives, 69 _____
- l) Otto O Shiri Ni Shiku – To Sit on a Husband, 70 _____
- m) Sen’en Teishu – Thousand Yen Husband, 72 _____

n) Yome Ni Iku – To Go as a Daughter-in-Law, 73 _____

(4) MOTHERHOOD

a) Fuhei – Guardians, 76 _____

b) Ichi Hime, Ni Taro – Ideal Birth Order of Children, 77 _____

c) Mamagon – Mother Blaming, 78 _____

d) Mizugo – Abortion, 79 _____

e) Obi Iwai – Rituals of Pregnancy, 82 _____

f) Ofukuro – Honorable Bag, 84 _____

g) Sato- Gaeri – Post-Partum Homecoming, 85 _____

h) Shikyu – Children's Palace (The Uterus), 87 _____

i) Sukinshippu, Skinship, 89 _____

j) Umazume – Stone (Infertile) Woman, 90 _____

(5) WORK FOR PAY

a) Danjo Koyo Kikai Kinto Ho – Equal Employment Opportunity Law, 94 _____

b) Geisha – Arts People, 96 _____

c) Gyosho no Obasan – Street-Peddling Aunties, 98 _____

d) Hobo to Kangofu – Child/Health-Care Providers, 99 _____

e) Ikuji – Child-Care, 100 _____

f) Joryu – Words for Women Who Cross the Professional Gender Line, 101 _____

g) O-Eru (OL) – Female Office workers, 103 _____

h) Paato – Underpaid (Essentially) Full-Time Female Workers, 103 _____

i) Shokuba no Hana – Office Flowers, 105 _____

(6) SEXUALITY

a) Chikan – Sexual Molesters (Male), 108 _____

b) Reipu – Rape, 108 _____

c) Junketsu Kyoiku – Sex Education, 109 _____

d) Kai – Words Used to Refer to Women's Body Parts, 111 _____

e) Nigo – The Mistress, 113 _____

f) Rezubian – Lesbians, 115 _____

g) Seiko – Words Used to Discuss Sexual Expression, 116 _____

h) Shojo – Words Used to Describe Sexual Abstinence (a.k.a. 'Virginity'), 118 _____

i) Soppu Redi – Female Sex Laborers, 119 _____

j) Sukin Redi – Door-to-Door Condoms Saleswomen, 122 _____

k) Yugurezuku – Old Men with Young Women, 124 _____

(7) AGING

- a) Konenki – Menopause, 126 _____
- b) Mibojin – The Not-Dead-Yet-Women (Widow), 127 _____
- c) Naisu Midi – Middle-Age Women, 128 _____
- d) Obaasan – Grandmothers, 130 _____
- e) Obasute Yama – The Abandonment of Old Women, 131 _____
- f) Shutome – Mothers-in-Laws, 133 _____
- g) Giant Garbage – Retired Husbands, 135 _____
- h) Uurenokori – The Older Unmarried Woman, 136 _____

Text B

One student's essay (from 1.d and 1.e of Text A) transformed into an exercise in collaborative critical analysis. (Format adapted for non-use owing to space constraints).

"WHO DEFINES BEAUTY?"

By Koz Sato

Kansai Gaidai University, IES Program

July 2001

AN EXERCISE IN CRITICAL ANALYSIS

INSTRUCTIONS

- Below you will find an essay written by a second-year Kansai Gaidai IES student. The essay is bracketed by and interspersed with questions. In small groups, answer these questions as thoughtfully as you can. Be aware that there are many kinds of questions being asked: some are simply grammar-based and require singularly "correct" answers, but many invite a multiplicity of defensible interpretations.
- Be aware that underlined words in the passage signal areas worthy of special attention and critical analysis¹⁾ See if you can figure out why.

BEFORE READING - PREDICTION

A. Look at the title of the piece (above), the name of its author and its date. Can you predict what the text is likely to cover? What it *could* cover but probably won't? _____ ...

WHILE-READING - QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- B. Who is the piece intended for? Am I a member of the intended audience?**
- C. Does the author present herself as an objective authority? As someone who identifies with her readers**

and shares their concerns?

- D. What does the author assume her readers know about the issue? Does she assume that her readers have already taken a stand on the issue she is discussing?
- E. How does the author establish her own authority or credibility? How does she locate her argument in current debates? Does she use quotations, summaries, citations, paraphrase?
- F. How does Sato refer to her sources? Does she identify them? Describe them? Is she consistent? How do these descriptions affect my attitude towards the text?
- G. What does the author's choice of examples tell me? What do they tell me about her attitude towards her message and her (intended) audience?
- H. Does the author overtly present her point-of-view? Does her choice of words – especially nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs – tell me something about her attitude? Am I comfortable with her choices?
- I. How does the author use personal pronouns (e.g., we versus they)? How does this affect me as a reader?

ESSAY BEGINS:

"I met a *bijin* (beauty) today" generally means the speaker saw a beautiful woman (Cherry, 1988, p. 19).

(1. The "speaker" in the above example sentence is probably female / male. I know this, because: ____ ...)

"At one time, the word *beauty* was used to mean women and even today most of us apply the word *bijin* to women rather than to men," writes Clarke (1983). But the concept of beauty varies from region to region and (2. **changes with the times, because / changes with the times. Clearly,**) one era's beauty is another's beast. If so, what is beauty? Who is a beauty? Who draws the line between beauties and uglies? Who defines beauty? Needless to say, society does because the standard of beauty reflects the values of society. In other words, men who are at the core of society define beauty.

As I mentioned, (3. **the standard / standards**) of beauty **is/are** changeable. In Japan, the word *bijin* means a woman with a beautiful face. (4. **I am sure that most Japanese people would think of a woman with a symmetrical face, not a well-proportioned body when they hear the word *bijin* / When most Japanese people hear the word *bijin*, they think of a woman with a symmetrical face, not a well-proportioned body.**) This comes from Japanese culture. Just think of *kimono*. Japanese women used to wear *kimono* as their daily clothes. Their bodies were completely wrapped by *kimono*. Therefore, men judged women only by their visible parts such as face, the nape (*unaji*) of the neck and their black hair. (5. **Didn't Japanese men once also wear *kimono* "as their daily clothes"?** If so, are readers to assume that Japanese women also judged Japanese men "only by their visible parts such as face, the nape (*unaji*) of the neck and their black hair"? If not, what assumptions has Sato made about judgment and gender? ____ ...) Surprisingly breasts had to be flat under *kimono*. (6. **"Surprisingly" to whom? According to whom? ____** ...) As Cherry (1988) points out,

“breasts . . . never used to be sexual targets” (p. 21). That’s why women’s faces are much more focused on in Japan though it was an even more important factor in the past. However, Western culture was introduced (7. **Introduced by whom?** ____ ...), especially from North America. And Japanese women threw *kimono* off and started to wear Western clothes. This brought change and brought a new concept of beauty and physical consciousness to Japan. (8. **From then on / From then,**) Japanese people began to include the body in their beauty concept.

Consequently, today a lot of Japanese women focus on their bodies. In other words, beauty consciousness (9. **has shifted / shifted**) from face to body. (10. **The effects of this shift in focus have been damaging to women and wide reaching. / NO SENTENCE HERE**) According to a survey by Sekirara Hakusho (2001), 65% of Japanese women regard themselves as fat. Only 21% (11. **recognize themselves / recognize**) as average. (12. **Similarly / Also**), all my female classmates except one shave their leg-hair and/or arm hair. (13. **Beyond the classroom, women are surrounded by advertisements for beauty treatment clinics (*esute*) that target them. / In reality, in town there are many signboards of beauty treatment clinics (*esute*).)** (14. **In the end of fashion magazines, advertisements for dieting drugs or food are put. / And if that weren’t enough, fashion magazines are full of advertisements for diet food and drugs.**) Dreadfully, plastic surgery is not rare nowadays. (15. **Ultimately / After all**), millions of women alter their bodies painfully.

(16. **Analyze the paragraph above. The two topic sentences tell us that ____ ... The following six sentences support the author’s point that ____ ... The final sentence concludes that ____ ...**) (17. **What does the paragraph above reveal about Sato’s attitude towards this shift in focus from female face to body? Support your answer with details from the paragraph. ____ ...**)

Why do women change their looks? What for? The answer is simple. To make themselves beautiful to men and society. But this is very important because their social value depends on their beauty. Halprin (1995) states “appearance has much to do with how women are received in society” (p. 6). For example, (18. **in the company, women have lost front-desk jobs if they are too old or too fat / in the business world, women often lose front-desk jobs when they grow older or put on weight.**) Likewise, in restaurants, in general, only pretty or young women can work on the floor, while the old and the fat work in the back and make much less money (Clarke, 1983). Here you (19. **“you” = ____ ...**) can see, beauties tend to get more opportunities and are accepted by society and men than uglies. It is not an exaggeration to say that the more beautiful you (**“you” = ____ ...**) are the more valuable you (**“you” = ____ ...**) are in society. Therefore, women always have to be afraid of male gaze.

But lately women’s attitudes have changed considerably. For instance, (20. **once nude photographs were**

very erotic and just for men / once erotic photographs were just for men). Only models' sexiness was focused on in (21. it / them). Women in photographs were like products to attract men. Needless to say, they were never admired or supported by women. (22. How does Sato know that such women were "never admired or supported" by other women? Is this a compelling assertion? Does it need to be qualified? If so, how? If not, why not? ____ ...) However recently some of nude photographs (23. "nude photographs" in this essay = photographs of women / women and men / men) are very popular even among women. In fact, a few years ago, (24. the Japanese actress, Makiko Esumi, published nude photographs / the Japanese actress, Makiko Esumi, was published naked). Surprisingly, according to Contiti (1997), "half of people who bought the photographs are women." (25. According to the text, who was "surprised": Contiti? Sato? Other? Explain: ____ ...) A lot of women (26. support the photographs / buy the photographs for themselves) and (27. express / say) that her body is very beautiful. Also, Makiko Esumi, herself, says that she wants to show her body to women, too. So it is not just sex appeal to men. (28. "it" in the previous sentence = ____ ...) I will give you one more example to prove that this is not the only case. Have you ever heard of *ganguro gyal* (black faced girls)? They put dark brown foundation on their faces. They also (29. put / wear) white eye shadow and lipstick. Some say that they look like orangutans. Anyway, it is in fashion and very popular among young girls though it is unpopular with boys. But a lot of girls still continue to wear make-up like that, because they like it. They don't worry about the male gaze at all.

Today, women have begun to challenge the male gaze (30. by establishing their own standards of beauty / by their own beauty standards, not men's or society's). However, (31. it might be still hard / it might still be hard) to completely free themselves from the male gaze, because women are still stuck in the role of the ones who are watched and criticized for their appearance. (32. Transform this last phrase into an active statement. Hint: who is doing what to whom? ____ ...) In reality, men still dominate most parts of society. They judge and criticize. (33. The author seems to be suggesting that women do not or even cannot judge and criticize each other or men. Do you think this a valid claim? Perhaps what Sato is trying to say indirectly is that ____ ...) But I believe that as women become independent financially, socially and sexually, they can also be independent of the male gaze. In other words, independent spiritually. Then women will be able to enjoy their own beauty and feel more comfortable. (34. Define the following terms as you imagine Sato would:

- "financial independence": ____ ...)
- "social independence": ____ ...)
- "sexual independence": ____ ...)
- "spiritual independence": ____ ...)

[Works cited removed owing to space constraints]

Post-Reading Questions

- J. How did my ethnicity/class/gender affect how I responded to the text? ____ ...
- K. To what extent do I think the author's ethnicity/class/gender influenced my interpretation of the text? ____ ...
- L. What are some other ways of writing about the topic? ____ ...
- M. What questions would I like to ask the author? ____ ...

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY

You are invited to respond to at least one of the above 'Post-Reading Questions' in the form of a 1-2 page essay. If you decide to do so, please send your paper to both me at tamarahc@hotmail.com and Ms. Sato at [student's address] by (date) ____ and (time) ____ .

Exercise written by Tamarah Cohen, Kansai Gaidai University, 2002. Permission to use "Who Defines Beauty?" granted by the author.

- 1 The underlined words that "signal areas worthy of special attention" are worthy of *whose* attention? *According to whom?* Remember, critical analysis is an inherent part of every act of reading. Question *everything* you read!.

(Tamarah Cohen 外国語学部講師)