

Entering the Imaginary World of Picture Books: How Words and Pictures Affect the Reader's Viewpoint

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<The flow of the presentation>

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1. Introduction

The unique character of picture books= combination of two levels of communication, the visual and the verbal

Cf. "The unique character of picturebooks as an art form is based on the combination of two levels of communication, the visual and the verbal (Nikolajeva and Scott 2001: 1, underline mine)."

<The readers of a picture book>

They travel through a fictive world, apprehending the feelings of the characters, most likely through (a) **the shift of viewpoint from the real to the imaginary world** and (b) **the mental simulation of the character's feelings**.

Cf. Picture books are usually presented to children through **reading (i.e. oral narrative) by adults**, often involving **a change in the tone of voice**.

◎There are few studies on the dynamics of the text and image in picture books.

"Most general studies of children's literature include a chapter on picturebooks, and a number of studies concentrate on picturebooks alone. Few if any of these books have focused upon the dynamics of the picturebook, how the text and image, two different forms of communication, work together to create a form unlike any other (Nikolajeva and Scott 2001: 2, underline mine)."

◎It is therefore reasonable to claim that research on picture books can be conducted not only from a linguistic point of view but also from a cognitive perspective.

<The purposes of the present study>

- ① to identify some distinctive characteristics of narrative style in English and Japanese picture books
- ② to explore what kinds of words and pictures induce the readers to create the imaginary world as represented in a picture book

2. Investigations on *The Rabbits' Wedding* and *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi*

The synopsis of *The Rabbits' Wedding* (and *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi*):

Two little rabbits, one white and the other black, played together happily in the forest. But in between the games of

Hop Skip and Jump Me and Race Around The Blackberry Bush the black rabbit stopped and sighed. "I'm just thinking," he would say, when the white rabbit asked him what was the matter. But he finally admitted he was wishing --- wishing that he and the white rabbit could be together forever and always. And after he had wished a little harder his wish came true. (quoted from the jacket)

2.1 Comparison English and Japanese Versions of the Text

First, I will investigate the narrative style of each picture book, focusing on the following three points:

- (i) Which speech is employed in the text, direct or indirect?
- (ii) What kinds of "subjective" expressions are used in the text?
- (iii) Are there any onomatopoeias in the text?

<Three Hypotheses>

Direct speech

To convey the character's words directly ⇒ To represent the scene vividly

Hypothesis 1:

If direct speech is employed in a picture book, the readers can feel as if they were in the fictive world, listening to the characters' conversation.

"Subjective" expressions

To show a particular character's viewpoint or feelings (and sometimes the narrator's viewpoint within the fictive world)

Hypothesis 2:

If the readers can apprehend the viewpoint and/or feelings of a particular character (or sometimes the narrator) reflected in "subjective" expressions, it can be assumed that the readers adopt a point of view which is close to or even the same as his or hers.

Onomatopoeias

To convey vividness of the scene

Hypothesis 3:

If the text of a picture book contains onomatopoeias, the readers can feel the imaginary world vividly, as if they were there.

2.1.1 Text of *The Rabbits' Wedding*

The Rabbits' Wedding consistently employs **direct speech with a parenthetical clause**, as exemplified in (1).

- (1) "Let's play Hop Skip And Jump Me," said the little white rabbit.

The Rabbits' Wedding, the text contains at least the following kinds of subjective expressions (underline mine):

- (2) A. Copulative look (5 times)

- a. ... the little black rabbit ... looked very sad. [Scenes 4, 5, 6, 7]
- b. And the little black rabbit never looked very sad again. [flyleaf]

- B. come (twice)

- a. All the other little rabbits came out to see how happy they both were ... [Scene 12]
- b. The other animals of the forest came to watch the wedding dance ... [Scene 13]

- C. Adjectives and Adverbs (5 times)

- a. Two little rabbits, a white rabbit, and a black rabbit, lived in a large forest. [Scene 1]
- b. The little white rabbit opened her eyes very wide and thought very hard. [Scene 9]
- c. The little black rabbit opened his eyes very wide and thought very hard. [Scene 10]

- d. The little white rabbit gave the little black rabbit her soft white paw. [Scene 11]
- e. And so the two rabbits were wed and lived together happily in the big forest: [Scene 14]

©To draw the readers into the imaginary world, the text of *The Rabbits' Wedding* employs some strategies other than onomatopoeias.

2.1.2 Text of *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi*

Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi also employs direct speech (or direct quotation), but 17 examples out of 22 are not the standard style in Japanese, i.e. they have the form without the quotative maker *to* or *tte*, as exemplified in (3-4):

- (3) “Douka shita no?” Shiroi usagi ga kikimashita.
 What.PT do-PAST FP white rabbit S ask-PAST
 “What’s wrong?” asked the white rabbit.
 “Un, boku, chotto kangaeteta n da.” Kuroi usagi wa kotaemashita. [Scene 4]
 Uh-huh I a little think-STAT-PAST NOM COP black rabbit TP answer-PAST
 “Uh-huh, I’m just thinking,” answered the black rabbit.
 Cf. “Douka shita no?” to/tte Shiroi usagi ga kikimashita.
 “Un, boku, chotto kangaeteta n da.” to/tte Kuroi usagi wa kotaemashita.
- (4) Soshite, kokoro o komete iimashita.
 Then heart DO put into-CONV say-POL-PAST
 “Korekarasaki, itsumo kimi to issyo ni iraremasu you ni!” [Scene 9]
 from now on always you with together ADV be-POSSIBILITY COMP ADV
 ‘Then (the black rabbit) said with all his heart, “I wish to be with you forever and always.”’
 Cf. Soshite, kokoro o komete “Korekarasaki, itsumo kimi to issyo ni iraremasu yoo ni!” to/tte iimashita.

Turning to the “subjective” expressions, the text contains some types of subjective expressions as in the following (underline mine):

- (5) A. Deictic expressions: *kono* and *yatte kuru*
- a. Nihiki no kono shiawasena yoosu o mini, hoka no chiisana usagi ga
 Two LK this happy state DO see-INF other LK little rabbits S
oozei yatte kimashita. [Scene 12]
 many send-CONV come-PAST
 ‘Many little rabbits came to see the two rabbits who looked happy.’
 - b. ... dansu o mini yatte kimashita. [Scene 13]
 ... dance DO see-INF send-CONV come-PAST
 ‘... came to see the dance.’
- B. Adjectival expressions
- a. Shiroi usagi to kuroi usagi, nihiki no chiisana usagi ga,
 white rabbit and black rabbit two LK little rabbit S
hiro mori no naka ni, sundeimashita. [Scene 1]
 large forest LK in ADV live-STATE-PAST
 ‘Two little rabbits, a white rabbit and a black rabbit lived in a large forest.’
 - b. Soshite, ichinitiju, issyo ni tanoshiku asobimashita. [Scene 2]
 then all day long together ADV happily play-PAST
 ‘Then [the two rabbits] played happily all day long.’
 - c. ... kuroi usagi wa ... kanashisoona kao o ... [Scenes 4, 5, 6, 7, 14]
 ... black rabbit TP ... sad-look-LK face DO...
 ‘... the black rabbit looked sad ...’

- d. Shiroi usagi wa, yawarakana shiroi te o sashinobemashita. [Scene 11]
 white rabbit TP soft-LK white hand DO stretch out-PAST
 'The white rabbit stretched out her soft white hands [to the black rabbit].'
- e. ... dongurisagashi o sitari site, tanoshiku kurashimashita [Scene 14]
 ... acorn-finding DO do-things like do-CONV happily live-PAST
 '[The two rabbits] lived happily doing FIND THE ACORN and'

Unlike the English version, *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi* contains onomatopoeias and the word *man-maruku*, both of which can be considered to reflect the way Japanese people tell a story vividly to someone like a child, often changing the tone of voice, as in (6) (underline mine):

(6) A. Onomatopoeias

- a. Phyon pyon no pyoon [Scene 3, twice]
 b. Phyon phon [Scene 6]
 cf. The word "phyon" is an onomatopoeia which represents the jump of a small animal like a rabbit. "Phyon" represents the act of jumping higher and/or longer.
- c. ... jitto kangaemashita. [Scene 9]
 cf. The onomatopoeia 'Jitto' here represents the way of thinking hard or intensely.
- d. ... sotto nigirimashita. [Scene 11]
 cf. The onomatopoeia "sotto" means 'gently.'

B. *Manmaruku*

- ... me o manmaruku shite... [Scenes 9,10]
 ... eyes DO perfectly round do-CONV ...
 '...with [his/her] eyes wide open

©The text of *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi* seems to employ more strategies than *The Rabbits' Wedding*.

2.1.3 Summary of the Differences of the Two Texts

	English Version	Japanese version
direct/indirect speech	direct speech with a parenthetical clause	direct speech ※Most of the examples have no quotative marker <i>to/tte</i>
subjective expressions	copulative <i>look</i> deictic: <i>come</i> adjectives/adverbs: <i>soft, happily, etc.</i>	Deictic: <i>yatte kuru, kono</i> adjectival expressions: <i>yawarakana, kanashisoona, etc.</i>
Onomatopoeias and others	No onomatopoeias	Onomatopoeias: <i>phyon, phyoon, jitto, sotto</i> Others: <i>manmaruku</i>

Table 1: Summary of the differences of *The Rabbits' Wedding* and *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi*

2.2 What the Pictures Show

1. A correlation can be seen between: (i) the direction of the eyes (or faces) of the character(s), (ii) the progression (or regression) of the story, and (iii) the direction in which we turn the pages.

Towards the climax (Scenes 9 and 10):

The relationship between two rabbits becomes intimate. Most of the scenes show the compatibility between the direction of the eyes (or faces) of the character(s) and the direction in which we turn the pages.

After the climax:

An intimate relationship between two rabbits is established. Most of the scenes show the incompatibility between the direction of the eyes (or faces) of the character(s) and the direction in which we turn the pages.

2. The size of the characters depicted differs from scene to scene.

Towards the climax: The repetition of “big” and “small” sizes can be seen.

In the climax: The two rabbits are the biggest in size.

After the climax: The two rabbits are getting smaller.

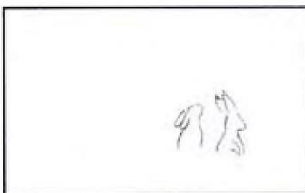
If the pictures of a picture book designate the area or distance within which the readers can (literally) “see” the scene (i.e., the sight of the readers), the change in size of the characters will be one of the factors whereby the readers determine their position from which they “see” the scene. The change from the first to the climax scenes in *The Rabbits’ Wedding* seems to be one strategy to gradually draw the readers to the fictive world of the two rabbits.

2.3 Experiments on the Dynamics of Words and Pictures

Participants	12 (male 5; female 7)
Trial	With text / without text [within-participants]
Examples of the Question	<p>[as to the sense of distance to the two rabbits]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You feel as if {you get closer to the two rabbits / you become more distant from the two rabbits / you stay at the same position}. <p>[Scenes 1-8, 11-13]</p> <p>[as to the positional relationship between the two rabbits]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The black rabbit is {in front of / in back of / in the left of / in the right of} the white rabbit. [Scene 9] • The white rabbit is {in front of / in back of / in the left of / in the right of} the black rabbit. [Scene 10]

Table 2: The outline of the experiment concerning the dynamics of words and pictures in *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi*

One of the examples of “feeling as if you get closer to (or zooming-in on) the two rabbits” can be seen in the change from Scene 1 to Scene 2.



Scene 1

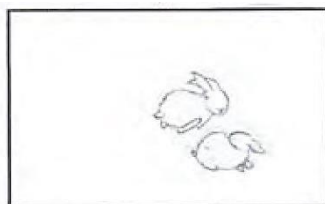


Scene 2

The change from Scene 2 to Scene 3 is an example of “feeling as if you become more distant from (or zooming-out on) the two rabbits.”

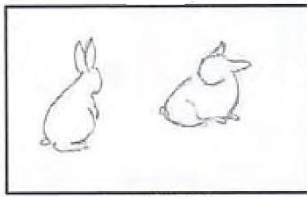


Scene 2

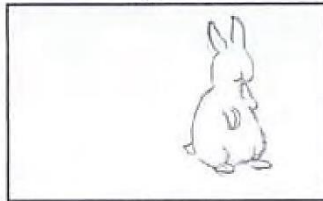


Scene 3

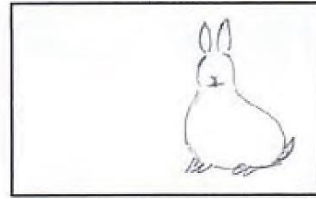
Through the series of pictures from Scene 8 to Scene 10, you can imagine the positional relationship between the two rabbits.



Scene 8



Scene 9

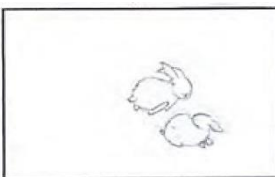


Scene 10

		Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3	Scene 4	Scene 5	Scene 6
Without text	closer	8	9	4	7	4	10
	staying	2	2	3	2	1	2
	more distant	2	1	5	3	7	0
With text	closer	2	9	6	7	4	5
	staying	4	2	4	3	4	3
	More distant	6	1	2	2	4	4
significance		* $p < .05$	ns	ns	ns	ns	* $p < .05$

		Scene 7	Scene 8	Scene 11	Scene 12	Scene 13	total
Without text	closer	1	7	7	4	3	64
	staying	3	2	2	2	1	22
	more distant	8	3	3	6	8	86
With text	closer	1	11	7	4	3	59
	staying	2	1	2	3	3	31
	more distant	9	0	3	5	6	90
significance		ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

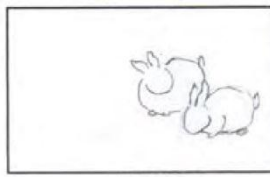
Table 3: The results of the question as to the sense of distance



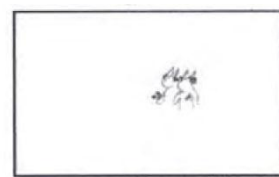
Scene 3



Scene 5



Scene 6



Scene 13

©No participants show the same judgment in both conditions.

⇒ The text more or less effects the viewpoint of the readers.

[Scene 6] The effect seems to be very strong (statistically significant).

⇒ Since the viewpoint of the text (i.e. the narrator's viewpoint) is settled in this book (because the way of telling the story is consistent throughout the text), the readers are not so strongly influenced by the pictures depicted.

[Scene 3] The number of the readers who feel closer in the with-text condition rises.

⇒ Scene 3 is the first scene in which the conversation between the two rabbits appears.

⇒ Since the direct mode of speech conveys vividness (as mentioned above) and the conversation carried out between two intimate rabbits may be in a very quiet tone of voice, the text might have made some of the participants feel closer to the two rabbits.

[Scene 13] Although the illustration shows the smaller figure of the two rabbits, the judgment of “staying” in the with-text condition increases.

⇒ The readers who have already set up and entered the imaginary world of this picture book tend to stay there, even though the picture shows the viewpoint away from the rabbits (??)

	front	back	left	right
without text	3	7	1	1
with text	8	0	0	4

Table 4: The results of the apprehension as to the position of the black rabbit in Scene 9

	front	back	left	right
without text	6	3	1	2
with text	12	0	0	0

Table 5: The results of the apprehension as to the position of the white rabbit in Scene 10

◎we cannot overlook the effect of the picture in these scenes. Especially, **the picture of the character en face** is one factor of leading the reader to the world depicted. These climax scenes seem to use the dynamics of words and illustrations very effectively.

3. Concluding Remarks

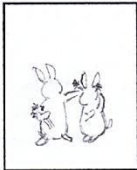
1. Both *The Rabbits' Wedding* and *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi* employs direct speech in expressing the conversation of the two rabbits, but while all the direct speech examples in the English version are accompanied by a parenthetical clause, most of those in the Japanese version take the form probably unique to picture books, i.e. the form without the quotative marker *to/tte*.
2. *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi* has more strategies which add the vividness to the story.
3. There is a certain correlation between the direction of the eyes (or faces) of the character(s), the progression (or regression) of the story, and the direction in which we turn the pages.
4. At least in Scene 10, the direction of the eyes (or faces) of the characters induces the readers to enter the fictive world of the picture book.
5. Although the size of the characters depicted sometimes effects on the readers' position from which they “see” the scene, the text has a greater influence than the pictures at least on adult Japanese readers.

References:

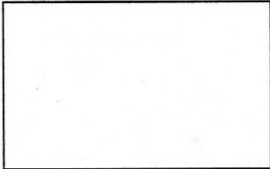
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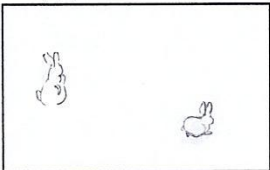
Appendix: A line drawing of *Shiroi Usagi to Kuroi Usagi* by Chie Fukada



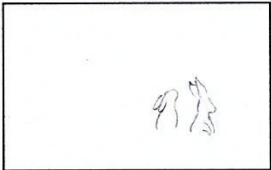
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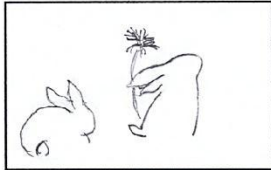
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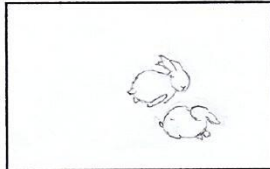
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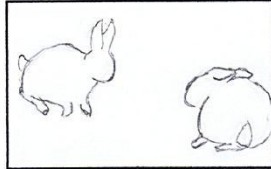
Scene 1



Scene 2



Scene 3



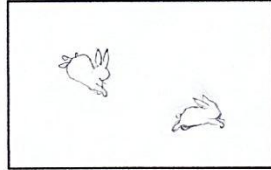
Scene 4



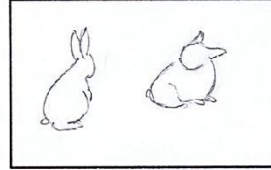
Scene 5



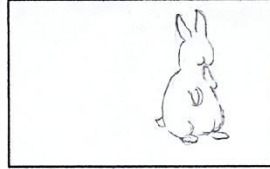
Scene 6



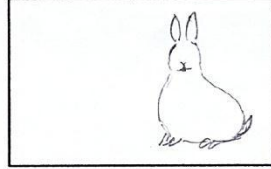
Scene 7



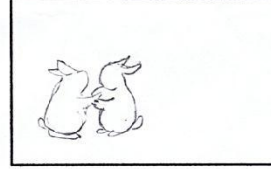
Scene 8



Scene 9



Scene 10



Scene 11



Scene 12



Scene 13



Scene 14



flyleaf



back cover