Recent comparative studies of Japanese and American interactions (Fujii and Kim 2014, Fujii 2012, Katagiri 2007, Machi 2007, Kobayashi 2012, Kawasoe 2012 and others) based on a comparable dataset for language and culture, the Mister O Corpus, reveal that language practice in Japanese interaction such as giving mutual consent, repeating others’ words and phrases, back-channeling, and taking the protagonist’s perspective share common features rooted in an underlying cultural view of self and other (self as inseparable from other); on the other hand, language practice in American interaction is rooted in the American cultural view of self and other (self as separable from other). This finding illustrates that seemingly illogical and impractical Japanese interactional practices operate within a different frame from that of the West, based on the language ideologies of Japanese culture.

The present study demonstrates that the ways of disagreeing in the two cultures differ greatly in the data-set of the task-based Mister O Corpus. Fujii (2012) reveals that the American participants present themselves in a direct manner, employing straightforward ways of proposing their ideas and opinions, whereas the Japanese participants present themselves more indirectly and interdependently, which leads to more indirect and mutually constructive interactions. Similarly, the American participants disagree in a direct and independent way, whereas Japanese participants disagree in a more indirect and interdependent way.

Using the results of this analysis, the present study further suggests that the theoretical and methodological investigation of disagreeing so far presented has been strongly based on Western interactional principles (e.g. Pomerantz 1984), but the disagreeing processes in Japanese interaction cannot be accounted for by these principles because the ideologies of language practices are different between the west and Japanese.

Keywords: disagreeing, ideology of language practice, the West and Japanese.