愛は甘いか？「甘え」の分析と集団療法プロセス
Is Love Sweet? Analysis of 'Amae' and the Group Therapeutic Process

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ABSTRACT

This article discussed the characteristics of a Japanese concept '*amae*' and the characteristics of the Japanese interpersonal relationships from a viewpoint of Japanese linguistic structure that throws *amae* into relief, and tried to examine a sensory-somatic word of "sweetness" from which the concept *amae* derives in terms of Bucci's multiple code theory and referential process. It was pointed out that Japanese and English are completely opposite in who gives "sweetness" to whom, and that the relation-dependency and ambivalence of the Japanese are embedded in linguistic structure of Japanese. To illustrate them, a case from a group therapy with Japanese was presented. The members felt themselves compelled to give sweetness to, or indulge, a person while felt a convoluted *amae* that was derived from her ambivalence in which she was afraid of being gratified while seeking for that. However it had the opposite effect. Rather the therapeutic processes occurred when the subsymbolic forms of the needs and fears evoked in her got connected to her imageries and memories and reflected in the symbolic form. It was suggested that the reorganizing of emotional processes would lead to a more primitive and healthier *amae*.

　本研究では，日本語の「甘え」概念の特徴，甘えという感情を顕在化させる日本語の言語構造からみた対人関係の特徴を論じ，甘えを理解するために，「甘え」概念が由来する「甘さ」という身体感覚語をBucci の多元コード理論と照合過程で検討することを試みた．誰が誰に「甘さ」をもたらすのかという点で日本語と英語は正反対で，日本人の関係依存性とアンビバレンスが日本語の言語構造に埋め込まれていることを指摘した．これらの議論を例証するために，日本人のグループセラピー事例を提示した．充

足を求めつつ恐れるというアンビバレンスがもたらす屈折した甘えに対して，周囲は「甘さ」を与えようとしてしまうが，それは逆効果をもたらす．むしろ自分に喚起された欲求や恐れの「下象徴的」形態が，イメージや記憶と結びつき，「象徴的」形態に反映された時，治療的な過程が生じた．すなわち，情緒過程の再体制化によって甘えはより自然で健康なものになるのである．

This study employs the concept of '*amae*' that characterizes Japanese behaviors and their psychology, tries to explicate the interpersonal relationships of Japanese from a linguistic perspective, and examines group dynamics and clinical process from a viewpoint of '*amae*' through a case illustration of group therapy with Japanese young adults.

Along with this aim, an important key concept is what 'sweetness' is when it is experienced in interpersonal relationships. "[*Amae*] is a noun which derives from '*amaeru*', an intransitive verb meaning 'to depend and presume upon another's love or bask in another's indulgence. It has the same root as the word, *amai*, an adjective meaning 'sweet'" (Doi, 1989, p.349). That is an important need for an infant to activate interactions with significant others, and its ubiquitous meaning has been recognized in recent years. The fact that such a need is named in terms of a sense of feeling 'sweet' is interesting, because an adjective 'sweet' or other equivalent words are often used across the Western languages in intimate relationships where '*amae*' comes up remarkably, although the Japanese word like '*amae*' was said to be very unique, and impossible to find any similar words in the Western languages when Doi first paid attention to '*amae*.'

Certainly, the '*amae*'-driven relationships in Japanese and its huge vocabulary may be characteristic of the Japanese language, but, in English, for example, boy/girlfriend or someone very close to you can be called 'sweetheart' or 'sweetie.' Similarly, it is apparent that 'honey' represents someone 'sweet.' It is well-known that 'sweet' or 'bitter' is used to describe affective states related with love. There may be a good reason why taste is used to describe the nature of love. Hence, this study is based on a major premise that examining the vocabulary of '*amae*' can lead to understanding psychological processes as 'signified.' This may imply differences in perceiving this sweetness, comparing the Japanese way with the Western one.

The ideas of Multiple Code Theory and Referential Process by Bucci (1997, 2001, 2007) are very helpful to develop the idea above. The theory of referential process explicates the process in which verbal contents arise from nonverbal processes, and is expected to operate as a lens to scrutinize the role of nonverbal processes in therapeutic relationship and the Japanese interpersonal relationships where intrapersonal and interpersonal nonverbal process is respected.

'*AMAE*' AS A KEY CONCEPT

Dr. Takeo Doi, a leading psychoanalyst and psychiatrist in Japan, was interested in the concept of *amae*, because he "was struck by the fact that their (Japanese patients') relationship to the therapist is tinged with the same emotional tone which pervades all interpersonal relationships in Japan" (Doi, *ibid*). And based on his own cross-cultural experiences, he found this emotional quality is from *amae*. He published a book named "The Structure of *Amae*" (1971), which became popular in Japan very quickly. Only two years later was it translated into English, with the title of "The Anatomy of Dependence" (1973). There he studied *amae* very deeply in comparison with many significant psychoanalytic concepts. Gradually he

became aware that the concept has universality across cultures and languages and that it must be a cornerstone in many psychoanalytic concepts. "The concept of *amae* is important as an organizing principle in understanding the emotional life of Japanese people. In spite of its being Japanese in origin it sheds light on and unifies many psychoanalytic concepts that are usually considered separately" (Doi, 1989, p.349).

Three characteristics of *amae*
Amae is linked to a psychology of infancy

As noted before, the basic definition of '*amae*ru' is 'to depend and presume on another's love or bask in another's indulgence'. '*Amae*ru-ing' as a daily usage refers to a behavior of nagging love from others or a state of being satisfied with the love s/he wants. In English, it's a state just like "You are being such a baby." As is displayed in these states, the concept of *amae* originally represents a sort of psychological state in infancy. Doi says, "[⋯] it definitely links with the psychology of infancy, because we say about a small child that it is *amaeru*-ing only when it begins to become aware of its surroundings and to seek its mother" (*ibid*). "Please note that in this instance *amae* describes certain forms of behavior of the child that directly refers to the feelings revealed by that behavior" (*ibid*). This behavior is precisely seeking for 'sweetness.'

"*Amae* can be used not only for a child vis-a-vis his mother or any caring person, but also when similar feelings occur in any other interpersonal relationship such as between lovers, friends, husband and wife, teacher and student" (*ibid*), to which I want to add 'master and pet.' Thus, *amae* does not always imply a regressed state of mind but healthy function everyone has with someone significant to him. This idea reminds us of "selfobject function" as a self psychologist would call it. Kohut (1981) emphasized the importance of one's selfobject matrix not only during infancy but in the whole life. With lifelong

healthy functions of selfobjects you can live a psychologically healthy life. Thus they are quite similar in this point.

Amae as nonverbal message

The second point is that *amae* is conveyed in a nonverbal way. "You cannot say 'I *amaeru* on you' unless you happen to be in a reflective mood to acknowledge your *amae* on the partner" (1989, p. 350), "[...] the genuine feeling of *amae* should be conveyed and appreciated only non-verbally," (*ibid*) such as vocal tones, physical reactions, gestures, and facial expressions.

You can exemplify it in many events, but here I will give you some interesting descriptions in "Norwegian Wood" by Haruki Murakami (1987/2000), a well-known novelist. This is a scene where Midori, a young and attractive woman, shows some interests to the hero Toru, whom she met lately.

"I'd like to go drinking with you again," she said, *cocking her head slightly.* (Murakami, 2000, p.196)

Of course, her speech itself works well enough as a love message. Nevertheless, you can enter into Midori, who tried to convey her outpouring emotions by cocking her head slightly, maybe unintentionally. It is suggested that the author tried to depict Midori's way of expressing her *amae*.

Interestingly, the same movement appeared several months later when Midori got angry at Toru, trying to reject him.

"I have to see somebody," Midori said, *cocking her head slightly*. (Murakami, 2000, p.254)

Cocking her head in this scene involves anger, but maybe Midori did not intend to reject him completely; rather her secret expectation to be loved more came out without her awareness. This type of unawareness is not dynamic unconscious by means

of repressing conflictual feelings but a so called "implicit relational knowing" (Stern et al., 1998), or a preverbal process that she had when she sought for fulfillment of her *amae*.

Interpersonal nature that amae includes

The third point is that *amae* includes interpersonal and intersubjective nature in essence. That's how it is quite close to ambivalence because, unlike a Freudian concept of drive, *amae* is also mixed up with a need that you want to be fulfilled and an anxiety that may not be fulfilled. Doi says, "[⋯] though it primarily indicates a content state of mind when one's need for love is reciprocated by another's love, it may also refer to that very need for love because one cannot always count on another's love, much as one would wish to do so. Hence it follows that the state of frustration in *amae*, the various phases of which can be described by a number of Japanese words, may also be referred to as *amae* and in fact it often is so called, since obviously *amae* is more keenly felt as a desire in frustration than in fulfillment" (1989, p. 350), "*amae* and *ambivalence* are quite closely related, because *amae* is vulnerable as it totally hinges upon another person for its satisfaction" (1989, p. 351).

Thus, *amae* has a root in interpersonal relationship in infancy; is based on bodily sense; has a nonverbal process for intrapersonal function as well as interpersonal relationship; can get captured and verbalized through a kind of self-reflection; and is uniquely expressed by use of the metaphor of taste.

Amae and sweetness: what is sweetness and where is it?

Let us consider the concept of *amae* from the sense of the English notion of "sweetness." We do this partly to reduce the difficulty in understanding many Japanese words, but mainly because using sensual English words will lead to a more universal meaning.

Recalling that an intransitive verb *amae*ru means to presume upon another's love, in this case, one could understand the love that a significant other gives one as perceived to be sweet. One could even suppose that the origin for the sense of sweetness lies in the taste of a mother's milk. Actually it is said that good mother's milk contains a certain amount of sweetness (for the baby). It may be that the sweetness comes to be perceived by the baby not only when she is fed and can feel unified with her mother but when the infant and the mother can interact in a proper way. Thus those emotional experiences are represented in the baby, connecting them with the taste of sweetness. In addition, since those emotional experiences are essential for healthy psychological development, one can refer to them as the "psychological nourishment" necessary in a lifetime and tasting sweet. Then all sorts of behaviors, both conscious and unconscious, that one seeks for that psychological nourishment or love can be referred to as '*amae*ru-ing.'

Of course, all they need is not sweet. Something bitter or solid is also necessary for their growth and adaptation to reality. They too work as psychological nourishment. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the nourishment that is perceived as sweet by an infant is the most important in infancy. This is also true with the ill and elderly.

In contrast, excessive sweetness causes harm. Giving only the sweet impairs the ego development. Children need to be more able to take bitterness gradually on the basis of enough experiences of sweetness. The failure of gradual alternation on the part of care givers is '*amayakashi*' meaning 'indulgence' or 'to spoil a child.' The Japanese language is abundant in vocabulary related with this. Instead of explaining this issue in detail, I would like to point out the significance of a film: "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" that was directed by Tim Burton (2005) based on a novel written by Roald Dahl (1916–1990), who had always been critical

about children's educational environment and conveyed messages with humor to protect the growth of children. With excellence of the screenplay by John August, that film succeeded in depicting the vivid and comical interactions between "spoiled children," "adults who haven't had their *amae* needs met", and "family who were connected in terms of mutual trust despite of misfortune." It is interesting because this film shows that sweetness expressed in terms of a symbolic use of chocolate has the same nuances as those related terms like *amae* in the Japanese language.

Anyway, we know that in cases in which an individual lacks fulfillment of sweetness in infancy he never fails to go through many psychopathologies in adulthood, including personality disorder or psychosis, and this can be described in the lexicon of *amae* as follows.

Doi says, "It is related to this usage that we can talk of two kinds of *amae*, a primitive one which is sure of a willing recipient and a convoluted one which is not sure if there is such a recipient. The former kind is childlike, innocent and restful: the latter is childish, willful and demanding" (1989, p. 350). Actually, this kind of convoluted *amae* is what pathological narcissism is all about, and the figure that results from an increased and formidable frustration due to the chronic convolution is narcissistic personality or borderline personality.

Anyhow, it is clear that this *sweetness* is something to represent psychological nourishment that everyone needs or a state of gratification. Presumably the sense of pleasure when one feels loved or unified with someone evokes a strong bodily response. And that is followed by a referential process where that response will be searched and connected with some word that represents similar experiences. In this case, the sense of taste is more likely to be chosen because taste, as well as touch or smell, is very primitive in itself in the same way that love in infancy is primitive, and it may have a lot to do with feeding.

So far, I noted that sweetness comes from its provider. However we have a set of examples with opposite meanings. What does a mother say to her baby when she gazes on her baby in her arms? She might say, "Lovely. I love you, sweetie." Or she might say, "Oh, you're asking love (*amae*ru-ing). I'm glad to care you."

It's very common that an English speaking mother calls her baby 'sweetie' or 'sweet-heart.' This is the opposite of the general pattern we see in Japanese. In the Japanese language, we don't have the same expressions, even though we have similar expressions like, "She is so lovely that I really want to eat her." "She is so lovely that it's never painful putting her into my eye." Those phrases show that Japanese subliminally feel baby 'sweet.'

But instead of saying 'sweet,' in Japanese, we say 'kawaii' (「可愛い」) to mean 'pretty' 'cute' or 'lovely.' Interestingly, the meaning that these Chinese letters signify is '*to be loved.*' Similar to 'kawaii,' there is an adjective 'karen-na' (「可憐な」). These letters signify '*to be pitied.*' That is, both phrases mean a quality of the object that moves you in a way to give love to it. What in the baby moves you? Presumably it is the baby's *defenselessness*, *precariousness* or *helplessness* accompanied by her innocence. Helplessness with innocence evokes in you strong emotional reactions through your mirror neurons. I believe that this is how Japanese perceive a baby as sweet.

In addition to it, a Japanese adjective 'itoshii' (「愛しい」), meaning 'beloved' or 'dear' has the same root as 'kanashii' (「かなしい」), meaning 'sad' or 'sorrowful.' Thus, there is a sense of helplessness in the root of 'itoshii' such that one cannot do anything to someone one loves. Here one can read a kind of resonance, on the part of the subject, with the helplessness of the object when it is very close to loss, separation, or death. This resonance that puts the subject in complete harmony with the object is highly characteristic of Japanese and the Japanese

language. This tendency motivates one to care others, but it creates a paradox such that one cannot help feeling more separated with another as one wants a stronger sense of unity. There you can find how 'itoshii' or love is closely related with 'kanashii' or loneliness. Thus you can say that in the Eastern world love comes out of unification with someone when you are moved and urged by its helplessness and pressing demand. On the other hand, in the Western world, love is seen as more active in a culture where independence is more valued and the sadness caused by separation tends to be replaced by autonomy or activeness on the part of the individual. That is what individualism is based on.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE

Though I am not a linguist, I think it is worth explaining the uniqueness in the linguistic structure of the Japanese language that is closely connected with interpersonal relationships from some preceding studies.

First, the Japanese language has a strong tendency to avoid using personal pronouns (Suzuki, 1973). Second, there is no personal pronoun in a strict sense. Instead it has "terms for self" for the first person and "address terms" for the second person (Suzuki, *ibid*) that are chosen in the context of the speaker and the partner, both intentionally and unintentionally. This is highly contrastive to Western languages where one must always use a single word (e.g., *I*, *je*) for the first person pronoun and one or two words for the second person pronoun (e.g., *you*, *tu*, *vous*) regardless of the context. In the Japanese language, the self is designated due to the context of the conversation, the relationship or position to the person you talk to. The self is, roughly speaking, referred to in terms of "term for the self" (e.g., *watashi*, *boku*, *shosei*, etc.) to someone in a higher position who is referred to

in terms of his social role (e.g., *otoosan* [=father], *sensei* [=teacher], etc.) or the name with an honorific (e.g., , *Yamashita-san*, *Kato-sensei*, etc.), while the self is referred to in terms of the social role (e.g., *otoosan* [=your father], *oniichan* [=your big brother], etc.) or "term for the self" (e.g., *ore*, *washi*, etc.) to someone in a lower position who is referred to in terms of "address term" (e.g., *kimi*, *omae*, *anta*, etc.) or his name (*Yamashita* [family name], *Kato-kun* [family name with an honorific], *Ichiro* [first name], etc.). Of course there are some exceptional rules for that. But unless you can use this grammatical rule perfectly, you would be seen as rude or impolite. Because of this, one hesitates to use "address terms," especially since what address term you choose is a delicate issue. That is why terms for the self and address terms, in particular, tend to be avoided and are like taboos. People who are likely to withdraw from social relationships tend to avoid those terms. However if you wish to have a deep relationship with someone, you must take risks to move further.

Again in "Norwegian Wood" (Murakami, 1987), Midori, in the beginning calls Toru "*Watanabe-kun*" (his family name with an honorific) so often when she makes approaches to him, the activeness of which is unusual to a young woman. And later she calls him "*Toru-kun*" (his first name with an honorific). Calling someone in terms of his first name can happen if she has some times as close a relationship to someone as in terms of his family name. In contrast to this, Toru calls Midori "*kimi*" (an address term, which sounds a little less vulgar than *omae*), and never in terms of her name. As a narrator, he calls her "*Midori*" or "*Midori Kobayashi*" (first and family name). On the other hand, to address Naoko, to whom Toru gives his heart, he tends to avoid address terms, using rather "*kimi*", and only rarely does he call her "*Naoko*," while he, as a narrator, always calls her just "*Naoko*" without an honorific. Those delicate nuances must inevitably be omitted in translated versions. But these examples show there are various ways of expressing

delicacy in interpersonal distance in the Japanese language, although it is very troublesome and confusing.

Third, the way you address another is designated from the perspective of the lowest person in the hierarchy. For example, in case of a family of four including a girl and a younger boy, the boy is addressed in terms of his name. But the others call each other by their name of the position from the viewpoint of the boy, who is the youngest person. So in this family, the husband and the wife call each other *otoosan* (father) or *okāsan* (mother), and they call the daughter *onēchan* (big sister), which may sound weird to Western people, because possessive cases like my or your are omitted. They are implicitly understood in the context and shared in the family.

Binominal Relationship
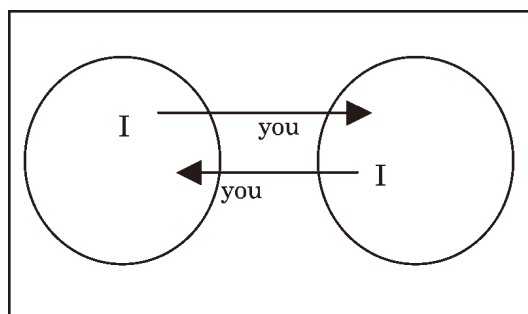
Mori (1970), who is a well-known philosopher

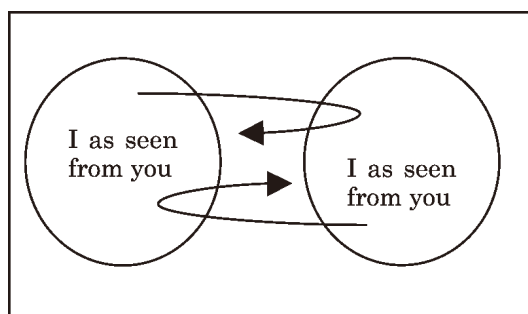Figure 1. Western interpersonal relationship

Figure 2. Japanese binominal relationship

in Japan, termed such a mutual relationship where the self is designated in relation with another person as "Binominal Relationship," where you look at yourself from the viewpoint of another, and implicit sharing of meaning is dominant.

The figures (1 and 2), which were made on the basis of Tatara (1993), are thought to be helpful to compare the Western way of interpersonal relationships with the Japanese (or perhaps East Asian) way. In the Western, self and other is clearly differentiated in a way that the standard of how one perceives oneself lies in oneself, while what lies outside of oneself is other. The meaning of the differentiation between self and other described here is not necessarily psychoanalytic. As noted about the characteristics of the Japanese language, it is rather connected with the fact that the Western languages have a clear distinction between "I" and "you" and they are the only words one calls oneself and another, respectively. On the other hand, in Japanese, self and other intertwine with each other in a delicate way in which they are designated and change according to the context. While the self is thought to be evaluated by others, the other is placed by the self in terms of how the self is gratified with *amae*. A hierarchical relationship as parallel with family relationship forms a cultural characteristic.

Speaking a little more metaphorically, Western people recognize themselves as if they had a mirror inside, on which they reflect themselves, while the Japanese people tend to recognize themselves as if they used others as a mirror for themselves. The fact that Western people look self-confident and conceited to Japanese while the Japanese look timid and indecisive to the Western can be explicated from this viewpoint. It may have something to do with the fact that the "hyper-vigilant" type (Gabbard, 1994) is more dominant in Japan than the "grandiose" type, when frustration of *amae* causes narcissistic disorders. Moreover, it may be connected to the

fact that, unlike in Western countries, interpersonal problems such as Taijin-kyofu-sho (TKS), avoidant personality disorder, and social withdrawal are so common in Japan (Tatara, 2008).

I do not at all mean that Japan is the soil for pathologies of *amae*. Far from it. Rather I want to claim that those disorders are brought about not by the pathology of the culture itself, but culturally specific forms of pathology like them come up because the dissatisfaction of *amae* increases, for some reason, so much as to disrupt their adaptation. In the Western world people tend to shut their minds, denying shame and the need of intimacy, and becoming haughtier. On the contrary, in Japan people tend to inflate themselves with conceit and grandiosity inside, afraid of others' looking through them and realizing their childish and fantastic ideas and wishes. One could assume that people with those disorders have some problems related with the separation-individuation period, but how the problems are framed and how the failures appear, depend upon the cultural patterns. Speaking a little extremely, it is the difference between a culture where people try to tolerate the sadness of separation through independency and a culture where they try to fill the sadness of separation with a sense of unity. It would be off the point to discuss which culture is more primitive.

Furthermore, I don't think that problematic behaviors such as TKS and social withdrawal is caused not only by individual problems like dissatisfaction of *amae* needs; rather by the influence according to a rapid decline of the societal rules and norms that started at latest in the Meiji period more than one hundred years ago. Soseki Natsume (1867–1916), a great writer in the Meiji period, had already pointed out that people in those days were being forced to live a "superficial way" of life, searching for a new lifestyle to cope with a crisis in which a rapid civilization washed away what the Japanese had built up with an indigenous

speed (Natsume, 1914/1978). Simultaneously, it is interesting that he often mentioned in his addresses and described in his novels the generation gap between the parents who succeeded their ancestors' job in their naïve community and the (highly educated) sons who learned in urban universities and tried to pursue their own lives instead of working just for food.

In the climate of modernization, the individual was required to be independent. That means that he must be responsible for his will as to his value system and vocational choice, and the succession of the cultures from his parents is not enough to adapt to modern society. He must also endure being exposed in others' eyes. And he was deprived of opportunities to learn to structure or socialize love (Eros in a psychoanalytic term) and the rules for interpersonal relationships which he is supposed to learn in his family. This causes collusion on the basis of motherhood rather than confrontation to social norms. Those issues have made individual development and socialization more difficult.

Thus, I believe that the goals of current psychotherapy should not be "westernization of the ambiguous Japanese ego" but self-establishment through harmonizing disruption (selective identification in case of lack of intra-family identification), and unraveling tangled unification (exploration of his needs and self-choice against intra-family enmeshment and ego inhibition).

BUCCI'S MULTIPLE CODE THEORY

Reviewing the word *amae*, you can see that it holds much interesting content which would bring to you productive knowledge if you try to figure it out from the viewpoint of multiple code theory.

"According to multiple code theory, thought and communication, including emotional communication, occurs in three basic forms: **subsymbolic nonverbal**, the codes of sensory and bodily experience that are at the core of emotion;

symbolic nonverbal, the codes of imagery in all sensory forms; and **symbolic verbal**, the code of language and logic. These different codes are connected only partially--called the **referential process**. Adaptive functioning depends on adequate integration among the multiple systems to enable people to understand and direct themselves." (Bucci, Nishimura, & Campanelli, 2008, p. 12)

The connection between these three codes, or referential processes, explicates well the emotional communication that is based on *amae*. As Doi explained, *amae* cannot be recognized by the sender himself when it happens in subsymbolic nonverbal form. Only by the third person, or the sender when he becomes self-reflective or frustrated, can *amae* be recognized and verbalized. No wonder some form of imagery may bridge between the sender and the receiver and/or within them.

Bucci assumes that the degree of referential activity can be measured in terms of a set of rating scales comprised of four areas; Concreteness, Specificity, Clarity, and Imagery level. The word *amae* is the one that reflects a high degree of Concreteness, especially sensory-somatic elements. You can assume that when the word *amae* is used as a result of a certain referential activity, some sensory-somatic process that is related with a taste causing the pleasure of attachment has been working in a subsymbolic code from which that referential activity happens. On the contrary, even when the word *amae* was used, one could not say that the referential process worked in an adaptive and successful way if the narrative was not rated as high in the other three areas.

Bucci claimed that the referential process has the three (or four, in Bucci (2007)) phases as follows;

"[t]he phases of the Referential Process include: **Arousal**, the phase where subsymbolic code is dominant; **Symbolizing**, the phase of imagery and narrative; and the phase of **Reflection**, in which the patient, with the therapist, explores the contents of the images and narratives. Optimally, the process is repeated within sessions and across sessions and promotes deeper understanding and change that reaches into bodily and emotional systems." (Bucci, 2008, p.12)

How it develops in a group situation where multiple interpersonal relationships happen simultaneously and with complexity, will be illustrated and discussed in the next section. The examination will also explore how *amae* can be seen in a group with Japanese people and how it is explored and verbalized.

ILLUSTRATION BY A CASE OF GROUP THERAPY

The group and its members

Here I will illustrate what I have explained theoretically by using a case of group therapy that I myself conducted. It was a four-day intensive program. We had eight sessions in all for a small group. In this particular small group, there were six Japanese members in their twenties: four women and two men. We had two male leaders: Dr. Chang from Taiwan and me. All the members including me spoke in Japanese, while Dr. Chang spoke in English through a Japanese-English interpreter.

The member I focus on here is Miss A, who was a junior college student in her early twenties. She had never been in therapy and was generally high functioning, but she had had difficulties in interpersonal relationships in her groups. This program was announced at her college and she responded to it.

In the beginning, the group felt tense to a certain degree that silence prevailed. In such an atmosphere, Miss A was sensitive about eye contact with the others. Every time she tried to look at anyone, she was avoided. Miss A spoke up, complaining that she could not make eye contact with anyone. The two other female members showed a sense of

shame about their need for help, saying, "If I had made eye contact with someone, I think it would be an indication that I wished to ask her for help. But I must not ask for help." Miss A told the group, "You can't understand each other without looking at each other's eyes." At the same time she told the therapists with a fearless smile, "You guys are willing to gaze into my eyes. But I am disgusted with them because you look like you are supposing what I am thinking. As a habit to return your look, I came to gaze into your eyes, as if I lose if I withdraw from your gaze." It seemed that she was trying to wipe her anxiety away. Actually she tried to cheer up Miss B, the youngest female member in the group, and criticized me when it seemed like I was plunging her into the predicament (session #1). The group began to regard her as a strong woman who can show an active attitude. However, contrary to the group's impression, she argued by saying, "It's bitter to be such a person because people depend upon me and let me work as a leader." "In reality I am weak and have the same worries as you guys have. I just tend to be aggressive because of my weakness." Finally she showed a little relief by saying, "It is progress for me that I could express things like that" (#2).

On the next day, however, the group didn't see her relief. She said, "I cannot ask for help," and began to feel "quite uneasy with people once I got familiar with them." Also she showed some irritation by saying, "I hate this atmosphere where you look reserved with each other", "Just listen to yourselves!" although the group expressed a lot of feelings (#3). While she told she was "trying not to cry because tears would make me collapse" (#3), she also said, "I am expecting you all to shell me!" when she was asked why she didn't cry and tried to make people cry (#4). Although it was pretty apparent that Miss A was searching for help and intimacy, it was difficult for the group to handle her cycle or the pattern in which she rejected approaches from the group, but instead she sometimes tried to hide behind

the others' conversations and then complained that the group did not try to talk. Nevertheless, she was respected in the group, with many members trying to come close to her. When Miss A told the group in a theatrical way that she wanted to "throw her feelings away" but that the rest of the group should not do the same thing, several members complained that she was abandoning the group. And the discussion escalated. Regarding those interactions, Dr. Chang pointed out her ambivalence (#5).

After that session she speculated by herself about what she had done, and showed up in the next session, looking refreshed. She said, "I'm very sorry that I bothered you a lot," "I found I didn't want to listen to you because I was so moved." After saying, "I envied you, because you can cry when you want to," she explained her family history. Her parents, whenever she asked for care with a lot of tears on her eyes, rejected her needs and feelings by saying, "Don't cry." "And so that's why I am so afraid to trust you (to allow me to cry). I am so afraid of being betrayed," she said. It was an honest comment, but she suddenly changed her attitude again at the end of the session. "Love equals sympathy. All of you are trying to give me love, but I don't want your sympathy!" (#6) However, her emotional states gradually came to be understood as well as the meaning of "ambivalence" by the group and herself. When Dr. Chang suggested that each of the group members should have the chairs for others and different feelings in his or her mind, she was so delighted and excited, and avowed that what she had done was to straighten her feelings up on the chairs (#7).

In the final session held on the following day, Miss A again made a negative declaration: "I tend to understand my feelings *by thinking*. What I couldn't get is my honest feelings. I didn't want you guys to know my existence." Dr. Chang told her, "If I try to understand your feelings *by thinking*, I can agree with you," and she felt surprised and funny.

Furthermore, when he told her, "It's very hard for you to say good-bye, right?" she nodded feelingly, saying, "Yeah." She seemed to be in her true colors and it was really touching (#8).

Discussion from the viewpoint of *amae*

This case illustrated how a group member conveyed her own ambivalence about being loved in interpersonal relationships. And it's an example of how a sense of helplessness impacts on people in a group. At the same time, it showed that when her sadness was accepted and understood finally, a healthy *amae* or what you can call a sense of natural unity emerged.

Not once 'amae' was mentioned in this group process. However, it is evident that Miss A established a healthy sense of *amae* with the group when she shared her "weakness" with her peers. It was not such an easy process, because "ambivalence" that the therapist pointed out was exactly a characteristic of "convoluted *amae*." It is a small step to awareness of *amae* to have a guilt feeling such as "I am sorry to bother you" when she recognized that she was harboring something about convoluted *amae*.

On the other hand, the Japanese members can accept on a gut level the fact that Miss A cannot *amaeru* while she wants to and cannot move further. The Japanese way of identifying with a victim is more cunning, trickier and even powerful, because it creates a tangled state of mind in the group as I showed above. In this sense, it seems to me that the sense of individual's boundary is quite different between Japan and the US. However, this does not mean that they can develop the group process more easily and better. Rather, they were at the mercy of her convoluted *amae* such that she was "expecting them to shell her, although she didn't want to cry and collapse," and they indulged her in this (i.e., *amayakashi*). A therapist who would try to stop this would be treated as a villain. Nevertheless, it is an inevitable and necessary process to work through the unresolved anger so that *amae* can become natural and healthy. Thus, as the confused group dynamics or group bedrock got resolved, the individual issues such as transferences, which had been concealed in this conspiracy, came to the surface, and the process of verbalization developed (Roland, 1998).

Regarding a therapeutic strategy to handle this state, indispensable are an understanding of ambivalence, a challenge to indulgence, and especially a **warm sense of reality**, which I believe is the essential part for the patient to be enabled to face her dissatisfaction, and **words through which you can dip or shape her needs** (in this instance, the word "ambivalence").

Discussion on Miss A's process from the viewpoint of Bucci's Multiple Code Theory

Let me briefly consider Miss A's process in this group from the viewpoint of Bucci's Multiple Code Theory. She made a progress along with the phases that Bucci described (Nishimura, 2007). Here I will point out some important points. At the Arousal phase Miss A did not show high referential activities; she talked about many feelings in her but they were not so specific, concrete, or clear. At that time, she looked quite restless (in her movements, eye contacts, and facial expressions, etc.) and **unconnected to anybody**. But, as described later, the group members' crying and expressing different feelings operated as intense stimuli for Miss A, and activated her subsymbolic representations very effectively. This made her repeat her patterns, forcing her to reject the group. It was such a relational pattern that compelled 'bitter' experiences to others as well as her in spite of seeking for 'sweetness.' At the Symbolizing and Reflection phase, when she showed higher referential activities by talking about more specific and concrete issues, she looked more restful and **connected to others**. So it is suggested that referential activity has some correlations with subsymbolic and interpersonal interactions with the

people in the therapeutic situation. It is important to note that a space where she could feel herself and use imageries played an important role. Her delight and sense of unity is sure to evoke in readers a taste of sweetness that is natural and authentic.

Another important thing: she became able to connect with others at these phases due to her integrating the dissociated emotion schemas with a certain amount of pain; in other words, it was not because she was given enough love or her needs for sweetness were gratified, but because she got over her convoluted sense of, and wishes for, sweetness, through objectifying her envy, shame, guilt and other painful feelings that would have evoked bitterness in her.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article I discussed the characteristics of a Japanese concept *amae*, and tried to examine a sensory-somatic word of sweetness from which the concept *amae* derives in terms of Bucci's multiple code theory and referential process. It was pointed out that Japanese and English are completely opposite in who gives sweetness to whom, and that the relation-dependency and ambivalence of the Japanese are embedded in linguistic structure of Japanese. To illustrate them, a case from a group therapy with Japanese was presented. The members felt themselves compelled to give sweetness to, or indulge, a person who had a convoluted *amae* that was derived from her ambivalence in which she was afraid of being gratified while seeking for that. The therapeutic processes occurred when the subsymbolic forms of the needs and fears evoked in her got connected to the imageries and memories and reflected in the symbolic form. It was suggested that the reorganizing of emotional processes would lead to a more primitive and healthier *amae*.

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Note