

PhD Thesis

**Cultural Differences in Crisis Communication: Western
Theory and the Japanese Context**

*

危機コミュニケーションにおける文化間相違：

欧米理論の日本文脈への適用

Thesis submitted to

Seinan Gakuin University Graduate School for the Degree of

Doctor in Philosophy

in Literature

By

Katharina Barkley

17DC002

Thesis supervised by: Professor Akira Miyahara

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank my mentor, Prof. Akira Miyahara. Without his constant encouragement and unwavering support, this thesis would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the members of my thesis committee, Prof. Chie Torigoe and Prof. Dwayne Olson, whose guidance and insights were invaluable.

To all the professors and teachers who have helped me and supported me along the way, a very heartfelt thank you.

I would also like to extend my warmest gratitude to all the students who participated in this project.

I also owe a great debt of gratitude to my parents, extended family, and all my friends, who have supported me and who have shared in my struggles.

In particular, I am deeply thankful for my parents-in-law, for their tireless help and support. I truly could not have done this without them.

Lastly, I want to thank my husband, Matthew, and my son, Liam, who have been my rock throughout this challenging process. They built me up when I was losing faith and supported me through countless sleepless nights. To them and all the ones I somehow forgot to mention a heartfelt: Thank You!

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This thesis contains materials published in:

Barkley, K. (2019). The Impact of CEO Ethnicity and Language Choice on Crisis Communication in Japan. *International Journal of Business Communication*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488419882984>

Barkley, K. (2019). Dangerous Voices – Losing the Battle for Dominance in a Cross-Cultural Rhetorical Arena. *Seinan Gakuin University Graduate School Graduate Studies*. 9, 1-18.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
AUTHOR'S NOTE	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	vi
TABLE OF FIGURES	vi
TABLE OF TABLES	vii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	1
1.2 Goals of this Thesis	2
1.3 Rationale	3
1.4 Overview of the Thesis	3
2 Culture and Crisis Communication	5
2.1 Crisis Communication	5
2.1.1 What Constitutes a Crisis?.....	5
2.1.2 Defining Crisis Communication	6
2.1.3 The Development of Crisis Communication	7
2.2 Crisis Communication and Culture	10
2.2.1 Defining Culture.....	10
2.2.2 Defining International and Cross-Cultural Crisis Communication.....	13
2.2.3 Culture and Crisis Communication: Japan vs. the West	15
3 Theoretical Foundations	17
3.1 Situational Crisis Communication Theory	17
3.2 Rhetorical Arena Theory	21
3.3 The Interplay of SCCT and RAT	23
4 The Japanese Context	25
4.1 Responsibility Attribution	26
4.1.1 Attribution Theory	26
4.1.2 Cultural Differences in Responsibility Attribution.....	27
4.2 Account Giving	31
4.2.1 Cultural Differences in Account Giving.....	32
4.3 High vs. Low Context Communication	36
4.3.1 The Apology Press Conference.....	38
4.4 In-group Loyalty	39
4.5 The Media Environment	41
4.6 Spokesperson Ethnicity	43
4.6.1 Source Credibility and Homophily	44
4.6.2 Japanese Cultural Identity and Perception of the “Other”	47
4.6.3 Perceptions of Non-Japanese in Japan	49
4.6.4 Language Choice and Language Perception	52
5 The Case of Olympus Corporation	56
5.1 The Olympus Loss Hiding Scandal	56
5.2 Method	57
5.3 Findings and Discussion	61

5.3.1	The Pre-Crisis Phase – A Small Arena	61
5.3.2	The Active Crisis Phase: Part 1 – The International Arena	62
5.3.3	The Active Crisis Phase: Part 2 – The Arena Expands	67
5.3.4	The Post-Crisis Phase: The Power of Quiet Voices	72
5.4	Conclusion	77
6	The Case of McDonald's Japan	79
6.1	Method and Procedures	79
6.2	Findings	83
6.2.1	Case 1	83
6.2.2	Case 2	87
6.3	Discussion	91
6.4	Conclusion	94
6.5	Implications of the Qualitative Research and Refinement of Research Questions	95
7	Testing SCCT Recommendations in the Japanese Context	97
7.1	Hypotheses	97
7.2	Design and Stimulus Materials	101
7.3	Participants	102
7.4	Measures	102
7.4.1	Crisis Responsibility	102
7.4.2	Causal Attributions	103
7.4.3	Company Image and Reputational Threat	104
7.4.4	Response Evaluation	104
7.4.5	Additional Measures	104
7.5	Procedures	105
7.6	Ethical Considerations	106
7.7	Results	106
7.7.1	Manipulation Checks	106
7.7.2	Response Match	107
7.7.3	Responsibility and Causal Attributions	110
7.7.4	Responsibility, Personal Control/Locus, External Control	113
7.7.5	Company Image	115
7.8	Discussion	117
7.9	Limitations	120
7.10	Conclusion	121
8	Spokespersons Ethnicity and Language Choice in a Japanese Cross-Cultural Context	122
8.1	Hypotheses	123
8.2	Design and Stimulus Materials	125
8.2.1	Audio Materials	127
8.2.2	Visual Materials	128
8.3	Participants	129
8.4	Procedures	129
8.5	Ethical Considerations	130
8.6	Data Quality	130
8.7	Measures	130
8.7.1	Spokesperson Credibility	130
8.7.2	Company Image	131
8.7.3	Similarity	131
8.8	Results	132
8.8.1	Reliability and Manipulation Checks	132
8.8.2	Response Success and The Effect of Ethnicity and Language	134

8.8.3	Ideological Similarity.....	141
8.8.4	Ideological Similarity and CEO Credibility.....	142
8.8.5	CEO Credibility and Company Image	143
8.8.6	Mediation Effect of Credibility on Company Image	144
8.9	Discussion	145
8.10	Limitations.....	149
8.11	Conclusion	150
9	Conclusion and Implications	151
	References	154
	Appendix	188
9.1	Appendix A1: Codebook Olympus Press Coverage	188
9.2	Appendix A2: Codebook Olympus Press Releases	190
9.3	Appendix A3: Key Press Conferences Transcripts and Videos	191
9.4	Appendix B1: Examples of Coding Procedure.....	192
9.5	Appendix C1: Case Scenarios: Crisis Type Research.....	196
9.6	Appendix C2: Survey Content & Questionnaire (Japanese)	198
9.7	Appendix D1: Sample of Visual Stimulus Materials.....	207
9.8	Appendix D2: Case Scenarios (English)	208
9.9	Appendix D3: Survey Content & Questionnaire (Japanese).....	210

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDSII	Causal Dimension Scale II
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CRS	crisis response strategies
FNN	Fuji News Network
IRT	Image Restoration Theory
JNPC	Japan National Press Club
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
RAT	Rhetorical Arena Theory
SCCT	Situational Crisis Communication Theory
TEPCO	Tokyo Electric Power Company

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 5-1 Code Category: Olympus CRS – Word Percentages by Month	65
Figure 5-2 Code: Source – Word Percentages by Month	67
Figure 5-3 Code Category: Key Concerns – Code Occurrence per Month	70
Figure 5-4 Total Articles in Corpus (N=273) per Week.....	73
Figure 5-5 Code Category: Points of Contention – Code Occurrence by Month.....	74
Figure 7-1 Estimated Marginal Means of Company Image.....	108
Figure 7-2 Estimated Marginal Means of Response Evaluation	110
Figure 7-3 Estimated Marginal Means of Company Image.....	116
Figure 8-1 Three-way interaction between CEO Ethnicity * Response Match * CEO Language.....	134
Figure 8-2 Three-way interaction between CEO Language * CEO Ethnicity * Response Match	137
Figure 8-3 CEO Credibility * Ideological Similarity	143
Figure 8-4 CEO Credibility * Company Image.....	144

TABLE OF TABLES

Table 2-1 Categories of International and Cross-Cultural Crisis Communication Research based on Schwarz (2013) and Schwarz et al. (2016)	14
Table 3-1 SCCT CRS (Coombs, 2007a, p. 170)	18
Table 3-2 SCCT Crisis Response Strategy Guidelines (Coombs, 2007a, p. 173)	19
Table 5-1 Corpus of Western press coverage of Olympus crisis for content analysis	58
Table 5-2 Code: Source - Word Percentages Week 1	64
Table 5-3 Code Category: Key Issues – Word Percentages by Month.....	64
Table 5-4 Code Category: Olympus CRS – Case Occurrence by Month [Olympus Press Releases].....	64
Table 5-5 Code Category: Translation (Rotten Narrative) – Case Occurrence by Source	72
Table 5-6 Code Category: Key Messages of Olympus’s Corrective Action Strategy – Case Occurrence by Month [Olympus Press Releases]	74
Table 6-1 Text evidence for analysis	80
Table 6-2 Crisis Communication Strategies and Key Criticisms - Case 1	84
Table 6-3 Crisis Communication Strategies and Key Criticisms - Case 2	90
Table 7-1 Pearson Correlation Table	111
Table 7-2 Results of Principle Component Analysis	113
Table 7-3 Median Scores for Personal Control/Locus, External Control, and Responsibility	115
Table 7-4 Unweighted Mean Company Image Scores by Crisis Type.....	117
Table 7-5 Pairwise Comparisons Table for Company Image	117
Table 8-1 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: With Outlier (N=230).....	135
Table 8-2 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: Without Outliers (N=229)	135
Table 8-3 Pairwise Comparison Table with Bonferroni Adjustment (CEO Ethnicity* Response Match* CEO Language).....	137
Table 8-4 Pairwise Comparison Table with Bonferroni Adjustment (Response Match* CEO Ethnicity* CEO Language).....	138
Table 8-5 Mean Company Image Table for Response Match * CEO Ethnicity * CEO Language.....	139
Table 8-6 Pairwise Comparison Table with Bonferroni Adjustment (Response Match* CEO Language * CEO Ethnicity).....	140
Table 8-7 Independent Samples T-Test: Ideological Similarity	142

1 Introduction

Navigating a crisis is tough on any organization, but such troubles are only compounded when a company is operating outside its comfort zone. With more and more companies growing into multinational organizations, crises increasingly cross national borders, requiring communication with diverse audiences with divergent information needs, and culture-specific communication standards and values (Claeys & Schwarz, 2016). Moving beyond its ethnocentric origins, the field of crisis communication has the potential to provide practitioners with a truly relevant international body of knowledge with increasing explanatory and eventually even predictive capabilities within and across a number of national contexts.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Crisis Communication as an academic discipline has historically been a heavily Western-centric field of research, with a majority of the research coming from Europe and North America. In order to align crisis communication practice and scholarship to the reality of vast cultural differences between stakeholders across the globe, an in-depth study of crisis communication differences across cultural settings is essential. Crisis communication as a field is heeding this call, and a number of scholars have started the drive to move crisis communication scholarship beyond its Western-centric origins (Falkheimer & Heide, 2006; Schwarz, Seeger, & Auer 2016; Ulmer & Pyle, 2016). Claeys and Schwarz (2016) recognized that any crisis communication effort in a cross-cultural setting “would need substantial research and knowledge about [stakeholder’s] information needs, communication habits, [and] culture-specific value orientations...,” (p. 224) and emphasized the need for international comparative research. In recent years, several prominent crisis

communication failures both by Japanese organizations abroad and international organizations in Japan have shone a spotlight on the need for such research in the Japanese context. The emphasis on differences between cultural approaches is not to be taken as a dismissal of their similarities. In fact, this thesis takes the express standpoint that communication theories should be adapted to and not reinvented for different cultural contexts. Recognizing that Western theories are not universally applicable does not mean they should be categorically discarded and disregarded when considering other cultural contexts. It is, in other words, not necessary to reinvent the wheel; one merely needs to tweak it for different territories.

1.2 Goals of this Thesis

This thesis has two primary goals. Firstly, the author hopes to show how Japanese crisis communication reality differs from Western theory by focusing on the differences between crisis communication strategies described and prescribed by one of the most prominent Western crisis communication theories, Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), and the crisis communication practices and realities in Japan. Cultural differences between Japan and the West will be identified, and their impact on crisis communication practices, expectations, and outcomes will be examined. The second goal is the assessment of the impact of cross-cultural crisis communication considerations, such as spokesperson ethnicity, language choice, and message fit on crisis communication outcomes in Japan. With this thesis, the author intends to contribute to the holistic body of evidence-based knowledge about crisis communication in Japan and with Japanese audiences and aid the establishment of a truly universal theoretical crisis communication framework.

1.3 Rationale

This thesis takes a mixed methods approach to achieving these goals. The first section takes a qualitative and narrative approach to illustrate the relevance of culture to crisis communication reality in Japan and in the Japan-Western cross-cultural context. Two qualitative case studies provide real-life examples of the variable of culture and simultaneously aid in refining the research questions and hypotheses for the quantitative portion of this thesis. The second section takes a traditional quantitative approach to testing the hypotheses and answering the refined research questions established in section one.

1.4 Overview of the Thesis

Chapter 2 introduces the state of the art of crisis communication and reviews relevant cross-cultural and international aspects of the field. Chapter 3 provides an introduction to the main theories in which this thesis is grounded. SCCT and Rhetorical Arena Theory (RAT) are introduced, and their theoretical underpinnings are discussed. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the psychological, socio-cultural, and organizational context of Japan and its effects on communication practices in general. Chapters 5 and 6 constitute the qualitative section of this thesis and illustrate the impact of the cultural differences identified in chapter 4 on real-life crisis communication situations. Chapter 5 examines the case of Olympus Corporation's struggles with cross-cultural crisis communication differences. This chapter focuses on a Japanese company communicating with a Western audience. Chapter 6 introduces the case of McDonald's Japan, whose Western chief executive officer (CEO) encountered considerable difficulties when attempting to address two crisis situations with a Japanese audience. Chapter 7 investigates the impact of crisis type

and message content on perceived corporate reputation, while chapter 8 focuses on the influence of spokesperson ethnicity and language choice on both spokesperson and corporate reputational outcomes. Chapter 9 concludes this thesis with final thoughts and future research directions.

2 Culture and Crisis Communication

Any meaningful discussion of cultural differences in crisis communication, needs to be preceded by an attempt to define what this concept entails. This requires a closer look at the two main elements, crisis communication and culture. This chapter will provide a detailed introduction of both crisis communication in general and international and cross-cultural crisis communication in particular.

2.1 Crisis Communication

2.1.1 What Constitutes a Crisis?

A first comprehensive definition was provided by Pearson and Clair (1998) who describe a crisis as “a low-probability, high-impact event that threatens the viability of the organization and is characterized by ambiguity of cause, effect, and means of resolution, as well as by a belief that decisions must be made swiftly” (p. 60). W. Timothy Coombs (2014) describes a crisis as “the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders related to health, safety, environmental, and economic issues, and can seriously impact an organization’s performance and generate negative outcomes” (p. 3). Two key features shared by several of the abundant and often diverse definitions of the term *crisis* are its unpredictable and non-routine nature and potential for strongly negative outcomes (For a detailed overview over the various definitions of crisis, see Pratt, 2012).

Crises have the potential to tarnish an organization’s good name and damage the relationship with its stakeholders (Coombs, 2007a). This is especially true for internationally active companies. Increased media interest in their actions, different sets of public expectations, as well as differing complex economic and political systems, expose these companies to an increased risk of experiencing a crisis. No

matter how much effort an organization puts into risk management, it is inevitable that the organization will eventually offend someone (Hearit, 2006).

2.1.2 Defining Crisis Communication

The field of crisis communication is vast and ranges from crisis communication by individuals on the one hand to the national level on the other. It covers a multitude of topics, including political crises, natural disasters, health crises, and terrorism, to name a few. This thesis will focus on the flourishing field of organizational crisis communication. Any further discussion of the term crisis communication will focus primarily on corporate aspects of the topic, and the discussion of overarching theories will be limited to their applicability to organizational crisis communication. Crisis communication is often defined as a key element of crisis management due to its essential role throughout the different stages of crisis management (Coombs, 2010a). Even before a crisis erupts, crisis communication encompasses the collection of information from various sources about potential problems, the mitigation of detected risks, and efforts to be ready if prevention fails (Coombs, 2014). Communication, once the crisis has begun, includes disseminating messages that help protect stakeholders from physical and emotional harm and mitigating the crisis fallout in terms of reputational damage. In the aftermath of a crisis, crisis communication focuses on allowing the organization to return to normal operations while attempting to learn from what has happened (Coombs, 2014). An effective crisis communication effort can aid victims and protect and restore the damaged image of the offending organization. Lackluster efforts, on the other hand, can further exacerbate the negative impact on an organization and its stakeholders (Coombs, 2006, 2010b).

Other scholars attribute an even greater significance to crisis communication. Hearit and Courtright (2004) assert that “crises are terminological creations conceived by human agents, and consequently, are managed and resolved terminologically. As such, instead of being one component, communication constitutes the quintessence of crisis management” (p. 205). This social constructionist view of crisis communication emphasizes that crisis meaning is negotiated through communication processes between crisis actors (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). If we see crisis meaning as socially constructed, we have to take into consideration the cultural context that defines how different audiences make sense of the world. If crisis reality is not knowable as an absolute truth but a terminological creation, then we cannot reasonably assume that all audiences will agree on causes of crises and make similar attributions of responsibility. This view of crises leads us to not only examine cultural differences in the use and evaluation of crisis response strategies (CRS) but also in the assessment of the crisis situation itself.

2.1.3 The Development of Crisis Communication

Early research in the field of crisis communication was heavily dominated by case study research (An & Cheng, 2010). Here, researchers focused on the organizations, and *what* and *how* they communicated during a crisis (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a). These rhetorical or text-oriented studies emerged as the most widely used approach to crisis communication during this time (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). Application of the rhetorical approach led to the development of typologies of crisis communication strategies such as Benoit’s Image Restoration Theory (IRT; 1995) and Hearit’s (2006) work on corporate apoloia. Research on account giving and apoloia helped researchers identify strategies ranging from accommodative rebuild strategies (compensation and apology), over diminishing strategies (excuse

and justification), to deny strategies (attack the accuser, denial, and scapegoating; Coombs, 2007a). More recently, primarily evidence-based studies have shifted the focus of crisis research from the organization to its stakeholders (Coombs, 2010a). Aiming to predict audience reactions to crisis response messages and make appropriate recommendations, this more formal approach is replacing case studies with quantitative methodologies. Key questions posed are “(1) how people perceive the crisis situation, (2) how they react to [CRS], (3) how they perceive the organization in crisis, and (4) how they intend to behave toward the organization in crisis in the future” (Coombs, 2010b, p. 721). SCCT by Coombs (2007a) draws on attribution theory to match CRS with audience perceptions. For a detailed overview of SCCT, see chapter 3. Other approaches are increasingly complex. For example, an adaption of Contingency Theory to the crisis communication context (Pang, Jin, & Cameron, 2010) utilizes a wide array of thematic contingency factors to determine organizational conflict positioning, ranging from advocacy to accommodation.

Much work has been done to create frameworks to classify the stages of a crisis. Three-stage (Coombs, 2010a; Smith, 1990), four-stage (Fink, 1986; Myers, 1993), and five-stage models (Pearson & Mitroff, 1993) have been developed. The three-stage model preferred by Coombs (2010a) will be adapted to facilitate a structured discussion throughout the qualitative section of this thesis. Coombs (2010a) views crises as consisting of three stages: the pre-crisis phase, the crisis response phase, and the post-crisis phase. During the pre-crisis stage, an organization should be ever vigilant for early warning signs of a potential crisis. Crisis management teams and crisis response plans should be prepared with the intention of preventing what can be prevented and making the best of crises that do occur. The crisis response phase takes place when the crisis manifests. This is a critical stage, and containment efforts

aim to minimize organizational and stakeholder damage (Coombs, 2014). The post-crisis phase is when the organization attempts to return to normal (Coombs, 2007d). Here crisis managers should reflect on the lessons learned throughout the crisis (Coombs, 2014) and foster crisis resilience through organizational changes and renewal (Ulmer, Seeger, & Sellnow, 2007). An organization should emerge from the crisis having become different and better through a learning experience. These changes and improvements can be a strong signal to stakeholders and the public that the organization “gets it” (Heath, 2010), and that similar issues will not occur again. This is especially true when corporate wrongdoing was the cause of the crisis.

While various theories exist on which crisis communication strategies best fit which situations, crisis communication scholars agree on three key guidelines for the crisis response phase: “(1) be quick, (2) be accurate, and (3) be consistent” (Coombs, 2007d, p. 6; 2014). If the organization fails to establish itself as a source of information at the onset of the crisis, the news media will quickly turn to anyone willing to speak about the crisis (Coombs, 2007d; Lerbinger, 1997). Thus, initial crisis information could be potentially inaccurate or even intentionally inflammatory (Coombs, 2006). The crucial first days or even hours of a crisis, which are when many initial opinions are formed, should see the organization fulfill the public demand for information and begin to shape audience perceptions (Sen & Egelhoff, 1991). Failure to speak up signals a lack of control and wastes an opportunity to drive the narrative (Coombs, 2014; Hearit, 1994). Overall, crisis communicators should keep in mind that unsuccessful crisis communication strategies can, in fact, exacerbate negative crisis effects, while a well-executed response effort can protect and restore a tarnished image (Coombs, 2010b).

2.2 Crisis Communication and Culture

Cultural differences can affect crisis communication efforts in several ways. Much research has been done concerning the impact of organizational culture on how organizations and their members communicate (e.g., Pepper, 1995; Ray, 1999). Organizational culture, and through it, national culture, influences organizations' communication behaviors during reputational crises (A. M. George, 2011; Ray, 1999; Yu & Wen, 2009). Culture impacts “whether an organization takes responsibility, offers an excuse, or places blame somewhere else” (Stephens, Malone, & Bailey, 2005, p. 395; Ray, 1999). Ray (1999) urges organizations to consider the “fit of the organization's culture with the culture of its external stakeholders”, emphasizing the need for “sensitivity to cross-cultural communication differences” (p. 22).

On the message receiver side, culture can impact not only how audiences evaluate crisis communication messages (Lingley, 2006; Takaku, Lee, Weiner, & Ohbuchi, 2005; Tyler, 1997), but also how they assess a crisis situation in the first place (Shaver & Schutte, 2001). In addition, audiences with different cultural backgrounds can have diverse needs regarding the manner and form of crisis communication messages. Conventions for media, genre, and text choices, as well as spokesperson selection, can differ vastly across cultures (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a). Culture is clearly relevant to the field of crisis communication, but before we can engage in a more in-depth discussion about cultural differences in crisis communication, we have to tackle the task of defining the elusive term culture.

2.2.1 Defining Culture

With what seems like thousands of different definitions and delineations across and within numerous fields of research, attempting to find a universal definition for the term culture seems impossible. Alvesson (2013) succinctly

summarizes the problem with *culture*: “Culture is a tricky concept as it is easily used to cover everything and consequently nothing” (as cited in Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 123). This inherent malleability of the term culture can be both a curse and a blessing. It allows researchers to find, within the myriad of different definitions, the one that most closely fits their needs, or even daringly add their own to the fray. However, that same ease of choosing a good fit for one’s own study can make comparing culture-centered studies difficult. The following section provides a brief and non-exhaustive overview of how the term culture is used by crisis communication scholars, and how the term will be defined for the purpose of this thesis.

Hofstede (2001) describes culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (p. 9). Hofstede (2001) takes a functionalist approach to culture and defines national cultures along five dimensions: (1) *power distance*, (2) *uncertainty avoidance*, (3) *individualism / collectivism*, (4) *masculinity / femininity*, and (5) *long-term / short-term orientation*. This approach has garnered some criticism in recent years as being methodologically flawed and suffering from “national cultural determinism” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 124). Nevertheless, Hofstede’s cultural dimensions are a frequent staple of crisis communication studies focusing on cultural differences (e.g., An, Park, Cho, & Berger, 2010; Haruta & Hallahan, 2003; Low, Varughese, & Pang, 2011; Taylor, 2000).

Other scholars take an “interpretive or symbolic approach” to culture, emphasizing shared meaning construction through communication (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 125). This perspective interprets culture as a product of communicative activities and processes within groups, which stands in contrast to the functionalist perspective and its view of culture in terms of psychological processes

(Frandsen & Johansen, 2017).

This thesis focuses on national culture as the unit for investigation. It goes without saying that any investigation of culture at the national level is inherently reductive. Nations are diverse, and even for Japan, long hailed as mono-ethnic and culturally homogeneous (*tan'itsu bunka*; Tsuneyoshi, 2004)¹, the national culture level approach leads to an inevitable loss of nuance. However, having acknowledged its drawbacks, let us move on to the defense of the investigation of culture at the national level.

First, national culture can be seen as the background or foundation from which other cultural contexts emerge or by which other contexts are framed. This is not to dismiss the importance of organizational culture, or the often-considerable differences between disparate groups within national units; rather it means to recognize the importance of national culture as the foundation of and background for organizational culture and attitudes (A. M. George, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2010). Organizational culture, for example, is always influenced by the national culture of its leaders and employees. Secondly, a focus on organizational culture or the specific cultural characteristics of just one stakeholder group would pose considerable methodological and practical challenges and is beyond the scope of this thesis. In conclusion, the admittedly somewhat reductive approach of focusing on national culture does not seek to dismiss

¹ Japan as a mono-ethnic nation defined by cultural homogeneity is a staple of *nihonjinron* (see section 4.6.2. “Japanese Cultural Identity and Perception of the ‘Other’”). However, several scholars have begun to challenge the view of Japan as lacking diversity (see DeVos & Wagatsuma, 1996; Hicks, 1997; Weiner, 1997, as cited in Tsuneyoshi, 2004).

the importance of other contextual considerations but merely aims to provide a first step or rough framework from which more detailed investigations can be launched and which can be refined over time.

2.2.2 Defining International and Cross-Cultural Crisis Communication

Culture is the bedrock of human communication, yet, it has only become a true focus of communication studies within the last 50 years (Rogers, 1994). The public relations field began to embrace culture as a relevant factor around the turn of the millennium (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a). And while it remains somewhat less ubiquitous in crisis communication research, international crisis communication and cultural context considerations are being increasingly recognized as a worthy and fertile new avenue in the field (Coombs, 2008; Falkheimer & Heide, 2006; Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a; Lee, 2005a; Schwarz et al., 2016). In 2005, Lee (2005a) described international crisis communication as “underdeveloped, if not undeveloped, [reflecting] either insensitivity or ethnocentrism in the current crisis communication field” (p. 286). Indeed, in 2007, the second edition of one of the most influential volumes on crisis communication, Coombs’ *Ongoing Crisis Communication*, made only a single mention of culture (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a).

A gradual shift in attitudes is, however, becoming evident (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). In 2010, Coombs, Frandsen, Holladay, and Johansen wrote: “Crises are increasingly becoming international [...]. Yet we know little about the effects of the international context on crisis communication. How does the international context affect crisis communication?” (p. 343). In the same year, *The Handbook of Crisis Communication* (Coombs & Holladay, 2010) dedicated an entire section, “Part IV Global Crisis Communication”, to crises occurring in different cultural contexts. In 2016, Schwarz, Seeger, and Auer published *The Handbook of International Crisis*

Communication Research, illustrating the rising importance of cultural context in the field. However, despite the increasing interest in culture, “the state of research in international crisis communication is still limited in quantity and scope” (Schwarz et al., 2016, p. 3).

Table 2-1 Categories of International and Cross-Cultural Crisis Communication Research based on Schwarz (2013) and Schwarz et al. (2016)

	Cross-national or cross-cultural crisis communication	
National and/or cultural context as explaining variable	Yes	No
Yes	I. International-comparative or cross-cultural-comparative crisis communication research	II. Comparative crisis communication research
No	III. International or cross-cultural crisis communication as object of study	IV. Context-specific or country-specific crisis communication (research)

Schwarz (2013) classified the field of international crisis communication by taking into consideration two aspects. The first aspect is whether “national or cultural context factors [are utilized] as independent or explaining sets of variables” (Schwarz et al., 2016, p.3). The second aspect is whether a cross-national or cross-cultural component is present. Table 2-1 introduces the resulting four types of international crisis communication research. A critical view places most existing international crisis communication research squarely in category IV, being limited to a single country and primarily “using some kind of framework or theory that was developed by Western-based scholars” (Schwarz et al., 2016, p. 4). Yet, the importance of investigating the fundamental applicability of Western theories and frameworks in this way should not be underestimated. While some research in categories II and IV suggests their potentially broader applicability with some adjustments (e.g., Huang, Lin, & Su, 2005; Romenti & Valentini, 2010; Lee, 2005b), a claim to universality remains far from being well established. Some evidence points in the direction of a considerable impact of cultural differences on crisis communication (e.g., An et al.,

2010; Drumheller & Benoit, 2004; Haruta & Hallahan, 2003; Taylor, 2000) and shines a spotlight on the need for more research. In fact, a number of scholars are in the process of developing distinct crisis communication frameworks for the Chinese cultural context (e.g., Hu & Pang, 2017; Wu, Huang, & Kao, 2016).

In line with Schwarz's (2013) typology, this thesis defines cross-cultural crisis communication as crisis communication that crosses national boundaries or involves senders and receivers of crisis messages from different national cultures. The studies in this thesis are primarily located in category IV with some cross-cultural elements but without a direct comparative component. In particular, this thesis focuses on crisis communication efforts where the senders or receivers of crisis messages are Japanese nationals and are, therefore, thought to be dominantly influenced by the Japanese national cultural context.

2.2.3 Culture and Crisis Communication: Japan vs. the West

The existence of vast literature on communication differences between Japan and the West hints at Japan being an ideal environment to examine the effect of cultural differences in crisis communication (e.g., Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Hamilton & Sanders, 1983; Ohbuchi & Takahashi, 1994; Sugimoto, 1997; Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986). However, research examining such crisis communication differences between Japan and Western countries remains somewhat rare. Pinsdorf (1991) and Haruta and Hallahan (2003), for example, contrasted the crisis communication strategies and public reactions for major airline disasters in Japan and the United States. Both investigations found considerable differences in account preferences, media strategies, and liability concerns between the two countries. A number of scholars examined the crisis communication efforts of Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) after the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power

Plant disaster through a cultural lens or by applying Western crisis communication theories (Choi, J. & Lee, 2017; Cotton, Veil, & Iannarino, 2015; Pratt & Carr, 2017). Other researchers took a cross-cultural approach. Drumheller and Benoit (2004), for example, found significant cultural effects on perceptions of crisis communication efforts by studying the case of the collision of the U.S. Navy submarine U.S.S. Greenville with the Japanese fishery training boat *Ehime Maru*. Nine Japanese students, teachers, and crewmembers were killed in the incident. The subsequent crisis handling by the U.S. Navy and the Greenville's commander, in particular, was deemed highly inappropriate by Japanese audiences who demanded an immediate apology. The case of the *Ehime Maru* is a prime example of the pitfalls of cross-cultural crisis communication and has been further examined by Hearit (2006), Takaku et al. (2005), and Lingley (2006). As an archetypical case of a Western multinational failing to take into account differing crisis communication standards in Asia, the 2006 cross-cultural crisis communication failure by the Schindler elevator company, has been examined by several researchers (e.g., Kalbermatten, 2011; Nottage, 2006; Rothlin & McCann, 2016). Schindler's failure to deliver an apology quickly and sincerely as well as its use of bolstering and ingratiating crisis communication strategies led to the company being perceived as self-important, unreliable, and willfully blind to Japanese cultural conventions (Kalbermatten, 2011). However, cross-cultural crisis communication failures are not limited to Western organizations. Japanese multinationals have experienced similar challenges. A. M. George (2012) examined communication plans implemented by Japanese automobile manufacturer Toyota during its 2009/2010 recall crisis finding cultural differences in the crisis management approach. The same case had previously been explored by Johar, Birk, and Einwiller (2010) and Neufeld (2011).

3 Theoretical Foundations

When approaching the topic of cross-cultural crisis communication, it is essential to acknowledge and take advantage of the outstanding foundation Western researchers have created in the field of crisis communication research. Existing models, born from exhaustive work by Western researchers within their own cultures, provide international scholars with an invaluable foundation from which to launch their empirical investigations. This study will ground its investigation in one of the most prominent crisis communication frameworks in the field, SCCT. The SCCT framework will serve as both the theoretical underpinnings of this study as well as the archetype of Western crisis communication practices against which the Japanese practices will be compared. In addition, the author will draw on RAT to incorporate various cultural differences into an expanded crisis communication framework.

3.1 Situational Crisis Communication Theory

Timothy W. Coombs began to develop SCCT in 1995 with the goal of illuminating “how people perceive crises, their reactions to [CRS], and audience reactions to the organization in crisis” (Coombs, 2010a, p. 38). SCCT was created to take crisis communication research beyond its descriptive beginnings and to empirically test the relationships found in case study research. SCCT also constituted a shift in perspective from a primarily sender oriented rhetorical approach to a more audience oriented social scientific approach (Coombs, 2010a). Audience oriented crisis communication research aims to examine audience “perceptions and reactions” in crises and how these “perceptions and reactions” can be altered (Coombs, 2010a, p. 37). Grounding his work in Weiner’s (1986) attribution theory, Coombs extended previous work on crisis communication strategies based in apologia and account

giving such as Benoit's (1995) IRT. SCCT recommends that organizations should adjust their crisis responses in accordance with how much the audience blames the organization for what has happened (i.e., perceived crisis responsibility), as crisis communication strategies are most effective when they match the perceived crisis type (Coombs & Holladay, 1996; Coombs, 1998, 2014). To determine the level of crisis responsibility likely to be attributed to the organization by its stakeholders, Coombs utilizes a two-step approach (Coombs, 2007a).

First, the theory assigns the crisis to one of three primary clusters: (1) the *victim cluster* (crises harming both the organization and its stakeholders and eliciting weak attributions of responsibility), (2) the *accidental cluster* (crises arising from unintentional actions by the organization and eliciting minimal attributions of responsibility), and (3) the *preventable cluster* (crises involving intentional inappropriate or illegal actions or risks for the stakeholders and eliciting strong attributions of responsibility; Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Coombs, 2007a). In the second step, touching upon Kelley's (1973) work on covariance in attribution, Coombs (2007b) adjusts the initial responsibility assessment by incorporating the quality of the audience's prior relationship with an organization (equivalent to Kelley's dimension of distinctiveness) and an organization's crisis history (equivalent to Kelley's dimension of consistency) as intensifying factors.

After the level of perceived responsibility has been determined, CRS are matched with crisis types through their perceived level of responsibility acceptance; higher levels of crisis responsibility require more accommodative and responsibility-accepting strategies (Coombs, 2007a). Table 3-1 provides a list of CRS utilized by SCCT, and Table 3-2 summarizes the key recommendations made by SCCT.

Table 3-1 SCCT CRS (Coombs, 2007a, p. 170)

Primary crisis response strategies

Deny crisis response strategies

Attack the accuser: Crisis manager confronts the person or group claiming something is wrong with the organization.

Denial: Crisis manager asserts that there is no crisis.

Scapegoat: Crisis manager blames some person or group outside of the organization for the crisis.

Diminish crisis response strategies

Excuse: Crisis manager minimizes organizational responsibility by denying intent to do harm and/or claiming inability to control the events that triggered the crisis.

Justification: Crisis manager minimizes the perceived damage caused by the crisis.

Rebuild crisis response strategies

Compensation: Crisis manager offers money or other gifts to victims.

Apology: Crisis manager indicates the organization takes full responsibility for the crisis and asks stakeholders for forgiveness.

Secondary crisis response strategies

Bolstering crisis response strategies

Reminder: Tell stakeholders about the past good works of the organization.

Ingratiation: Crisis manager praises stakeholders and/or reminds them of past good works by the organization.

Victimage: Crisis managers remind stakeholders that the organization is a victim of the crisis too.

Table 3-2 SCCT Crisis Response Strategy Guidelines (Coombs, 2007a, p. 173)

1. Informing and adjusting information alone can be enough when crises have minimal attributions of crisis responsibility (victim crises), no history of similar crises and a neutral or positive prior relationship reputation.
 2. Victimage can be used as part of the response for workplace violence, product tampering, natural disasters and rumors.
 3. Diminish crisis response strategies should be used for crises with minimal attributions of crisis responsibility (victim crises) coupled with a history of similar crises and/or negative prior relationship reputation.
 4. Diminish crisis response strategies should be used for crises with low attributions of crisis responsibility (accident crises), which have no history of similar crises, and a neutral or positive prior relationship reputation.
 5. Rebuild crisis response strategies should be used for crises with low attributions of crisis responsibility (accident crises), coupled with a history of similar crises and/or negative prior relationship reputation.
 6. Rebuild crisis response strategies should be used for crises with strong attributions of crisis responsibility (preventable crises) regardless of crisis history or prior relationship reputation.
 7. The deny posture crisis response strategies should be used for rumor and challenge crises, when possible.
 8. Maintain consistency in crisis response strategies. Mixing deny crisis response strategies with either the diminish or rebuild strategies will erode the effectiveness of the overall response.
-

A critical point that suggests that cultural differences might lead to a potentially limited cross-cultural applicability of the SCCT framework is its distinctly ethnocentric origins. Grounded in two Western communication theories, apologia and attribution theory, and developed from and supported by U.S. experimental data, SCCT can be seen as an exclusively Western construct. Only a limited number of scholars have attempted to apply SCCT in non-Western contexts and established

cultural differences in the communication theories it originated from necessitate a closer examination of the framework's cross-cultural validity (Claeys & Schwarz, 2016).

For example, SCCT makes no mention of fundamental cultural differences in responsibility attribution. Various scholars have identified significant differences in mechanisms of responsibility attribution across cultures (Choi, I., Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999; Hamilton & Sanders, 1996; Shaver & Schutte, 2001; Zemba, Young, & Morris, 2006). Therefore, choosing an appropriate crisis response strategy, which matches the perceived responsibility attribution of a given audience, necessitates a clear understanding of cross-cultural variations in responsibility attributions. As SCCT was refined, key elements of attribution theory were tested and dismissed as having little influence on reputational outcomes in experimental settings. Coombs and Holladay (2002) found the personal control dimension of attribution theory to be isomorphic with crisis responsibility and Coombs (1998) dismissed external control as not contributing significantly to explanations of crisis responsibility. This dismissal, while backed with robust findings, is a dismissal based solely on U.S. study participants and is therefore of dubitable validity when examined through a cross-cultural lens. This raises several questions. Would empirical testing with subjects from other cultural backgrounds have resulted in the same dismissal of attribution dimensions as irrelevant to SCCT? Moreover, might other non-Western responsibility attribution considerations affect SCCT? However, not only the responsibility attribution aspects of SCCT might be subject to cultural variation. A number of researchers have also found considerable cultural differences in account preferences (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992; Itoi, Ohbuchi, & Fukuno, 1996; Takaku, 2000). Therefore, perceptions of what are considered appropriate CRS could also be

subject to cultural variation. This poses the question: Do cultural differences in account giving necessitate adjustments to crisis response recommendations made by SCCT?

3.2 Rhetorical Arena Theory

For a well-rounded look at cross-cultural crisis communication for the Japanese context, we have to move beyond what is considered in the SCCT framework and examine how and by whom crisis messages are delivered in Japan. Significant differences can exist across cultures in context, media, genre, and text choices, as well as spokesperson preferences (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a). Such differences can originate from different media environments and responsibility attribution patterns, homophily and language considerations, as well as culture specific idiosyncrasies of crisis management conventions. RAT, a more recent crisis communication framework, addresses these diverse communication needs.

RAT takes a *multi-vocal approach* to crisis communication and explicitly recognizes the importance of cultural differences to crisis communication (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). When a crisis emerges, a *rhetorical arena* is formed, where various groups and individuals interact and communicate. RAT aims to examine the “communicative complexity” of the crisis arena and “to identify, describe, and explain patterns within the multiple communication processes taking place” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 142). RAT uses the term *arena* to illustrate how various voices “struggle with each other regarding interpretation of not only the crisis itself, but the handling of it.” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 142). This terminology conjures up images of voices engaged in a metaphorical battle over definitional hegemony.

The model differentiates between two levels of analysis, the macro- and the micro-level. On the macro-level, RAT takes inventory of the various complex and divergent voices speaking up throughout a crisis, allowing an observer to construct a diagnostic map of the arena (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a). On the micro-level, RAT examines the “individual communicative processes between a sender and a receiver in the rhetorical arena, showing how this process is mediated by four parameters: *context*, *media*, *genre*, and *text*” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a, p. 563).

Context “consists of a specific set of internal or psychological and external or sociological contexts that ‘filters’ each individual communicative process” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 150). The sociological context, in turn, consists of three sub-units, the national cultural context, the organizational context, and the situational context of the particular sender-receiver interaction being examined. The timing of the message, for example, is seen as a vital component of the situational context (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). For the purpose of this thesis, we consider spokesperson choice a situational factor. The media parameter refers to the “carrier” of the crisis message, which includes not only traditional media types (e.g., legacy, electronic, social) but also “the spoken and written word, even the human body, are defined as media in this context” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 152).

The third parameter is genre. RAT defines genre as “a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the discourse community(s) in which it regularly occurs” (Swales, 1999, as cited in Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 153). Text genres commonly used by corporations in crisis include press releases and conferences, interviews, written communication to stakeholders, or social media posts.

The final parameter is text itself, the words and actions chosen to convey the message (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). This can include staging, eye contact, body language, clothing, and many more minute details, which have the potential to significantly impact how a message is interpreted. In some cultures, for example, a perfectly worded apology can be ruined by not bowing deeply enough. The four micro-level parameters constitute a framework for both the creation and interpretation of crisis messages (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010b).

The micro-level of RAT is of particular interest to this thesis as it provides an excellent framework for the incorporation of cultural differences in the crisis communication process between culturally dissimilar organizations and audiences. To summarize, RAT's micro-level takes into consideration psychological, socio-cultural, organizational, and situational contexts and emphasizes the importance of identifying the aspects of these types of contexts that will have the most substantial influence on the crisis management and crisis communication decisions of the actors involved (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010b). In addition, the micro-level accounts for cultural differences in the conventions for the selection of *media* (oral or written communication, electronic, print or new media channels), *genre* (i.e., press release, in-person address, tweet, blog, videos), and *text* (i.e., verbal or visual messages) (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010a, p. 563).

3.3 The Interplay of SCCT and RAT

Crises are infinitely complex. Communication during a crisis is a back and forth between crisis actors in the rhetorical arena. With the comparative simplicity of SCCT, the more nuanced view of the crisis communication process provided by RAT is undoubtedly necessary. If we consider the crisis arena as the macro view of a crisis,

we can choose to utilize SCCT as a tool on the micro-level, zooming in on both the initial assessment of the situation by the organization and the sending of that first and all-important message to stakeholders at large. An initial public reaction, by its very nature, cannot be deeply nuanced and will frequently be more reductive and generic rather than brilliant. An organization may, however, aim to make its initial communication as appropriate to its key audience as possible. Taking into consideration a target audience's cultural background and associated expectations and communication practices can allow an accused organization to overcome the initial hurdle of, at least not making things worse with an inappropriate reaction. While SCCT, in its current form, is undoubtedly an invaluable tool in crisis communication decision making when facing a predominantly Western audience, a culturally substantially different audience is likely to need adjusted crisis response recommendations.

In addition, the-micro level of RAT can add to SCCT an awareness of crisis message form. Where SCCT recommends a general strategy, the micro-level of RAT takes into consideration the culturally appropriate packaging of that strategy. Beyond the what, we have to consider the who, when, where, and how of the message delivery (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010b).

4 The Japanese Context

This chapter will explore existing research on psychological, socio-cultural, and organizational differences between Japan and the West² and discuss their potential impact on crisis communication. Instead of structuring this literature review by discussing typical cultural dimensions (e.g., Hofstede's cultural dimensions), it is structured as a collection of more specific manifestations of cultural differences identified in the academic literature of a number of fields including social psychology, interpersonal communication, public relations, and media studies.

This literature review will discuss more traditional cultural dimensions and concepts as part of the psychological, socio-cultural, and organizational circumstances that have given rise to the more specific cultural differences and idiosyncrasies in responsibility attribution, account giving, and media environment, as well as issues of spokesperson and language choice. This structure allows the author to focus more succinctly on the cultural differences in the communication theories and concepts, which form the theoretical underpinnings of Western crisis communication theories and frameworks. We will begin with a discussion of the role of culture in responsibility attribution.

² To narrow its scope, this investigation will primarily, but not exclusively, focus on comparisons between Japan and the United States, which is the birthplace of SCCT and can be considered a prime representation of Western communication practices and preferences. However, this focus is not to be mistaken as a dismissal of the often-significant cultural differences between Western nations.

4.1 Responsibility Attribution

4.1.1 Attribution Theory

Attribution theory deals with “the study of perceived causation” (Kelley & Michela, 1980, p. 458). Attribution theory was first developed in Fritz Heider’s (1958) seminal work *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations* to explain how regular people intuitively trace the causes of events. Over the years, Heider’s theory was refined by Weiner (1982, 1985, 1986, 1995a, 1995b) and Kelley and colleagues (Kelley, 1973; Kelley & Michela, 1980).

Russel (1982) and McAuley, Duncan, and Russell (1992) developed Weiner’s findings into a causal dimension scale assessing causal perceptions in terms of *locus of causality, external control, personal control, and stability*. While this scale was originally developed for individuals, Coombs and colleagues have demonstrated that it can be successfully applied to organizations (Coombs & Holladay, 1996). When applied to organizational actions, stability embodies whether the cause of the event is perceived as a one-time aberration or an overall pattern. If there is a pattern of similar behavior the cause is thought to be stable, but if it is a unique occurrence it is considered unstable. The personal control dimension reflects whether the cause is controllable by the organization and the external control dimension considers whether it is controllable by anyone else (McAuley et al., 1992). Locus of causality addresses whether “the event’s cause is something about the actor or something about the situation” (Coombs & Holladay, 1996, p. 281). After finding consistent similarities between the personal control and locus of causality dimensions, Wilson, Cruz, Marshall, and Rao’s (1993) recommended collapsing the two into a single measure. However, little research has been done into the potential universality of these concepts across cultural contexts.

4.1.2 Cultural Differences in Responsibility Attribution

Western social psychologists and crisis communication scholars have found causal attributions to be an important precursor to responsibility judgments (Coombs, 2007b; Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Schwarz, 2008; Shaver, 1985; Weiner, 1986, 1995a). Legal psychologists have argued that beyond causation, the judgment that a duty has been violated is an additional predictor of responsibility attribution (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992). A violation of a duty is a violation of one's role responsibility. Role responsibilities range from general behavioral expectations in society, which all individuals should adhere to, to more specific obligations such as what is expected from the leader of an organization (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992). The degree to which both actual deeds and the more contextual role responsibilities factor into responsibility attributions can vary across cultures. Japanese, for example, tend to give more weight to information about what was expected of an actor (i.e., role responsibilities) while Americans emphasize what an actor actually did (i.e., deeds) (Hamilton & Sanders, 1983).

These differences in focus can be seen as linked to the fundamental differences between collectivist and individualist societies. "In individualist societies, people are autonomous and independent from their in-groups; they give priority to their personal goals over the goals of their in-groups, [and] they behave primarily on the basis of their attitudes rather than the norms of their in-groups" (Triandis, 2001, p. 909). This concept of the individual as independent and clearly separate from others leads to a self-construal that focuses primarily on internal characteristics such as personality traits, values, and abilities (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Evaluations of the actions of others reflect this view of the self, focusing on internal aspects rather than contextual explanations when assessing perceived offenses. Collectivist societies, on

the other hand, emphasize values that serve the group and elevate group needs over personal goals (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Interdependence and harmonious relations are focal aspects of collectivism (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001). This value orientation, in turn, results in an interdependent view of the self, where “others become an integral part of the setting, situation, or context to which the self is connected, fitted, and assimilated” (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 227). The individual is, therefore, seen as less separate from others and more defined by the social context resulting in evaluations of the actions of others that are primarily context dependent. This view of the self focuses not on the individual but the self as a part of a greater whole. The drive for uniqueness and distinctiveness of the independent self-construal is replaced with a desire for connectedness and interdependence. For those with an interdependent self-construal,

the unit of representation of both the self and the other will include a relatively specific social context in which the self and the other are embedded. This means that knowledge about persons, either the self or others, will not be abstract and generalized across contexts, but instead will remain specific to the focal context. (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 231)

Hamaguchi (1985, as cited in Markus & Kitayama, 1991) wrote, that for the Japanese,

a sense of identification with others (sometimes including conflict) pre-exists and selfness is confirmed only through interpersonal relationships. [...] Selfness is not a constant like the ego but

denotes a fluid concept which changes through time and situations according to interpersonal relationships. (p. 228)

This view of individuals as being continuously redefined by their contexts is reflected in responsibility attribution processes. Hamilton & Sanders (1992) found that when deciding with whom to place responsibility for an offense, “Americans concentrated on a transgressor’s deeds and state of mind [while] Japanese concentrated on the transgressor’s social roles and the influence of other parties in the context (including victims)” (Shaver & Shutte, 2002, p.36). This reflects findings that those from less individualistic cultures focus more on contextual and situational factors rather than individual disposition (Bond, 1983; Miller, J. G., 1984; Morris & Peng, 1994). In other words, the members of collectivist cultures “are less likely to show the correspondence bias, or a preference for explanations of behavior in terms of traits, dispositions, or other internal attributes of the target” (Choi, I. et al., 1999, p. 47).

A second key difference between Japan and many Western cultures that arises from the divergent views of the self in relation to others is the degree of responsibility attribution to individuals and groups. While a manager may be held accountable for the mistakes of his subordinates or a parent might be called to take responsibility for a child, in general, U.S. Americans do not take responsibility for problems they did not cause (Sugimoto, 1998). This stands in contrast to many East Asian cultures. Menon, Morris, Chiu, and Hong (1999) suggested that East Asian audiences have a greater tendency to attribute negative outcomes to aspects of collectives rather than individual agents. Their survey of newspaper reporting on “rogue trader” scandals revealed that Japanese newspapers made frequent mention of the organization, while U.S. papers focused more heavily on the individual offender. Kashima et al. (2005) found that

Japanese subjects attributed considerably more agency to groups than North Americans and Europeans. Zemba, Young, and Morris (2006) referred to this inclination as *collective agency orientation* or *proxy logic*. This strong degree of in-group or hierarchical responsibility sharing is reflected in responsibility attributions and subsequent account giving that can, at times, seem utterly foreign to Western observers. In Japan, for example, it is not uncommon to see companies publicly apologize for the actions of their employees as private individuals outside of working hours. Organizations will, for example, apologize for employees who have caused accidents while drinking and driving (Horita, 2006). In the United States, with the exception of high-profile cases, the offender's employer would have no connection to the offense and would not be mentioned in news reports. In Japan, on the other hand, newspaper articles and reports will regularly include the company affiliation of offenders. In general, Japanese will be held responsible for the offenses of a much larger circle of individuals than is typical in the United States (Sugimoto, 1998), and causal attributions are not necessary for a Japanese audience to make a responsibility judgment. An et al. (2010) examined post-crisis crisis reactions of both Americans and Koreans finding that Korean subjects considered employees as part of the corporate family, which made strategies that attempted to blame individual employees ineffectual. This difference was attributed to the strong collective values present in Korean society.

Extending such cultural differences to responsibility judgments in organizational crises, we can expect to see a higher attribution of responsibility to the organization irrespective of causal attributions, especially in the case of related-entity/employee malicious tampering or misconduct due to the collective agency orientation and greater emphasis on role responsibilities. Similarly, collective agency

might pose an obstacle for attempts by an organization to frame responsibility as residing with a single actor or group within or connected to the organization. Such attempts would further be hindered by the comparatively greater weight of contextual over dispositional or trait considerations. Overall, there seems to be a considerable likelihood that a focus on context, wider circles of responsibility, and proxy logic consideration will impact not only the initial assessment of crisis responsibility but also the appropriateness of certain CRS.

4.2 Account Giving

Initial assessments of responsibility are not necessarily set in stone. The accused can change the attributions made by an audience, by offering an “an explanation or interpretation of the event” (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992, p. 158). Account giving is most commonly defined as the act of giving information, explanations, or reasons regarding unusual or offensive behavior (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992; Takaku, 2000). Accounts serve to change the degree of responsibility a target audience attributes to an offender and alter the levels of anger and sympathy experienced by the audience (Weiner, 1995a, 1995b).

There are various types of accounts ranging from the rejection of all responsibility to full acceptance (Takaku et al., 2005). Was the offense a one-time mistake, an accident, a false accusation, an act of sabotage, or potential evidence of underlying structural weaknesses? Accounts aim to frame organizational or individual acts or failings in less negative terms (Hearit, 1994). Takaku (2000) discussed five general types of accounts: apology, excuse, justification, denial, and avoidance. Variations of the first four account types are shared across major crisis communication theories (e.g., Benoit, 2005; Coombs, 2007a).

In the first three account types, the accused acknowledges their “causal association with the event and its harmfulness” (Itoi et al., p. 914). An apology will also include an admission of culpability and statement of remorse for the negative impact of the offense (Takaku, 2000). Such an admission reaffirms that the offense was not as sign of an overall lack in moral character, but an aberration that the offender regrets (Weiner, Graham, Peter, & Zmuidinas, 1991). In an excuse, on the other hand, the accused attempts to diminish personal blame by attributing the offense to causes beyond their control (i.e., “Our profit reports were being manipulated, but we did not know about it.”) An effective excuse will reduce feelings of anger and may even garner sympathy for the offender (Weiner, 1995b; i.e., “One malicious worker intentionally tampered with our products to damage our reputation.”) A justification will either attempt to decrease the perceived gravity of the offense or avoid blame by claiming to have followed a higher moral imperative (i.e. “We manipulated profits to not have to lay off workers.”). A denial refuses to acknowledge a causal link between the accused and the offense (i.e. “We did not manipulate our profit statements.”). Lastly, avoidance is not addressing any accusations at all (Takaku, 2000). While the sentiments expressed by these types of accounts might be universal, the relative appropriateness and popularity of each account type can vary significantly across cultures.

4.2.1 Cultural Differences in Account Giving

A number of researchers have found considerable cultural differences in account preferences (e.g., Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992; Itoi, Ohbuchi, & Fukuno, 1996; Takaku, 2000). Collectivist cultures, such as Japan, tend to show a preference for apologies while individualistic cultures like the United States prefer to deny,

challenge, explain, or justify their behavior (Hamilton & Hagiwara, 1992; Takaku, 2000; Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986). Americans are more likely to accept excuses and justifications when there has been a transgression, while Japanese overwhelmingly demand apologies (Ohbuchi, 2015). In Japan, if you have inconvenienced someone, you apologize even if it was not your fault (Hayashi, 2015). Even when choosing to apologize, Americans often incorporate explanations and mitigating circumstances to clarify that the offense will not be repeated or was not intentionally committed (Barnlund & Yoshioka, 1990; Sugimoto, 1999; Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986). By offering truthful information about the circumstances that contributed to the offense, U.S. apologizers can reinforce that the offense was not intentional or malicious (Sugimoto, 1998). In Japan, these excuses and justifications are not well received and are likely to be perceived as “anti-apology” markers (Sugimoto, 1999).

The comparative popularity of apologies in Japan can be attributed to various cultural differences between Japan and the United States in the occasion, meaning, function, and form of apologies (Ju & Power, 1990; Lingley, 2006; Ohbuchi, 1999; Sugimoto, 1999; Takaku et al., 2005; Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986). In Japan, apologies are an integral part of resolving *any* conflict (Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986). In the United States, on the other hand, apologies are most heavily associated with the admission of guilt (Maddux, Kim, Okumura, & Brett, 2012). The implication of admission of guilt in an apology is so strong that some lawyers discourage apologies as they might lead to litigation and subsequent legal repercussions (Fitzpatrick, 1995; Hamilton & Sanders, 1992; Tyler, 1997; Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986). Accordingly, the prevalent frameworks of crisis communication strategies classify the apology as an admission of responsibility to be utilized primarily in situations where the

company “knowingly placed people at risk, took inappropriate actions or violated a law/regulation” (Coombs, 2007a, p. 168).

In Japan, in line with the collective agency approach to responsibility judgments, apologies are less associated with guilt. Apologies can serve to restore social harmony after an upset and to express concern for the problems or distress of others. Admitting responsibility and apologizing are connected to recognizing “the basic rule that has been violated and reaffirm[ing] that the transgressor values that rule” (Darby & Schlenker, as cited in Weiner et al., 1991, p. 284). This results in a more favorable assessment of the offender as the transgression is seen as less indicative of the offender’s overall character (Blumstein et al., 1974; Weiner et al., 1991). Ohbuchi (1999) attributed the Japanese willingness to accept responsibility even in the absence of guilt to an interdependent self-identity where the act of apologizing portrays a close connection to the larger group and “the person is perceived as someone who would protect the group at the expense of her or his own well-being” (p. 42).

Not only the meaning of and occasion for an apology can differ across cultures. Apology timing is also of great significance. Researchers have found considerable cultural differences between the West and Japan. Tavuchis (1991) wrote about Western apologies, that if an apology is issued too early or easily, it may be perceived as patronizing, self-serving, or a mere courtesy. “The idea here is that a ‘meaningful’ apology comes only after reflection on the wrong that was perpetrated” (Hearit, 2006, p. 33). This stands in contrast to the Japanese practice of issuing apologies without delay (Ito, 2015; Otake, 2009). In Japan, a delayed apology can give the impression that the issuer is insincere in their apology and that they care little for the stakeholders they have harmed.

In the Western world, to be effective, an apology has to be perceived as sincere. However, using the Anglo-American notion of sincerity to evaluate a Japanese apology is inherently flawed, as the term is imbued with culture-specific meaning. In her survey of Japanese etiquette manuals, Sugimoto (1998) found that the ideal form of a Japanese apology is described as being *sunao*. The terms “*sunao*” and “sincere” do differ significantly. While both words imply truthfulness, a *sunao* apology includes adjusting one’s description of the damage to that of the victim and humbling oneself to a degree adjusted to the victim’s assessment of the situation, not one’s own (Sugimoto, 1998). In other words, by validating the victim’s view of the situation, a Japanese apologizer performs the right external act and reaffirms their commitment to the social order.

One prime example of how cultural differences in the use of apologies can profoundly impact cross-cultural communication efforts is the case of the collision between the U.S.S. *Greenville* and *Ehime Maru*. The submarine’s commander waited nearly one month to make an apology, which also failed to meet the minimum standard for a “formal” Japanese apology due to its lack of both an admission of “personal responsibility and self-blame” (Takaku et al., 2005, p. 40). Even volumes espousing the values of apologizing in crisis communication recognize that an apology is not always recommended in the Western context. In his book *Crisis Management by Apology*, for example, Hearit (2006) recommended against making an apology whenever determining the level of financial liability is difficult, reinforcing the Western synonymy of apology and admission of guilt. He addressed an example where a large number of people were harmed by a crisis and acknowledged that an apology may “be used as proof as [*sic*] culpability. Such a decision to apologize would be likely to set in motion a chain of events that would

result in a substantial negative judgment that would, in effect, bankrupt the organization or institution” (Hearit, 2006, p. 55).

In conclusion, the cultural variations in account giving discussed lend further support to the suspicion that several of the recommendations made by SCCT are a poor fit for the Japanese context. While Coombs (2007a) warns that in a Western context “using overly accommodating strategies when unnecessary, actually can worsen the situation” (p. 173), Japanese audiences might require a more extensive use of accommodative rebuild strategies. The next subsection moves beyond mere message content and attempts to examine cultural differences in message delivery. National-cultural (e.g., practices, norms, and the media environment), organizational and situational context (e.g., spokesperson, location, and timing), media, genre, and text³, all mediate the crisis communication process and impact both the creation as well as the interpretation of crisis messages (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017).

4.3 High vs. Low Context Communication

One key contextual factor that can significantly impact crisis communication efforts is the existence of vast differences in communication styles. In highly uniform societies, like Japan, common cultural roots result in a high degree of mutual understanding about the meanings and patterns that underly social interactions. Such societies share a host of symbols, nonverbal communication patterns, and subtleties in the use of language that are easily understood by its members but often hard to decipher for outsiders (Ju & Power, 1998). Hall (1976) referred to this style of

³ For a detailed discussion of the parameters of the micro component of RAT see section 3.2. (“Rhetorical Arena Theory”).

communication as “high context”. In high context cultures, like Japan, communication, in general, relies heavily on implicit meaning, with a much smaller proportion of the information being conveyed directly. Sellnow, Ulmer, Seeger, and Littlefield (2009) provided a concise summary of Ting-Toomey and Chung’s classification of the high and low context communication patterns:

High context patterns reflect collectivist values (all understand), spiral logic (all thought is connected), indirect verbal style (no need to speak the obvious), understated or animated tone (nonverbal communication dominates), formal verbal style (demonstration of respect), and verbal reticence or silence (unwillingness to confront). Low context patterns include individualistic values (self-focused), linear logic (one step follows another), direct verbal style (willing to ask and tell), matter-of-fact tone (common expectation to get more information), informal verbal style (no one commands more respect than another), and verbal assertiveness or talkativeness (behavior demonstrates demand for information). (p. 42)

Japanese communication requires a high level of shared context as much of the message comprehension depends on making inferences about the intended meaning. Western communication, in contrast, relies on explicit messages that include all necessary information in the spoken words and are straightforward and concise. Japanese communication, on the other hand, values non-verbal elements of communication and uses less direct speech (Okabe, 1987). “While the Japanese prefer verbal restraint and periods of silence, Americans regard reticence to talk as a weakness, and periods of silence as a vacuum that must be filled” (De Mente, 2004, p.

14-15). Hear one, understand ten (*ichi wo kiite jū wo shiru*) is a popular way of describing the Japanese communication style (Gundling, 1999). This implies that when a speaker explicitly states only one tenth of an intended message, the listener will be able to infer the remainder utilizing unspoken message cues and shared background knowledge. Consequently, from a Japanese perspective, Western stakeholders require more elaborate and detailed explanations far beyond what is typical for a Japanese audience.

High context communication implies that the majority of the information conveyed is “either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message” (Hall, 1976, p. 91). In low context countries like the United States, on the other hand, one “cannot tell a great deal from the context, the surroundings, the clothes or the occasion” (Ju & Power, 1998, p. 62). The view of crisis rhetoric as a social drama or public ritual (Hearit, 2006) can be beneficial when examining public apologies in Japan. The question of how a message is delivered and who delivers the message is just as important as the message content itself. For example, when Japanese apologize, particularly in a public or official setting, the physical context and the position of the spokesperson making the apology are of great significance. An excellent example for the intricate performance required for a skillful public apology is the Japanese apology press conference, *shazaikaiken*.

4.3.1 The Apology Press Conference

A *shazaikaiken*, when performed correctly, sends the message that an individual or company feels sorry for the pain, concern, or anger that was caused and wishes to repair the damaged relationship with its stakeholders (T. Tanaka, 2006). On the surface, one or more individuals utter words of apology and bow deeply in front

of an audience of reporters. Yet, these carefully orchestrated dramas are packed with implicit meaning. In a corporate setting, for example, minute meaning lies in the positions of those chosen to make the apology (CEO or lower-level management), the length and depth of the bow (a 90-degree angle is reserved for the heaviest of offenses), and even the attire and manner of those apologizing (Nakajima, 2007). While an apology press conference does constitute the acceptance of moral or social responsibility, it does not, however, necessarily imply the acknowledgment of legal responsibility. Kovacs (2011) noticed that the Japanese media tends to pay particular attention to inadequate apologies and writes: “When a crisis happens, make a proper apology to the media and they will forget quickly and pay little attention to you” (p.149). While a well-executed *shazaikaiken* is in no way a “get-out-of-jail-free” card, it can go a long way in repairing a reputation and speeding up the resolution of a crisis (T. Tanaka, 2006).

4.4 In-group Loyalty

A further contextual factor that can affect how individuals and organizations in crises act and are perceived is the relative importance of group affiliations. While traditional cultural dimension theories are slowly falling out of favor, they continue to provide several useful insights into how individuals communicate and interact with each other. Hofstede (2001), for example, described Japan as defined by collectivism, which implies a society defined by strong affiliations with in-groups that will take care of their members “in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (p. 225). Consequently, Japanese individuals have traditionally defined themselves in terms of their connections with others, such as family relationships or organizational affiliations

(Gundling, 1999; Wokutch, 1990)⁴. The comparative importance of group affiliations in Japan has led to a strong in-group and out-group thinking (Wokutch & Sheppard, 1999). Stephen Harner (2012), a journalist with Forbes magazine, described the effect of in-group loyalty in respect to crisis management: “Strict legality is one thing, responsibility to one’s ‘family’—still how most Japanese view the companies that employ them—is quite another. There is no doubt to which an honorable man owes his loyalty.” Wokutch (1990) compared this modern loyalty to the company to the loyalty to one’s lord in feudal times and stated that this loyalty can take “precedence over other duties even to one’s family and (in extreme cases) to following the law” (p. 63).

In Japan, “internal restraint” is an integral element of everyday social interactions (Gundling, 1999, p.5). The public airing of problems and direct and open conflict are avoided in favor of indirect conflict resolution that ensures mutual face saving (De Mente, 1993; Gundling, 1999; Ting-Toomey, 1999). Fear of loss of face can be seen as a driving force behind the seeming reluctance of Japanese companies to admit mistakes or discuss problems publicly (A. M. George, 2012). A desire to avoid issues or deal with them in-house leads to a preference by organizations for cover-ups or simple inaction in the face of potential crises (Chen, 2008; Inoue, 2010). This reluctance to share information with outsiders can be seen in the lack of transparency that has defined such crises as the Fukushima nuclear disaster (e.g., I. Suzuki & Kaneko, 2013, Pratt & Carr, 2017) or the Toyota recalls (e.g., A. M. George, 2012; Neufeld, 2011).

⁴ See section 4.6.2. (Japanese Cultural Identity and Perception of the “Other”) for a more detailed discussion of Japanese identity construals.

Further evidence for the Japanese dislike for public disclosure can be seen in how some Japanese politicians handle image crises. “Once they are involved in a scandal, instead of taking active measures in crisis communication and management, they tend to resign, usually with an open apology,” in some cases, even deciding to end their lives (Chen, 2008, p. 149). Chen (2008) cited two illustrative examples: the cases of Toshikatsu Matsuoka, a Japanese Minister of Agriculture, Forestries, & Fisheries, who committed suicide right before he was to address financial improprieties in front of the Diet, and Fumio Kyuma, a minister of defense who stepped down after facing media scrutiny due to questionable comments regarding the atomic bombings (p. 149).

4.5 The Media Environment

How Japanese corporations choose to communicate in crisis is affected by Japan’s media context. Japan’s media environment is vastly different from the Western model. While Japan has a number of respected publications, both daily and weekly, the investigative journalism dominant in most Western countries is largely absent from Japan’s major media outlets (Farley, 1996; Winfield, Mizuno, & Beaudoin, 2000). In many cases, the mainstream Japanese media seems to fulfill more of an information transmission and dissemination rather than an information discovery function. The main forms of information dissemination are press releases and press conference, and so-called *kisha* clubs (press clubs) smoothly facilitate the relationship between the media and organizations. These informal associations of journalists “function as communication channels for officials in government, political parties, law-enforcement, large companies and other important news sources” (Winfield et al., 2000, 344).

Club membership is often limited to members of large news organizations, which can restrict access to information for independent journalists and foreign news outlets. *Kisha* clubs are also frequently criticized for the formation of close ties to their news sources and uniformity in their reporting (Farley, 1996; Suzuki as cited in Winfield et al., 2000). Close relationships can act as a deterrent to investigative reporting that portrays organizations in a negative light (Chen, 2008). Articles in major publications often adhere closely to the information provided by companies or organizations. This means the mainstream Japanese media does not cover the “watchdog” function over businesses and government that is prevalent in many Western countries (Farley, 1996). The Japanese media may more closely resemble a “guard dog”, which does nothing to uncover a scandal but will pursue the culprit after they have been revealed (Farley, 1996; Krauss, 2000). Along these lines, official news conferences rarely see more critical questioning by journalists who are intent on uncovering a hidden story, illustrating that investigative journalism by the mainstream media remains in its infancy in Japan (Chen, 2008). Greenslade (2015) cited an editorial by *The Guardian*: “Mainstream Japanese journalism is not corrupt, but it is respectful, like the culture around it. Anglo-Saxon journalistic traditions are not, at their best, respectful of anything.”

These differing media environments have to be taken into consideration as an important contextual factor when communicating across cultures. Schranz and Eisenegger (2016) provided an in-depth discussion about the media’s impact on crisis communication. Coombs (2007a) wrote: “In most cases, the news media is the final arbitrator of the crisis frames. The frames used in the news media reports are the frames that most stakeholders will experience and adopt” (p. 171). If this assertion holds true in Japan, the nature of the Japanese media environment seems to provide

organizations with a clear opportunity for asserting their crisis frames. For example, in the case of Olympus Corporation's 2011 accounting fraud scandal (chapter 5), the Japanese press was slow to repeat a narrative or frame for the crisis that disagreed with Olympus, until the international media coverage itself became newsworthy. Extant research suggests that the Japanese media is more likely than the Western media to honor an organization's chosen frame for a crisis and less likely to feature dissenting voices in the rhetorical arena. However, an organization's CRS should be in line with cultural and societal expectations. Should an organization fail these expectations, as in the case of McDonald's Japan 2014 food safety crisis (chapter 5), the response itself is in danger of becoming the story.

4.6 Spokesperson Ethnicity

While cultural differences in "what to say" and "how to say it" have received some attention by researchers in the crisis communication field, the question of who should deliver crisis messages in a cross-cultural context remains virtually unexplored. Littlefield and Cowden (2006) recognized that "using multiple spokespeople who represent and speak in patterns similar to intended audiences, and using language representative of the target audience, are topics meriting further investigation" (p. 7). They recommend the use of cultural agents who present adjusted crisis messages to the members of their respective audiences. In relatively homogeneous countries, this seems clear cut. It would seem the logical choice to choose a spokesperson from the host country to avoid the potential negative effects of using a spokesperson who could be perceived as significantly different from the target audience.

However, this might not always be possible. A peculiarity in Japanese crisis management, for example, often requires a company's CEO and upper management

to present the company's crisis response. Zemba, Young, and Morris (2006) attributed this need for leaders to handle crisis communication to the Japanese tendency toward collective-level causality, which can extend blame for an incident from a member of an organization, first to the organization and then to organization's leadership through *proxy logic*. Consequently, any foreign organization operating in Japan runs the risk of finding its CEO in the role of crisis spokesperson, a role that can be difficult to master without extensive cross-cultural knowledge. One prominent case of a foreign CEO struggling in the role of crisis spokesperson is that of McDonald's Japan. In 2014, the company suffered considerable reputational damage after a tainted chicken meat scandal, when its Canadian CEO, Sarah Casanova, first failed to address the issue herself, and later delivered a lackluster non-apology to its Japanese costumers ("2014 nen wāsuto", 2015). While McDonald's CRS themselves were clearly misaligned with Japanese expectations, Casanova and her performance at a key apology press conference received considerable negative media attention (chapter 6). This raises the question of whether spokesperson ethnicity and language choice affect a Japanese audience's assessment of an organization's crisis communication efforts. This section will review relevant research and discuss source credibility, ethnicity, and language considerations from a general communication perspective and, more specifically, in their application to crisis communication practice.

4.6.1 Source Credibility and Homophily

Source Credibility has long been established as a key component of persuasion (Pornpitakpan, 2004). Research on source effects on persuasion had its beginning in the work of Hovland and the *Yale Communication and Attitude Change Program*, who established that communication effectiveness is dependent on how an audience

thinks and feels about the sender of a message (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953). Homophily, or the perceived degree of similarity between audience and message sender, has emerged as having the potential to have a significant impact on source credibility (Berscheid, 1966; Brock, 1965). While such dimensions as ideological similarity or status similarity have received significant attention, cultural or ethnic similarity remains much less ubiquitous (Arpan, 2002).

Simons, Berkowitz, and Moyer (1970) suggested that the relationship between similarity and source credibility is not necessarily clear-cut. While similarity can lead to higher levels of “safety credibility”, for example, the perception of expertness or “qualification” often necessitates a certain degree of dissimilarity between message sender and receiver (Rogers & Bhowmik, 1970). In addition, the impact of homophily with a message source on credibility can also vary depending on whether the message receiver perceives the membership group of the sender as inferior or superior to their own membership group (Arpan, 2002). Similar sources could engender more “trust and respect”, or a group member could simply conclude that, in a particular context, “representatives of [...] dissimilar, high-prestige, outgroups could be expected to have greater competence, dependability, etc., than ingroup representatives” (Simons et al., 1970, p. 8).

Simons et al. (1970) also argued that the impact of source similarity on persuasion and credibility depends on whether given similarities, or differences, are perceived as relevant to the message and its context. Previous studies in marketing and public relations have found evidence for the significance of homophily for the impact of spokesperson messages with a target audience (DeShields & Kara, 2000). Wang and Arpan (2008) found race to be a powerful predictor for spokesperson evaluations by African Americans in the health advertisement context. Hong and Len-

Ríos (2015) examined the impact of the race of organizational crisis spokespersons on an audiences' evaluations of both the spokesperson and the crisis situation. Comparing white and black spokespersons in two crisis scenarios in the United States, they found race “to matter as a heuristic cue only if more relevant information, such as an organization’s past behavior, is absent” (Hong & Len-Ríos, 2015, p. 78).

Arpan (2002) tested the applicability of such mechanisms for cross-cultural crisis communication and found that matching the ethnicity of a crisis spokesperson to the audience can impact audience perceptions. Her paper revealed that perceived ethnic similarity did affect the spokesperson’s perceived credibility and, consequently, crisis communication success. The degree of perceived similarity, in turn, was influenced by how close participants felt to their own ethnic group. Arpan (2002) recommended that “among audiences where ethnic identity is thought to be strong, a spokesperson considered by members of the public to be similar to themselves should be considered” (p. 333). Such advice is supported by Littlefield and Cowden (2006) who conducted a review of intercultural communication literature and recommended matching spokespersons to their target audiences to ensure that both message content and delivery are culturally appropriate. Liu and Pompper (2012) found that a number of crisis communication practitioners in the United States favor this type of spokesperson-audience matching due to a “greater likelihood of mutual trust based on shared cultural value systems, character traits, ‘code,’ and history/context” (p. 137).

However, most of the previous research in this topic area has focused on ethnic minorities in the United States or examined the reactions of U.S. audiences to foreign spokespersons. This raises the question to what extent these findings are applicable to the Japanese context. To identify the degree of homophily a Japanese

audience is likely to feel with a non-Japanese spokesperson, we first have to delve into an examination of the Japanese cultural identity and perception of the “other”.

4.6.2 Japanese Cultural Identity and Perception of the “Other”

In terms of cultural identity, Japan is dominated by a clear division between the Japanese and foreigners, who are often referred to as *gaijin* or outside people in Japanese. A number of scholars see the term *gaijin* as emblematic of the strong in-group/out-group mentality that defines Japanese social identity construction (Befu, 1983; Fujimoto, 2002; Woronoff as cited in Fujimoto, 2002; Kumagai & Keyser, 1996). Lie (2000) explains that the Japanese tend to view non-Japanese as their polar opposite, not only in terms of ethnicity but also culture and class, which reinforces the idea of Japanese uniqueness. This active concern with the “uniqueness of Japanese society, culture, and national character” has given rise to a multitude of writings on the topic, often collectively labelled *nihonjinron* (theories about the Japanese; Yoshino, 1992, p. 2; Yoshino, 1998; for a critical view on the topic see Yoshino, 1992).

In the *nihonjinron* approach, “culture is seen as infrastructural, and social, political, and economic phenomena are viewed as manifestations of a cultural ethos considered unique to the Japanese” (Yoshino, 1998, p. 16). *Nihonjinron* assign special meaning to two characteristics of Japanese culture, high context communication, and collectivism (see Befu, 1993). In Japan, culture is closely intertwined with race, and non-ethnic Japanese are seen as incapable of ever fully becoming Japanese. Yoshino (1998) wrote: “The main attribute of the Japanese uniqueness is possessiveness. Exclusive ownership is claimed upon certain aspects of Japanese culture” (p. 21). When examining attitudes of educators and businessmen, Yoshino (1992) confirmed

the strong belief that Westerners are incapable of learning to think and act like Japanese. Yoshino (1998) called this perception of foreigners *racialist* rather than racist. However, the ever-increasing number of foreign residents and naturalized citizens in Japan who have acquired a high degree of linguistic and behavioral adaptation, has begun to demythologize the traditional idea of what it means to be Japanese. This trend, away from the belief that Japaneseness somehow resides in the blood (*nihonjin no chi*), is also reinforced by returning ethnic-Japanese children, born abroad or moved there by their parents at a very young age (*kikokushijo*), whose language use and behavior are distinctly un-Japanese (Iwabuchi, 1994; Yoshino, 1998).

Nevertheless, with the Japanese conflation of ethnicity and cultural identity, the two homophily dimensions of attitude and ethnicity should become virtually indistinguishable. A foreigner simply by virtue of not being Japanese is considered to be significantly different in attitudes, behavior, and worldview. In Japan, therefore, ethnicity can be considered a virtual proxy for out-group status. Considering the Japanese identity construction and belief that non-Japanese have difficulties understanding the Japanese ways, we can expect an overall lower perceived homophily between Western spokespersons and Japanese audiences, resulting in potentially lower credibility and company image outcomes. However, while social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004) confirmed the existence of definite *in-group bias*, Brewer (1999) reminded us, that “findings from both cross-cultural research and laboratory experiments support the [...] view that ingroup identification is independent of negative attitudes toward out-groups” (p. 429).

Some work has been done on exploring the potential positive effects of invoking group affiliation to elicit identification with a speaker. Einwiller, Laufer, and

Ruppel (2017) found that identification with a CEO acting as a spokesperson can have a positive effect on crisis communication effectiveness. If the group is too “large and heterogeneous”, however, affiliation is not distinctive enough to have an impact (Einwiller, Laufer, & Ruppel, 2017, p. 1007). Little attention has been paid to situations where a speaker is a clear member of an out-group. Ethnicity and subsequent out-group status are inferred from skin and hair color, facial features, names, or accents, none of which a corporate spokesperson is able to hide.⁵ Some work exploring out-group status has been done by Arpan (2002) who concluded that rather than thinking of ethnically dissimilar spokespersons simply as outsiders, perceptions about their individual countries of origin should be considered. Arpan and Sun (2006) found that the overall impression of the country of origin of an organization rather than its out-group status alone influenced audience perceptions of an organization in crisis. Extending these findings to our considerations about spokesperson ethnicity, we have to take into consideration the status of different out-groups in Japanese society. The next section will review the literature on Japanese perceptions of different groups of foreigners.

4.6.3 Perceptions of Non-Japanese in Japan

In Japan, not all foreigners are perceived or treated equally. Despite an ever-increasing drive towards internationalization and globalization, inequalities persist. The definition of the desirable foreigner, that perfect imagined “other” for intercultural communication, is narrow: white and a native speaker of accent-free

⁵ In Japan this out-group status due to ethnicity remains salient even when evidence to the contrary is present.

English (Fujimoto, 2002). Darker skin or failing to speak English seem to immediately lower a foreigner's prestige. "Although the discourse on 'internationalization' and 'global citizens' has gained wide currency, it often hides the general public's discrimination against foreign residents of the same or darker color or English speakers with an 'accent'" (Kobayashi, 2010, p. 324). Kobayashi (2010) argued, that while perceptions of white foreigners might be positive, many others experience significant discrimination. Much research has been done examining the attitudes of Japanese English language students towards English language teachers and fellow English language students from other countries⁶. For example, when studying overseas, Japanese students felt a "sense of solidarity" with Korean students due to physical and cultural similarities, while they showed a clear preference for interactions with Caucasian foreigners in their home context (Kobayashi, 2010, p. 323). Finding a similar feeling of solidarity with fellow Asian immigrants among young Japanese living in London and New York, Fujita (2009) argued that study participants nevertheless experienced a reinforced sense of national identity. Examining the experiences of South American students in Japan, K. Tanaka (1997) found that over half of those surveyed had encountered some form of prejudice against darker skinned individuals.

Applying the above findings to our considerations on spokesperson ethnicity in crisis situations in Japan, we can hypothesize that being Japanese will be a relevant similarity as it implies at least a certain degree of shared understanding of the audience's point of view as well as relevant social obligations. However, rather than

⁶ See Kobayashi (2010) for an overview of relevant research in the language learning context.

expecting a positive effect from group membership when the group is too large and diverse in terms of gender, age, occupation, and social status, we posit a negative effect of distinct out-group membership. This negative effect, however, could be significantly reduced by the positive image and high status of white native English-speaking foreigners in Japan. Indeed, white Westerners seem to be “more welcome than other foreigners” (Simmons & Chen, 2017, p. 233). Hagiwara (2004) stated that the perception of foreigners by the Japanese is primarily shaped by the media rather than personal interactions and that white foreigners are the most frequently represented group. Fujimoto (2002) argued that the Japanese media mirrors U.S. race relations, favoring white people over people of color.

Overall, the Japanese media portrays white foreigners in a positive light. Fujimoto (2002) saw in Japan a trend towards “identifying with white Westerners and privileging white bodies” (p. 2). Other researchers have found a paradoxical “tendency for Japanese people to admire Western elements as long as they are ‘outside’ but to consider them harmful when they come too close” (Torigoe, 2012, p. 87). However, the use of foreign, in particular, white spokespersons and models is a common practice in Japanese advertising and entertainment. On the surface, white foreigners are perceived as stylish and cool. However, while they are overwhelmingly portrayed in a positive light, they are often stereotyped in advertisements and TV programs in a fashion that reinforces their otherness and sets them apart from the Japanese (Hambleton, 2011; Prieler, 2010). This differentiation can be seen as reinforcing the idea of Japanese uniqueness and the value of being Japanese (*nihonjinron*; Creighton, 1995).

Rogers and Bhowmik (1970) wrote that while in any communication situation message sender and receiver can never be homophilous on all variables, “they should

be homophilous on as many as are relevant to the situation, in order for effective communication to occur, and they may be heterophilous on all others” (p. 531). In Japan, being Japanese seems to be considered a requirement for truly effective communication. When that ideal is unattainable, and a foreign spokesperson has to address a Japanese audience, the question of language arises. Should a translator be used, or should the foreign spokesperson speak in Japanese? The next section will review the literature on language effects and examine the perception of the English language in Japan as well as the perception of Japanese speaking foreigners.

4.6.4 Language Choice and Language Perception

Hosman (2002) wrote: “The assumption is that language variation affects the impression formation process, and in a persuasion context an important impression affected is that of the speaker. Language variations may affect listeners’ judgments of a speaker’s source credibility, attractiveness, likability, and/or similarity” (p. 372). With language choice clearly being an important element of communication outcomes, we now have to turn our attention to how different languages are perceived in Japan. Of particular interest to this thesis are the perceptions of non-native Japanese as well as native and non-native English. While the number of foreign speakers of Japanese is steadily rising, foreigners are primarily assumed to be “unable to communicate fluently in Japanese, and unknowledgeable about Japanese culture and society” (Yamashiro, 2013, p. 151). Some scholars even conclude that most Japanese prefer this linguistic incompetence. Miller (1977) found that while the Japanese are quick to praise the most rudimentary efforts made to speak their language, true Japanese fluency by foreigners constitutes an “extremely serious invasion of sociolinguistic territorial interests that are to be defended” (p. 82). Yoshino (1992) identified a

similar sense of unease with linguistically competent Westerners and theorized that such role inconsistencies can feel like a threat to the Japanese cultural identity. More recently, however, Azuma (2010) found that Japanese participants welcomed the linguistic efforts of advanced Japanese language learners, which resulted in a more favorable evaluation compared to a native speaker. This positive effect extended to a greater tendency to forgive linguistic mistakes when they were made by foreigners rather than Japanese. These findings lead us to posit that a Japanese audience may be more forgiving of cultural misalignments in the content of crisis messages when they are delivered by a foreign speaker. This should be especially true when the spokesperson delivers the message in Japanese rather than English.

Turning now to Japanese audiences' perceptions of English, research seems to indicate that the different varieties of English can elicit considerably different responses. Many Japanese seem to display a preference for native varieties of English. McKenzie (2008) found that Japanese university students perceived speakers of U.K. and U.S. varieties of English as significantly more competent than speakers with a Japanese accent. Similarly, Takahashi (2012) explored Japanese students' perception of native and non-native varieties of English. She found that both Japanese and Chinese English were ranked higher in solidarity but significantly lower in terms of status than the U.S. variety of English. Clearly, the quality of English can affect how an audience perceives messages.

To summarize, while some believe that most Japanese would react poorly to Japanese speaking foreigners, more recent findings suggest a positive effect of making the effort to speak in Japanese. In addition, native-level English seems to be preferred over accented varieties. However, research on Japanese audiences' perceptions of Japanese individuals speaking English is rare, and we cannot make a

clear prediction for the impact of English language messages delivered by Japanese spokespersons.

Overall, while some of the concepts and considerations above are hinting at potential trends in the impact of ethnicity and language considerations on crisis communication efforts, the author does not feel comfortable with making predictions based on the literature review alone. The impact might also vary considerably person to person and could be affected by racial bias.

In the next section, the information gleaned from the review of relevant literature will be augmented by qualitative research to gain a clearer picture of the real-life impact of these considerations, and to aid in the establishment of meaningful hypotheses for the quantitative portion of this volume. While the review of the existing literature has shown that considerable cultural differences exist in communication practices between the West, in particular the United States, and Japan, these findings are predominantly gained from interpersonal communication and public relations research.

This raises the question as to whether these findings apply to corporate crisis communication theory. Chapters 5 and 6 introduce the cases of Olympus Corporation and McDonald's Japan as examples of the impact of communication differences on real-life crises. The cases illustrate both the impact of misalignments in CRS as well as the power of additional contextual factors. The case study approach has been utilized to study a wide variety of phenomena from the personal or group level to the organizational or societal level (Yin, 2009). Particularly in the field of crisis communication, case studies have been, and still remain today, an indispensable tool for understanding real-life crises within their diverse contexts (An & Cheng, 2010; Yin, 2009). One of the key strengths of the case study approach is its inclusion of a

wide variety of sources to gain insight into a particular situation. Sources can include textual materials (i.e., newspaper articles), online materials and resources, interviews and official statements, and media accounts, to name only a few (Sellnow et al., 2009, p. 56). The next chapter introduces the case of Olympus Japan's crisis communication performance in the international arena.

5 The Case of Olympus Corporation

This chapter utilizes Frandsen and Johansen's (2017) RAT to frame an analysis of Japan's Olympus Corporation's crisis communication efforts during its 2011 financial fraud crisis. While the Olympus case is in no way an example of Japanese crisis communication best practices, it offers a number of insights into how the cultural differences identified in chapter 4 can affect not only CRS but also media, genre, and text choices made by the various voices in a rhetorical arena (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010b). Content analysis is utilized to systematically examine a large corpus of Olympus's press releases and Western press coverage to assess the rhetorical arena and its communication processes. The purpose of this case study is twofold, to identify key voices and their impact on the arena and to situate Olympus's crisis communication efforts in a cultural context. This chapter constitutes the first of two attempts to give real-life examples of how cross-cultural crisis communication can be affected by cultural differences between senders and receivers of crisis communication messages. This case study adopts a social constructionist approach to crises, which emphasizes that crisis meaning is fluid, uniquely constructed in a given cultural context (Falkheimer & Heide, 2006), and can be influenced by prominent voices leading an audience's sense making efforts (Heath, 2004). When a crisis occurs, an immediate demand for information is created (Lerbinger, 1997). In a Western media context, the news media will quickly turn to anyone else that is willing to discuss the crisis if the organization does not speak up (Coombs, 2007d).

5.1 The Olympus Loss Hiding Scandal

A case of financial statement fraud spanning nearly two decades at Olympus Corporation began to unravel in mid-2011. After the company's former CEO and

president, Michael Woodford, blew the whistle on questionable advisory fees for several major acquisitions, a third-party investigations committee revealed major accounting irregularities. On November 8, 2011, approximately one month after accusations had first surfaced, Olympus admitted to having settled deferred losses stemming from the 1990s through fraudulent mergers and acquisitions (M&A) activities (Olympus Corporation, 2011a). Two days later, Olympus's market value bottomed out at only JPY460 per share, a mere 18.5 percent of what its price had been only one month earlier.

5.2 Method

The question arises, how do we gain insight into a rhetorical arena. This study uses a qualitative mixed-methods approach, drawing on multiple sources to achieve a well-rounded look at the crisis. A mosaic approach is utilized, combining findings from the analysis of various sources into a cohesive final narrative (Bazeley & Kemp, 2012). A combination of primary and secondary sources was selected to make up the mosaic design. Newspaper articles, press releases, transcripts and videos of press conferences, and a first-person account about the case were consulted to gain a nuanced understanding of the rhetorical arena.

For the Olympus case, the Western press mediated the majority of crisis communication processes. Therefore, this paper utilizes articles in the Western press to provide a detailed look at the rhetorical arena and its key themes from a Western perspective. This study explicitly focuses on the Western perceptions and interpretations of the Olympus case. The Japanese perspective, focusing primarily on risk management and corporate governance aspects, has been discussed by a number of scholars and lies beyond the scope of this study (e.g., Adachi, 2012; Ohira, 2013;

Ohira, Higuchi, & Sato, 2013). This paper does not view “the media as mere transmitters of information that represent or reconstruct reality”; instead, it recognizes the interpretive function of “the media as story makers that contribute to the construction of social reality” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017, p. 179; Lerbinger, 1997). The author believes that the media’s interpretation or framing of a crisis is a good reflection of which communicative strategies resonate within a certain cultural context. An inductive qualitative content analysis was performed on 273 articles published during the first six months of the Olympus crisis by one U.S. daily newspaper, *The New York Times*, one British daily newspaper, *The Times*, and two international financial publications, *The Financial Times* and *Bloomberg News*. The timeframe of seven months was chosen to cover the entirety of the crisis from its earliest public eruption to when media interest eventually faded. See Table 5-1 for an overview of the articles analyzed. The publications were selected due to their excellent reputations and high circulation both in their respective countries and worldwide.

Table 5-1 Corpus of Western press coverage of Olympus crisis for content analysis

Source	Number of Articles	Method of Retrieval	Date Range
The New York Times	41	LexisNexis	
The Times	47	LexisNexis	
The Financial Times	90	ProQuest	October 2011 – April 2012
Bloomberg News	95	Bloomberg News Website	

Only articles with more than 50% Olympus case-related content were included in the corpus. The resulting corpus was analyzed through an inductive qualitative

content analysis method (Neuendorf, 2002). Content coding was performed with the QDA Miner software by Provalis. In the first phase of the content analysis, the texts were reviewed, and initial codes were assigned. The next step consisted of grouping the codes and creating categories and themes. In the third step, a finalized codebook was created, and all texts were recoded with the finalized codes. See Appendix A1 for the full codebook. Key themes included voices, specific narratives, positive and negative frames, overarching context, key concerns, and mentions of Olympus's CRS. A second coder coded ten percent of the articles, with inter-coder reliability of 0.91 (Krippendorff's Alpha).

The second piece of the mosaic was a corpus of 62 press releases published within the same timeframe as the analysis above. These texts gave insight into the company's crisis communication efforts. The press releases were downloaded from the official company website and constituted the only English language crisis communication issued by the company⁷. In fact, all press releases were translations of identical press releases issued in Japanese. Qualitative content analysis was utilized to analyze the corpus. This process was primarily deductive and was theoretically grounded in Coombs' (2007c) ten CRS. The coding process followed the same steps as above. Emergent key themes consisted of CRS and reactions to stakeholder demands and criticisms. See Appendix A2 for the full codebook.

The third piece of the mosaic consisted of a review of the transcripts and videos of five key press conferences given by Olympus and one press conference

⁷ Press conferences regarding the crisis were conducted exclusively in Japanese. No official translations were provided by Olympus and only short summaries were issued in form of press releases.

given by Michael Woodford to the Japan National Press Club (JNPC). For a list of the materials reviewed, see Appendix A3. The transcripts were read and reread, paying particular attention to CRS and overall rhetoric, as well as references to cultural differences in the case of Woodford's press conference. The transcripts and videos were not formally coded but annotated by hand.

Lastly, the author drew on the 2012 book *Exposure: Inside the Olympus Scandal* by Michael Woodford. The book gives valuable insights into the internal crisis communication aspects of this case as well as the early rhetorical arena and adds an additional piece to the mosaic picture of this crisis case. While the book might be considered a questionable source, this study treats the contents of the book as a first-person account by an involved party. While the contents are inherently subjective, they do contribute to our overall understanding of the Western view of the Olympus crisis. It should also be noted that the contents of the book were never officially disputed by Olympus or other involved parties. A thematic analysis was conducted on the book. Passages addressing communication between the actors in the arena were identified and coded for voices, content of interactions, and cultural misalignments. Coding for cultural misalignment moved beyond the manifest to the more interpretive latent level of analysis (Boyatzis, 1998) and attempted to address underlying and implicit concepts.

Due to the lengthy nature of the Olympus case, the findings and discussion will be presented concurrently to preserve the flow of crisis development and allow for a thick description that provides relevant interpretations in close proximity to actual findings. In line with reviewer suggestions, some quantitative data from the qualitative content analysis was included to strengthen the credibility of the findings.

5.3 Findings and Discussion

5.3.1 The Pre-Crisis Phase – A Small Arena

An article by the small Japanese investigative magazine FACTA in August 2011 opened the rhetorical arena for what was to become one of the largest financial fraud cases in Japanese history (Yamaguchi, 2011). Even though the FACTA article had provided excellent documentation of its accusations and could have been easily fact-checked by larger publications, the story was not picked up by any major Japanese news outlet. At this point, Olympus was facing a single but persistent voice in the crisis arena, Michael Woodford, its, at the time, brand new CEO. A friend had provided Woodford with a translation of the FACTA article, which questioned exorbitant advisory fees paid for M&A activities. However, Woodford's inquiries with the board of directors were rebuffed with vehement denials.

When examining Olympus's crisis communication efforts during the early crisis phase through a cultural lens, some of the behaviors exhibited become more understandable. The top management was choosing a denial/no comment strategy to save face not only for the company but also for respected former executives and was following Japanese cultural conventions by trying to prevent the issues from becoming public knowledge. It should be mentioned here that the Olympus corporate culture had amplified certain collectivist values to an unhealthy degree and far beyond general cultural norms—a known risk of the Japanese tendency towards in-group loyalty in the family-style (community model) corporation (Ishikawa, 2016).

Also, had the situation been virtually confined to Japan, we could have reasonably expected a very different outcome to the situation considering the press environment and tendencies for in-group loyalty. Woodford (2012) cited high-ranking journalists as having called the topic too hot to handle. This initial refusal of the larger

Japanese media outlets to cover the topic illustrates a reluctance to move against major companies. In most Western countries, the publication of the first article in FACTA would have been enough to make the crisis fully erupt. However, the Japanese media environment let Olympus ignore these first accusations and employ a denial/no comment strategy successfully.

Olympus had an excellent opportunity to get ahead of the story and break the news to the international press themselves before Woodford blew the whistle. They had ample warning that the risk of discovery was increasing exponentially, first through the articles in FACTA, then through the repeated inquiries by Woodford (Woodford, 2012). The company had the opportunity to employ a stealing thunder strategy (Arpan & Pompper, 2003). Research has shown that the reputational impact of a crises can be mitigated to a certain extent if the organization discloses the crisis voluntarily before being found out by an outside party (Arpan & Pompper, 2003; Claeys & Cauberghe, 2012). With Woodford as a charismatic spokesperson for the company, voluntary disclosure of the details could have potentially resulted in a more favorable overall outcome, at least for the company's image, if not for all stakeholders.

5.3.2 The Active Crisis Phase: Part 1 – The International Arena

On October 14, 2011, the Olympus board of directors dismissed Woodford from his position as CEO, citing cultural differences in management styles for the decision. This, in turn, prompted Woodford to blow the whistle and disclose all he knew to a journalist with *The Financial Times*. The ensuing article entitled “More Than a Clash of Cultures at Olympus,” written by Jonathan Soble (2011a), was the spark that ignited this crisis and expanded the rhetorical arena to an international level. During the first two days, press inquiries were left unanswered, and Olympus

remained silent. Content analysis revealed that the first days of the crisis were dominated by Woodford establishing his side of the story—he had been fired because he had raised questions about unusually high M&A fees (see Table 5-2). His charges of “calamitous errors and exceptionally poor judgment” were quoted across all four analyzed sources (e.g., Lewis, 2011a; Soble, 2011b). Over the next weeks, the Western press overwhelmingly featured Woodford’s accusations (see Table 5-3), only giving cursory attention to Olympus’s version of events. During October 2011, less than 10% of the total word count of the articles analyzed addressed Olympus’s CRS, which in the early phase, consisted of claims that Woodford’s firing had been due to cultural differences (denial strategy). See Table 5-4 for an overview of the crisis communication strategies employed by Olympus and Figure 5-1 for the word percentages of the articles analyzed that mentioned these strategies. On October 17, 2011, Olympus addressed the accusations by the Western press in a Japanese only press brief restating that Woodford’s firing had been due to management differences, all M&A activities were beyond reproach (continued denial), and that legal steps against Woodford were being considered. During the following weeks, Japanese press releases were translated into English and posted on the company’s international website. Company spokespersons made no statements in English.

Table 5-2 Code: Source - Word Percentages Week 1

Table Content - Code Category: Source, Count: Percentage of Words, Display: Column Percentage								
	10/14/2011	10/15/2011	10/16/2011	10/17/2011	10/18/2011	10/19/2011	10/20/2011	10/21/2011
Woodford, M.	65.90%	58.40%	81.50%	68.50%	67.70%	65.20%	27.80%	65.50%
Investors	3.40%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	2.30%	25.00%	12.90%
Olympus Management	30.80%	41.60%	18.50%	31.50%	30.90%	23.20%	47.20%	16.30%
Investigative Committee	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Investment professionals	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.40%	9.30%	0.00%	0.00%
TSE	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.30%
Japanese politicians	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Table 5-3 Code Category: Key Issues – Word Percentages by Month

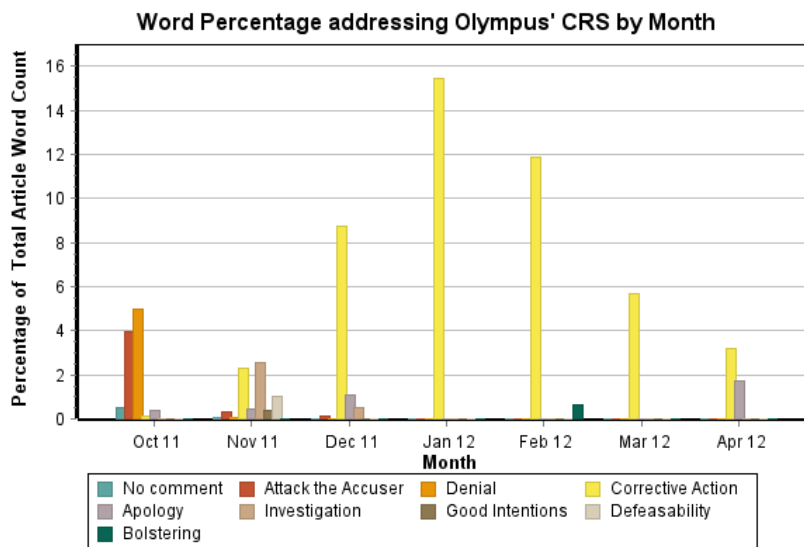
Table Content - Code Category: Key Issues, Count: Case Occurrence, Display: Column Percentage							
	Oct 11	Nov 11	Dec 11	Jan 12	Feb 12	Mar 12	Apr 12
Firing Woodford	15.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Accusations	84.3%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Issues in Japan	0.0%	14.8%	5.7%	10.5%	10.0%	0.0%	14.3%
The Revelation	0.0%	70.4%	25.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Background	0.0%	1.9%	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Recovery	0.0%	1.9%	62.9%	89.5%	90.0%	50.0%	85.7%

Table 5-4 Code Category: Olympus CRS – Case Occurrence by Month [Olympus

Press Releases]

Table Content - Code Category: Crisis Response Strategy, Count: Case Occurrence, Display: Column Percentage							
	Oct 11	Nov 11	Dec 11	Jan 12	Feb 12	Mar 12	Apr 12
Denial	44.40%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Attack Accuser	22.20%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Apology	0.00%	36.40%	25.00%	0.00%	25.00%	50.00%	40.00%
Shifting Blame	22.20%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Corrective Action	11.10%	45.50%	50.00%	100.00%	50.00%	50.00%	60.00%
Bolstering	0.00%	9.10%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Differentiation	0.00%	9.10%	25.00%	0.00%	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Figure 5-1 Code Category: Olympus CRS – Word Percentages by Month



Olympus’s initial crisis response strategy is described in the Western press as “Deny, deny, deny” and on November 4, 2011, Stuart Biggs and Mariko Yasu quoted David Herro, a “Chicago-based chief investment officer for international equities” as saying, “They just keep denying that anything illegal or excessive has happened, [...] Clearly they’ve done something excessive” (Yasu & Biggs, 2011) . This feeling of suspicion, together with a critical tone is reflected in a majority of Western articles analyzed around this time frame. In fact, for the month of October, 18.36% percent of the total article words were coded as representing an overtly negative frame.

On October 21, 2011, under pressure from a steadily declining stock price, Olympus announced the formation of an independent third-party committee to investigate the accusations, a common practice by Japanese companies in cases of matters that need clarification. A few days later, Tsuyoshi Kikukawa stepped down as president and CEO, in what was perceived in the West as a gesture “intended to appease investors”, who had caused the stock price to fall by over 50% since the crisis first erupted (Soble, 2011d). The stepping down of the head of an organization during a crisis is a long-standing Japanese tradition, which is reminiscent of the ritual

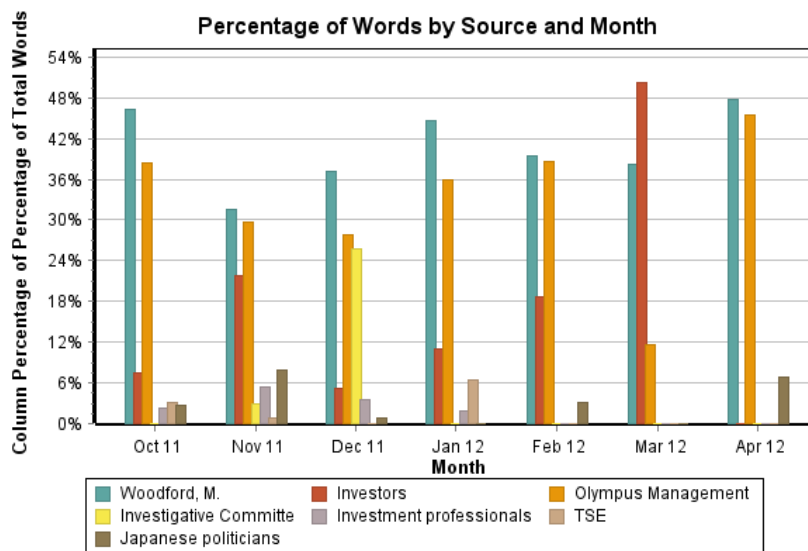
suicides by samurai who had become disgraced. Yet, this did little to appease Western stakeholders, and one article quoted Woodford as saying: “They’ve just got somebody else standing up saying the same thing, not answering the question about this huge amount of money. It’s just extraordinary” (Soble, 2011d). Olympus continued its denial strategy even under mounting pressure from various voices in the arena (see Table 5-4).

Olympus broke a further tenant of good crisis communication when it failed to speak with one voice (Coombs, 2007d) when an internal memo penned by Kikukawa was leaked to *The Financial Times*. In what the Western media called a “diatribe” and “vitriolic” Kikukawa leveled various accusations at Woodford, ranging from “being something of a control freak” to “poor temper control, lack of respect for reporting lines and overly indulgent use of private jets” (Clark, 2011; Mure, 2011). In the most personal attack, Kikukawa accused Woodford of disliking Japan (Soble, 2011c). *The Financial Times*, in turn, quoted Woodford as calling Kikukawa’s words “a desperate ploy to buy time” (Soble, 2011c). Considering the overwhelmingly positive attitude towards Woodford by the Western press and international stakeholders, this attack seemed ill-conceived. Even if the memo was intended for employees only, Olympus should have anticipated the possibility of this memo reaching the public. While the company had been employing an attack the accuser strategy alongside its efforts to deny any wrongdoing (see Table 5-4), the personal nature of the attack led to Kikukawa being perceived as desperate and petty (Mure, 2011).

Considerable cultural differences between Olympus as the message sender and the Western message receivers, hindered Olympus’s narrative and attempts to shape the conversation. Woodford emerged as the dominant voice of the crisis (see Figure 5-2). His narrative, media, genre, and text choices resonated with Western audiences.

While Olympus primarily communicated *to* its stakeholders, Woodford communicated *with* them. He gave frequent interviews, appeared on television, and gave a compelling narrative presented through colorful and descriptive language. He became a vocal representative for Western stakeholders and provided the news media with entertaining sound bites. In contrast, Olympus offered clinical sounding press releases that found little representation in the media (see Figure 5-1) and traditional Japanese press conferences that did little to satisfy the Western demand for explanations and justifications. In fact, Olympus crisis communication strategies, as well as media, genre, and text choices, were adjusted mainly to its own socio-cultural and organizational context. However, it should be noted here that Olympus’s extended denials were also viewed critically by many Japanese observers.

Figure 5-2 Code: Source – Word Percentages by Month



5.3.3 The Active Crisis Phase: Part 2 – The Arena Expands

On November 8, 2011, the much-debated question of what exactly had happened at Olympus was finally answered. Nearly one month after the crisis had begun, the newly appointed CEO and president Shuichi Takayama stepped before

cameras at a specially appointed press conference and admitted to a loss-hiding scheme that had spanned decades. The announcement, however, was again delivered solely in Japanese. This admission marked a definite shift in Olympus's CSR away from denial. At the press conference, Takayama bowed frequently in a traditional Japanese apology. He claimed not to have known about the loss hiding until the previous night, a statement that was met with derision by Woodford, who stated in a telephone interview later that day that, "it's beyond belief that Mr. Takayama claims he only found out about it last night. If he didn't know before I started [my inquiries], then he should have known after" (Yasu & Fujimura, 2011).

Takayama's traditional Japanese apology received much criticism in the Western press. He provided no additional information and little in the way of an explanation. He did not address why a number of former and current Olympus executives had perpetrated such an elaborate fraud. Olympus did, however, complement its apology with an attack the accuser strategy. Takayama explained during the press conference: "the reason why shares fell so much is because Mr. Woodford gave that important information including things we didn't even know. [...] If it wasn't for Mr. Woodford, we would still be well placed in the market, and our business would be healthy" (Farrell, 2011). This statement was not well received by the Western press, which primarily echoed colorful assessment of the claims by Woodford, who stated in an interview with *Bloomberg's* Lisa Murphy: "What a ludicrous, idiotic statement, [...] it's offensive" (Farrell, 2011). This attacking the accuser strategy was clearly designed to resonate with the Japanese press and public, which, at least theoretically, share a cultural dislike for disloyalty.

After the revelation of the large-scale loss hiding activities, the focus of the rhetorical arena now shifted from questions of what had happened, to why and how

this could have happened (see Figure 5-3). The question of why can be vital in establishing a compelling narrative for a crisis. In the case of Olympus, the absence of an explanation, which, while rather typical for a Japanese apology, allowed for a narrative spearheaded by Woodford and highly critical of the Japanese ways to dominate the rhetorical arena. Olympus permitted a narrative to emerge that told the story “of the morally upstanding Western executive uncovering the fraud by a corrupt Japanese board” and the reputational damage began to spread far beyond Olympus itself. Headlines read: “Focus Should Not Be Solely on Olympus” (King, 2011), “Japan Tries to Limit Olympus Fallout” (Nakamoto, 2011), and “It’s No Good Pretending This Is an Isolated Case” (Lewis, 2011b). The now dominant narrative framed the crisis in terms of general weaknesses in Japanese corporate governance, which caused a further expansion of the rhetorical arena. Now, corporate governance experts, Japanese regulators, and politicians were frequently represented in the media (see Figure 5-2). The case was increasingly being discussed in terms of wider implications. In the week beginning November 7, 2011, 12 articles discussed the Olympus case in terms of the overarching context. Codes included Corporate Governance ($N = 5$), Japanese Business Culture ($N = 4$), The Regulatory Environment ($N = 4$), and Japan (in general) ($N = 7$). Leo Lewis (2011a) succinctly summarized the overall sentiment:

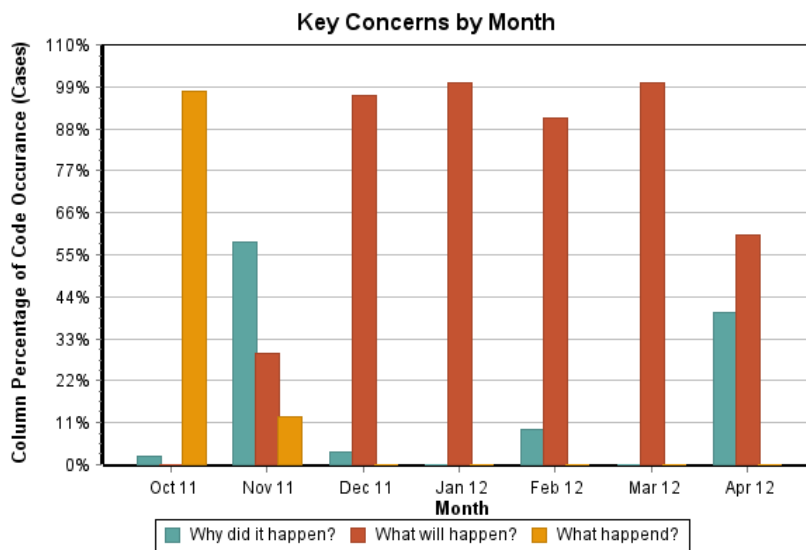
In coming days, the great effort by the government, regulators, prosecutors, and corporate Japan will be to pretend that everything horrible still washing up from the 1980s is specific, rather than systemic; that Olympus was unique. It was not. [...] Japan, not just Olympus, has again been caught in a spectacular scandal.

Japanese financial service minister, Shozaburo Jimi promised sweeping changes:

It is troubling to see investors, both domestic and abroad, question the fairness and transparency of the Japanese markets. I am determined to take every measure necessary, if any issues for improvement [of fairness and transparency] were to be identified through untangling of this case. (Nakamoto, 2011)

Japan’s Prime Minister at the time, Yoshihiko Noda, reinforced Japan’s commitment to strict regulatory action: “We have to address it sternly when such an inappropriate case surfaces. By doing so, I would like to secure confidence in Japan’s financial market” (Mure & Nakamoto, 2011).

Figure 5-3 Code Category: Key Concerns – Code Occurrence per Month



The release of the third-party committee report on December 6, 2011, ended most discussion about the why and how of the actual loss hiding scheme (see Figure 5-3), and was highly damning for Olympus. The document contained a detailed description of Olympus’s accounting scheme and sharply worded criticism of the

company management and board of directors. Olympus provided an unofficial English translation of the report as well as a shorter summary report on its website, both were accompanied by an apology and a promise for corrective action. Differences in translations between Olympus and the Western press illustrate how language can be used to emphasize a point of view. For example, the Japanese “*keiei chūshin bubun ga kusatte ori, sono shūhen bubun mo osen sare*” (Olympus Corporation, 2011a, p. 179) was translated by Olympus as “the core of management was corrupted, and the periphery was also contaminated” (Olympus Corporation, 2011b, p. 179), while the media quickly spread the much more imaginative phrase “rotten to the core.” This is, while not a mistranslation, a somewhat stronger meaning than the original Japanese phrase implied. As no official translation was provided, *The New York Times* wrote: “The management was rotten to the core, and infected those around it, said the report, which ran more than 200 pages, with appendixes” (Tabuchi & Bradsher, 2011). While *The Financial Times* chose the somewhat tamer “rotten at the core”, both *Bloomberg News* and *The Times* echoed the more colorful “rotten to the core”, which quickly became a defining image of the scandal (see Table 5-5).

Ho, Pang, AuYong, and Lau (2014) described how a photograph or a phrase can become enduring representations of a key moment of a crisis. Such “[a]n enduring image constitutes a prime representation of the accused in a given crisis” (Ho et al., p. 519). These representations are full of “symbolic potential” and become permanently embedded in the public consciousness (Ho et al., 2014, p.519). The emergence of the “rotten to the core” narrative and image could have been mitigated, if not prevented, through the use of a strong, quotable, and widespread translation of the report by Olympus. While Olympus provided an unofficial English translation of

the report, this translation initially⁸ appeared on its website in the form of a low-quality photocopy in PDF format, in conjunction with a press release. A strong spokesperson giving television interviews could have potentially spread the preferred translation, avoiding the emergence of the evocative “rotten to the core”. However, considering the Japanese media environment where newspapers will often echo a company’s press releases without much editing, Olympus’s unpreparedness for communication with the Western press in English is not surprising. Clearly, Olympus’s communication processes with its Western stakeholders continued to suffer from poor cultural alignment in media, genre, and text. Olympus’s communication efforts in English remained limited to straight translations of Japanese language press releases, which further proves a lack of awareness of contextual differences between the many voices in a cross-cultural rhetorical arena.

Table 5-5 Code Category: Translation (Rotten Narrative) – Case Occurrence by Source

Table Content - Code Category: Translation, Count: Case Occurrence, Display: Count				
	The Times (London)	The New York Times	The Financial Times	Bloomberg News
“rotten at the core”			4	
“the core was rotten”			1	
“rotten to the core”	2	4		5
“rotten core”				5

5.3.4 The Post-Crisis Phase: The Power of Quiet Voices

The weeks after the release of the third-party committee report spelled the beginning of the post-crisis phase. Ill-adjusted communication processes had dragged

⁸ The bitmap style PDF file was later replaced with a version that could be searched and copied.

out the active crisis phase for nearly two months. The release of the committee report on December 6, 2011, had yet again sparked massive press coverage (see Figure 5-4), but Olympus’s clearly structured reform plans, combined with investigations into executive and non-executive liability, constituted a solid recovery strategy that resonated with the Western press. Content analysis of Olympus’s press releases revealed that managerial reform through corporate governance changes and corporate restructuring made up the key message of renewal and rebirth that Olympus had chosen as the frame for its recovery efforts (see Table 5-6). These messages were widely reflected in the Western media. *Bloomberg* cited Takayama as saying, “we’ll be reborn as new Olympus so that we can provide value to all our stakeholders including shareholders, customers, banks and our employees” (Yasu, 2011). Yet, content analysis showed that the post-crisis phase was defined by three major points of contention (see Figure 5-5).

Figure 5-4 Total Articles in Corpus (N=273) per Week

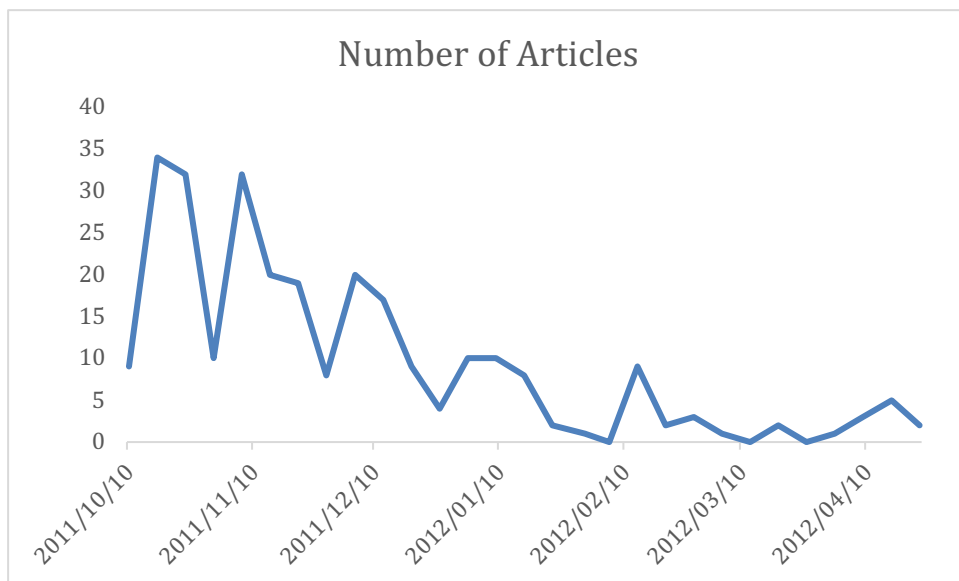
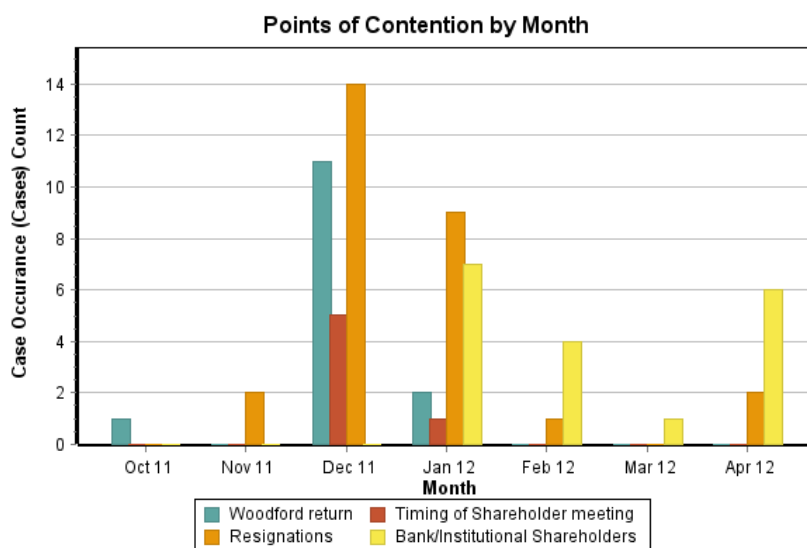


Table 5-6 Code Category: Key Messages of Olympus’s Corrective Action Strategy –
Case Occurrence by Month [Olympus Press Releases]

Table Content - Code Category: Key Messages of Olympus’s Corrective Action Strategy, Count: Case Occurrence (Cases), Display: Count						
	Nov 11	Dec 11	Jan 12	Feb 12	Mar 12	Apr 12
Management Reform	2	5	2	1		1
Corporate Governance Reform	1	4	2	1	1	
Company Structure Reform	1	3		1		1
Use of Nomination Committee			2	1		
Release of Corrected Financial Statements		8				3
Board Resignation	1	2	3	1		
Business Alliance		1				
Submission of Financial Results and Forecasts		1		1	1	
Extraordinary Shareholders’ Meeting		2	2	1	1	
Lawsuits			4			
New Board Selection				1	1	2

Figure 5-5 Code Category: Points of Contention – Code Occurrence by Month



First, problems began to arise in the different approaches to executing reform plans. While foreign voices, led by Woodford, demanded the immediate resignation of the board, this did not happen. Olympus announced that the board would continue

to perform its duties until an extraordinary shareholder's meeting could be called to ensure smooth crisis management and a successful handoff of responsibilities. Woodford, on the other hand, strongly opposed allowing a "tainted and contaminated" board to continue to lead the company (Mure, 2012).

A further point of contention was the return of Woodford to lead the company. This move, while popular with international investors, did not find support with Japanese institutional investors and Olympus's main bank, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Group (SMBC). The bank, along with the Japanese Bankers Association, had pledged its continued support for Olympus after the company avoided delisting from the Tokyo stock exchange in mid-December (S. Sato & Taniguchi, 2011), Woodford lamented the lack of support from Japan's institutional investors as he abandoned his attempts to rejoin Olympus in January 2012 in favor of suing the company: "The Japanese institutional shareholders have not spoken one single word of criticism, in complete and utter contrast with overseas shareholders, who were demanding accountability" (Tabuchi, 2012).

Media attention had decreased, and while Western stakeholders and Woodford remained loud proponents of change, a hereto-quiet stakeholder was gaining importance. Japanese institutional investors began to shape the post-crisis landscape. Olympus now began addressing this hereto-quiet voice. The perceived lack of support by Japanese institutional investors for the sweeping changes demanded by Western stakeholders soon emerged as the third major point of contention (Code: Bank/Institutional Shareholders). The influence of the Japanese institutional investors and major creditors culminated in a roster for Olympus's new board of directors that found little support in the West. Olympus had made some concessions to Western voices. More than half of the new 11 person board were outside directors in an effort

to satisfy Western demands for strengthened corporate governance structures, but efforts to place a Western director on the board had failed. As chairman, shareholders voted in 63-year-old Yasuyuki Kimoto, a former executive at SMBC, Olympus's main lender. Hideaki Fujizuka, a former executive of the Mitsubishi UFJ bank, another Olympus creditor, was also elected to the board. These placements are reminiscent of the main bank's authority to intervene during periods of financial distress, which was popular during the heyday of relational monitoring (Y. Suzuki, 2011). The proposed board was accepted at the meeting of shareholders with a clear majority. The Western press was not pleased and overwhelmingly agreed with Woodford, who dramatically exclaimed: "A new start at Olympus? How dare you? Shame on you, [...] Do you not realize how that looks to the world" (Tabuchi & Inoue, 2012).

Clearly, Olympus's efforts to utilize corrective action as a crisis communication strategy failed in the execution and follow-through in the eyes of international stakeholders. However, Olympus's crisis communication strategies in the post-crisis phase satisfied its most salient stakeholders at the time, Japanese institutional investors and banks. While the Western press, as a loud and aggressive opinion shaper was the most dominant voice in the rhetorical arena during the active crisis phase, Japanese institutional investors became increasingly important during the post-crisis phase. While this stakeholder group held little definitional power in the publicly visible rhetorical arena, it held considerable real-life power. This suggests that as an arena loses importance and a crisis draws to an end, rhetorical dominance does not necessarily equal influence over eventual organizational outcomes.

While the Western view of Olympus as a deeply corrupt organization dominated the rhetorical arena, the sweeping corporate governance changes

demanded by these dominant voices were not achieved due to the strong influence of a quieter voice with whom Olympus's crisis communication efforts had clearly had the desired effect. This analysis suggests that while Olympus failed in its communication efforts with Western stakeholders, its recovery strategies were somewhat more successful with Japanese institutional investors. The subsequent recovery of the Olympus share price—by May 2013 Olympus had recovered its pre-crisis share price and by November 2015 company shares attained near record levels—and the current overall performance of the company prove that the company's refusal to accede to the demands of the dominant voices in the rhetorical arena did not have lasting effects on the company's future.

This study does not seek to dispute the fact that a crucial factor in the recovery of Olympus was its near monopoly position in the world-wide endoscopy market. However, without the continued support of its major Japanese creditors and institutional investors, the company would have been unlikely to survive as an independent entity.

5.4 Conclusion

This case study has demonstrated that cultural differences in cognitive schemes (collectivism and high context communication), socio-cultural norms (apology practices and in-group loyalty), and organizational context (media environment) can have a significant impact on the appropriateness and effectiveness of crisis communication efforts in a cross-cultural arena. The Olympus case has shown that when an organization is ill-prepared to communicate effectively in a diverse multi-vocal rhetorical arena, unfriendly voices can emerge as a dominant force and compound the reputational damage of a crisis.

A key take-away for Japanese companies conducting crisis communication in a Western context is the importance of a quick and thorough response. While the Japanese media might accept initial denials, and Japanese society may allow for public apologies with vague explanations, this is unlikely to work in a Western context. A further important point is the need for an English-speaking spokesperson with a strong media presence. An effective spokesperson can mitigate some of the damage done by the negative narrative established by the opposition by providing an alternative frame for the situation as well as giving the press a strong source of information. While not every crisis will entail as prolific a voice for the injured parties as Woodford, having a highly visible spokesperson that ensures that the company is speaking with one voice is clearly important. Additionally, the establishment of a cross-culturally competent crisis management team that can create, translate, and deliver a culturally adjusted frame through appropriate choices of media, genre, and text for a culturally diverse arena is of the essence.

While the scope of this analysis was limited, and conclusions were based on a single case study, the findings illustrate the potential impact of cultural differences in a diverse rhetorical arena and highlight the need for the quantitative investigation in the second part of this thesis. Chapter 7 will attempt to confirm and validate the effect of cultural differences on crisis communication in an experimental setting and formalize the findings of this admittedly highly anecdotal inquiry. While the Olympus case focused on the crisis communication failure by a Japanese company, the following chapter will introduce the case of McDonald's Japan, as an example of an essentially Western company failing to communicate effectively with its Japanese stakeholders.

6 The Case of McDonald's Japan

This chapter utilizes the case of two consecutive food safety crises at McDonald's Japan, hereinafter referred to as McDonald's, to illustrate the impact and relevance of cultural differences in both responsibility attribution and account giving on crisis communication outcomes. Coombs' (2007a) SCCT was chosen as the theoretical framework for this study due to its audience-oriented approach to crisis communication and its strong foundation in both attribution theory and account giving research. McDonald's faced two major food safety crises consecutively in 2014 and 2015. The company faced considerable reputational threats from first a tainted chicken meat scandal in July 2014 and then a string of foreign objects discovered in McDonald's dishes in January 2015. McDonald's crisis communication efforts, particularly during its first crisis in 2014, were not well received in Japan and were widely blamed on a poor cultural fit between the communication strategies of the U.S. fast-food giant and the expectations of its Japanese customers. This case aims to identify the specific shortcomings of McDonald's crisis communication strategies and situate them in the larger theoretical context of cultural differences in account giving and attribution theory. The study provides a real-world example of key differences in crisis communication practices and conventions between the North America and Japan.

6.1 Method and Procedures

This study draws upon a number of different sources to gain insight into the two McDonald's cases. Video recordings of three key McDonald's press conferences were consulted to ascertain the company's CRS, and 204 texts from various sources (daily newspapers, business and specialty publications, and popular websites and

blogs) were assessed for public reactions to the CRS employed by McDonald's. A pilot review of Japan's most significant daily newspapers' reporting on the two McDonald's crises had revealed a limited number of useful findings due to the Japanese tendency towards respectful and uniform reporting (Chen, 2008; Winfield et al., 2000). This led to the decision to include business and industry publications as well as blogs and general web content, which constitute a rich source of editorial-type reporting and opinion pieces. See Table 6-1 for a detailed overview of text sources. The author believes these types of sources to be an adequate reflection of overall public sentiment. While the degree of respectability of these sources clearly varies, this variation was intentional to give the analysis depths and range.

Table 6-1 Text evidence for analysis

Source	Retrieval Method	# of Texts
Asahi Shinbun	Kikuzou II Visual	18
Mainichi Shinbun	Mainichi News Pack	20
Nishi Nihon Shinbun	Papyrus	15
Nihon Keizai Shinbun	Nikkei Terekon 21	22
The Japan Times (English)	Website	16
Nikkei Business	Website and physical library	7
Toyo Keizai	Website	3
KouhouKaigi	Website and physical library	42
Webnews/Websites/Blogs/ Matome sites ⁹	Google search (first 10 pages)	61
Total:		204

⁹ Matome sites are popular Japanese websites that aggregate social media posts about a topic from Twitter, Facebook, and similar services.

An initial review showed that the Japanese search string “*makudonarudo* AND *shazai*” [“McDonald’s AND apology”] returned the most relevant texts (i.e., discussions of and reactions to McDonald’s crisis communication efforts). The analysis focused on texts published during the period from July 20, 2014, day one of the first crisis, to January 5, 2016, exactly one year after the revelation of the second crisis. This timeframe was chosen to obtain a balanced cross-section of primary and secondary reactions as well as sentiments maintained over time for both cases. The author believes that an overreliance on immediate reactions might over-represent initial anger and outrage at the situation itself as opposed to reactions to the company’s crisis communication efforts. All texts which were returned for the search string in the set time frame and which had a primary focus on either case were included in the corpus.

While the massive loss in patronage and revenue for the company clearly indicated that its crisis communication performance was sub-par, a thematic analysis was used to uncover specific sentiments towards and potential cultural misalignments in strategic choices. The thematic analysis format was chosen as the method of analysis because it lends itself to the task of discovering how audiences make sense of events and complements the exploratory nature of this inquiry. The video footage of the press conferences was watched and rewatched, and coded passages were transcribed. Coding for the audiovisual materials was applied at the sentence level and was strongly theory-driven (deductive), reflecting Coombs’ (2007) 10 primary CRS. See column two of Tables 6-2 and 6-3 for example content for each code.

The analysis process for the text data was considerably more open. While it could not be called entirely inductive because it was driven by a clear research question, codes were not predefined and guided by the text itself (Braun & Clarke,

2006). The analysis was conducted at the latent or interpretative level¹⁰, which “goes beyond the semantic content of the data, and starts to identify or examine the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations - and ideologies - that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data” (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 84). It also seems appropriate here to reiterate the overarching social constructionist perspective of this thesis. Meaning rather than being seen as fixed is understood to be context dependent and socially produced (Burr, 1995). Therefore, this study will not focus on the individual level but instead aims “to theorize the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions, that enable the individual accounts that are provided” (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 85).

The overall analysis followed the six steps for thematic analysis laid out by Braun and Clarke (2006). In the first step, all texts in the corpus were carefully read and reread, paying close attention to both discussions of McDonald’s crisis communication efforts as well as audience perceptions and criticisms thereof. In the second step, all texts were annotated with preliminary notes and codes that described the relevant content. Then, patterns of codes were evaluated for emergent themes. In phase four, the candidate themes were reviewed and refined, and sub-themes were established where necessary. At this level, all code elements were reviewed for consistency, and illustrative quotations were collected from the texts to enrich the discussion. After establishing a clear thematic map, themes and sub-themes were named and finalized, and the report was written up. See Appendix B1 for coding examples with subthemes and themes.

¹⁰ For a detailed discussion of the differences between the manifest or semantic level, and the latent or interpretative level see Boyatzis (1998).

6.2 Findings

6.2.1 Case 1

In July 2014, Shanghai Hushi Foods, a major supplier of chicken to McDonald's, was exposed as having used expired and otherwise tainted chicken meat in its production. McDonald's, in a press release on its corporate website, quickly announced that it had stopped all sales of potentially affected items and apologized for any worry and concern it may have caused its customers. One day later, on July 23, 2014, Family Mart CEO, Isamu Nakayama, bowed and apologized for having sourced products from the same company with the words: "We are deeply sorry to have betrayed our domestic customer's trust" ("Chūgoku kigyō ga", 2014). McDonald's management did not address the issue in front of cameras until July 29, 2014, as part of a previously scheduled earnings announcement press conference. McDonald's president and CEO, Sarah Casanova, began the press conference with an apology for "any anxiety or concern that [the] situation may have caused" (Fuji News Network [FNN], 2014, 2:50), but did not bow. She reassured customers of McDonald's high quality and safety standards and expressed her outrage over the incredibly "disturbing and appalling" (3:40) news from Shanghai. Casanova utilized a number of crisis communication strategies (see Table 6-2). She assured customers of McDonald's stringent standards (bolstering) and shifted the blame by reminding customers that the difficulties had occurred due to "the willful action of a few individuals" (scapegoating; e.g., 42:50, 48:15). She also attempted to diminish the impact by stating that "these allegations are restricted to one supplier in one city" (43:18) and that "there is no evidence that the products alleged to have been produced inappropriately were destined for Japan" (37:40, 57:08). A list of corrective action strategies to prevent a reoccurrence of the incidence completed her presentation.

Table 6-2 Crisis Communication Strategies and Key Criticisms - Case 1

Crisis Communication Strategy	Comments/Content (with video time codes) ¹¹	Criticisms
Apology	2:50 - "I would like to extend my sincere apologies to our valued customers for any anxiety or concern that this situation may have caused."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insincere - No admission of responsibility - Unapologetic
Justification (Minimization)	37:40 - "Shanghai Hushi produced products for companies around the world. There is no evidence that the products alleged to have been produced inappropriately were destined for Japan." (also 57:08) 43:18 - "these allegations are restricted to one supplier in one city."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seen as denial of responsibility - Customers are not being taken seriously
Scapegoating & Victimage	42:50 - "willful deception of a few individuals at the Hushi Shanghai plant." (also 48:15, and many others) 1:31:10 - "McDonald's has been deceived"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Denial of responsibility - Taking a victim role
Bolstering	4:50 - "we moved incredibly quickly" 3:27 - "we are known around the world for our stringent food quality and safety standards" (many repetitions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not taking customer concerns seriously - Contradictory
(no Compensation Strategy)	38:07 - "We do not have plans to reimburse, we think that what's most important is that we take steps to reassure our customers about the quality and safety of our food."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negative - Disrespectful - Perceived as an attempt to diminish the incident

McDonald's Japanese audience was not impressed with Casanova's performance, and McDonald's crisis communication efforts received much criticism in both the popular press and on social media. See column three of Table 6-2. One of the most frequent complaints discovered during the thematic analysis for case 1 was the absence of a proper Japanese-style apology taking full responsibility for the crisis. The use of scapegoating, bolstering, and diminishing strategies were repeatedly named as anti-apology markers.

¹¹ FNN (2014)

Casanova began with the words, “I would like to extend my sincere apology to our valued customers for any anxiety or concern that this situation may have caused.” So far this stuck to the basic attitude of an apology press conference, but then, as the press conference continued Casanova declared, “this was a deed that was committed by a few individuals with bad intentions at one factory in one city in China,” and a suspicious mood began to be in the air. In the end, even the words “McDonald’s was tricked” were spoken. This is equivalent to saying, “we are not responsible.” There is nothing else to say but they have lost all sight of their customers’ point of view (“2014 nen wāsuto”, 2015, p. 25).

By assuming a victim role and claiming to have been deceived by malicious outsiders, McDonald’s refused to take responsibility in the eyes of the Japanese public. Such a failure to convey a sincere apology can, in fact, compound the damage (“Ayamari no nai”, 2015). Criticisms for McDonald’s use of scapegoating, bolstering, and diminishing strategies, which are repeatedly named as anti-apology markers, emerged as three key themes. As a result, Casanova’s apology was overwhelmingly judged as being in name only, and common reactions included “She’s making a fool of the Japanese!” and “What was she doing?” (“Nabakari shazaikaiken”, 2014). One *Yahoo! Japan* user asked succinctly: “Where was the apology? Is this the American way?” (“Nihon no makudonarudo”, 2014). Media training expert Sasaki Masayuki did indeed see a cultural explanation and explained that the press conference had given the impression that McDonald’s was covering all its legal bases as is typical in the West and forgot all about its customers (“2014 nen wāsuto”, 2015). Marketing expert, Tomoaki Koso agreed: “There is no understanding of the trouble this caused

customers. It is an ironclad rule that any individual in their right mind would immediately apologize” (Ogawa, 2015). A *Nikkei* article from August 31, 2014, told of frustrated franchise managers and mounting criticism for Casanova’s handling of the situation (Kaneda, 2014). The article criticized Casanova’s failure to apologize promptly but also questioned her decision to express anger and cast McDonald’s into a victim role. “If shop managers had her attitude, there would certainly be customer complaints,” stated a store manager from Kanagawa prefecture (Kaneda, 2014, p. 12).

A further point of criticism, frequently appearing across the texts surveyed, was Casanova’s perceived attitude (“Makudonarudo shachō”, 2014). O. Sato (2015) called Casanova’s attitude cold and compared her unpopular words to the infamously disastrous statement “I haven’t slept at all!” by Snow Brand president Tetsuro Ishikawa during the company’s large-scale food contamination crisis in 2000. Kanda (2015) wrote that Casanova appeared indifferent. She delivered an apology press conference “without so much as a simple bow,” criticizes the *Nishinippon Newspaper’s* Ogawa (2015). However, not only Casanova’s attitude was found lacking, but also her appearance and choice in apparel were deemed unsatisfactory. In particular, her loose locks, prominent glasses, fashionable rings, and round-neck shirt were mentioned as inappropriate for a proper apology press conference (e.g., “Don konishi nihon”, 2014).

The timing of the apology was also a frequent point of criticism. Waiting over a week to appear in front of the press was considered a considerable breach in etiquette. Delaying the conference by 10 days to coincide with an earnings announcement gave the impression that McDonald’s took food safety too lightly (O. Sato, 2015). Finally, McDonald’s decision to not offer refunds was consistently unpopular among social media users (e.g., “Nihon makudonarudo”, 2014; “Nabakari

shazaikaiken”, 2014). This decision stood in stark contrast to Family Mart’s offer to provide refunds for customers who could provide a receipt. Overall, McDonald’s apology missteps secured the company the fourth place on the Japanese public relations magazine *Kouhoukaigi*’s “Worst *shazaikaiken* of 2014” list (“risuku to kouhou”, 2015).

6.2.2 Case 2

In January 2015, McDonald’s encountered a second crisis only seven months after the first, when a number of cases of foreign objects found in McDonald’s menu items came to light. A human tooth, plastic pieces, and other foreign objects had been discovered in McDonald’s food at various locations throughout Japan. The company’s first response in front of cameras was a press conference held on January 7, 2015, by two of McDonald’s board members. Casanova did not attend due to overseas business appointments. Nearly one month later, on February 5, 2015, Casanova addressed the press during an earnings announcement press conference. McDonald’s CEO bowed deeply and offered a Japanese-style apology to its customers. While Casanova’s performance received some positive reviews, the overall reaction to McDonald’s crisis communication strategies for case 2 was unfavorable (see Table 6-3).

The thematic analysis revealed that the CEO’s absence on January 7, as well as the overall content of this first apology press conference, did not satisfy the Japanese public. Toshiaki Kanda (2015) wrote for *Yahoo News Japan*: “I am simply stunned that Casanova would be taking it easy on her business trip abroad during such a critical time. For such an important press conference she should have finished two days early.” Similarly, *Toyokeizai*’s O. Sato (2015) noted that for the press and customers, it seemed like the company’s leader was shirking her responsibility and

running away. Many others agreed that Casanova had neglected her duties, sending a dangerous message to customers and reporters alike (Matsusaki, 2015). However, not only Casanova's absence drew heavy criticism, but also the conference content itself did nothing to abate customer concerns. "It took three hours, and there were barely any explanations. It was painful to watch," lamented Tsuruno (2015). Many texts also revealed strong disapproval of McDonald's attempts to diminish the impact by claiming the incidences were not a sign of overall quality issues but individual occurrences that did not have to be disclosed publicly (e.g., "Makudonarudo ibutsu kon'nyū," 2015). This led some to question whether McDonald's had only given explanations because of the public outcry and not because of a need to inform the public (Tsuruno, 2015). In an interview with *Nikkei Business*, Tohoku University's Kenichi Ohbuchi assessed the situation as follows: "McDonald's took the old American stance of 'if it is not clearly my fault, I will not apologize,' which did not go over well with the Japanese public. [...] They did not understand Japanese culture at all" (Hayashi, 2015, p. 3).

Overall, the month of January left a sour taste in the mouths of the Japanese public. "It is already becoming apparent that, due to McDonald's poor public relations response, customers are abandoning the company in droves, believing not only McDonald's food but also the company itself to be untrustworthy" (O. Sato, 2015). Kanda (2015) predicted on January 8, 2015, that customer's desire for McDonald's food would quickly wane, not due to the company's problems with foreign objects found in its food, but because of "this foreign organization's inadequate adjustments to the Japanese cultural environment."

When Casanova, finally appeared before cameras during a scheduled earnings announcement conference on February 5, 2015, to deliver a full apology, some

positive voices could be heard. “Finally Casanova Has Delivered a Japanese-Style Apology!” read one blog post’s headline, “she has finally understood the spirit of Japanese culture and bowed her head deeply” (Onishi, 2015). Especially Casanova’s deep bow at the beginning of the press conference did receive positive attention (e.g., Kuroi, 2014; Ogawa, 2015).

Others noticed Casanova’s changed appearance during the press conference (e.g., “Medatanu you”, 2015). On February 6, 2015 the Japanese TBS television program *Ippuku* dedicated a before and after style segment to Casanova’s press conferences. One popular blog post titled “Casanova Gets Off Her High Horse” stated: “Her hereto loosely hanging, casual locks were tied back, her heavy, black-framed glasses had been switched for frameless ones. Her suit changed from black to light grey, and she made an overall brighter image” (“Makudonarudo takabisha kasanoba”, 2015). Casanova’s appearance was not the only thing that found positive mention. Ayako Sato, a representative from the International Performance Research Center, said during an interview, “I think maybe someone coached her in the Japanese way of doing things,” and pointed out changes in Casanova’s wording. Her casual “hello everyone,” had changed to “good afternoon,” and she expressed concern for her audience by thanking them for coming despite their busy schedules, a typical Japanese opening (FNN, 2015b; “Makudonarudo takabisha kasanoba”, 2015). Nevertheless, the press conference was perceived by many as being too little too late. Ito (2015) assessed that “the prostration, however, did little to settle the ire of increasingly suspicious customers across the country”. Overall, McDonald’s handling of its foreign object crisis landed the company on rank 2 of *Kouhoukaigi*’s worst apology list for 2015 (“Netto yūzā ga erabu”, 2016), making McDonald’s the only company to be present on the list two years running.

Table 6-3 Crisis Communication Strategies and Key Criticisms - Case 2

Crisis Communication Strategy	Comments/Content (partially with video time codes)	Criticism
Primary Response¹²		
Apology	- Apologized for worry and inconvenience caused to customers	- No real admission of responsibility
Justification (Minimization)	- Denied that the cases revealed underlying quality-control issues and referred to them as “isolated” incidents.	- Not taking things seriously enough - Not being honest
Attack the Accuser	- Claimed it was a possibility that the items in question had been planted by the accusers.	- No specific criticism mentioned
No Comment	- Declined to name the total number of incidents.	- Not forthcoming with information
Secondary Response¹³		
Mortification – Apology	- Apology for “all of the great anxiety and concern that the recent reports of food related foreign objects have caused our customers” (deep 5 second bow) - Apology for being absent the first time (3:14) and “for the use of expressions that may have caused misunderstandings when we were explaining the incidents” and the company’s “inability to adequately communicate the efforts we are making to step up measures to avoid these incidences in the future” (2:40)	- More appropriate - Culturally adjusted - Delivered well - Appearance much improved - Too little too late - Insincere
(no attempts to use Scapegoating or Justification)		- No specifics mentioned (the absence of these strategies is believed to have contributed to the positive evaluation of the apology strategy)

¹² FNN (2015a)

¹³ FNN (2015b)

6.3 Discussion

The two cases illustrate the impact of the previously identified cultural differences in both responsibility attribution and account giving. McDonald's failed to consider vital cultural differences when crafting its crisis communication strategies. In case 1, McDonald's saw itself in a clear victim role and accordingly chose less accommodative CRS. Through a U.S. analytical lens, this seems like an appropriate assessment considering three facts: the acts had been intentionally committed by a small number of individuals, the supplier had taken full responsibility for the incident, and there was no actual proof that any tainted meat had ever reached Japan. "People will assign very little responsibility to the organization when it is perceived to be the victim of others' actions. For instance, a crisis might result from a supplier's failure to act responsibly" (Holladay, 2010, p. 165). McDonald's approach was generally in line with SCCT recommendations, categorizing this crisis as a victim crisis which does not require highly accommodative strategies, particularly in the absence of intensifying factors. From a Japanese point of view, however, McDonald's had not fulfilled its duty to ensure food safety for its customers, a clear violation of a critical role expectation. In addition, the employees of the Chinese supplier could be seen as well within McDonald's extended circle of responsibility (collective agency)¹⁴. Japanese cultural conventions required McDonald's to take responsibility and offer a full apology to restore the break in the social contract with its customers. Even if others are the principal perpetrators, a company cannot escape responsibility in the

¹⁴ This responsibility attribution could also potentially be related to the fact that many large Japanese organizations are fully vertically integrated, and suppliers are generally part of the company conglomerate.

eyes of Japanese customers (“Aratana risuku ni”, 2014). It is not acceptable in Japan to not apologize because you are not sure yet if you have done anything wrong, clarified Ohbuchi in an interview (Hayashi, 2015). These statements clearly reflect previous findings on cultural differences in responsibility attribution and account giving.

In case 1, while Casanova had started the press conference with an apology for the worries and inconvenience caused to its customers, what followed disqualified McDonald’s approach from being perceived as apologetic by a Japanese audience. Casanova offered excuses while simultaneously justifying and minimizing the problem. These types of accounts constituted poor choices in the Japanese cultural context, where excuses and justifications tend to be seen as anti-apology markers (Sugimoto, 1999). Japanese reporters do not want to hear excuses, instead, “they want to see the top management of a company prostrate themselves in apology, which is the image they want to share” (O. Sato, 2015). Previous research also suggested that any attempt to minimize the problem is ill-advised when trying to deliver a *sunao* apology, which requires apologists to adjust their perception of the problem to that of the audience (Sugimoto, 1998). This seems particularly counter-intuitive to a Western observer concerned with factual portrayals and minimizing potential legal liability. This also makes it difficult for companies to change initial perceptions by offering alternative frames, as Casanova did by attempting to frame McDonald’s as a victim of the crisis.

Casanova’s failure to bow (case 1) further contributed to the perception of McDonald’s as unapologetic. As previous literature has suggested, adherence to proper apology form is essential in Japan. The true gravity of Casanova’s missing bow becomes apparent when considering findings by Kovacs (2011), who showed

that of 22 apology press conferences that took place in 2007 all 22 featured the apologist bowing deeply, with four cases of repeated bows. The criticism of Casanova's appearance further illustrates the highly scripted and uniform nature of Japanese apology press conferences. However, whether or not such criticisms would have arisen had she delivered an otherwise impeccable performance during the first press conference remains unclear. A second question of interest is whether a male speaker's appearance would have been similarly scrutinized.

Cultural differences in the appropriate timing of an apology also impacted the effectiveness of McDonald's crisis communication efforts. Both cases featured, what the Japanese audience perceived as late apologies. While Western companies often do not apologize until after a thorough investigation to determine culpability and legal implications has been completed, this approach is ill-suited for Japan, where a quick apology is the cornerstone of any crisis management effort (Ito, 2015).

In case 2, McDonald's made the critical mistake of holding an apology press conference in the absence of its president and CEO. "It is a clear rule that an apology press conference has to be faced by the head of the company," stated O. Sato (2015). The position of the individual giving an apology is of great importance and clearly indicates the importance an organization attributes to a given offense. By holding the initial press conference without Casanova, McDonald's sent the message that it did not consider the crisis a top priority. Furthermore, the company failed to deliver detailed information about the incidences and defended its initial non-disclosure by diminishing the incidences and calling them separate and isolated incidents that did not require public disclosure (justification). McDonald's failed to adjust its crisis communication messages and presentation to Japanese expectations. However, it should be noted here that McDonald's response to case 2 did not only violate

Japanese expectations, but also SCCT guidelines, which state that repeated technical-error accidents with negative prior relationships require a highly accommodative response. Consequently, the attempts to diminish the crisis should be evaluated as a generally poor crisis response rather than being attributed to cultural variations.

Casanova's attempt at delivering a proper Japanese apology conference in February 2014 did receive some positive mentions due to its close adherence to Japanese apology standards. This demonstrates that culturally adjusted strategies can make a difference in audience perceptions. While a Western point of view might interpret this formal apology as insincere and artificial, it did, to some extent, satisfy the ideal of a *sunao* apology in Japan. Casanova put her customers' perceptions and expectations first and delivered an apology that expressed respect for those wronged and for Japanese cultural rules. While this effort was too little, too late for McDonald's, the author believes that other foreign organizations can learn an important lesson from the case of McDonald's: When communicating in Japan, a keen awareness of cultural differences is essential to deliver an appropriately adjusted crisis communication strategy.

6.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to illustrate how previous findings of cultural differences in responsibility attribution and account giving between Japan and North America can be relevant to crisis communication theory. This was achieved by showing how cultural differences in these two areas affected the effectiveness of McDonald's crisis communication efforts in two consecutive crisis situations. Overall, the McDonald's cases illustrated how cultural differences can negatively affect a company's crisis communication efforts across cultures. It is evident that the cultural

differences identified in previous research on responsibility attribution and account giving can be potentially significant for SCCT.

While the scope of this investigation was limited, and its conclusions are only tentative and based on only two cases with a small sample of communication artifacts, it provides compelling evidence for the need to further examine cross-cultural differences in crisis communication strategies in the Japanese context and beyond. Chapters 7 and 8 attempt to experimentally replicate some of the differences in crisis communication effectiveness across cultures displayed in the McDonald's and Olympus cases.

6.5 Implications of the Qualitative Research and Refinement of Research

Questions

The purpose of the qualitative portion of this thesis was to clearly illustrate that the previous findings on cultural differences in the psychological, socio-cultural, and organizational context between Japan and the West identified in the literature have potential relevance to crisis communication theory. This was achieved by showing how cultural differences in responsibility attribution, account giving, spokesperson conventions, and media relations harmed the effectiveness of both Olympus's and McDonald's crisis communication efforts.

Firstly, it is evident that the cultural differences identified in previous research on responsibility attribution and account giving are potentially significant for the applicability of SCCT in the Japanese context. It is therefore of particular interest whether the differences in crisis communication effectiveness displayed in the McDonald's cases can be reproduced experimentally and to what degree cultural differences in responsibility attribution and response appropriateness respectively

impact audience perceptions and crisis recovery. Chapter 7 will attempt to answer the following research questions: Do Japanese audiences attach a similar escalating responsibility attribution to the three crisis categories (victim, accident, preventable cluster) defined by SCCT? Moreover, does a culturally matched crisis response strategy (mortification) result in better reputational outcomes than the strategies recommended by SCCT for the victim and accident crises clusters?

Secondly, the two McDonald's cases illustrated the importance of adherence to crisis communication conventions and standards in cross-cultural crisis communication situations. The cases raised the question of the importance of spokesperson ethnicity and language choice as a component of crisis communication¹⁵. Would Casanova's efforts have been judged equality harshly if she had been Japanese? Or would she have faced even harsher criticism for failing to fulfill her audience's expectations? Furthermore, the cases raised the question of whether the choice to deliver the crisis communication messages in English accompanied by a Japanese translator, colored audience perceptions. Would Casanova have been perceived in a more positive light had she delivered the message in Japanese? These considerations lead the author to ask the following research questions in chapter 8: How will the ethnicity of the spokesperson, language choice, and message content affect perceived spokesperson credibility? Moreover, how will the ethnicity of the spokesperson, language choice, and message content affect company image?

¹⁵ While gender was also considered as a potentially influential factor in the McDonald's case, resource limitations made its inclusion as an independent variable in the spokesperson study in Chapter 8 not feasible.

7 Testing SCCT Recommendations in the Japanese Context

Chapter 4 established that Japanese crisis communication practices can differ significantly from Western approaches and that what works in one country can have devastating effects in another context. Chapter 6 lent strong support to the suspicion that the SCCT recommended approach might not have the same effect in Japan as it does in the United States. In this chapter, these qualitative findings, combined with the previously discussed cultural variations in responsibility attribution and account giving, will be used as guideposts for a quantitative examination of crisis communication differences between the SCCT assumptions and Japanese crisis reality.

7.1 Hypotheses

SCCT assumes that the reputational threat of crises is primarily based on responsibility attributions (Coombs, 2007a). Based on differences in attributed crisis responsibility, SCCT groups crises into three crisis clusters of increasing levels of both crisis responsibility and risk of damage to the organization's image. Responsibility attribution also constitutes the conceptual link that associates a given SCCT crisis type with a SCCT crisis response recommendation (Coombs, 2007a). Qualitative case research, however, has provided compelling evidence for the existence of cultural differences between Japan and the United States, the birthplace of SCCT, that may render SCCT recommendations less than optimal for Japanese audiences. H1a and H1b address the question of whether the inferior performance of SCCT recommended strategies compared to culturally matched strategies can be confirmed experimentally.

H1a: A culturally matched crisis response will result in higher company image scores than the SCCT recommended response and no response.

H1b. A culturally matched crisis response will receive better response evaluations than the SCCT recommended response.

SCCT is grounded in two major communication theories, attribution theory and account giving. As chapter 4 has shown, both theories are subject to considerable cultural variations. This raises the question of whether the proposed limited applicability of SCCT to the Japanese context arises solely from differences in the appropriateness of certain account types or hinges on fundamentally different responsibility judgments.

When discussing crisis responsibility, we first have to assess whether the term addresses the same underlying concepts in SCCT and this study. To capture the underlying dimensions of responsibility and to zero in on potential cultural differences, this study employs a number of different measures of the responsibility term. Three distinct measures are employed to assess the notion of responsibility. The first measure is the blame scale developed by Griffin, Babin, and Darden (1992). The blame scale was employed as a measure for crisis responsibility throughout the development of SCCT (Coombs, 1998; Coombs, 1999; Coombs & Holladay, 2002). The second measure related to responsibility employs three of the four causal attribution dimensions of the Causal Dimension Scale II (CDSII) by McAuley, Duncan, and Russell (1992). The third measure addresses a more Japanese view of the term responsibility. This one-item measure employs the Japanese term *sekinin*, which is loaded with ambiguity. *Sekinin* is the first word any dictionary will offer as the Japanese translation for the English term *responsibility*, and vice versa. However,

these two terms are far from synonymous. Like icebergs, the two words seem similar on the surface, but hidden below the superficial meaning is a wealth of culture-specific nuances. While the causality aspect prominent in the English term responsibility is explored extensively in this study, the different nuances present in the Japanese concept of responsibility have not received enough attention. The term *sekinin* was chosen because it does include the idea of causality but can also address the duty and role responsibility aspects of Japanese responsibility considerations.

To gain insight into how crisis responsibility considerations differ between Japan and SCCT assumptions, a number of hypotheses either accepted or dismissed during the development of SCCT will be examined in this chapter. We will first address the relationship between crisis responsibility (blame) and three causal attribution dimensions (personal control, locus of causality, external control). SCCT found that stronger perceptions of personal control intensified perceptions of crisis responsibility. However, the assumption that stronger attributions of external control would lessen the perception of crisis responsibility was disproven, and the external control dimension was dismissed as irrelevant to SCCT (Coombs, 1998). This study will test the validity of that dismissal for the Japanese context. Further, Coombs and Holladay (1996), drawing on Wilson et al. (1993), combined personal control and locus of causality into the single dimension of personal control/locus representing the intentionality of a crisis. The two items correlated at .68 ($p < .01$) in the 1996 study. Lastly, and representing the most recent development in SCCT concerning initial crisis responsibility, Coombs and Holladay (2002) found that the personal control dimension was isomorphic with crisis responsibility (blame).

A second critical assumption of SCCT, is the connection between crisis responsibility and reputational threat (Coombs, 2007a). However, considering the

cultural differences in terms of responsibility attribution between Japan and the West, the question arises whether crisis responsibility (as defined by SCCT) is, in fact, strongly related to company image outcomes. To address the above considerations a number of hypotheses are established:

- H2a: Stronger perceptions of personal control should intensify perceptions of crisis responsibility and decrease company image scores.
- H2b: Stronger attributions of external control will have no effect on the perception of crisis responsibility and company image scores.
- H2c: The *sekinin* measure will be more representative of company image outcomes than personal control and crisis responsibility.
- H3a: The personal control and locus of causality dimensions can be summed into a common factor.
- H3b: The personal control dimension is isomorphic with crisis responsibility.

Considering the evidence from both the literature review and qualitative sections of this thesis, we can posit that:

- H4: Perceived levels of personal control/locus, external control, and crisis responsibility will not adequately reflect the relationships represented in the SCCT crisis clusters.

H4 addresses whether the perceived levels of responsibility attributed to each crisis scenario in this study follow the responsibility levels represented by the SCCT

crisis clusters. This study evaluates how the comparative differences between the crisis scenarios compare to SCCT findings.

SCCT is rooted in a clear and strong relationship between crisis responsibility and company image outcomes. “Publics will make attributions about the cause of a crisis. The more publics attribute responsibility for the crisis to the organization, the greater the risk should be of reputational damage” (Coombs & Holladay, 1996, p. 292). However, based on the literature review and qualitative cases study sections of this thesis, we can hypothesize that:

H5: The reputational threat of the four crisis types examined will not follow the escalating responsibility attributions represented by the SCCT crisis cluster typology (Coombs & Holladay, 2002; Coombs, 2007a).

7.2 Design and Stimulus Materials

This investigation utilized a 4 (crisis type) × 3 (crisis response) between-subjects factorial experimental design to test the hypotheses. Crisis type was manipulated by choosing four crisis scenarios representing a cross-section of the SCCT crisis clusters. *Workplace violence* and *product tampering* were selected from the victim cluster, *technical error product harm* from the accidental cluster, and *organizational misdeed with injuries* from the preventable cluster (Coombs, 2007a). The crisis response variable was manipulated by introducing no response, a culturally adjusted response, or the SCCT recommended response for each crisis type. Based on both the extensive literature review in chapter 4 and the qualitative case studies conducted in chapters 5 and 6, the rebuild strategy was chosen as the culturally matched crisis response for all four cases. See Appendix C1 for the four case

scenarios and variations of the crisis responses in English and Appendix C2 for the scenarios and questionnaire in Japanese. The company's crisis history and the participant's prior relationship with the company were held constant by introducing a fictitious company.

7.3 Participants

The respondents for this study were a convenience sample of 259 undergraduate students enrolled in several Japanese universities. 59.8% were female, and 40.2% were male. The sample ranged in age from 18 to 60 ($M = 20.46$, $SD = 4.62$). All participants were Japanese citizens. An a priori power analysis, conducted with the G*Power software, indicated that a sample size of 225 participants was needed to detect a medium effect size $f = .25$ (Cohen, 1988, p. 286), type I error rate = .05, and power = .80. This sample size was achieved.

7.4 Measures

7.4.1 Crisis Responsibility

A three-item 5-point scale for blame developed by Griffin et al. (1992) assessed respondents' perception of crisis responsibility. This scale has been used frequently and successfully by Coombs and colleagues (Coombs, 1998; Coombs & Holladay, 2002). The responsibility dimension exhibited internal reliability of .881 (Cronbach's Alpha). This value was comparable to the values ranging from .80 to .86 found in previous studies (Coombs, 1998; Coombs & Holladay, 2002). One additional 5-point item asked respondents to rate their agreement with the statement, "The company is responsible for the crisis." This item tested for the impact of using the term *sekinin* to elicit responsibility attribution.

The Japanese versions for all scales employed in this study were adapted to the Japanese context through back-translation. A native speaker of both Japanese and English performed the translation, and a near-native speaker of English completed the back-translation. The back-translated version showed no major differences from the original English version, and the translators cooperated to resolve minor discrepancies. The resulting Japanese scales were judged as appropriate in terms of language equivalency and cultural fit.

7.4.2 Causal Attributions

Three dimensions of the four-dimension CDSII by McAuley et al. (1992) measured the participants' causal attributions. The applicability of the CDSII to the Japanese context was established by Tournat (2014). The personal control, locus of causality, and external control dimensions were assessed with one three-item 5-point bipolar scale each. Elements of the CDSII were used frequently by Coombs and colleagues throughout the development of SCCT, and initial crisis responsibility is now regarded by SCCT as a function of personal control. While the fourth dimension of the CDSII, stability, is considered an intensifying factor of crisis responsibility in SCCT, the locus of causality and external control dimensions were found to be irrelevant to crisis responsibility judgments. The personal control and locus of causality dimensions showed internal reliabilities of .718 and .820 (Cronbach's Alpha), respectively. Compared to McAuley et al. (1992), the reliability for the external control dimension was lower than expected at .643 (Cronbach's Alpha). This made the analysis of the external control attribution problematic as this value falls below the commonly accepted threshold of .700 (Loewenthal & Lewis, 2001). To increase comparability with early studies (Coombs, 1998; Coombs & Holladay, 1996),

the combined personal control/locus scale (Cronbach's Alpha .856) was created by merging the personal control and locus of causality scales.

7.4.3 Company Image and Reputational Threat

Company image, often referred to as the reputational threat level, was assessed with a 9-item 5-point Likert-type scale labeled from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* and inspired by Coombs and Holladay (1996). Examples of items include: "The company is not concerned with the wellbeing of its publics," "The company is well managed," and "The company is basically honest." The scale showed high internal consistency of .885 (Cronbach's Alpha). The comparative reputational threat is assessed in this study by examining the relative differences in company image scores across experimental conditions.

7.4.4 Response Evaluation

Participants' evaluation of the crisis response was assessed with a three-item 5-point Likert-type scale. The items were: "The company's crisis response was inappropriate," "The company responded well to the crisis," and "The company failed in its crisis response." While pretests ($N=25$) had indicated high internal consistency, an in-depth reliability analysis revealed that the internal consistency could be further increased by deleting the first of the three items. The resulting two-item scale showed high internal consistency of .798 (Cronbach's Alpha).

7.4.5 Additional Measures

The survey included one additional 5-point Likert-style item, that was highly experimental due to its ambiguous wording. "The company's crisis response was

typical for Japan.” Responses were completely randomly distributed across response types and failed to show a correlation to any of the other measures. The item was consequently dismissed.

Finally, participants assigned to the no response conditions ($N = 81$) were asked to assess the severity of the crisis scenario on a 7-point semantic differential scale with the endpoints labeled *not severe* and *very severe*. The wording was left intentionally vague to avoid any undue influence on respondents’ interpretation of the question. In a review of previous studies, Vidmar and Crinklaw (1974) found no conclusive evidence that U.S. subjects’ judgements of wrongdoing were significantly affected by the severity of the damage. Hamilton and Sanders (1983) confirmed this lack of impact of severity when judging wrongdoing for Japanese audiences. Zhou and Ki (2018) addressed the role of crisis severity in the context of SCCT, calling for a reevaluation of the dismissal of crisis severity as an intensifying factor. While they did find a significant main effect of crisis severity on company reputation, they did not discover a unilateral impact of severity on responsibility judgments. Their experimental study found support for the importance of crisis severity for responsibility assessments in accidental crises but also confirmed that severity did not exert any influence on responsibility judgments for other types of crises. Taking the above findings into account, the author believed it prudent to assess that crisis severity was indeed perceived to be similar across all four scenarios as intended.

7.5 Procedures

Respondent first read one crisis scenario and then completed the accompanying measures. The survey was administered via a prominent survey website. Crisis scenarios were assigned to respondents based on an A/B split testing

algorithm provided by the survey website. As a participation incentive, respondents had the option to participate in a gift card lottery. Responses were collected over a six-week period.

7.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations address proper behavior of the researcher towards respondents, as well as any others who may be affected by or participated in the creation of this research. Researchers have an ethical obligation to ensure that people involved in their research (1) are protected from harm (2) have given full consent for their participation, and (3) are assured that their privacy will be protected. All efforts were made to comply with these guidelines and ensure a high ethical research standard for this study.

7.7 Results

7.7.1 Manipulation Checks

A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to test for differences in the perceived severity between the crisis type scenarios. A visual check of the boxplots confirmed that the distributions of severity scores were sufficiently similar across all groups. The median severity scores showed no statistically significant differences, $\chi^2(3) = 4.014, p = .260$. The manipulation of crisis severity was successful. Manipulation checks were not conducted for crisis responses as it was unclear how a Japanese audience would interpret the responses. Response content was based on previous work by Coombs and colleagues. One question, however, asked respondents how they judged response appropriateness and whether the company failed or succeeded in their crisis communication efforts (see H1b).

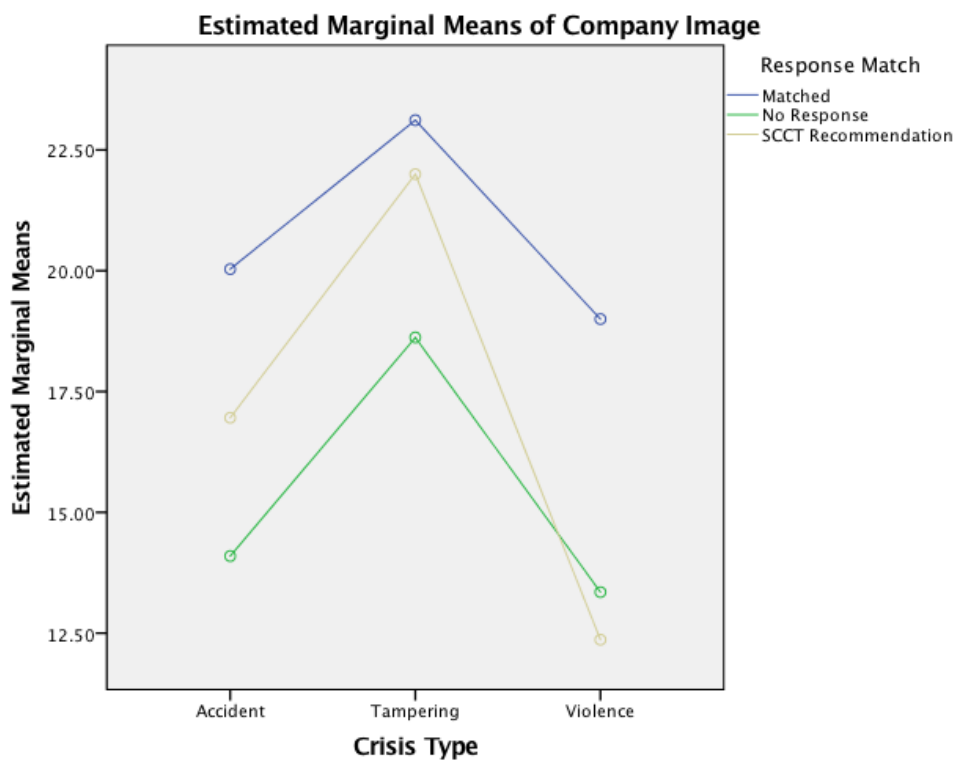
7.7.2 Response Match

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of crisis type and response match on company image. The misconduct type crisis scenario (*organizational misdeed with injuries*) was excluded as the SCCT recommended response strategy coincided with the culturally matched strategy. The data on company image was normally distributed for every combination of the independent variables (Shapiro-Wilk's test: $p > .05$) and an assessment of the box plots revealed that there were no significant outliers. Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variances, $p = .218$. There was no statistically significant interaction effect between crisis type and response match for company image scores, $F(4, 197) = 2.234, p = .067$, partial $\eta^2 = .043$. However, there were statistically significant main effects of both crisis type, $F(2, 197) = 29.595, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .231$, and response match, $F(2, 197) = 20.556, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .173$, both large effect sizes (Cohen, 1988, p. 287). Because the number of participants across conditions was not equal, the unweighted marginal means from the estimates and pairwise comparison tables were examined. A culturally matched response was associated with a company image mean score 3.610, 95% CI [1.62, 5.60] points higher than the SCCT recommended response, and 5.361, 95% CI [3.29, 7.43] points higher than no response independent of crisis scenario, both statistically significant differences, $p < .001$. This leads us to reject the null hypothesis and accept H1a that the culturally matched response results in better company image outcomes independent of crisis type.

One interesting observation is that the difference in company image outcomes between the matched and SCCT recommended responses was much larger for the violence scenario than for the tampering scenario (see Figure 7-1). This suggests that the non-accommodative response recommended by SCCT was particularly

inappropriate for the Japanese participants' assessment of the violence scenario. This is in line with the findings discussed in the literature review section, which suggested that collective agency considerations would lead to higher levels of reputational threat where employees are involved. In other words, because the employee who committed the violent act is seen as part of the company, rather than an individual, their actions reflect on and fall within the extended responsibility circle of the company.

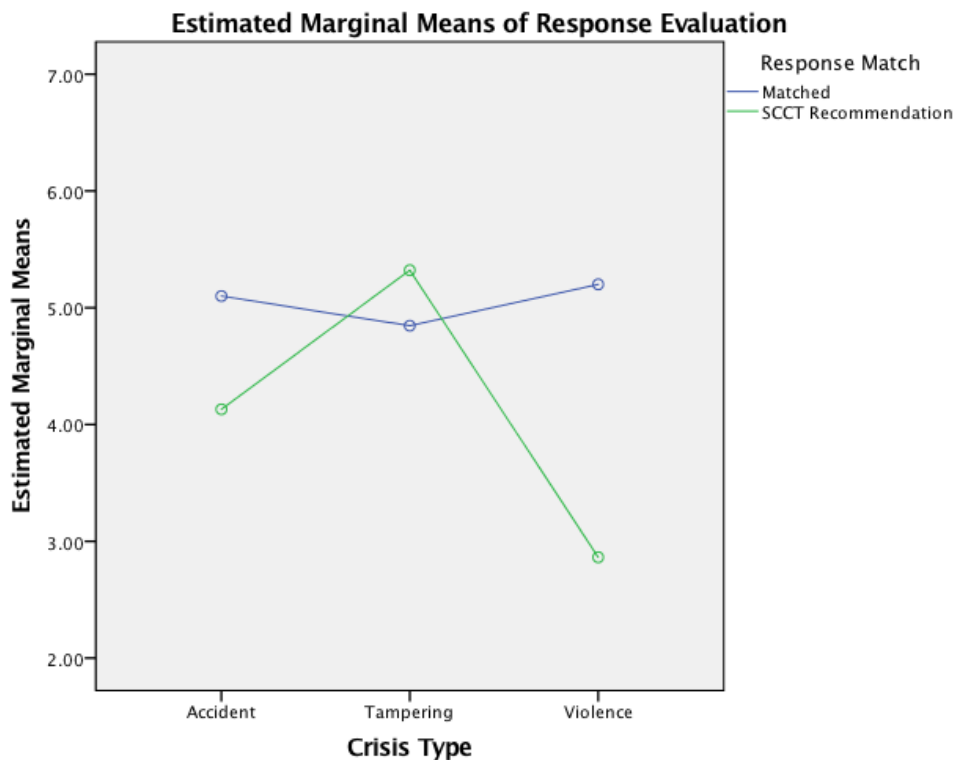
Figure 7-1 Estimated Marginal Means of Company Image



H1b was examined with a second two-way ANOVA. Response evaluation scores were not available for the no response condition. The analysis compared the response evaluation scores of the three crisis scenarios for culturally matched and SCCT responses. Several cells of the design violated Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality. However, the departure from normality was judged as minor enough to proceed with

the analysis. Kurtosis and skewness values of the affected cells were well within the acceptable range of -2 to 2 for univariate normality (D. George & Mallery, 2010). There were no significant outliers in the dataset. Homogeneity of variances was checked with Levene's test, $p = .086$. The analysis of variances revealed a statistically significant interaction effect between crisis type and response match, $F(2, 138) = 10.529, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .132$. For a visual representation of the interaction effect, see Figure 7-2. While the SCCT response was evaluated slightly more positively than the matched response for the tampering condition, the SCCT response performed significantly worse than the matched response for the accident and violence conditions. For the accident condition, the response evaluation was .97, 95% CI [.18, 1.60] points higher for the matched response, $F(1, 138) = 5.951, p = .016$, partial $\eta^2 = .041$. For the violence condition, the response evaluation was 2.34, 95% CI [1.39, 3.29] points higher for the matched response, $F(1, 138) = 23.674, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .146$, a large effect size (Cohen, 1988, p. 287). For the tampering condition, the SCCT response slightly outperformed the matched response by .48, 95% CI [-.30, 1.25] points, $F(1, 138) = 1.481, p = .226$, partial $\eta^2 = .011$, a non-statistically significant difference. These results let us partially accept H1b. The matched response condition received a statistically significantly better response evaluation than the SCCT recommended response for both the accident and violence scenarios. However, for the tampering condition, response evaluations were similar across response strategies.

Figure 7-2 Estimated Marginal Means of Response Evaluation



7.7.3 Responsibility and Causal Attributions

H2a focused on the relationship between personal control, perceptions of crisis responsibility, and company image. The strength of the relationships was assessed with a Pearson correlation. There was a statistically significant, strong positive correlation between personal control and crisis responsibility, $r(259) = .627, p < .001$. Crisis responsibility and company image correlated significantly at $r(259) = -.321, p < .001$. Personal control and company image were significantly negatively correlated, $r(259) = -.375, p < .001$ (see Table 7-1).

It should be noted, however, that these correlations are significantly weaker than the correlations found by Coombs' (1998), who measured significant correlations of $r = .73$ for personal control and responsibility, $r = -.67$ for crisis responsibility and company image, and $r = -.58$ for personal control and company image. Nevertheless,

these results allow us to accept H2a. Stronger perceptions of personal control intensify perceptions of crisis responsibility and decrease company image scores.

Table 7-1 Pearson Correlation Table

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Responsibility	-					
2. Personal Control	.627**	-				
3. Locus of Causality	.678**	.695**	-			
4. External Control	-.477**	-.343**	-.342**	-		
5. Personal Control/Locus	.709**	.916**	.925**	-.372**	-	
6. <i>Sekin</i>	.736**	.612**	.697**	-.370**	.713**	-
7. Company Image	-.321**	-.375**	-.434**	.144*	-.440**	-.458**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

H2b focused on the relationship between external control, perceptions of crisis responsibility, and company image. Contrary to expectations, external control was significantly negatively related to crisis responsibility, $r(259) = -.477, p < .001$, and significantly positively related to company image, $r(259) = .144, p = .020$ (see Table 7-3). These correlations are considerably different from Coombs (1998), who failed to find significant correlations between external control and crisis responsibility ($r = -.05$, ns) and external control and company image, ($r = .01$, ns). These results let us reject H2b. While the findings for H2a are in line with SCCT assumptions, the finding of a statistically significant effect of external control on responsibility and company image contradicts accepted SCCT assumptions.

The experimental *sekin* dimension was significantly negatively related to company image, $r(259) = -.458, p < .001$. The experimental measure was more strongly related to company image than crisis responsibility ($r = -.321$), personal control ($r = -.375$), and the combined personal control/locus scale ($r = -.440$), leading us to accept H2c. However, further investigation revealed that the *sekin* dimension

did not measure a wider definition of responsibility and was closely related to the personal control/locus dimension $r(259) = .713, p < .001$. In fact, their combined Cronbach's Alpha of .879 could not be further improved by removing one of the items.

Following the procedures laid out in Coombs (1996), H3a was addressed by first conducting a correlation analysis of the two factors followed by a Cronbach's Alpha analysis with elimination table. Personal control and locus of causality were positively correlated, $r(259) = .695, p < .001$, and the Cronbach's Alpha of the combined scale was .856, a value that could not be improved by removing one of the items. These results show that personal control and locus of causality are highly similar and can be summed into one scale and allow us to accept H3a.

Retracing the steps of Coombs (2002), H3b was addressed by running a principle component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation on the scale items for personal control and responsibility. The necessary assumptions for PCA were met. The presence of a least one correlation coefficient above 0.3 for each variable was confirmed by assessing the correlation matrix. The individual Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values all exceeded 0.78, and the overall (KMO) value was 0.84., which is deemed *middling* to *meritorious* by Kaiser (1974). A statistically significant Bartlett's test of sphericity ($p < .001$) indicated that the use of PCA was appropriate for this dataset. A rotation was not necessary as only a single item had an eigenvalue of over 1. This factor had an eigenvalue of 3.552 and it explained 59.20% of the variance (see Table 7-2). This result is in line with Coombs (2002) and confirms the isomorphic relationship between responsibility and personal control, allowing us to accept H3b.

Table 7-2 Results of Principle Component Analysis

Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.552	59.204	59.204	3.552	59.204	59.204
2	.876	14.608	73.812			
3	.584	9.734	83.546			
4	.471	7.845	91.390			
5	.302	5.037	96.427			
6	.214	3.573	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

7.7.4 Responsibility, Personal Control/Locus, External Control

Separate Kruskal-Wallis tests were performed to check for differences in the personal control/locus, external control, and responsibility scores between the crisis types: the tampering, violence, accident, and misconduct groups. The Kruskal-Wallis test was chosen as an alternative to the ANOVA because several cells of the design violated normality, and some outliers were present. These tests were run only on the no response dataset to avoid the confounding effects of crisis responses altering initial responsibility judgments. An examination of the boxplots showed that the distributions of the scales were comparable for all groups. The median personal control/locus, external control, and responsibility scores were statistically significantly different across the crisis types, with $\chi^2(3) = 41.301, p < .001$, $\chi^2(3) = 43.441, p < .001$, and $\chi^2(3) = 53.735, p < .001$ respectively. Dunn's (1964) test with Bonferroni adjustment to compensate for multiple comparisons was used for post-hoc pairwise comparisons. Reported p-values are the Bonferroni adjusted values. This analysis found statistically significant differences in personal control/locus scores between tampering (Mdn = 8) and misconduct (Mdn = 18) ($p < .001$), tampering and accident (Mdn = 14) ($p < .001$), tampering and violence (Mdn = 13) ($p = .015$), and violence and misconduct ($p = .011$; see Table 7-3). The post hoc analysis for the external control scores showed statistically significant differences between tampering

(Mdn = 10) and the accident (Mdn = 5) ($p < .001$), tampering and misconduct (Mdn = 5) ($p < .001$), and tampering and violence (Mdn = 6) ($p < .001$). Similarly, a third follow-up analysis confirmed statistically significant differences in crisis responsibility scores between tampering (Mdn = 3) and misconduct (Mdn = 9) ($p < .001$), tampering and accident (Mdn = 9) ($p < .001$), accident and violence (Mdn = 6) ($p < .001$), and violence and misconduct ($p < .001$). See Table 7-3.

Overall, we can say the trend for personal control/locus and responsibility scores diverges from SCCT assumptions. Violence and tampering, both part of the victim cluster, were statistically significantly different both in terms of personal control/locus and external control. However, the differences between the misconduct and accident scenarios for both responsibility and personal control/locus were not statistically significant, while SCCT describes the accident cluster as carrying minimal attributions of crisis responsibility as compared to strong attributions of crisis responsibility for the preventable cluster (Coombs, 2007a). This difference could not be confirmed in this data set. In general, we can see a pattern of escalating attribution of personal control/locus and responsibility in Table 7-3, which roughly reflects the relationship represented in the SCCT crisis clusters. However, there were significant differences within the victim cluster and the clear distinction between accident and misconduct could not be confirmed. These results lead us to accept H4. We can confirm that perceived levels of personal control/locus and responsibility might not accurately reflect the relationships in the SCCT crisis clusters. While external control is not directly addressed in the current version of SCCT, an early paper by Coombs and Holladay (1996), theorized that accidents and transgressions should evoke less attributions of external control than tampering for example. This general trend was

present in the data. Attributions of external control also emerged as a significant difference between the two victim cluster crisis scenarios, tampering and violence.

Table 7-3 Median Scores for Personal Control/Locus, External Control, and Responsibility

Report ^a			
Median			
Crisis Type	Personal Control/Locus of Control	External Control	Crisis Responsibility
Accident	14.0000	5.0000	9.0000
Misconduct	18.0000	5.0000	9.0000
Tampering	8.0000	10.0000	3.0000
Violence	13.0000	6.0000	6.0000
Total	13.0000	6.0000	4.0000

a. Response Match = No Response

7.7.5 Company Image

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if the reputational threat (lower image outcomes) was different across the four crisis scenarios. The analysis was conducted at the matched and no response levels of the crisis response variable. SCCT recommended responses were excluded via the filter function in SPSS. A visual assessment of the boxplots confirmed that there were no outliers, and Shapiro-Wilk's tests ($p > .05$) found the data in every group to be normally distributed. Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variances ($p = .201$). There was no statistically significant interaction effect between crisis type and response match for company image, $F(3,178) = .553, p = .647$, partial $\eta^2 = .009$. There was a statistically significant main effect of crisis type, $F(3, 178) = 13.555, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .186$. Unweighted marginal means for company image from the estimates and pairwise comparison tables are presented to compensate for the unbalanced design of the study. The tampering scenario was associated with a mean company image score 6.09, 95% CI [3.45, 8.73] points higher than the misconduct scenario, 4.69, 95% CI[1.79, 7.59] points higher than the violence scenario, and 3.80, 95% CI[1.17, 6.43] points higher

than the accident scenario, all statistically significant differences, $p < .001$ (see Table 7-5).

The marginal means for company image were lowest for the misconduct condition, 14.78 ($SE = .69$), followed by the violence, 16.17 ($SE = .82$), accident, 17.06 ($SE = .69$), and tampering conditions, 20.87 ($SE = .71$) (see Table 7-4 and Figure 7-3). This analysis allows us to accept H5. The reputational threat, as represented by company image scores, does not fully represent the SCCT predictions. The accident and misconduct conditions were not significantly different in terms of image outcomes, while the two victim cluster conditions, violence and tampering, exhibited significantly different levels of reputational threat. In particular, the violence scenario deviates from the mild reputational threat assigned to workplace violence incidents in the SCCT crisis cluster typology.

Figure 7-3 Estimated Marginal Means of Company Image

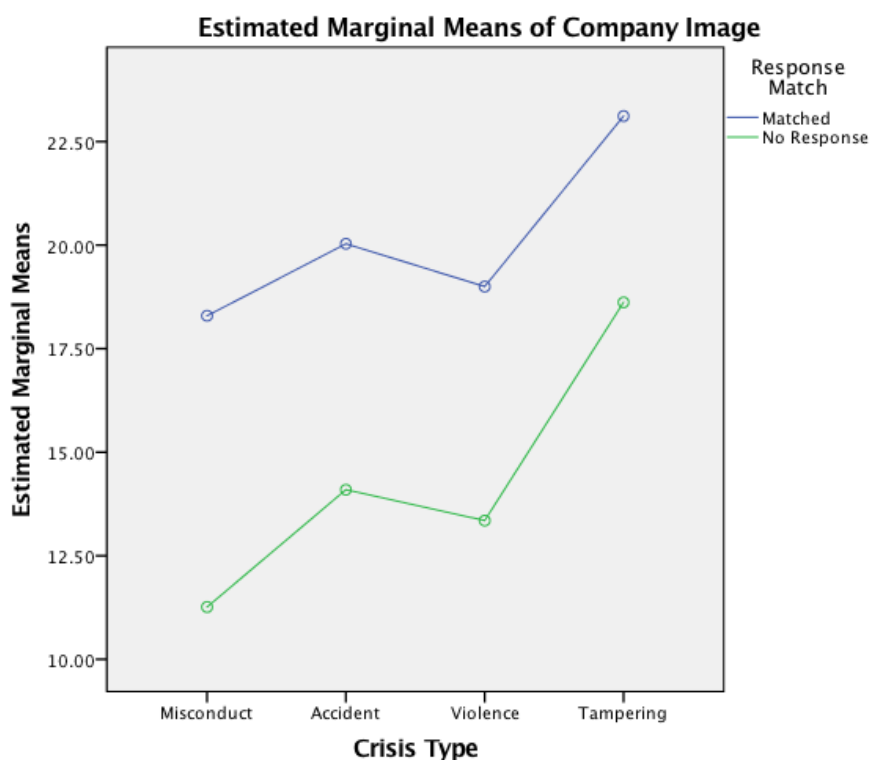


Table 7-4 Unweighted Mean Company Image Scores by Crisis Type

Estimates				
Dependent Variable: Company Image				
Crisis Type	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Accident	17.064	.687	15.709	18.419
Misconduct	14.779	.691	13.415	16.143
Tampering	20.867	.708	19.470	22.264
Violence	16.175	.824	14.549	17.801

Table 7-5 Pairwise Comparisons Table for Company Image

Pairwise Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Company Image						
(I) Crisis Type	(J) Crisis Type	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Accident	Misconduct	2.286	.974	.120	-3.14	4.885
	Tampering	-3.803*	.986	.001	-6.434	-1.172
	Violence	.889	1.073	1.000	-1.973	3.751
Misconduct	Accident	-2.286	.974	.120	-4.885	.314
	Tampering	-6.089*	.989	.000	-8.728	-3.449
	Violence	-1.396	1.076	1.000	-4.266	1.474
Tampering	Accident	3.803*	.986	.001	1.172	6.434
	Misconduct	6.089*	.989	.000	3.449	8.728
	Violence	4.692*	1.087	.000	1.793	7.591
Violence	Accident	-.889	1.073	1.000	-3.751	1.973
	Misconduct	1.396	1.076	1.000	-1.474	4.266
	Tampering	-4.692*	1.087	.000	-7.591	-1.793

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at $p < .05$

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

7.8 Discussion

H1a and H1b addressed the question of whether the SCCT recommended CRS were indeed the optimal response for each crisis scenario or whether a more culturally adjusted response would lead to better reputational outcomes. H1a was accepted, as the culturally adjusted responses consistently outperformed both the SCCT and the no response scenarios. The gap between the matched and SCCT responses seemed to widen as the reputational threat increased. In addition, participants rated the culturally matched responses higher in terms of response success for both the accident and violence scenarios. For the tampering condition, the SCCT response was evaluated

marginally more positively than the matched response, an effect that was not proportionately reflected in company image outcomes, however. It should also be noted that for the violence condition, the SCCT response was evaluated as particularly poor both in terms of image outcome and response evaluation compared to the culturally matched response. This is not surprising considering that the culturally matched apology is diametrically opposed to the defensive denial of responsibility through the use of the victimage strategy.

H2a was accepted, which tells us that some of the underlying assumptions regarding crisis responsibility encapsulated within SCCT hold with a Japanese audience. Stronger perceptions of personal control did indeed intensify perceptions of crisis responsibility and decrease company image. However, the strength of these correlations was considerably weaker than suggested by SCCT. While the findings for H2a were generally in line with SCCT assumptions, the finding of a statistically significant correlation between external control and responsibility, and external control and company image contradicted accepted SCCT assumptions and led to the dismissal of H2b.

The experimental *sekinin* measure failed to capture a more comprehensive definition of responsibility. While we were able to accept H2c, the measure was, in fact, found to be isomorphic with the personal control/locus dimension. H3a and H3b tested two key assumptions during the development of SCCT regarding the relationship between responsibility measures. Both hypotheses were accepted, showing that the personal control and locus of causality dimensions can be summed into a common factor and that the personal control dimension is isomorphic with crisis responsibility.

H4 posited that perceived levels of personal control/locus, external control,

and responsibility (blame) would not accurately reflect the responsibility attributions inherent in the SCCT crisis clusters. The hypothesis was accepted, as no statistically significant differences could be identified between the accident and misconduct cluster scenarios, and the two victim cluster scenarios were found to be significantly different both in terms of blame and personal control/locus. External control differed significantly across scenarios, with the violence scenario clustering together with misconduct and accident, which demonstrates, that the employee committing the act of violence, was perceived as part of the company, rather than an individual acting independently from the company.

H5 addressed the reputational threat of the four crisis scenarios and postulated that image outcomes would not follow the increasing reputational threat levels implied by the SCCT crisis clusters. Findings of considerable variation in threat levels across the two victim cluster scenarios allowed us to accept H5. This pattern seems to be in line with the Japanese concept of collective agency and proxy responsibility discussed in chapter 4. While the principal offender was completely independent of the company in the tampering scenario, the offender in the workplace violence scenario was a company employee and therefore within the wider circle of responsibility of the company. In fact, independent of response match, reputational outcomes for the violence scenario were slightly worse than the accident condition. This leads us to conclude that workplace violence should not be part of the victim cluster.

Overall, this study has shown that SCCT is not applicable to the Japanese context in its current form. Crisis response recommendations are affected by fundamental differences in account giving practices. A culturally adjusted, highly accommodative apology response outperformed the SCCT recommendations across

all crisis types. The higher the reputational threat, the larger the gain from choosing a matched response over the SCCT recommendation. In terms of responsibility considerations as well as reputational threat levels, the workplace violence scenario stood out as significantly divergent from its SCCT victim cluster. While SCCT places workplace violence in the victim cluster, with “weak attributions of crisis responsibility” and “mild reputational threat” (Coombs, 2007a, p. 166), this did not hold true for the Japanese context. The overall relationship between the responsibility measures utilized by SCCT and company image was significantly weaker than predicted. This weaker relationship casts some doubt on the usefulness of the causality focused responsibility term currently employed by SCCT for the Japanese context.

7.9 Limitations

This study is subject to several limitations. Firstly, the experimental design included only one case per crisis scenario, which reduces the external validity of the findings. While the cases were carefully constructed to mimic the crisis scenarios employed in the establishment of SCCT, a wider sample and a number of variations of each case, could have enhanced the relevance of this study. A second potential shortcoming is the limited number of participants and use of a convenience sample of university students. Older age groups, in particular, might assess the crisis scenarios and crisis responses differently. In addition, participants were assigned to one of the eleven experimental conditions by a computer algorithm, which resulted in an unbalanced design. A clear advantage of increasing the number of participants would be the possibility of randomly reducing certain cells to achieve a balanced design. However, the findings are in line with expectations based on existing literature and

give weight to the overall call for adjustments to SCCT assumptions for the Japanese context. As a first experimental exploration of the topic area, the current scale and respondent pool were judged to be sufficiently relevant to give further weight to the qualitative findings and confirm the need for further research into the shortcomings of SCCT for the Japanese context.

7.10 Conclusion

Overall, we can say that in the Japanese context, responsibility considerations, as defined by Western causal definitions of responsibility, are not sufficient to predict company image outcomes for a Japanese audience. Responsibility judgments and image outcomes did not follow the SCCT crisis clusters. Workplace violence was found to have more in common with accidents than tampering, a fact that can be tentatively attributed to the Japanese tendency for proxy responsibility judgments. In addition, the culturally matched response consistently outperformed the SCCT recommended responses, proving that cultural differences in account giving are significant for SCCT. In conclusion, we can say that both differences in responsibility attribution and account giving practices seem to negatively influence the appropriateness of SCCT for the Japanese context.

Future research should build on these findings to develop a culturally adjusted version of SCCT for organizations addressing Japanese audiences. One consideration here should be that the magnitude of the reputational impact of unmatched responses is likely to be significantly higher in older populations who often have a more traditional view of the importance of communication etiquette. A further potential future extension of this research would be the inclusion of a larger number of crisis cases to increase the external validity of findings.

8 Spokespersons Ethnicity and Language Choice in a Japanese

Cross-Cultural Context

While the previous chapter focused on *what* to say in a crisis, this chapter examines *how* crisis messages are delivered to their target audience. RAT encourages us to consider how factors such as context, media, genre, and text impact an audience's evaluation of crisis response messages (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017). One frequently used genre type for addressing crisis situations in Japan, for example, is the press conference. Press conferences provide the press with a wealth of audio-visual materials that can accompany their reporting about an organization's crisis response.

In relatively homogeneous countries, it would seem a logical choice to choose a spokesperson from the host country. For one, such a choice would avoid the potential negative effects of using a spokesperson who could be perceived as significantly different from the target audience. In addition, such a choice could increase the likelihood of a culturally appropriate delivery of the crisis communication efforts. However, matching the spokesperson to their target audience might not always be possible. In Japanese crisis management, for example, a company's CEO and upper management are expected to present the company's crisis response (Nakajima, 2007). Chapter 6 introduced the case of McDonald's, which suffered considerable reputational damage after a tainted chicken meat scandal, when its Canadian CEO, Sarah Casanova, failed to deliver a satisfactory apology to its Japanese costumers ("2014 nen wāsuto", 2015). While McDonald's CRS were misaligned with Japanese expectations, Casanova herself and her performance at a key apology press conference received considerable negative media attention. This raises the question of whether spokesperson ethnicity and language choice affect a Japanese audience's assessment of an organization's crisis communication efforts?

With a multitude of foreign organizations operating in Japan, many foreign CEOs will face the challenge of conducting a press conference to deliver a crisis response to a Japanese audience. This chapter aims to explore how spokesperson ethnicity, language choice, and message appropriateness can affect how a Japanese audience perceives a foreign company in crisis.

8.1 Hypotheses

As shown throughout the crisis communication literature, a crisis response matched to the expectations of the audience has better reputational outcomes than unmatched responses (e.g., Coombs, 2007a). For this study, a preventable type crisis was chosen so that the SCCT recommended response and the culturally matched response would coincide. In this study the matched response (rebuild strategy: apology) is considered matched both in terms of SCCT recommendations and cultural appropriateness. The unmatched response (excuse with bolstering) is considered the inferior choice both by SCCT and in regard to cultural fit. The first hypothesis tests the relationship between company image outcomes and crisis response match.

H1: Company image outcomes will be more positive when a matched crisis response strategy is used.

As the literature review section of this thesis has shown, there is significant evidence that spokesperson ethnicity has the potential to influence reputational outcomes of crisis communication efforts. Similarly, language perceptions have the potential to influence audience impressions. While there is the potential that foreign spokespersons might be less credible due to the lower degree of homophily, this

potential negative impact could be offset by the positive effect of making the effort of delivering the crisis response in Japanese. Encroaching on linguistic territory, on the other hand, could have a potentially negative effect. Furthermore, a Japanese audience might be more forgiving of a culturally unmatched response when delivered by a foreigner because he or she is perceived as incapable of understanding the Japanese way of doing things. With impact significance and directionality unclear, no concrete hypothesis could be formed. This led the author to ask the more general research question RQ1 and establish the null hypothesis H2₀.

RQ1: Do spokesperson ethnicity and language choice have a moderating effect on company image?

H2₀: There are no reputational outcome differences between or interaction effects of spokesperson ethnicity and language choice.

The previously discussed research on homophily and source effects suggests that ideological similarity can result in higher credibility assessments, which in turn should improve company image. In general, the practice of othering to define the concept of self and the strong belief in Japanese uniqueness dominant in the literature on Japanese identity suggest that respondents should perceive foreign spokespersons as less similar and consequently less credible. Therefore, the following hypotheses were tested to confirm the relationship discussed above.

H3: Respondents will perceive spokespersons of the same ethnicity as more homophilous in terms of ideological similarity.

H4: Ideological similarity positively influences credibility.

H5: Credibility positively influences company image.

H6: Credibility mediates the influence of ethnicity on company image.

8.2 Design and Stimulus Materials

This study employed a 2 (spokesperson ethnicity) \times 2 (language choice) \times 2 (crisis response match) between-subjects factorial experimental design to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Subjects were presented with the fictitious case of a foreign hotel chain, which was experiencing an employee misconduct crisis. Including all three variables (ethnicity, language, and message fit) allows for a test of the interaction between these variables. For example, anecdotal evidence from interpersonal communication leads the author to believe that a Japanese audience might be somewhat more forgiving of a mismatched crisis response when that response is delivered by a foreigner in English.

Efforts were made to hide the true comparative purpose of the research from participants to avoid self-reported measures being influenced by social desirability concerns (in this case the desire to not be perceived as racist for evaluating foreigners negatively) rather than personal attitudes. Because this study employs a between-subjects design, each subject was only exposed to one condition. This approach was necessary as it would have been impossible for subjects to evaluate the second condition without making involuntary comparisons to the first. Awareness of testing for unintentional bias can skew results as participants actively try to avoid being perceived as influenced by race/ethnicity. While the difference between *honne*, one's inner feelings about a given topic, and *tatemae*, one's outward responses to that topic, can be considerable in Japan (Doi, 1986), a 1995 study in the *Journal of Social Psychology* found no significant differences in "self-deception" and "impression

management” for anonymous survey style research between Japanese and Canadian college students (Heine & Lehman, 1995, p. 778).

The crisis scenario was designed as occurring at a fictitious company to eliminate potential confounding effects due to pre-crisis reputation or prior relationship, which can affect organizational reputation outcomes (Coombs & Holladay, 2010). To ensure that participants would pay equal attention to both message content and source factors (speaker ethnicity and language choice), a crisis scenario engendering a moderate level of involvement was created (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). Messages on topics that are of greater importance to the listener tend to increase involvement and attention paid to source factors (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). Most subjects were highly likely to have stayed at a hotel and to have used their amenities (high personal relevance resulting in low attention to source factors). However, the hotels in question were unfamiliar and not local (low personal relevance resulting in close attention to source factors).

The participants were provided with a fictitious newspaper article detailing an employee misconduct crisis at ABC hotel chain. After reading the article, subjects were asked to listen to an audio recording of a fictitious press conference conducted by the company’s CEO while viewing a photo of the press conference provided as visual stimulus. The matched response consisted of a rebuild strategy, a full apology, while the unmatched response combined an excuse with bolstering. In this study, the matched response (rebuild strategy: apology) is considered matched both in terms of SCCT recommendations and cultural appropriateness. The unmatched response (excuse with bolstering) is considered the inferior choice both by SCCT and in regard to cultural fit.

8.2.1 Audio Materials

The development of the audio materials for this study proved challenging. Isolating the language factor in audience perception studies poses a significant methodological hurdle. The most prominent approach is the use of a matched guise test (Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, & Fillenbaum, 1960). These tests present subjects with recordings of spoken content in different languages or language varieties and asks the subjects to rate the speakers in terms of a number of physical and personality traits; However, unbeknownst to the subjects, the content was not delivered by different speakers but was, in fact, recorded by the same individual delivering different “guises” (Agheyisi & Fishman, 1970; Lambert et al., 1960). Employing the matched guise technique, a Caucasian double native speaker of English and Japanese recorded the crisis response statements (matched and unmatched) in both languages. However, a preliminary test (N=27) revealed that subjects did not believe that the Japanese language message had been spoken by a Caucasian individual. While the recordings were accepted as believable for the Japanese speaker speaking English and Japanese conditions (JE and JJ), as well as the Foreigner speaking English condition (FE), the non-Japanese individual speaking Japanese condition (FJ) was discarded as unbelievable and unrealistic. The author was regrettably unable to locate a double native speaker who was able to deliver a credibly accented (near-native) version of the FJ condition. This led to the decision to employ two voice actors instead of one. Consequently, the final audio materials were recorded by one bilingual native-Japanese individual of Japanese nationality and one near-native bilingual Caucasian individual of U.S. nationality. The use of authentic voice actors from the ethnic and linguistic backgrounds in question is not without precedent. In her research on spokesperson ethnicity effects on audience evaluations of crisis response messages,

Arpan (2002) utilized voice actors of Mexican and Japanese ethnicity and nationality, as well as a Caucasian voice actor of U.S. nationality to represent their respective varieties of accented English speech. One limitation of this approach is the potential impact of differences in factors such as voice tone and delivery speed arising from using different speakers.

Message content for both the matched and unmatched responses adhered to the basic standards of good crisis communication, in that they were timely and communicated regard for the victims. Both responses were created in Japanese and phrased based on recommendations and warnings found in mainstream Japanese best practice handbooks for apologies and crisis communication (e.g., Nakajima, 2007; Ohbuchi, 2015). The Japanese originals were translated to English and then back-translated by two separate bilingual translators to ensure high fidelity. A total number of eight separate audio clips were recorded. An interpreter delivering the Japanese translation of the English statements accompanied the FE and JE versions.

8.2.2 Visual Materials

The visual stimulus materials were designed to reinforce the independent variables and depicted both the spokesperson's ethnicity as well as the matched or unmatched nature of the crisis response. Two base images were manipulated with Adobe Photoshop to portray the independent variable of ethnicity. Two individuals bowing deeply, behind tables set up in the typical style of a Japanese apology press conference, were depicted in the picture representing the matched message condition. One speaker standing behind a raised podium, head raised confidently, and photographed mid-speech, was depicted in the picture representing the unmatched condition. Only the head of the spokesperson changed across images. To improve the

generalizability of the findings, ten different models (5 Japanese and 5 Caucasians) were used to portray the role of the company spokesperson. All models were, however, similar with regard to age and general appearance to minimize the impact of confounding variables (see Appendix D1).

8.3 Participants

The study analyzed responses by a convenience sample of 266 Japanese university students. Participants partook in the study voluntarily. Incentives consisted of the chance to win one of three Amazon gift cards and bonus points awarded by participating teachers. A computer algorithm randomly assigned the participants to one of the eight experimental conditions. They first answered questions covering socio-demographic and optional contact information. On page two of the questionnaire, participants first read the text and then, listened to the audio material while viewing the visual stimulus material. This was followed by manipulation checks and measures for the dependent variables. Participants were between 18-50 years old with an average age of 20.86 years ($SD = 4.64$). 59.1% were female, and 40.9% were male. An a priori power analysis, using the G*Power software, revealed a required sample size of 128 participants for a medium effect size $f = .25$ (Cohen, 1988, p. 286), type I error rate = .05, and power = .80. This sample size was achieved.

8.4 Procedures

Each respondent read one crisis scenario and then completed the corresponding measures. See Appendix D2 for the basic scenario and response manipulations in English and Appendix D3 for the scenario, response manipulations, and questionnaire in Japanese. The survey was administered via a prominent survey website. Experimental conditions were randomly assigned to respondents based on an

A/B split testing algorithm provided by the survey website. Responses were collected over a five-week period.

8.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations address the proper behavior of the researcher towards respondents, as well as any others who may be affected by or may have participated in the creation of this research. Researchers have an ethical obligation to ensure that people involved in their research (1) are protected from harm (2) have given full consent for their participation, and (3) are assured that their privacy will be protected. All efforts were made to comply with these guidelines and ensure a high ethical research standard for this study.

8.6 Data Quality

The survey website employed archival data screening methods recommended by DeSimone, Harms, and DeSimone (2015), such as quarantining suspicious responses according to completion speed outliers and patterned responses, to ensure high data quality. All quarantined responses were reviewed, and 64 of a total number of 330 collected responses, were dismissed due to bad data quality (i.e., straight-line responses and extremely short response times).

8.7 Measures

8.7.1 Spokesperson Credibility

The spokesperson credibility was measured with a 12-item, 7-point bipolar scale, based on McCroskey's measures for credibility and ethos (McCroskey & Young, 1981). Examples of bipolar items include "trustworthy/untrustworthy,"

“reliable/unreliable,” and “virtuous/sinful.” The scale exhibited high internal consistency of .911 (Cronbach’s Alpha). Scale values ranged from -3 (“<<<”) to 3 (“>>>”).

8.7.2 Company Image

Company image, or the reputational threat level, was measured with a 9-item, 5-point Likert-type scale displayed in a radio button matrix labeled from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Examples of items include: “The company is not concerned with the wellbeing of its publics,” “The company is well managed,” and “The company is basically honest.” The scale showed high internal consistency of .878 (Cronbach’s Alpha).

8.7.3 Similarity

The degree to which participant’s felt similar to the spokesperson was assessed with five bipolar, 7-point scale items based on McCroskey’s homophily scale (McCroskey, Richmond, & Daly, 1975). Three items addressed the perceived degree of ideological similarity between respondents and the spokesperson (e.g., “values like mine/values unlike mine”), while two items addressed physical similarity (e.g., “looks like me/looks different from me”). Reliability analysis of the ideological similarity scale revealed a Cronbach’s Alpha of .815. The two physical similarity items showed an internal consistency of .831 (Cronbach’s Alpha). Scale values ranged from -3 (“<<<”) to 3 (“>>>”).

8.8 Results

8.8.1 Reliability and Manipulation Checks

After confirming that internal consistency was acceptable (Cronbach's alpha reported in the Measures section), the items were combined to form a single compound measure for each scale. Participants were asked to indicate whether the CEO was Japanese or a foreigner and whether he was speaking English or Japanese, to ensure that they had interpreted the manipulation of the independent variables correctly. The term foreigner, instead of Caucasian, was chosen as a contrast term to avoid the question being interpreted as asking exclusively about race. One key consideration here, was the fear that a Japanese CEO speaking English could be identified as Japanese, while being perceived as a foreigner, if the second choice was labeled Caucasian. This would fail to identify instances where a respondent might think of the speaker as a Japanese American and, therefore, considerably different from themselves. In fact, several respondents ($N=19$) misidentified the Japanese CEO speaking English as a foreigner. The manipulation checks were considered a success and screened out a number of other responses. One response was deleted for misidentifying a foreign speaker as Japanese. In addition, eight individuals misidentified the translator's voice as the CEO in the Japanese CEO speaking English condition. Moreover, one person identified the Foreign CEO as speaking English when he was indeed speaking in Japanese. This rate of misidentification was not unexpected but had to be screened out to avoid confounding effects. Removing a total of 36 cases due to misidentifications of either CEO ethnicity or language choice reduced the total number of respondents to $N = 230$.

To assess whether the crisis response match was successfully manipulated, the survey asked respondents to rate how much responsibility the CEO had taken for the

crisis. The bipolar, 5-point item ranged from “denied all responsibility” to “took full responsibility”. A Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the responsibility acceptance scores of the matched and the unmatched response. However, a visual inspection revealed that the distributions of the responsibility acceptance scores for the matched and unmatched responses were dissimilar. Responsibility acceptance scores for matched responses (mean rank = 143.90) were statistically significantly higher than for the unmatched responses (mean rank = 74.41), $U = 2,530$, $z = -8.148$, $p < .001$. The matched responses (rebuild strategy) were correctly identified by respondents as indicating a higher degree of responsibility acceptance, and therefore accommodation. The unmatched, bolstering and justification strategy was evaluated as indicating less responsibility acceptance. The manipulation of the crisis response match was successful.

Finally, two one-way ANOVAs were run to test the assumption that the five Caucasian and five Japanese faces in the visual stimulus materials did not elicit significantly different levels of credibility. Responsibility scores were normally distributed (Shapiro-Wilk’s test: $p > .05$) for all groups. There was one outlier in the Caucasian dataset that was judged to be minor enough to be disregarded. Levene’s test for equality of variances confirmed that there was homogeneity of variances for both the Caucasian and Japanese datasets, with $p = .819$ and $p = .627$, respectively. Both ANOVAs found no statistically significant differences in terms of credibility between the five Caucasian models $F(4,114) = 1.529$, $p = .198$, and five Japanese models $F(4,106) = .713$, $p = .585$.

8.8.2 Response Success and The Effect of Ethnicity and Language

To assess both H1 and H2₀, a three-way ANOVA was conducted. Before conducting the analysis, assumptions for the three-way ANOVA were tested. One outlier was found in the data set through an assessment of the boxplots. An investigation revealed that the outlier was not the result of data quality issues but simply represented one individual with particularly strong feelings about the company. The outlier was located at the upper end of the company image score distribution. To decide how to deal with this outlier, a second three-way ANOVA was conducted, which excluded the outlier via the filter function in SPSS. As seen in Tables 8-1 and 8-2, the differences were not substantial enough to change the interpretation of the results or the conclusion of this analysis. Therefore, the decision was made to proceed without modifying or eliminating the outlier. Company image scores were normally distributed (Shapiro Wilk's test: $p > .05$) for all groups. Levene's test, $p = .737$, confirmed homogeneity of variances for the data. The subsequent analysis revealed a statistically significant three-way interaction of CEO ethnicity, language choice, and response match, $F(1, 222) = 7.562, p = .006$. See Table 8-1 and Figures 8-1 and 8-2.

*Figure 8-1 Three-way interaction between CEO Ethnicity * Response Match * CEO Language*

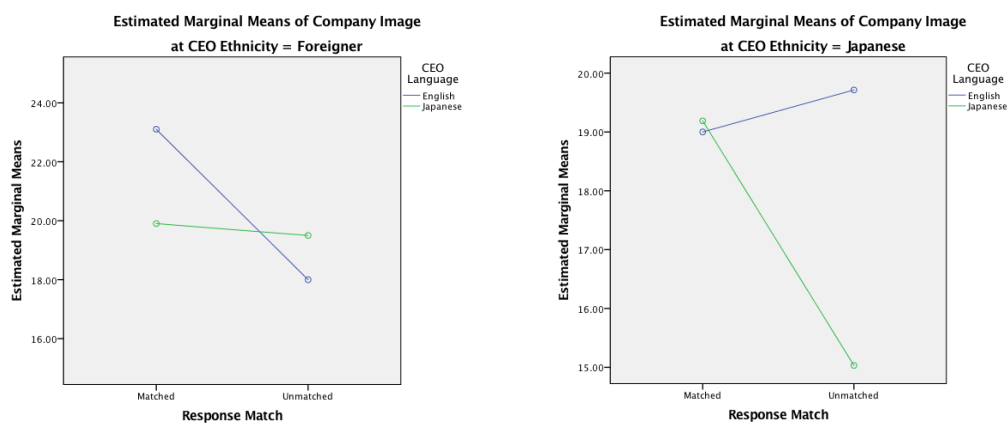


Table 8-1 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: With Outlier (N=230)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects (with outlier)

Dependent Variable: Company Image

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1212.076 ^a	7	173.154	4.410	.000
Intercept	76341.756	1	76341.756	1944.274	.000
CEOethnicity	185.745	1	185.745	4.731	.031
CEOlanguag	124.270	1	124.270	3.165	.077
ResponseMatch	259.561	1	259.561	6.611	.011
CEOethnicity * CEOlanguag	25.369	1	25.369	.646	.422
CEOethnicity * ResponseMatch	13.755	1	13.755	.350	.555
CEOlanguag * ResponseMatch	.100	1	.100	.003	.960
CEOethnicity * CEOlanguag *	296.913	1	296.913	7.562	.006
ResponseMatch					
Error	8716.811	222	39.265		
Total	95872.000	230			
Corrected Total	9928.887	229			

a. R Squared = .122 (Adjusted R Squared = .094)

Table 8-2 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: Without Outliers (N=229)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects (without outlier)

Dependent Variable: Company Image

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1201.283 ^a	7	171.612	4.456	.000
Intercept	75611.257	1	75611.257	1963.244	.000
CEOethnicity	162.829	1	162.829	4.228	.041
CEOlanguag	143.351	1	143.351	3.722	.055
ResponseMatch	232.203	1	232.203	6.029	.015
CEOethnicity * CEOlanguag	17.500	1	17.500	.454	.501
CEOethnicity * ResponseMatch	8.166	1	8.166	.212	.646
CEOlanguag * ResponseMatch	.280	1	.280	.007	.932
CEOethnicity * CEOlanguag *	325.654	1	325.654	8.456	.004
ResponseMatch					
Error	8511.468	221	38.513		
Total	94716.000	229			
Corrected Total	9712.751	228			

a. R Squared = .124 (Adjusted R Squared = .096)

After having discovered a statistically significant three-way interaction, simple two-way interactions at both levels of CEO ethnicity were investigated. A two-way ANOVA was run with the user-specified error term of the three-way ANOVA for each level of CEO ethnicity, which revealed a statistically significant simple two-way interaction between language choice and response match for the foreign CEO

condition, $F(1, 222) = 3.930, p = .049$, but not for Japanese CEO condition, $F(1, 222) = 3.655, p = .057$.

Due to the near significant simple interaction effect ($p = .057$) for the Japanese CEO condition, the author decided to run *simple simple main effects* to follow up both the significant two-way interaction for the foreign CEO condition and the insignificant interaction for the Japanese CEO condition. The first test revealed a statistically significant *simple simple main effect* of response match for foreign CEOs speaking in English, $F(1, 222) = 8.832, p = .003$, but not for foreign CEOs speaking Japanese, $F(1, 222) = .061, p = .805$. A simple simple pairwise comparison was run for foreign CEO speaking English condition with a Bonferroni adjustment applied. The mean image outcome values for the matched and unmatched responses were 23.100 ($SD = 5.266$) and 18.000 ($SD = 6.851$), respectively, with a statistically significant mean difference of 5.100, 95% CI [1.718, 8.482], $p = .003$. See Table 8-3.

The second test revealed a statistically significant *simple simple main effect* of response match for Japanese CEOs speaking in Japanese, $F(1, 222) = 7.555, p = .006$, but not for the Japanese CEOs speaking English, $F(1, 222) = .121, p = .728$. A simple simple pairwise comparison was run for Japanese CEO speaking in Japanese condition with a Bonferroni adjustment applied. The mean image outcome value from the matched condition was 15.031 ($SD = 1.108$) and 19.714 ($SD = 1.675$) in the unmatched condition, a statistically significant mean difference of 4.158, 95% CI [1.177, 7.139], $p = .006$. See Table 8-3.

Table 8-3 Pairwise Comparison Table with Bonferroni Adjustment (CEO Ethnicity* Response Match* CEO Language)

Pairwise Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Company Image

CEO Ethnicity	CEO Language	(I) Response Match	(J) Response Match	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Foreigner	English	Matched	Unmatched	5.100*	1.716	.003	1.718	8.482
		Unmatched	Matched	-5.100*	1.716	.003	-8.482	-1.718
	Japanese	Matched	Unmatched	.403	1.634	.805	-2.816	3.623
		Unmatched	Matched	-.403	1.634	.805	-3.623	2.816
Japanese	English	Matched	Unmatched	-.714	2.051	.728	-4.756	3.328
		Unmatched	Matched	.714	2.051	.728	-3.328	4.756
	Japanese	Matched	Unmatched	4.158*	1.513	.006	1.177	7.139
		Unmatched	Matched	-4.158*	1.513	.006	-7.139	-1.177

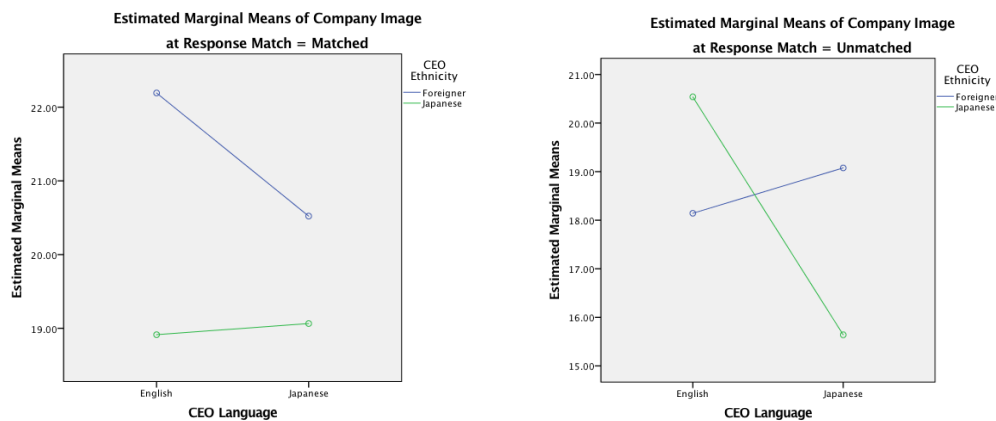
Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the $p < .05$ level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Figure 8-2 Three-way interaction between CEO Language * CEO Ethnicity *

Response Match



Simple two-way interactions at both levels of response match were also investigated. A two-way ANOVA (using the error term from the three-way ANOVA) was performed at both levels of response match, which revealed a statistically significant simple two-way interaction between language choice and CEO ethnicity

for unmatched responses, $F(1, 222) = 5.168, p = .024$, but not for matched responses, $F(1, 222) = 2.433, p = .120$ (see Figure 8-2).

Two tests for *simple simple main effects* were performed to follow up to the significant two-way interaction for the unmatched condition. The first test revealed a statistically significant *simple simple main effect* of language choice for unmatched responses delivered by Japanese CEOs, $F(1, 222) = 5.440, p < .021$, but not for unmatched responses delivered by foreign CEOs, $F(1, 222) = .210, p = .647$. A simple simple pairwise comparison was performed for unmatched responses by Japanese CEOs with Bonferroni adjustment. The mean image outcome scores in the Japanese and English language conditions were 15.031 ($SD = 6.209$) and 19.714 ($SD = 6.911$), respectively, a statistically significant difference of 4.683, 95% CI [.726, 8.640], $p = .021$. See Tables 8-4 and 8-5.

Table 8-4 Pairwise Comparison Table with Bonferroni Adjustment (Response Match CEO Ethnicity* CEO Language)*

Pairwise Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Company Image

Response Match	CEO Ethnicity	(I) CEO Language	(J) CEO Language	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Matched	Foreigner	English	Japanese	3.197*	1.499	.034	.242	6.152
		Japanese	English	-3.197*	1.499	.034	-6.152	-.242
	Japanese	English	Japanese	-.189	1.570	.904	-3.282	2.904
		Japanese	English	.189	1.570	.904	-2.904	3.282
Unmatched	Foreigner	English	Japanese	-1.500	1.835	.414	-5.115	2.115
		Japanese	English	1.500	1.835	.414	-2.115	5.115
	Japanese	English	Japanese	4.683*	2.008	.021	.726	8.640
		Japanese	English	-4.683*	2.008	.021	-8.640	-.726

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the $p < .05$ level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Table 8-5 Mean Company Image Table for Response Match * CEO Ethnicity * CEO Language

Response Match * CEO Ethnicity * CEO Language

Dependent Variable: Company Image

Response Match	CEO Ethnicity	CEO Language	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Matched	Foreigner	English	23.100	.991	21.147	25.053
		Japanese	19.903	1.125	17.685	22.121
	Japanese	English	19.000	1.184	16.666	21.334
		Japanese	19.189	1.030	17.159	21.219
Unmatched	Foreigner	English	18.000	1.401	15.239	20.761
		Japanese	19.500	1.184	17.166	21.834
	Japanese	English	19.714	1.675	16.414	23.015
		Japanese	15.031	1.108	12.848	17.214

The second test for *simple simple main effects* following up on the significant two-way interaction for the unmatched condition revealed a significant *simple simple main effect* of CEO ethnicity for unmatched responses delivered in Japanese, $F(1, 222) = 7.595, p = .006$, but not for unmatched responses delivered in English, $F(1, 222) = .616, p = .433$. A simple simple pairwise comparison was conducted for unmatched responses in English with Bonferroni adjustment. The mean image outcome scores in the foreign CEO condition was 19.500 ($SD = 6.642$) and 15.031 ($SD = 6.209$) in the Japanese CEO condition, a statistically significant difference of 4.469, 95% CI [1.273, 7.664], $p = .006$. See Table 8-5 and Table 8-6.

A test for simple main effects was performed to follow up on the insignificant results of the simple two-way interaction test for the matched condition. This test revealed a statistically significant simple main effect of CEO ethnicity for matched responses, $F(1, 222) = 4.919, p = .028$. The unweighted mean image outcome score in the Japanese CEO condition was 19.095 ($SE = .785$) and 21.502 ($SE = .750$) in the foreign CEO condition, a statistically significant difference of 2.407, 95% CI [.337, 4.477], $p = .023$.

Table 8-6 Pairwise Comparison Table with Bonferroni Adjustment (Response Match* CEO Language * CEO Ethnicity)

Pairwise Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Company Image

Response Match	CEO Language	(I) CEO Ethnicity	(J) CEO Ethnicity	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Matched	English	Foreigner	Japanese	4.100*	1.544	.008	1.057	7.143
		Japanese	Foreigner	-4.100*	1.544	.008	-7.143	-1.057
	Japanese	Foreigner	Japanese	.714	1.526	.640	-2.293	3.721
		Japanese	Foreigner	-.714	1.526	.640	-3.721	2.293
Unmatched	English	Foreigner	Japanese	-1.714	2.184	.433	-6.017	2.589
		Japanese	Foreigner	1.714	2.184	.433	-2.589	6.017
	Japanese	Foreigner	Japanese	4.469*	1.622	.006	1.273	7.664
		Japanese	Foreigner	-4.469*	1.622	.006	-7.664	-1.273

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the $p < .05$ level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

However, Laerd Statistics (2017) explains that the lack of a statistically significant interaction should not be mistaken for proof that there is no interaction effect at all (Faraway, 2015; Fox, 2008; Searle, 2006), in other words, failure to disprove the null-hypothesis does not automatically equal its acceptance (Searle, 2006). Taking into consideration that the “power of statistical tests for higher order terms [...] is expected to be low” (Aiken & West, 1991, p. 139), Laerd Statistics (2017) suggests that investigating simple main effects may be acceptable even when the threshold for statistical relevance is not met (Faraway, 2015). Having found sufficient evidence to justify the approach, the author decided to run a *simple simple main effects* test for the matched condition, revealing a statistically significant difference of 3.197, 95% CI [.242,6.152], $p = .034$, points between the matched foreign CEO response in English ($M = 23.100$) and the matched foreign CEO response in Japanese ($M = 19.903$).

Finally, let us examine the above findings in terms of H1, RQ1, and H2₀. Firstly, we can reject H1. Company image outcomes are not always more positive

when a matched crisis response is used. Matched responses significantly outperformed unmatched responses for foreign CEOs speaking English and Japanese CEOs speaking Japanese. However, there was no statistically significant difference between matched and unmatched responses when language expectations were confounded (i.e., foreigners speaking Japanese and Japanese speaking English). There are clear reputational outcome differences between or interaction effects of spokesperson ethnicity and language choice, which allows us to dismiss H₂₀ and answer RQ1 in the affirmative. CEO ethnicity and language choice can have a significant impact on crisis communication efforts.

8.8.3 Ideological Similarity

To address H3, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to check for differences in the ideological similarity ratings for the Japanese and foreign CEO conditions. A visual examination of the boxplot found two outliers in the data. An investigation revealed that the outliers were not the result of data quality issues but simply represented two individuals with particularly strong feelings about their ideological similarity to the CEO. The outliers were found at the top of the similarity score distribution. Two t-tests were conducted, with one excluding the outliers via the filter function in SPSS to decide how to proceed. The differences between the two t-tests were not substantial enough to alter the interpretation of the results or the conclusion of this analysis. Therefore, the analysis was performed without excluding the outliers. Ideological similarity scores for ethnicity were normally distributed (Shapiro-Wilk's test: $p > .05$), and homogeneity of variances was confirmed (Levene's test: $p = .177$). Contrary to expectations, the foreign CEO condition was rated higher in perceived ideological similarity ($M = .09, SD = 3.55$) than the

Japanese CEO condition ($M = -1.06, SD = 3.80$), a statistically significant difference, $M = 1.15, 95\% CI[2.78, 0.81], t(228) = 2.108, p = .018$ (see Table 8-7). The foreign CEO was perceived as considerably less dissimilar than the Japanese CEO, which leads us to reject H3.

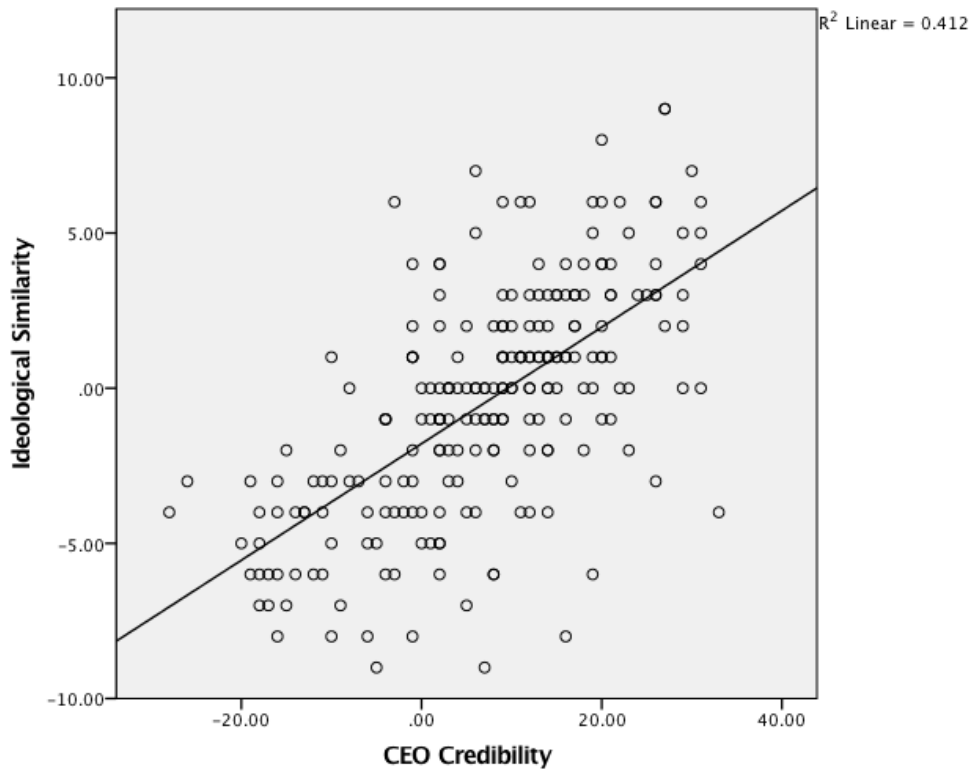
Table 8-7 Independent Samples T-Test: Ideological Similarity

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Ideological Similarity	Equal variances assumed	1.834	.177	2.384	228	.018	1.15550	.48472	.20039	2.11061
	Equal variances not assumed			2.378	223.696	.018	1.15550	.48589	.19799	2.11301

8.8.4 Ideological Similarity and CEO Credibility

A Spearman's rank-order correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between ideological similarity and credibility because neither of the variables was normally distributed. A visual assessment of the scatterplot indicated that the relationship was monotonic. There was a statistically significant, strong positive correlation between credibility and similarity, $r_s(230) = .654, p < .001$. This relationship leads us to accept H4. Ideological similarity has a significant positive influence on credibility. For a visual representation of the relationship, see Figure 8-3.

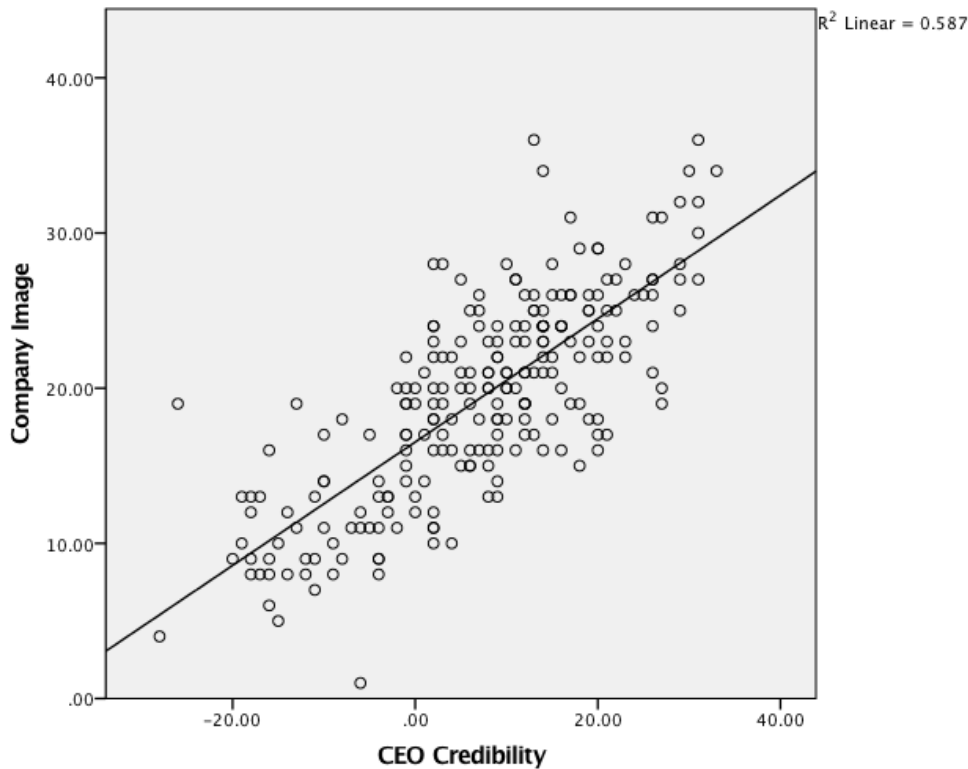
Figure 8-3 CEO Credibility * Ideological Similarity



8.8.5 CEO Credibility and Company Image

A Spearman's rank-order correlation examined the relationship between credibility and company image. A visual inspection of the scatterplot found the relationship to be monotonic. There was a statistically significant, strong positive correlation between company image and credibility, $r_s(230) = .752, p < .001$. This relationship leads us to accept H5. Credibility has a significant positive influence on company image. For a visual representation of the relationship, see Figure 8-4.

Figure 8-4 CEO Credibility * Company Image



8.8.6 Mediation Effect of Credibility on Company Image

To test H6, that ethnicity affects company image outcomes through spokesperson credibility, a mediation analysis was performed with the SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017). The dataset was examined for outliers on three indicators. Mahalanobis distances were calculated and examined for values higher than 13.82 ($df = 2, p = .001$) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Cook's indicator values higher than $4/(N-k-1) = .0176$ (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998), and Leverage values higher than $(2k+2)/N = .0260$ were also flagged (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The presence of two or more unacceptable indicators was chosen as the exclusion criteria. This conservative approach was due to the relatively high internal consistency present in the included scales. However, extreme cases were removed to filter cases with potentially extreme responding bias. Consequently, one response was

dismissed due to having values outside the acceptable range on two of the outlier indicators. A visual examination of the histogram and P-P plot of the standardized residuals confirmed that the data was normally distributed. An assessment of the standardized residuals plot confirmed that the assumption of homoscedasticity was met.

For Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of CEO ethnicity on company image, while disregarding the mediator, was significant $F(1,227) = 8.922, p = .003, R^2 = .038, b = -2.563, t(227) = -2.987, p = .003$. Step 2 of the mediation process confirmed that the regression of CEO ethnicity on the mediator, credibility, was significant as well, $b = -5.785, t(227) = -3.580, p = <.001$. Step 3 confirmed that the credibility, controlling for CEO ethnicity, was significant, $F(2,226) = 172.819, p < .001, R^2 = .605, b = .408, t(226) = 18.000, p < .001$. Finally, Step 4 of the analysis showed that, while controlling for credibility, CEO ethnicity was not a significant predictor of company image, $b = -.205, t(226) = -.362, p = .718$. A Sobel test was performed and confirmed full mediation for the model ($z = -3.516, p < .001$). The mediator could account for 92% of the total effect ($P_M = .92$)¹⁶. Credibility fully mediated the relationship between CEO ethnicity and company image outcomes.

8.9 Discussion

H1 addressed whether matched crisis responses consistently outperformed unmatched responses. While the author expected to accept H1 readily, the combined

¹⁶ Percent mediation calculated as $P_M = a*b / (a*b + c') = 1 - (c'/c)$ (Preacher & Kelley, 2011).

impact of CEO ethnicity and language choice managed to moderate and even reverse this expectation for some combinations of the independent variables. This forced us to reject H1 and allowed us to answer RQ1 with a resounding yes. CEO ethnicity and language choice can have a significant impact on crisis communication efforts. A three-way ANOVA revealed a significant three-way interaction effect between ethnicity, language choice, and response match and allowed us to reject H2₀. Further investigation into the interaction effects and simple main effects revealed a number of interesting findings.

For the matched response, CEO ethnicity had a significant simple main effect, with foreign CEOs achieving significantly better image outcomes independent of Language choice. Despite the absence of a statistically significant interaction effect, a deeper investigation of *simple simple main effects* revealed a significantly better outcome when a foreign CEO presented a matched response in English (M= 23.100) rather than Japanese (M = 19.903). Matched responses presented by a Japanese CEO, either in Japanese (M = 19.000) or in English (M= 19.189), received nearly identical mean scores (see Table 8-5). The matched responses delivered in Japanese by the foreign CEO and the Japanese CEO were also not significantly different (see Table 8-6). This lets us posit that for matched responses, there is no positive effect of using one's non-native language (see Japanese CEO), and there might even be a negative effect as in the case of the foreign CEO. One possible explanation for this is that rather than having a negative or positive effect, speaking imperfect Japanese makes the content harder to understand. In other words, speaking imperfect Japanese reduces the perceived quality of the matched response, but might also hides how inappropriate the unmatched response is. In fact, this pattern persisted for the unmatched responses.

Overall, using a non-native language seems to have a positive moderating effect on company image for the unmatched response. For the foreign CEO, the Japanese version of the unmatched response performed 1.50 ($SE = 1.84$) points better than the English version. However, this effect was not statistically significant. For Japanese CEOs, the positive effect was statistically significant, with the English version receiving a mean score 4.68 ($SE = 2.01$) points higher than the Japanese version (see Table 8-4). A possible interpretation for this relationship in the unmatched condition is that while the unmatched response decreases image, having a CEO with considerable language talent has a positive impact on image that partially offset (foreign CEO) or even completely reverses (Japanese) the negative effects of an unmatched response. The differences in the strength of the positive effect of language could be due to different levels of fluency. The voice actor for the Japanese CEO delivered a perfectly fluent English response, while the voice actor for the Foreign CEO delivered a near-native, but accented response. The reason for this choice in presentation was discussed at length in the section on stimulus materials. A second potential interpretation for the superior performance of the Japanese version of the unmatched response when presented by a foreign CEO, may be the fact that accented Japanese makes the content harder to understand, which, in turn, hides how inappropriate the unmatched response is. Future research should consider video stimulus materials that would make a foreigner with native level Japanese a believable condition.

To summarize, for foreign CEOs, the matched response outperformed the unmatched response regardless of the language used, and reputational gains from presenting an unmatched response in Japanese were insignificant. In other words, as long as they can deliver culturally adjusted crisis messages there is no need for

foreign CEOs to speak Japanese. In fact, the matched response delivered by a foreign CEO in English was the combination with the highest marginal mean score. This implies that there is no reason for foreign companies to fear how their male, Caucasian, native English-speaking CEO will fair in a crisis situation in Japan, as long as the appropriate use of consultants ensures a culturally matched message and presentation.

H3 addressed how spokesperson ethnicity affected feelings of ideological similarity. Surprisingly, results showed that, respondents felt that foreign CEOs were considerably less dissimilar than Japanese CEOs in terms of ideological similarity. This finding contravenes several of the assumptions of *nihonjinron* and might be an indicator of the changing attitudes of Japanese young adults towards foreigners. It would be particularly interesting here to assess whether an older pool of respondents would show significantly different results. On the other hand, these findings could also reflect that Japanese young adults perceived themselves as ideologically significantly different from older Japanese men.

Correlation analysis allowed us to accept H4 and H5, finding a significant positive correlation between ideological similarity and credibility, and credibility and company image. These results were in line with the findings from the literature review of relevant source effects and homophily research. Finally, a mediation analysis was employed to investigate H4. Results revealed that CEO ethnicity did indeed affect company image through credibility. In other words, credibility fully mediated the effect of ethnicity on company image.

8.10 Limitations

This study was subject to several limitations. Survey style research reflects how people report their feelings about given stimulus materials, not how people really feel about these materials. However, in the field of crisis communication, surveys are the preferred method of data collection. As long as survey results reflect real-world observations in the form of case studies, we can be reasonably confident in the validity of findings. However, researchers have to keep in mind the potential impact of reporting biases, particularly when exploring areas such as ethnicity and language perceptions. A social desirability bias, for example, might skew participants' reported evaluations of other ethnicities and languages. To reduce the potential impact of such reporting biases, a between-subjects experimental design was employed, and participants were not informed about the ethnicity and language focus of the study. One indication that there was minimal self-reporting bias was the fact that the positive evaluation of the credibility of the foreign CEO was reflected in company image outcomes. Also, the potential level of negative sentiment towards non-Japanese spokespersons might be stronger in an older sample, as University students usually experience a higher degree of international exposure than older generations.

Furthermore, this study was limited in scope. Only one type of foreigner was considered in this analysis. As indicated by the literature review, other ethnicities and languages might fare considerably different in this type of study. Country of origin concerns for the company in question might also be a relevant consideration that was not addressed in this study. For this study the term "international hotel chain" was chosen to avoid confounding effects of associating the company with any particular country of origin.

Finally, it is essential to mention the potential impact of gender on these findings. Female CEOs could potentially be judged much more harshly than male CEOs. While this paper posited that the harsh judgment of Sarah Casanova's McDonald's crisis response was due in part to her status as a foreigner, the above findings give weight to the suspicion that gender issues rather than ethnicity might have further aggravated the situation.

8.11 Conclusion

This chapter reconfirmed that crisis response messages and their content are of vital importance. A crisis response strategy that matches the expectations of the target audience can protect a company's image and reduce the negative reputational outcomes of a crisis. However, the context, media, genre, and text impact an audience's evaluation of crisis response messages. This chapter examined the impact of two such factors, spokesperson ethnicity and language choice. With a multitude of foreign organizations operating in Japan, foreign CEOs are bound to face the challenge of delivering crisis responses to Japanese audiences. Overall, the results of this study should reassure companies in Japan with Western CEOs. There seems to be no real need for Caucasian CEOs to speak Japanese, and as long as a culturally appropriate response is delivered, having a foreign CEO address a crisis can even be an asset. In addition, the Japanese respondents seemed considerably more forgiving of unmatched responses by foreigners than by Japanese. However, while the use of a student sample might give hope for the future, it does not adequately represent the current socio-demographic makeup of Japan. Therefore, future research should attempt to confirm these findings with more representative samples of the Japanese population.

9 Conclusion and Implications

Navigating a crisis is challenging for any organization, but the level of difficulty increases even further when the crisis involves differing cultural contexts. In recent years, a number of prominent crisis communication failures, both by Japanese organizations abroad and international organizations in Japan, have highlighted the need for crisis communication research that takes into consideration the Japanese context. When crisis strikes, international companies operating in Japan suddenly face a demanding audience with culture-specific communication practices, standards, and values. This thesis questioned the applicability of SCCT for the Japanese context and drew on RAT to consider the effect of spokesperson ethnicity and language choice on crisis communication efforts with Japanese audiences

This thesis achieved its two major goals. Firstly, the purpose of the qualitative portion of this thesis was to clearly illustrate that the previous findings on cultural differences in the psychological, socio-cultural, and organizational context between Japan and the West identified in the literature review have potential relevance to crisis communication theory. This was achieved by showing how cultural differences in responsibility attribution and account giving, spokesperson conventions, and media relations had a negative impact on the effectiveness of both Olympus's and McDonald's crisis communication efforts. Both cases illustrated the importance of the adherence to crisis communication conventions and standards in cross-cultural crisis communication situations, and the McDonald's case, in particular, gave weight to the question of the importance of spokesperson ethnicity and language choice.

The second goal was to quantitatively confirm the established hypotheses and answer the research questions raised by the literature review and the examination of the qualitative evidence. Chapter 7 took a closer look at the effect of cultural

variations in responsibility attribution and account giving on the effectiveness of SCCT recommended strategies in Japan. Findings indicated that in the Japanese context, responsibility considerations, as defined by Western causal definitions of responsibility, are not sufficient to predict company image outcomes. Responsibility judgments only partially followed the responsibility attributions suggested by the SCCT crisis clusters. In terms of reputational threat, some deviations from the SCCT crisis clusters were found, and the prevalence of proxy responsibility considerations, which is not sufficiently reflected in the Western causal concept of responsibility, was identified as the most likely explanation for these deviations. Overall, culturally matched crisis responses were found to consistently outperform the SCCT recommended responses. In other words, chapter 7 gave scientific weight to what practitioners' guides in Japan have long espoused: when a crisis strikes, apologize.

Chapter 8 confirmed the vital importance of a culturally adjusted crisis response but also illustrated the considerable impact of spokesperson ethnicity and language choice on crisis communication efforts by foreign organizations. The chapter found that, as long as a culturally matched response was utilized, foreign CEOs received higher credibility evaluations and, subsequently, higher company image outcomes than their Japanese counterparts independent of language choice. Rather than hindering message delivery, speaking in English while using a translator, resulted in the most favorable reputational evaluation. For the foreign CEOs, speaking in Japanese was not required or even counterproductive.

In conclusion, we can say that, as a first exploration of the applicability of Western crisis communication theory in Japan, this thesis was a success. It clearly demonstrated that knowledge of and respect for cultural differences are vital for successful cross-cultural crisis communication by international organizations. Future

research should consider the inclusion of older respondents in similar studies, as perceived ideological similarity to a foreign spokesperson and views on the importance of formal communication etiquette could differ across generations. A further potential future extension of this research would be the inclusion of a larger number of crisis cases that involve proxy responsibility elements (see chapter 4), as such cases are likely to be perceived quite differently by Japanese and U.S. audiences.

Finally, with this thesis, the author hopes to have made a substantial contribution to the holistic body of evidence-based knowledge about crisis communication in Japan and with Japanese audiences. However, it should be noted that the author views this volume as only the first step in an effort to develop a comprehensive theoretical crisis communication framework for Japan.

References

- 2014 nen no wāsuto kiki kōhō (2015). [2014's worst crisis PR]. *Kouhoukaigi*, 72, 20-27.
- Adachi, T. (2012). Jikkōtekina Nihongata kōporētogabanansu no mosaku: Orinpasu jiken o keiki to shite [The search for effective Japanese corporate governance: Triggered by the Olympus scandal]. *Journal of Economics*, 83, 36(1)-36(3).
- Agheyisi, R., & Fishman, J. A. (1970). Language attitude studies: A brief survey of methodological approaches. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 12(5), 137-157.
- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- An, S., & Cheng, I. (2010). Crisis communication research in public relations journals: Tracking research trends over 30 years. In W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 65-90). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- An, S., Park, D., Cho, S., & Berger, B. (2010). A cross-cultural study of effective organizational crisis response strategy in the United States and South Korea. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 4(4), 225-243.
- Aratana risuku ni tachimukau (2014, September 8). *Nikkei Business*, pp. 42-45.
- Arpan, L. M., & Pompper, D. (2003). Stormy weather: Testing “stealing thunder” as a crisis communication strategy to improve communication flow between organizations and journalists. *Public Relations Review*, 29(3), 291-308.

- Arpan, L. M. (2002). When in Rome? the effects of spokesperson ethnicity on audience evaluation of crisis communication. *Journal of Business Communication, 39*(3), 314-339.
- Arpan, L. M., & Sun, H. (2006). The effect of country of origin on judgments of multinational organizations involved in a crisis. *Journal of Promotion Management, 12*(3-4), 189-214.
- Ayamari no nai ayamarikata (2015, January 27). *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, p. 29.
- Azuma, S. (2010). How open is Japan linguistically? Natives' attitudes toward non-natives' use of honorifics in business settings. *Global Business Languages, 6*(Article 5) Retrieved from <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/gbl/vol6/iss1/5>
- Barnlund, D. C., & Yoshioka, M. (1990). Apologies: Japanese and American styles. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 14*(2), 193-206.
- Bazeley, P., & Kemp, L. (2012). Mosaics, triangles, and DNA: Metaphors for integrated analysis in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 6*(1), 55-72.
- Befu, H. (1983). Internationalization of Japan and nihon bunkaron. In H. Befu, & H. Mannari (Eds.), *The challenge of Japan's internationalization: Organization and culture*. (pp. 232-266). Tokyo: Kodansha International.
- Befu, H. (1993). Nationalism and nihonjinron. In H. Befu (Ed.), *Cultural nationalism in East Asia: Representation and identity* (pp. 107-135). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- Benoit, W. L. (2005). Image restoration theory. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of public relations: Volume 1* (pp. 408-410). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Reference.
- Benoit, W. L. (1995). *Accounts, excuses, and apologies: A theory of image restoration strategies*. Albany, NY: State Univ. of New York Press.
- Berscheid, E. (1966). Opinion change and communicator-communicatee similarity and dissimilarity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 4(6), 670-680.
- Blumstein, P. W., Carssow, K. G., Hall, J., Hawkins, B., Hoffman, R., Ishem, E., Maurer, C. P., Spens, D., Taylor, J., & Zimmerman, D. L. (1974). The honoring of accounts. *American Sociological Review*, 39(4), 551-566.
- Bond, M. H. (1983). A proposal for cross-cultural studies of attribution. In M. Hewstone (Ed.), *Attribution theory: Social and functional extensions* (pp. 144-157). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Brewer, M. B. (1999). The psychology of prejudice: Ingroup love and outgroup hate? *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3), 429-444.
- Brock, T. C. (1965). Communicator-recipient similarity and decision change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1(6), 650-654.

- Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. Florence, KY: Taylor & Frances.
- Chen, N. (2008). Evolutionary public relations in China, Japan and South Korea. In A. Freitag, & A. Q. Stokes (Eds.), *Global public relations: Spanning borders, spanning cultures* (pp. 137-161). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Choi, J., & Lee, S. (2017). Managing a crisis: A framing analysis of press releases dealing with the Fukushima nuclear power station crisis. *Public Relations Review*, 43(5), 1016-1024.
- Choi, I., Nisbett, R. E., & Norenzayan, A. (1999). Causal attribution across cultures: Variation and universality. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(1), 47-63.
- Chūgoku kigyō ga kigengire niku kakō (2014, July 25). [Chinese company processes expired meat]. *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, p. 19.
- Claeys, A., & Cauberghe, V. (2012). Crisis response and crisis timing strategies, two sides of the same coin. *Public Relations Review*, 38(1), 83-88.
- Claeys, A., & Schwarz, A. (2016). Domestic and international audiences of organizational crisis communication: State of the art and implications for cross-cultural crisis communication. In A. Schwarz, M. W. Seeger & C. Auer (Eds.), *The handbook of international crisis communication research* (1st ed., pp. 224-235). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Clark, A. (2011, October 26). Sacked British chief an autocrat, says Olympus. *The Times*. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database.

- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences (2nd ed.)*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.
- Coombs, W. T. (1998). An analytic framework for crisis situations: Better responses from a better understanding of the situation. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 10*(3), 177-191.
- Coombs, W. T. (1999). Information and compassion in crisis responses: A test of their effects. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 11*(2), 125-142.
- Coombs, W. T. (2006). Crisis management: A communicative approach. In C. H. Botan, & V. Hazleton (Eds.), *Public relations theory II* (pp. 171-197). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007a). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate Reputation Review, 10*(3), 163-176.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007b). Attribution theory as a guide for post-crisis communication research. *Public Relations Review, 33*(2), 135-139.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007c). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing and responding* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007d). Crisis Management and Communications. *Institute for Public Relations*: instituteforpr.org.

- Coombs, W. T. (2008). The future of crisis communication from an international perspective. In T. Nolting & A. Thiessen (Eds.), *Krisenmanagement in der Mediengesellschaft: Potenziale und Perspektiven der Krisenkommunikation* [Crisis management in the media society: Potentials and perspectives of crisis communication] (pp. 275-287). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag fuer Sozialwissenschaften.
- Coombs, W. T. (2010a). Parameters for crisis communication. In W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 17-53). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Coombs, W. T. (2010b). Pursuing evidence-based crisis communication. W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 719-725). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Coombs, W. T. (2014). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing and responding* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Coombs, W. T., Frandsen, F., Holladay, S. J., & Johansen, W. (2010). Why a concern for apologia and crisis communication? *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 15(4), 337-349.
- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (1996). Communication and attributions in a crisis: An experimental study in crisis communication. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 8(4), 279-295.

- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2002). Helping crisis managers protect reputational assets: Initial tests of the situational crisis communication theory. *Management Communication Quarterly, 16*(2), 165-186.
- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2010). *The handbook of crisis communication*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Cotton, A. J., Veil, S. R., & Iannarino, N. T. (2015). Contaminated communication: TEPCO and organizational renewal at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. *Communication Studies, 66*(1), 27-44.
- Creighton, M. R. (1995). Imaging the other in Japanese advertising campaigns. In J. G. Carrier (Ed.), *Occidentalism: Images of the West* (pp. 135-160). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- De Mente, B. (1993). *Behind the Japanese bow*. New York, NY: Passport Books.
- De Mente, B. (2004). *Japan's cultural code words: Key terms that explain attitudes and behaviour of the Japanese*. Boston, MA: Tuttle.
- DeShields, O. W., & Kara, A. (2000). The persuasive effect of spokesperson similarity moderated by source credibility. *American Marketing Association Conference Proceedings, 11*, 132-138.
- DeSimone, J. A., Harms, P. D., & DeSimone, A. J. (2015). Best practice recommendations for data screening. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 36*(2), 171-181.
- Doi, T. (1986). *The anatomy of self: The individual versus society*. Tokyo: Kodansha.

Don konishi nihon makku shachō no shazai kaiken fasshon ha shippai (2014, August 6).

[Don Konishi declares McDonald's CEO's apology conference fashion a failure].

Aera Asahi. Retrieved from <https://dot.asahi.com/wa/2014080500084.html>

Drumheller, K., & Benoit, W. L. (2004). USS Greenville collides with Japan's Ehime Maru: Cultural issues in image repair discourse. *Public Relations Review*, 30(2), 177-185.

Dunn, O. J. (1964). Multiple comparisons using rank sums. *Technometrics*, 6(3), 241-252.

Einwiller, S. A., Laufer, D., & Ruppel, C. (2017). Believe me, I am one of you! the role of common group affiliation in crisis communication. *Public Relations Review*, 43(5), 1007-1015.

Falkheimer, J., & Heide, M. (2006). Multicultural crisis communication: Towards a social constructionist perspective. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 14(4), 180-189.

Faraway, J. J. (2015). *Linear models with R* (2nd ed.). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Farley, M. (1996). Japan's press and the politics of scandal. In S. J. Pharr, & E. S. Krauss (Eds.), *Media and politics in Japan* (pp. 133-163). Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press.

Farrell, G. (2011, November 8). Woodford calls Olympus's bid to pin woes on him 'Ludicrous'. *Bloomberg News*. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-11-08/woodford-says-blaming-olympus-s-woes-on-him-is-ludicrous-blames-board>

- Fink, S. (1986). *Crisis management: Planning for the inevitable*. New York, NY: American Management Association.
- Fitzpatrick, K. R. (1995). Ten guidelines for reducing legal risks in crisis management. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 40(2), 33.
- Fox, J. (2008). *Applied regression analysis and generalized linear models* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2010a). Corporate crisis communication across cultures. In A. Trosberg (Ed.), *Pragmatics across languages and cultures* (pp. 543-569). Berlin/New York: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2010b). Crisis communication, complexity, and the cartoon affair: A case study. In W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 425-448). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2017). *Organizational crisis communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fuji News Network (2014). *Nihon makudonarudo HD kessan kaiken kasanoba shachō ga chinsha [McDonald's Japan CEO Casanova apologizes at earnings release press conference]*. Youtube: Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3_rXN3enOU;
- Fuji News Network (2015a). *Ibutsu kon'nyū nihon makudonarudo ga kisha kaiken [McDonald's Japan holds press conference concerning food contamination matters]*. Youtube: Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2dHve8x_qI

- Fuji News Network (2015b). *Nihon makudonarudo no sara kasanoba shachō ga kaiken [McDonald's japan CEO Sarah Casanova holds press conference]*. Youtube: Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIkXWxBzdg>
- Fujimoto, E. (2002). Japanese-ness, whiteness, and the “other” in Japan's internationalization. In M. J. Collier (Ed.), *Transforming communication about culture: Critical new directions* (pp. 1-24). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Fujita, Y. (2009). *Cultural Migrants from Japan: Youth, Media, and Migration in New York and London*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- George, A. M. (2011). Localize it: Multicultural audiences require nuanced messaging. In S. Goldstein (Ed.), *Crisis management guidebook 5* (pp. 26-30). New York, NY: PR News Publication.
- George, A. M. (2012). Japan (Toyota) - Delays, denials, recalls and apologies: Fixing the dent in Toyota's image. In A. M. George, & C. B. Pratt (Eds.), *Case studies in crisis communication: International perspectives on hits and misses* (pp. 227-253). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- George, D., & Mallery, P. (2010). *SPSS for windows step by step: A simple guide and reference, 17.0 update*. (10th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Greenslade, R. (2015, July 24). Journalists wonder if the Financial Times is safe in Nikkei's hands. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2015/jul/24/journalists-wonder-if-the-financial-times-is-safe-in-nikkeis-hands>

- Griffin, M., Babin, B. J., & Darden, W. R. (1992). Consumer assessments of responsibility for product-related injuries: The impact of regulations, warnings, and promotional policies. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 19, 870-878.
- Gundling, E. (1999). *Communicating with Japanese in business*. Tokyo: JETRO.
- Hagiwara, S. (2004). Nihon no terebi kōkoku ni arawareru gaikoku imēji no dōkō (Trends in the appearance of foreign images in Japanese television commercials). *Keio Media Communication*, 54, 5-26.
- Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., & Black, W. C. (1998). *Multivariate data analysis* (5th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. New York, NY: Anchor Books.
- Hambleton, A. (2011). Reinforcing identities? non-Japanese residents, television and cultural nationalism in Japan. *Contemporary Japan*, 23(1), 27-47.
- Hamilton, V. L., & Hagiwara, S. (1992). Roles, responsibility, and accounts across cultures. *International Journal of Psychology*, 27(2), 157-179.
- Hamilton, V. L., & Sanders, J. (1983). Universals in judging wrongdoing: Japanese and Americans compared. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 199-211.
- Hamilton, V. L., & Sanders, J. (1992). *Everyday justice: Responsibility and the individual in Japan and the United States*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

- Hamilton, V. L., & Sanders, J. (1996). Corporate crime through citizens' eyes: Stratification and responsibility in the United States, Russia, and Japan. *Law and Society Review*, 30(3), 513-547.
- Harner, S. (2012, January 6). Olympus, Woodford, duty and honor in Japan. *Forbes*. Retrieved from www.forbes.com/sites/stephenharner/2012/01/06/olympus-woodford-duty-honor-and-original-sin-in-japan/
- Haruta, A., & Hallahan, K. (2003). Cultural issues in airline crisis communications: A Japan-US comparative study. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 13(2), 122-150.
- Hayashi, E. (2015, December 7). Nihonjin ha naze "owabi" ga suki no ka [Why do the Japanese love apologies?]. *Nikkei Business Online*. Retrieved from <http://business.nikkeibp.co.jp/atcl/interview/15/120300013/120400001/>
- Hayes, A. F. (2017). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.
- Hearit, K. M. (1994). Apologies and public relations crises at Chrysler, Toshiba, and Volvo. *Public Relations Review*, 20(2), 113-125.
- Hearit, K. M., & Courtright, J. L. (2004). A symbolic approach to crisis management: Sears' defense of its auto repair policies. In D. P. Millar, & R. L. Heath (Eds.), *Responding to crisis: A rhetorical approach to crisis communication* (pp. 201-212). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hearit, K. M. (2006). *Crisis management by apology: Corporate response to allegations of wrongdoing*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Heath, R. L. (2004). Crisis response: The time to speak. In D. P. Millar, & R. L. Heath (Eds.), *Responding to crisis: A rhetorical approach to crisis communication* (pp. 201-212). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Heath, R. L. (2010). Introduction: Crisis communication: Defining the beast and demarginalizing key publics. In W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 1-14). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Heine, S. J., & Lehman, D. R. (1995). Social desirability among Canadian and Japanese students. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 135*(6), 777-779.
- Ho, B., Pang, A., AuYong, G. X., & Lau, L. (2014). Enduring image: Capturing defining moments in crises. *Public Relations Review, 40*(3), 519-525.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Holladay, S. J. (2010). Are they practicing what we are preaching? An investigation of crisis communication strategies in the media coverage of chemical accidents. In W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 159-180). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hong, S., & Len-Riós, M. E. (2015). Does race matter? Implicit and explicit measures of the effect of the PR spokesman's race on evaluations of spokesman source

credibility and perceptions of a PR crisis' severity. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 27(1), 63-80.

Horita, M. (2006). Shinyoku wo uragiri mōshiwake arimasen: Shazaikaiken kiji kara miru shokugyō to jinkaku [We apologize for betraying your trust: Occupation and character as portrayed in articles covering apology press conferences]. *Kanazawa University Faculty of Economics Social Linguistics Presentations*, 2, 65-84.

Hosman, L. A. (2002). Language and persuasion. In M. Pfau, & J. P. Dillard (Eds.), *The persuasion handbook: Developments in theory and practice* (pp. 371-390). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Hovland, C. I., Janis, I. L., & Kelley, H. H. (1953). *Communication and persuasion: Psychological studies of opinion change*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Hovland, C. I., & Weiss, W. (1951). The influence of source credibility on communication effectiveness. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 15(4), 635-650.

Hu, Y., & Pang, A. (2017). The indigenization of crisis response strategies in the context of China. *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 11(1), 105-128.

Huang, Y., Lin, Y., & Su, S. (2005). Crisis communicative strategies in Taiwan: Category, continuum, and cultural implication. *Public Relations Review*, 31(2), 229-238.

Inoue, T. (2010). A culture of apologies: Communicating crises in Japan. *The Public Relations Strategist*, 24. Retrieved from https://www.prsa.org/Intelligence/TheStrategist/Articles/view/8644/102/A_culture_of_apologies_Communicating_crises_in_Jap#.Ve6IoXvq7-Y

- Ishikawa, K. (2016). Kotokushū ni yosete: CSR keiei to gurōbaru wakugumi kyōtei no teiketsu ni miru nihon kigyō no henka to kanōsei [Foreword: Changes and possibilities for Japanese companies through CSR management and global framework agreements]. *Shakai Seisaku*, 8(1), 93-97.
- Ito, M. (2015, February 21). Apologizing in Japan: Sorry seems to be the hardest word. *The Japan Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/02/21/national/social-issues/apologizing-japan-sorry-seems-hardest-word/>
- Itoi, R., Ohbuchi, K., & Fukuno, M. (1996). A cross-cultural study of preference of accounts: Relationship closeness, harm severity, and motives of account making. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 26(10), 913-934.
- Iwabuchi, K. (1994). Complicit exoticism: Japan and its other. *Continuum: The Australian Journal of Media & Culture*, 8(2), 49-82.
- Johar, G. V., Birk, M., & Einwiller, S. A. (2010). How to save your brand in the face of crisis. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 51(4), 57-64.
- Ju, J., & Power, M. R. (1998). Cultural differences in the efficacy of apologies. *Culture Mandala: The Bulletin of the Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies*, 3(1), 56-66.
- Kaiser, H. F. (1974). An index of factorial simplicity. *Psychometrika*, 39(1), 31-36.
- Kalbermatten, P. (2011). Schindler elevators and the challenges of the Japanese market. In P. Haghirian, & P. Gagnon (Eds.), *Case studies in Japanese management* (pp. 203-229). Singapore: World Scientific.

- Kanda, T. (2015, January 8). Kasanoba shachō ha makudonarudo shazai kaiken ni nozomubeki da [Casanova should have wanted to attend McDonald's apology press conference]. *Yahoo!News*. Retrieved from <http://bylines.news.yahoo.co.jp/kandatoshiaki/20150108-00042086/>;
- Kaneda, S. (2014, August 31). Makudonarudo fu no rensa [Continuous failures at McDonald's]. *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, p. 12.
- Kashima, Y., Kashima, E., Chiu, C., Farsides, T., Gelfand, M., Hong, Y., ... Yzerbyt, V. (2005). Culture, essentialism, and agency: Are individuals universally believed to be more real entities than groups? *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 35(2), 147-169.
- Kelley, H. H. (1973). The processes of causal attribution. *American Psychologist*, 28(2), 107-128.
- Kelley, H. H., & Michela, J. L. (1980). Attribution theory and research. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 31(1), 457-501.
- Kim, Y., & Kim, S. (2010). The influence of cultural values on perceptions of corporate social responsibility: Application of Hofstede's dimensions to Korean public relations practitioners. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 91(4), 485-500.
- King, I. (2011, November 9). Focus should not be solely on Olympus. *The Times*. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database.
- Kobayashi, Y. (2010). Discriminatory attitudes toward intercultural communication in domestic and overseas contexts. *Higher Education*, 59(3), 323-333.

- Kovacs, E. (2011). Nihon media ni okeru shazai kaiken no bunseki [Analysis of Apology Conferences in the Japanese Media]. *Sociologist*, 13(1), 145-167.
- Krauss, E. S. (2000). Japan: News and politics in a media-saturated society. In R. Gunther, & A. Mughan (Eds.), *Democracy and the media: A comparative perspective* (pp. 266-302). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Kumagai, F., & Keyser, D. J. (1996). *Unmasking Japan today: The impact of traditional values on modern Japanese society*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Kuroi, M. (2014, February 8). Makku, saiken supīdo osoku [McDonald's recovery speed is slow]. *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, p. 15.
- Laerd Statistics. (2017). Two-way ANOVA using SPSS Statistics. Statistical tutorials and software guides. Retrieved from <https://statistics.laerd.com/>
- Lambert, W. E., Hodgson, R. C., Gardner, R. C., & Fillenbaum, S. (1960). Evaluational reactions to spoken languages. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 60(1), 44.
- Lee, B. K. (2005a). Crisis, culture, community. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 29(1), 275-310.
- Lee, B. K. (2005b). Hong Kong consumers' evaluation in an airline crash: A path model analysis. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17(4), 363-391.
- Lerbinger, O. (1997). *The crisis manager: Facing risk and responsibility*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Lewis, L. (2011a, October 18). Sacked British boss hurls accusations at Olympus. *The Times*. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database.
- Lewis, L. (2011b, November 9). It's no good pretending this scandal is an isolated case. *The Times*. Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database.
- Lie, J. (2000). The discourse of Japaneseness. In M. Douglas, & G. Roberts (Eds.), *Japan and global migration foreign workers and the advent of a multicultural society* (pp. 70-90). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lingley, D. (2006). Apologies across cultures: An analysis of intercultural communication problems raised in the Ehime Maru incident. *Asian EFL Journal*, 8(1), 97-122.
- Littlefield, R. S., & Cowden, K. (2006). Rethinking the single spokesperson model of crisis communication: Recognizing the need to address multiple publics. Paper presented at the *Annual Convention of the National Communication Association*, San Antonio, Texas.
- Liu, B. F., & Pompper, D. (2012). The crisis with no name: Defining the interplay of culture, ethnicity, and race on organizational issues and media outcomes. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 40(2), 127-146.
- Loewenthal, K., & Lewis, C. (2001). *An introduction to psychological tests and scales*. London: Psychology Press.
- Low, Y. S. Y., Varughese, J., & Pang, A. (2011). Communicating crisis: How culture influences image repair in Western and Asian governments. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 16(3), 218-242.

- Maddux, W. W., Kim, P. H., Okumura, T., & Brett, J. (2012). Why “I’m sorry” doesn’t always translate. *Harvard Business Review*, June. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2012/06/why-im-sorry-doesnt-always-translate>
- Makudonarudo ibutsu kon'nyū shazai (2015, January 8). [McDonald’s apologizes for food contamination]. *Sankei Express*. Retrieved from <https://www.sankeibiz.jp/express/news/150108/exc1501080645001-n1.htm>
- Makudonarudo shachō no shazai no taido ga chō warukute (2014, July 30). [McDonald’s CEO’s apology attitude was terrible] [Blog post]. Retrieved from http://r13.jp/424/japan_macdonalds/
- Makudonarudo takabisha kasanoba shachō ga daihenshin (2015, February 6). [McDonald’s CEO Casanova gets off her high horse] [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://news.careerconnection.jp/?p=7048>
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98(2), 224-253.
- Matsusaki, T. (2015, January 20). Makku, keiei hōkai no yochō [McDonald's, signs of business collapse]. *Business Journal*. Retrieved from http://biz-journal.jp/2015/01/post_8639.html
- McAuley, E., Duncan, T. E., & Russell, D. W. (1992). Measuring causal attributions: The revised causal dimension scale (CDSII). *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18(5), 566-573.

- McCroskey, J. C., Richmond, V. P., & Daly, J. A. (1975). The development of a measure of perceived homophily in interpersonal communication. *Human Communication Research, 1*(4), 323-332.
- McCroskey, J. C., & Young, T. J. (1981). Ethos and credibility: The construct and its measurement after three decades. *Communication Studies, 32*(1), 24-34.
- McKenzie, R. M. (2008). Social factors and non-native attitudes towards varieties of spoken English: A Japanese case study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 18*(1), 63-88.
- Medatanu you kosei kesu (2015, December 25). [Eliminating individuality to not stick out]. *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, p. 7.
- Menon, T., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C., & Hong, Y. (1999). Culture and the construal of agency: Attribution to individual versus group dispositions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 76*(5), 701-717.
- Miller, J. G. (1984). Culture and the development of everyday social explanation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46*(5), 961.
- Miller, R. A. (1977). *The Japanese language in contemporary Japan: Some sociolinguistic observations*. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.
- Morris, M. W., & Peng, K. (1994). Culture and cause: American and Chinese attributions for social and physical events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*(6), 949.

- Mure, D. (2011, November 25). Diatribe sheds light on Olympus darkroom. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Mure, D. (2012, April 20). Olympus board voted in despite protests. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Mure, D., & Nakamoto, M. (2011, October 31). Japan PM calls for clarity on Olympus scandal. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Myers, K. D. (1993). *Total contingency planning for disasters: Managing risk-- minimizing loss-- ensuring business continuity*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Nabakari shazaikaiken ni hihan tasū (2014, July 30). [Many criticisms for in name only apology press conference]. *BuzzNews*. Retrieved from <http://www.buzznews.jp/?p=101911>
- Nakajima, S. (2007). *Sono kisha kaiken machigatterimasu! kikikanri kōhō*. [That press conference was wrong! The reality of crisis management PR.]. Tokyo: Nihonkeizaishinbun Publishers.
- Nakamoto, M. (2011, November 11). Japan tries to limit Olympus fallout. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Netto yūzā ga erabu: wāsuto shazai rankingu (2016). [Internet user's worst apology ranking]. *Kouhoukaigi*, 84, 18.
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Neufeld, F. (2011). Lost in translation? Toyota and the recall crisis. In P. Haghirian, & P. Gagnon (Eds.), *Case studies in Japanese management* (pp. 231-245). Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company.
- Nihon makudonarudo no onna shachō ga wadai (2014, July 30). [McDonald's Japan's female CEO is becoming a topic of conversation]. Message posted to <http://gossip1.net/archives/1006803360.html>
- Nihon no makudonarudo no kasanoba shachō ga shazai kaiken shita (2014, July 29). [McDonald's Japan CEO Casanova holds apology press conference. Message posted to http://detail.chiebukuro.yahoo.co.jp/qa/question_detail/q13132926938
- Nottage, L. (2006). The ABCs of product safety re-regulation in Japan: Asbestos, buildings, consumer electrical goods, and Schindler's lifts. *Griffith Law Review*, 15(2), 242-286.
- Ogawa, S. (2015, April 3). Ima wo kokyū = shazai no saki ni nani ga aru? [Take a breath = Is there something beyond apologies?]. *Nishi Nihon Shinbun*, p.10.
- Ohbuchi, K. (1999). A social psychological analysis of accounts: Toward a universal model of giving and receiving accounts. In N. Sugimoto (Ed.), *Japanese apology across disciplines* (pp. 9-45). Commack, NY: Nova Science Publishers.
- Ohbuchi, K. (2015). *Shippai shinai ayamari kata* [How not to fail at apologizing]. Tokyo: CCC Media House.
- Ohbuchi, K., & Takahashi, Y. (1994). Cultural styles of conflict management in Japanese and Americans: Passivity, covertness, and effectiveness of strategies. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 24(15), 1345-1366.

- Ohira, K. (2013). Nihon kigyō no kōporētogabanansu: Orinpasu no fushōji ga imi suru mono [Corporate governance of Japanese companies: What does the Olympus' scandal imply?]. *Management Philosophy*, 10(2), 38-45.
- Ohira, K., Higuchi, Y., & Sato, S. (2013). Wagakuni kigyō no fushōji kara miru kōporētogabanan su no chōsa kenkyū: Orinpasu no kēsu o chūshin ni [A Study on the corporate governance of Japanese companies from the view of corporate scandal: Focusing on the case of Olympus]. *The Bulletin of Institute for Research in Business and Economics Meiji Gakuin University*, 30, 25-34.
- Okabe, K. (1987). Indirect speech acts of the Japanese. In D. L. Kincaid (Ed.), *Communication theory: Eastern and Western perspectives* (pp. 127-136). London: Academic Press.
- Olympus Corporation (2011a). Chousa houkoku sho [Investigation report]. Retrieved from https://www.olympus.co.jp/jp/common/pdf/if111206corpj_6.pdf
- Olympus Corporation (2011b). Investigation report. Retrieved from https://www.olympus-global.com/en/common/pdf/if111206corpe_2.pdf
- Onishi, H. (2015, February 6). Kasanoba CEO mo youyaku nihonryuu no shazai kisha kaiken. [Casanova finally delivers a Japanese style apology press conference; Blog post] [Blog post]. Retrieved from <http://blogos.com/Article/105072/>
- Otake, T. (2009, March 8). When scandal strikes a firm. *The Japan Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2009/03/08/general/when-scandal-strikes-a-firm/>

- Pang, A., Jin, Y., & Cameron, G. T. (2010). Contingency theory of strategic conflict management: Directions for the practice of crisis communication from a decade of theory development, discovery, and dialogue. In W. T. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 527-549). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Pearson, C. M., & Clair, J. A. (1998). Reframing crisis management. *The Academy of Management Review*, 23(1), 59.
- Pearson, C. M., & Mitroff, I. I. (1993). From crisis prone to crisis prepared: A framework for crisis management. *The Executive*, 7(1), 48-59.
- Pepper, G. L. (1995). *Communicating in organizations: A cultural approach*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1984). Source factors and the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. In T. C. Kinnear (Ed.), *Advances in consumer research volume 11* (pp. 668-672). Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.
- Pinsdorf, M. K. (1991). Flying different skies: How cultures respond to airline disasters. *Public Relations Review*, 17(1), 37-56.
- Pornpitakpan, C. (2004). The persuasiveness of source credibility: A critical review of five decades' evidence. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 34(2), 243-281.
- Pratt, C. B. (2012). Theoretical approaches to and sociocultural perspectives in crisis communication. In A. M. George, & C. B. Pratt (Eds.), *Case studies in crisis communication: International perspectives on hits and misses* (pp. 3-27). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Pratt, C. B., & Carr, R. L. (2017). Culture as crisis communication: Tokyo electric power company and the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster. In A. M. George, & K. Kwansah-Aidoo (Eds.), *Culture and crisis communication: Cases from nonwestern perspectives* (pp. 153-167). Piscataway, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Prieler, M. (2010). Othering, racial hierarchies and identity construction in Japanese television advertising. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13(5), 511-529.
- Ray, S. J. (1999). *Strategic communication in crisis management: Lessons from the airline industry*. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.
- Risuku to kōhō (2015). [Risk and PR]. *Kouhoukaigi*, 72, 16-19.
- Rogers, E. M., & Bhowmik, D. K. (1970). Homophily-heterophily: Relational concepts for communication research. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 34(4), 523-538.
- Rogers, E. M. (1994). *A history of communication study: A biographical approach*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Romenti, S., & Valentini, C. (2010). Alitalia's crisis in the media – A situational analysis. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 15(4), 380-396.
- Rothlin, S., & McCann, D. (2016). The social environment: Business etiquette and cultural sensitivity. In S. Rothlin, & D. McCann (Eds.), *International business ethics: Focus on China* (pp. 321-340). Berlin: Springer Verlag.
- Russell, D. (1982). The causal dimension scale: A measure of how individuals perceive causes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 42(6), 1137.

- Sato, O. (2015, February 11). Makudonarudo no shazai ha, nani wo machigaetanoka [What was wrong with McDonald's apology]. *Toyokeizai Online*. Retrieved from <http://toyokeizai.net/articles/-/60414>
- Sato, S., & Taniguchi, T. (2011, December 30). Sumitomo Mitsui will maintain support for Olympus. *Bloomberg News*. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-12-29/sumitomo-mitsui-will-maintain-support-for-olympus-miyata-says>
- Schranz, M., & Eisenegger, M. (2016). Organizational crisis and the news media. In A. Schwarz, M. W. Seeger & C. Auer (Eds.), *The handbook of international crisis communication research* (pp. 165-174). Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Schwarz, A. (2008). Covariation-based causal attributions during organizational crises: Suggestions for extending situational crisis communication theory (SCCT). *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 2(1), 31-53.
- Schwarz, A. (2013). Internationale und komparative Krisenkommunikationsforschung: Relevanz, State of the Art und Forschungsagenda [International and comparative crisis communication research: Relevance, state of the art, and research agenda]. In D. Ingenhoff (Ed.), *Internationale PR-Forschung* [International PR research] (pp. 261-289). Konstanz: UVK.
- Schwarz, A., Seeger, M. W., & Auer, C. (2016). Significance and structure of international risk and crisis communication research. In A. Schwarz, M. W. Seeger & C. Auer (Eds.), *The handbook of international crisis communication research* (pp. 1-10). Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.

- Searle, S. R. (2006). *Linear models for unbalanced data*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Sellnow, T. L., Ulmer, R. R., Seeger, M. W., & Littlefield, R. S. (2009). *Effective risk communication: A message-centered approach*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Sen, F., & Egelhoff, W. G. (1991). Six years and counting: Learning from crisis management at Bhopal. *Public Relations Review*, 17(1), 69-83.
- Shaver, K. G. (1985). *The attribution of blame: Causality, responsibility, and blameworthiness*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Shaver, K. G., & Schutte, D. A. (2001). Towards a broader psychological foundation for responsibility: Who, what, how. In A. E. Auhagen, & H. Bierhoff (Eds.), *Responsibility: The many faces of a social phenomenon* (pp. 35-47). London: Routledge.
- Simmons, N., & Chen, Y. (2017). "I never wanted to be famous" pushes and pulls of whiteness through the eyes of foreign language teachers in Japan. In S. Toyosaki, & S. Eguchi (Eds.), *Intercultural communication in Japan: Theorizing homogenizing discourse* (pp. 224-238). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Simons, H. W., Berkowitz, N. N., & Moyer, R. J. (1970). Similarity, credibility, and attitude change: A review and a theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 73(1), 1.
- Smith, D. (1990). Beyond contingency planning: Towards a model of crisis management. *Organization & Environment*, 4(4), 263-275.

- Soble, J. (2011a, October 15). More than a clash of cultures at Olympus. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Soble, J. (2011b, October 17). Olympus acquisitions central to dispute. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Soble, J. (2011c, October 25). Pressure on Japan to investigate Olympus. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Soble, J. (2011d, October 26). Olympus head quits as scrutiny intensifies. *The Financial Times*. Retrieved from ProQuest Academic database.
- Stephens, K. K., Malone, P. C., & Bailey, C. M. (2005). Communicating with stakeholders during a crisis: Evaluating message strategies. *Journal of Business Communication, 42*(4), 390-419.
- Sugimoto, N. (1997). A Japan-U.S. comparison of apology styles. *Communication Research, 24*(4), 349-369.
- Sugimoto, N. (1998). Norms of apology depicted in U.S. American and Japanese literature on manners and etiquette. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 22*(3), 251-276.
- Sugimoto, N. (1999). Sorry we apologize so much: Linguistic factors affecting Japanese and US American styles of apology. *Intercultural Communication Studies, 8*, 71-78.
- Suzuki, I., & Kaneko, Y. (2013). *Japan's disaster governance: How was the 3.11 crisis managed?* New York, NY: Springer Science & Business Media.

- Suzuki, Y. (2011). *Japan's financial slump: Collapse of the monitoring system under institutional and transition failures*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillian.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Tabuchi, H. (2012, January 7). With Olympus managers still entrenched, an ousted chief drops his sword. *The New York Times*, Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database.
- Tabuchi, H., & Bradsher, K. (2011, December 6). The culture was corrupt at Olympus, panel finds. *The New York Times*, Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database.
- Tabuchi, H., & Inoue, M. (2012, April 21). Company news: Olympus shareholders vote in favor of directors. *The New York Times*, Retrieved from LexisNexis Academic database.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (2004). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In J. T. Jost, & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Key readings in social psychology. Political psychology: Key readings* (pp. 276-293). New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Takahashi, M. (2012). Language attitudes of Japanese university students toward Japanese English. *Proceedings of the 41st Annual Meeting of the English Language Education Society of Japan*, 27-34.
- Takaku, S., Lee, Y. T., Weiner, B., & Ohbuchi, K. (2005). A cross-cultural examination of perceptions of apology, responsibility, and justice: The U.S.S. Greenville accident and the E-P3 airplane accident. *Tohoku Psychologica Folia*, 64, 39-57.

- Takaku, S. (2000). Culture and status as influences on account giving: A comparison between the United States and Japan. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30(2), 371-388.
- Tanaka, K. (1997). Japan as seen from Latin American students in Japan. *Journal of Japanese Language and Culture, Education Center for International Students*, Nagoya University, 5, 1-28.
- Tanaka, T. (2006). *Sonna shazaikaiken de ha kaisha ga abunai* [Apology press conferences that are dangerous for companies]. Tokyo: Bunshunbunko.
- Tavuchis, N. (1991). *Mea culpa: A sociology of apology and reconciliation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press.
- Taylor, M. (2000). Cultural variance as a challenge to global public relations: A case study of the Coca-Cola scare in Europe. *Public Relations Review*, 26(3), 277-293.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (1999). *Communicating Across Cultures*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Torigoe, C. (2012). Whiteness discourse in Japan: The construction of ideal beauty and racial others in cosmetic surgery advertisements. *Seinan Gakuin University Journal of English Literature Studies*, 52(3), 71-94.
- Tournat, T. (2014). Attribution theory: Measurement foundations for an emerging research area within applied linguistics. *JALT Journal: The Research Journal of the Japan Association for Language Teaching*, 36(2), 201-222.

- Triandis, H. C. (2001). Individualism-collectivism and personality. *Journal of Personality, 69*(6), 907-924.
- Tsuneyoshi, R. (2004). The 'new' foreigners and the social reconstruction of difference: the cultural diversification of Japanese education. *Comparative Education, 40*(1), 55-81.
- Tsuruno, M. (2015, January 9). Makudonarudo ha jidai ni attenai [McDonald's does not suit the times]. *Nikkei Business Online*. Retrieved from <http://business.nikkeibp.co.jp/article/opinion/20150108/275973/>
- Tyler, L. (1997). Liability means never being able to say you're sorry: Corporate guilt, legal constraints, and defensiveness in corporate communication. *Management Communication Quarterly, 11*(1), 51-73.
- Ulmer, R. R., & Pyle, A. S. (2016). International organizational crisis communication. In A. Schwarz, M. W. Seeger & C. Auer (Eds.), *The handbook of international crisis communication research* (pp. 108-118). Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ulmer, R. R., Seeger, M. W., & Sellnow, T. L. (2007). Post-crisis communication and renewal: Expanding the parameters of post-crisis discourse. *Public Relations Review, 33*(2), 130-134.
- Vidmar, N., & Crinklaw, L. D. (1974). Attributing responsibility for an accident: A methodological and conceptual critique. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 6*(2), 112-130.
- Wagatsuma, H., & Rosett, A. (1986). The implications of apology: Law and culture in Japan and the United States. *Law & Society Review, 20*(4), 461-498.

- Wang, X., & Arpan, L. M. (2008). Effects of race and ethnic identity on audience evaluation of HIV public service announcements. *Howard Journal of Communications, 19*(1), 44-63.
- Weiner, B. (1982). An attribution theory of motivation and emotion. *Series in Clinical & Community Psychology: Achievement, Stress, & Anxiety, 223-245*.
- Weiner, B. (1985). "Spontaneous" causal thinking. *Psychological Bulletin, 97*(1), 74.
- Weiner, B. (1986). *An attributional theory of motivation and emotion*. New York, NY: Springer Verlag.
- Weiner, B. (1995a). Inferences of responsibility and social motivation. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 27*, 1-47.
- Weiner, B. (1995b). *Judgments of responsibility: A foundation for a theory of social conduct*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Weiner, B., Graham, S., Peter, O., & Zmuidinas, M. (1991). Public confession and forgiveness. *Journal of Personality, 59*(2), 281-312.
- Wilson, S. R., Cruz, M. G., Marshall, L. J., & Rao, N. (1993). An attribution analysis of compliance-gaining interactions. *Communication Monographs, 60*(4). 352-372.
- Winfield, B. H., Mizuno, T., & Beaudoin, C. E. (2000). Confucianism, collectivism and constitutions: Press systems in china and Japan. *Communication Law and Policy, 5*(3), 323-347.
- Wokutch, R. E. (1990). Corporate social responsibility Japanese style. *Academy of Management Executive, 4*(2), 56-74.

- Wokutch, R. E., & Shepard, J. M. (1999). The maturing of the Japanese economy: Corporate social responsibility implications. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 9(3), 527-540.
- Woodford, M. (2012). *Exposure: Inside the Olympus scandal: How I went from CEO to whistleblower*. London: Portfolio Penguin.
- Wu, F., Huang, Y. C., & Kao, L. (2016). East meets West: A new contextual perspective for crisis communication theory. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 26(4), 350-370.
- Yamaguchi, Y. (2011). Orinpasu mubō M&A kyogaku sonshitsu no kai [Monster losses at Olympus over reckless acquisitions]. *Facta*. Retrieved from <https://facta.co.jp/article/201108021.html>
- Yamashiro, J. H. (2013). The social construction of race and minorities in Japan. *Sociology Compass*, 7(2), 147-161.
- Yasu, M. (2011, December 15). Olympus's Takayama says he wants to avoid battle with Woodford. *Bloomberg News*. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-12-14/olympus-meets-earnings-deadline-to-avoid-automatic-delisting-shares-drop>
- Yasu, M., & Biggs, S. (2011, November 4). Olympus delays earnings release pending probe into acquisitions. *Bloomberg News*. Retrieved from www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-11-04/olympus-delays-earnings-release-pending-probe

- Yasu, M., & Fujimura, N. (2011, November 9). Olympus urged to extend purge of executives over hidden losses. *Bloomberg News*. Retrieved from www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-11-07/olympus-used-gyros-fees-to-hide-losses
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yoshino, K. (1992). *Cultural nationalism in contemporary Japan: A sociological enquiry*. London: Routledge.
- Yoshino, K. (1998). Culturalism, racialism, and internationalism in the discourse on Japanese identity. In D. C. Gladney (Ed.), *Making majorities: Constituting the nation in Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, Fiji, Turkey, and the United States* (pp. 13-30). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Yu, T., & Wen, W. (2003). Crisis communication in Chinese culture: A case study in Taiwan. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 13(2), 50-64.
- Zemba, Y., Young, M. J., & Morris, M. W. (2006). Blaming leaders for organizational accidents: Proxy logic in collective-versus individual-agency cultures. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 101(1), 36-51.
- Zhou, Z., & Ki, E. (2018). Does severity matter? An investigation of crisis severity from defensive attribution theory perspective. *Public Relations Review*, 44(4), 610-618.

Appendix

9.1 Appendix A1: Codebook Olympus Press Coverage

Theme	Code	Description	Unit of Coding
Key Issues	Accusations	Passage talks about the accusations against Olympus.	These codes are text or paragraph level codes.
	Background	Passage focuses on the Background of the Olympus Scandal (e.g., the financial bubble, accounting reform).	
	Firing Woodford	The passage discusses the firing of Woodford.	
	Issues in Japan	The passage talks about issues in Japan concerning/framing/surrounding the Olympus crisis. This coding will overlap with one or more of the overarching context codes.	
	Recovery	The passage addresses Olympus recovery efforts.	
	The Revelation	The passage focuses on the revelation of what had happened at Olympus.	
Negative Sentiment	Contradictions	The passage discusses contradictions in Olympus's narrative.	These codes are sentence or paragraph level codes.
	Criticism	The passage is critical.	
	Negative Image	A strongly negative image is evoked in the passage.	
	Strongly negative	The passage is strongly negative (significant departure from neutrality).	
	Suspicion	The passage expresses suspicions about Olympus activities.	
Positive Sentiment	Positive	The passage expresses a clearly positive sentiment towards Olympus.	
Source	Investigative Committee	The passage directly or indirectly quotes the investigative committee.	
	Investment Professionals	The passage directly or indirectly quotes the investment professionals.	
	Investors	The passage directly or indirectly quotes Olympus's investors.	
	Japanese politicians	The passage directly or indirectly quotes Japanese politicians.	
	Olympus Management	The passage directly or indirectly quotes the Olympus Management.	
	TSE	The passage directly or indirectly quotes Tokyo Stock Exchange officials.	
	Woodford, M.	The passage directly or indirectly quotes Woodford.	
Olympus CRS	Apology	The passage discusses Olympus's use of the Apology CRS.	
	Attack the Accuser	The passage discusses Olympus's use of the attack the accuser CRS.	
	Bolstering	The passage discusses Olympus's use of the attack the accuser CRS.	
	Corrective Action	The passage discusses Olympus's use of the corrective action.	
	Defeasibility	The passage discusses the Olympus's use of excuses and evasion.	
	Denial	The passage discusses Olympus's use of the denial CRS.	
	Good Intentions	The passage discusses Olympus's claims to have acted with good intentions.	
	Investigation	The passage discusses Olympus's promise and use of a third-party investigation committee.	
	No comment	The passage discusses Olympus's use of the attack the	

		accuser CRS.	
Points of Contention	Bank/Institutional Shareholders	The passage addresses the support for and lack of censure of Olympus by Japanese creditors and institutional shareholders. Banks and institutional shareholders are discussed in terms of their lack of support for or their opposition to Western demands.	
	Resignations	The passage talks about the controversy surrounding the resignation of the current board of directors.	
	Timing of Shareholder meeting	The passage discusses the controversy about the timing of the extraordinary shareholder meeting.	
	Woodford return	The passage discusses demands for Woodfords return or Olympus's response to these demands.	
Concerns	What happened?	The article is dominated by the question what happened in the Olympus case.	These codes are applied at the text level of analysis.
	What will happen?	The article's focus is on the future of Olympus and its recovery.	
	Why did it happen?	The article focuses on the revelation what had happened at Olympus.	
Overarching Context	Business Culture	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms weaknesses or shortcomings of Japan's business culture.	These codes are sentence or paragraph level codes.
	Corporate Governance	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms weaknesses or shortcomings of Japan's corporate governance practices and regulations.	
	Japan	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms of Japan in general. This code is applied when none of the other Overarching Context codes apply.	
	Japanese Media	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms of the Japanese media environment and practices.	
	Banks and Institutional Investors	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms of Japanese banks and institutional investors.	
	Morality	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms weaknesses or shortcomings of Japan's business culture.	
	Regulation	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms weaknesses or shortcomings of Japan's regulatory environment.	
	Yakuza	The Olympus scandal is discussed in terms of the Japanese organized crime.	
Translation	"core was rotten"	The article mentions the phrase "core was rotten".	These codes are applied at the word level of analysis.
	"rotten at the core"	The article mentions the phrase "rotten at the core".	
	"rotten to the core"	The article mentions the phrase "rotten to the core".	
	"rotten core"	The article mentions the phrase "rotten core".	

9.2 Appendix A2: Codebook Olympus Press Releases

Theme	Code	Description	Unit of Coding
Crisis Response Strategies	Denial	Olympus employs a denial strategy.	All codes applied to the paragraph or sentence level of analysis.
	Attack Accuser	Olympus employs an attack the accuser strategy.	
	Apology	Olympus employs an apology strategy.	
	Shifting Blame	Olympus employs a shift the blame/scapegoating strategy.	
	Corrective Action	Olympus employs a corrective action strategy.	
	Bolstering	Olympus employs a bolstering strategy.	
	Differentiation	Olympus employs a differentiation strategy.	
Reforms	Management	Olympus promises management reforms.	
	Corporate Governance	Olympus promises corporate governance reforms.	
	Company Structure	Olympus promises corporate restructuring.	
	Nomination Committee	Olympus promises/announces the formation of a nomination committee.	
	Correct Financial Statements	Olympus promises to/announces the release of corrected financial statements.	
	Board will resign	Olympus promises the resignation of its board of directors.	
	Business Alliance	Olympus promises to enter business alliances to aid recovery.	
	Submission of Financial Results and Forecasts	Olympus promises the timely submission of financial results and forecasts to maintain its TSE listing.	
	Shareholders' Meeting	Olympus announces plans to hold an extraordinary shareholders meeting.	
	Lawsuits	Olympus promises to pursue lawsuits against key individuals involved in the fraud.	
New Board Selection	Olympus discusses the selection of a new board. This code is similar to but distinct from the Nomination Committee code.		
Stakeholder Demands	Immediate Change	Olympus addresses stakeholder demands for immediate changes.	
	Legal Action	Olympus addresses stakeholder demands for legal actions against the company and key individuals involved in the fraud.	
	Disclosure	Olympus addresses stakeholder demands for increased disclosures.	
	Choice of Board Members	Olympus addresses stakeholder choices for members of the new board.	
Response to Demands	Agree	The company agrees with stakeholder demands and promises swift action.	
	Agree but later	The company agrees with stakeholder demands but makes no promises for immediate action or urges stakeholders to be patient.	
	Deny	The company refuses stakeholder demands outright.	

9.3 Appendix A3: Key Press Conferences Transcripts and Videos

Date of Press Conference	Title	Source
10/14/2011	オリンパス：ウッドフォード社長解任を発表した10月14日の記者会見の一問一答	http://judiciary.asahi.com/articles/201111100011.html
10/26/2011	オリンパス：菊川会長兼社長の辞任と高山新社長の就任を発表した10月26日の記者会見の一問一答	http://judiciary.asahi.com/articles/201111140002.html
10/27/2001	オリンパス：過去の企業買収に関する10月27日の記者会見の一問一答	http://judiciary.asahi.com/articles/201112020009.html
11/08/2011	オリンパス：過去の損失計上先送りに関する11月8日の記者会見の一問一答	http://judiciary.asahi.com/articles/201112040003.html
12/06/2011	オリンパス第三者委 記者会見一問一答全文「腐った経営中枢」	http://judiciary.asahi.com/investigation/2011121100001.html
12/06/2011	第三者委員会によるオリンパス問題調査結果説明記者会見	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlj5f9T8CK4&t=94s
12/15/2011	マイケル・ウッドフォード元オリンパス社長 2011. 12. 15	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCRKWSUfb18

9.4 Appendix B1: Examples of Coding Procedure

Text [Date and Source]	Initial Notes and Codes ¹⁷ (Open Coding Phase)	Categories	Theme
<p>[7/30/2014 - http://r13.jp/424/japan_macdonalds/] マクドナルド社長の謝罪の態度が超一悪くてワロタw</p>			
 <p>上海福喜食品公司という中国のマクド肉工場が期限切れの腐った鶏肉や床に落ちた肉などを使ってチキンナゲットなどの商品を製造していた問題で、29日に日本マクドナルドのサラ・カサノバとこの外人の女社長兼CEOがやっと謝罪会見した。</p>			
<p>しかし謝罪の態度が超一悪くてワロタw 完全に消費者をなめてるだろw、マクド・マック「嫌なら食うな」w</p>  <p>この女社長の表情や態度、言動などからは、客に対して申し訳なかったといった気持ちがまったく伝わってこねーんだけど。</p>	<p><u>Casanova's attitude</u> doesn't seem like she is sorry. Criticism of <u>facial expression, attitude and behavior.</u></p>	<p>Perception of Casanova's attitude</p>	<p>Criticism of Apology Style</p>
<p>しかも「我々はだまされたと考えてる」とか言ってるしw、品質管理は万全とか言って散々消費者をだまらかしてきてよく言ったよなー、頭おかしいだろこいつ。</p>	<p>“<u>We were betrayed</u>” phrase and talking about <u>excellent quality control</u> is perceived as crazy.</p>	<p>“We were betrayed” Excellence</p>	<p>Criticism of Victimage Criticism of Bolstering</p>
<p>そもそも中国人を全面的に信用しちゃってる時点で、どれだけいい加減なんだって話なんだけど！あの中国だぞおい、あの中国人だぞおい！金の為ならどんな違法なことでも平気するのが中国人の本質である。だからもし中国人に仕事をやらせるなら24時間365日常駐で監視する指導係を工場の中に配置して、さらに監視カメラを大量に設置して本部からオンラインで24時間モニター監視&録画</p>	<p><u>Criticism of Chinese Suppliers.</u></p>		

¹⁷ Initial codes are underlined.

<p>した上で、さらに抜き打ちで定期査察するくらいのプレッシャーを与え続けないとダメだろ普通に考えて。</p>			
 <p>さらに「この件は一つの市一つの工場による数人の悪意をもった従業員による行動です」とかボケたこと言っちゃてるし、大丈夫かこの無能社長は！すでにテレビでも組織的にマクドナルドを騙していることは明らかになっているんだが。もしかして日本の消費者は馬鹿だと思ってわざと印象操作してるんか？</p>	<p>Strongly worded criticism of calling the incident a “<u>willful deception by a few individuals at one plant in one city</u>”.</p>	<p>Minimizing the problem</p>	<p>Criticism of Justification</p>
 <p>さらに「上海福喜食品で不適切に作られた商品が日本に向け出荷されていたという証拠はありません」とか完全に開き直ってる。証拠があるもないも、お前らこれまでずーと気が付いてなかった訳で、逆に言えば、日本に向けて出荷されてなかったという証拠もないわけだから、頭下げてキッチリ謝罪した上でレシートを持ってきた人には返金なりするのが筋だろと思うんだが。</p>	<p>Criticism for questioning the severity of the crisis by saying, “<u>There is no evidence that the inappropriately produced Shanghai Husi products were destined for Japan.</u>”</p>	<p>Minimizing the problem</p>	<p>Criticism of Justification</p>
<p>まあとにかくこのバカ社長は、一度も頭を下げることなく、終始、自分たちは被害者だといった自分たちの責任を棚に上げたような内容の会見を続けた訳で、これだけ見てもマクドナルドという企業がどれだけ糞だったかということがわかると思う。自分たちのミスを認めて反省し改善策を提示しそしてきっちと謝罪する。そんな日本人なら当たり前のことすらできない、そんなマクド・ドナルド社長が率いるその程度の企業、それが日本マクドナルドの正体なのだ。</p>	<p>Sharp criticism because Casanova <u>didn't bow once, acted like a victim and didn't accept responsibility.</u> Obvious difference to Japanese.</p>	<p>No bow</p>	<p>Criticism of Apology Style</p>
 <p>昔、よく巷でマクドナルドのハンバーガーの肉は食用ミミズの肉とかネズミの肉を使っているなんていう都</p>	<p><u>Loss of confidence in McDonald's quality control standards.</u></p>	<p>Acting like a victim</p> <p>No acceptance of responsibility</p>	<p>Criticism of Victimage</p> <p>Criticism of Apology Content</p>

市伝説がささやかれていたが、今回の一件を見ると、仮に下請け工場の製造段階でそのような肉を少しずつ混ぜてもマクドナルド本体はまったく気がつかない訳だからあり得る話である。			
まあ実際、今回のチキンは氷山の一角で、他の食材も同じような状況の可能性は大である。なぜなら前社長で現在ベネッセ HD の社長の原田泳幸は、安く売って利益を出すために限界までコストを削減するコストカッターの異名を持つ無能経営者で、たぶんだけど、こういった商売において一番重要な品質管理までもコストカットしちゃったんじゃないかと。でなきゃ 100 円ハンバーガーで利益を出すなんて不可能だろ (爆) w	Suspicious about product quality.		
とにかくマクドナルドは、信用できない企業なので、おいらの二度と食べないメシ屋に昇格させてもらった。というかもう 5 年以上前からまったく食べてないがな (爆) w そして日本マクドナルドは、乞食専用食堂となり、徐々にオワコン化、そして数年後に倒産し日本を撤退した・・・。	.		
[8/6/2014 - https://dot.asahi.com/wa/2014080500084.html?page=1] ドン小西「日本マック社長の謝罪会見ファッションは失敗」			
サラ・カサノバ (日本マクドナルド社長兼 CEO) 1965 年、カナダ生まれ。91 年、マクドナルドカナダに入社。2004 年から約 5 年間、人材交流で日本マクドナルドのマーケティング本部長などに就任。「メガマック」などの生みの親とされる。マレーシア勤務を経て、昨年 8 月、日本マクドナルド社長兼 CEO に 7 月 29 日、「上海福喜食品」の期限切れ鶏肉問題で謝罪 (c) 朝日新聞社			
7 月 29 日、「上海福喜食品」の期限切れ鶏肉問題で謝罪会見に臨んだ、日本マクドナルド社長兼 CEO のサラ・カサノバ氏。しかし、そのファッションに苦言を呈するのはファッションデザイナーのドン小西氏だ。 * * * いろんな謝罪会見を見てきたけどさ、はっきり言ってこりゃあ失敗だね。だまされただの、訴えるだの、この期に及んで被害者アピールってどうなのよ。それ以上に、この謝罪ファッションも失敗だよ。まあ、普通だったら、お偉いさんが頭丸めて、45 度で頭を下げたまま 60 秒間静止…レベルの一大事だろ？	Press conference was a failure due to trying to play the <u>victim</u> role and <u>failing to bow</u> .	Acting like a victim No bow	Criticism of Victimage Criticism of Apology Style
なのにくら女性でも、丸首のインナーはないよ。せめて襟付きの白シャツならオシャレメガネも映えただろうし、白と黒の組み合わせで、謝罪モードもパワーアップしたのにおまけによく見ると、右手に二つ、左手に一つ、計三つの指輪が光ってる。手だけでもこんなにつけてるんだから、ほんとは胸元も、何本ものネックレスでゴージャスに飾りたかったはず。でも直前に誰かに止められて、しぶしぶしてきたってところだろう。	Criticism of choice of <u>clothing, glasses, jewelry</u> as inappropriate for an apology press conference.	Criticism of Appearance	Criticism of Apology Style
たしかに女性服だと、ドレッシーにならずに、しかもあらたまった印象をつくるのがむずかしい。政府の成長戦略の一つにも掲げられて、これからもっと増えてきそうな女性管理職。謝罪ファッションには、より細心のご注意を。			
[7/30/2014 - https://blog.goo.ne.jp/sunafukin-0101/e/d6bf709a5878f7482916440e4b5eca1d] ★日本マクドナルド・・・社長の謝罪			
★気になるコラム・記事 <マクドナルド>全商品、加工国を公表 社長「深くおわ			

<p>び」</p>  <p>＜日本マクドナルドホールディングスのサラ・カサノバ社長兼最高経営責任者（CEO）は29日、期限切れ鶏肉を使用していた中国の食品加工会社「上海福喜食品」から商品を輸入していた問題を受けた安全管理体制の強化策を発表した。ほぼ全ての商品別に、原材料の最終加工国と原産国・地域を公開することなどを盛り込んだ。</p> <p>【チキンクリスピー、チキンエッグマフィン…中国製鶏肉使用の商品リスト】</p> <p>記者会見したカサノバ社長は「何よりも大切なお客様にご心配をおかけしたことを深くお詫び申し上げます」と謝罪する一方、「報道されている行為は絶対に許すことができない」と述べ、上海福喜の対応を非難した。・・・以上引用・yahoo・毎日＞</p>			
<p>ベネッセに転身された前社長の原田さんは、マックにそのまま留まっていたとしても結局は《謝罪会見》する運命だったのかしら？</p> <p>どっちの《会見》の方が、気が重くないかな？</p>			
<p>しかし、サラ・カサノバ社長さん「深くお詫び申し上げます」といいつつ、《頭が高い》のは、さすが《アメリカ流》というか・・・。</p> <p>《日本流》のお辞儀の角度まで決まっているのも大概ですが</p> <p>一瞬「指導してあげようか？」って（笑</p>	<p>Critical of the <u>absence of a bow while apologizing.</u></p>	<p>No Bow</p>	<p>Criticism of Apology Style</p>
<p>まあ、中間決算会見の《ついで》に、謝罪されたようですが・・・</p> <p>本人的には、《不本意》だったのかしら？</p>	<p>Criticism of <u>apology as part of the scheduled Earnings Announcement press conference.</u> Apology felt reluctant.</p>	<p>Late apology</p>	<p>Criticism of Apology Timing</p>

9.5 Appendix C1: Case Scenarios: Crisis Type Research

The Cases:	<u>Workplace Violence:</u>	<u>Terrorism/Tampering:</u>	<u>Technical Failure Accident:</u>	<u>Employee Misconduct:</u>
	In Akita Prefecture, three workers of a Heiwa Brand yogurt factory were hospitalized.	In Akita Prefecture, three people contracted a dangerous listeria infection after eating Heiwa Brand yogurt products.	In Akita Prefecture, three people contracted a dangerous listeria infection after eating Heiwa Brand yogurt products.	In Akita Prefecture, three people contracted a dangerous listeria infection after eating Heiwa Brand yogurt products.
Crisis Scenario	A police investigation revealed that a 42-year old Heiwa Brand employee had suddenly attacked several coworkers with a knife inflicting numerous stab wounds. All three victims are recovering well.	An independent investigation revealed that an unknown individual had injected listeria bacteria into Heiwa Brand Yogurt cups with a hypodermic needle at three separate convenience stores.	An independent investigation revealed that a technical failure on one production line had resulted in the listeria contamination of a small number of products. The report attributed the cause of the failure to an unusual manufacturing flaw in the equipment.	An independent investigation revealed that the listeria bacteria originated from a valve on the yogurt production line, which should have been cleaned regularly, but was not. Overall the report found hygiene standards at the plant to be severely lacking.
Informing and Adjusting Information	At a press conference on the next day, the company CEO expressed his heartfelt sympathy to affected individuals and their families.	Heiwa Brand immediately instructed its customers to discard any of its products and removed all Heiwa Brand products from shelves nationwide. At a press conference on the next day, the company CEO expressed his heartfelt sympathy to affected individuals and their families.	Heiwa Brand immediately instructed its customers to discard any of its products and removed all Heiwa Brand products from shelves nationwide. At a press conference on the next day, the company CEO expressed his heartfelt sympathy to affected individuals and their families.	Heiwa Brand immediately instructed its customers to discard any of its products and removed all Heiwa Brand products from shelves nationwide. At a press conference on the next day, the company CEO expressed his heartfelt sympathy to affected individuals and their families.
Culturally Matched Crisis Response Strategy	Rebuild= The CEO expressed deep regret for his employee's actions and went on to bow deeply in apology, pledging to compensate all victims and their families. The company promised to make all efforts to prevent such an incident from occurring again.	Rebuild = The CEO expressed deep regret for having betrayed his customers trust and went on to bow deeply in apology, pledging to compensate all victims and their families. The company promised to make all efforts to prevent such tampering from occurring again.	Rebuild = The CEO expressed deep regret for having betrayed his customers trust and went on to bow deeply in apology, pledging to compensate all victims and their families. The company promised to make all efforts to prevent such an accident from occurring again.	Rebuild = The CEO expressed deep regret for having betrayed his customers trust and went on to bow deeply in apology, pledging to compensate all victims and their families. The company promised to make all efforts to prevent such misconduct from occurring again.
SCCT Recommended	Victimage = The CEO stated: "We	Victimage = The CEO expressed	Diminish (excuse and justification) =	Rebuild = The CEO expressed

<p>Crisis Response Strategy</p>	<p>are deeply hurt by our employee's actions. Our trust was betrayed." The company went on to promise to make all efforts to prevent such an attack from occurring again.</p>	<p>his shock and outrage at this act of food terrorism and promised that this vicious attack on Heiwa Brand and its valued customers would not go unpunished. The company promised to make all efforts to prevent such tampering from occurring again.</p>	<p>The CEO went on to express his regret for this unfortunate accident and explained this type of internal manufacturing defect of the well-maintained production line had never occurred before and could not have been detected by current industry standard maintenance procedures. The company promised to make all efforts to ensure that such an accident could not occur again.</p>	<p>deep regret for having betrayed his customers trust and went on to bow deeply in apology, pledging to compensate all victims and their families. The company promised to make all efforts to prevent such misconduct from occurring again.</p>
---------------------------------	---	--	--	---

9.6 Appendix C2: Survey Content & Questionnaire (Japanese)

Crisis Communication Survey

企業の危機管理コミュニケーションに関するアンケート調査

西南学院大学大学院文学研究

カタリナ バークレー

指導教授：宮原哲

西南学院大学大学院コミュニケーション学専修博士後期課程で、会社の危機的コミュニケーションについて研究をしています。このたびはアンケートにご協力いただき、ありがとうございます。正解や誤りはありませんので、率直にお答えください。

このアンケートの結果は博士論文のデータとして使用しますが、皆様の個人的情報を含みそれ以外の用途で使用することはありません。担当の先生によっては授業のボーナス点として加算されることもあります。また、回答者の中から抽選で1名の方に1万円、3名の方々に1,000円のAmazonギフト券をお送りします。ご協力、どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。

1) 性別*

女

男

答えたくない

2) 年齢

17

...

85+

3) 国籍

() 日本

() 日本以外

4) Amazon ギフト券の抽選に参加したい方は、メールアドレスを入力してください。（個人的情報はそれ以外の用途で使用することはありません）

5) 先生にあなたのアンケート調査への協力を知らせたい場合は、先生の名前と学籍番号を入力してください。

例：[福岡先生 s16AF001]

[Examples of scenarios with crisis response]

従業員襲撃事件 [Workplace Violence: Matched Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県の平和ブランドヨーグルトの工場の職員3人が入院した。山根警察によると42歳の平和社員の容疑者が同僚をナイフで攻撃し、いくつかの刺し傷を負わせた。平和社によると、3人の被害者は早くも回復していることが分かった。翌日の記者会見では、会社の代表取締役が「被害に遭った方々とその家族に対する心からのお見舞い」を述べた。代表取締役は、社員の悲惨な行動に対する深い遺憾の意を示し、謝罪のために深々と頭を下げ、また被害者とその家族全員を補償すると約束した。同社は、このような事件が二度と起こらないようあらゆる努力をすると述べた。

従業員襲撃事件 [Workplace Violence: SCCT response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県の平和ブランドヨーグルトの工場の職員3人が入院した。山根警察によると42歳の平和社員の容疑者が同僚をナイフで攻撃し、いくつかの刺し傷を負わせた。平和社によると、3人の被害者が早くも回復していることが分かった。翌日の記者会見では、会社の代表取締役が「被害を被った人々とその家族に対する心からのお見舞い」を述べた。続いて、代表取締役は「社員の悲惨な行動で弊社は深く傷つけられた。信頼が裏切られた」と述べた。同社は、このような事件が二度と起こらないようにあらゆる努力をすると述べた。

従業員襲撃事件 [Workplace Violence: No Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県の平和ブランドヨーグルトの工場の職員3人が入院した。山根警察によると42歳の平和社員の容疑者が同僚をナイフで攻撃し、いくつかの刺し傷を負わせた。平和社によると、3人の被害者は早くも回復していることが分かった。

ヨーグルトに異物混入 [Tampering: Matched Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、何者かが3店舗のコンビニで平和ブランドヨーグルトのカップに皮下針でリステリア菌を注入したことが判明。平和社は早急に商品を破棄するようにと顧客に伝え、商品を全国的に自主回収した。翌日の記者会見では、会社の代表取締役が「被害に遭った方々とその家族に対する心からのお見舞い」を述べた。代表取締役は、顧客の信頼を裏切ったことに対する深い遺憾の意を示し、謝罪のために深々と頭を下げ、また被害者とその家族全員を補償すると約束した。同社は、このような異物混入が二度と起こらないようにあらゆる努力をすると述べた。

ヨーグルトに異物混入 [Tampering: SCCT Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、何者かが3店舗のコンビニで平和ブランドヨーグルトのカップに皮下針でリステリア菌を注入したことが判明。平和社は早急に商品を破棄するようにと顧客に伝え、商品を全国的に自主回収した。翌日の記者会見では、会社の代表取締役が「被害に遭った方々とその家族に対する心からのお見舞い」を述べた。代表取締役はこのような食品テロにあったことへのショックと強い憤りを表し、大事な顧客への凶悪な攻撃は決して許されるものではないと述べた。同社は、このような異物混入が二度と起こらないようにあらゆる努力をすると述べた。

ヨーグルトに異物混入 [Tampering: No Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、何者かが3店舗のコンビニで平和ブランドヨーグルトのカップに皮下針でリステリア菌を注入したことが判明。

異物混入事故 [Accident: Matched Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、1つの生産ラインにおける技術的な問題によって、少数の商品にリステリア菌が混入したことが発覚。原因は、機器の製造上の異常欠陥によるものとみられる。平和社は早急に商品を破棄するようにと顧客に伝え、商品を全国的に自主回収した。翌日の記者会見では、会社の代表取締役が「被害に遭った方々とその家族に対する心からのお見舞い」を述べた。代表取締役は、顧客の信頼を裏切ったことに対する深い遺憾の

意を示し、謝罪のために深々と頭を下げ、また被害者とその家族全員を補償すると約束した。
同社は、このような事件が二度と起こらないようにあらゆる努力をすると述べた。

異物混入事故 [Accident: SCCT Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、1つの生産ラインにおける技術的な問題によって、少数の商品にリステリア菌が混入したことが発覚。原因は、機器の製造上の異常欠陥によるものとみられる。平和社は早急に商品を破棄するようにと顧客に伝え、商品を全国的に自主回収した。翌日の記者会見では、会社の代表取締役が「被害に遭った方々とその家族に対する心からのお見舞い」を述べた。代表取締役は、このような事件が起こってしまったことへの遺憾の意を示し、メンテナンスが行き届いた生産ラインでこのような内部製造上の欠陥はかつて生じたことはなく、現在の業界標準のメンテナンス手順では検出できなかったと説明した。同社は、このような事件が二度と起こらないようにあらゆる努力をすると述べた。

異物混入事故 [Accident: No Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、1つの生産ラインにおける技術的な問題によって、少数の商品にリステリア菌が混入したことが発覚。原因は、機器の製造上の異常欠陥によるものとみられる。

生産ライン不適切管理 [Misconduct: Matched Response = SCCT Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、リステリア細菌はヨーグルト生産ラインのバルブから生じたもので、定期的な洗浄を怠っていたため発生したとみられる。工場の衛生基準が総合的

に低かったことが確認できた。平和社は早急に商品を破棄するようにと顧客に伝え、商品を全国的に自主回収した。翌日の記者会見では、会社の代表取締役が「被害に遭った方々とその家族に対する心からのお見舞い」を述べた。代表取締役は、顧客の信頼を裏切ったことに対する深い遺憾の意を示し、謝罪のために深々と頭を下げ、また被害者とその家族全員を補償すると約束した。同社は、このような不祥事が二度と起こらないようあらゆる努力をすると述べた。

生産ライン不適切管理 [Misconduct: No Response]

9/14(金) 11:39 配信

秋田県で3名が、平和ブランドのヨーグルト製品を食べた後、危険性の高いリステリア感染症にかかった。独自調査によると、リステリア細菌はヨーグルト生産ラインのバルブから生じたもので、定期的な洗浄を怠っていたため発生したとみられる。工場の衛生基準が総合的に低かったことが確認できた。

* この事件の深刻度を示してください。[No response scenarios only]

深刻でない	とても深刻
-------	-----------	-------

6) この事件についてどう思いますか。

	全く同意 できない	同意でき ない	どちらと もいえな い	同意でき る	非常に同 意できる
今回の危機は会社ではなく、周りの状況に引き起こされた。	()	()	()	()	()

この危機は会社のせいである。	()	()	()	()	()
この危機は周りの状況のせいである。	()	()	()	()	()
この危機は会社の責任である。	()	()	()	()	()

7) この危機の原因について考えてください。原因は_____

会社が管理できる	*****	会社は管理できない
会社のある一面を表している	*****	周囲の状況のある一面を表している
会社の意志の下にある	*****	会社の意志の下にない
他の誰かの意志の下にある	*****	他の誰かの意志の下にない
会社の内側にある	*****	会社の外面にある
他の誰かが自由勝手にできる	*****	他の誰も自由勝手にできない
会社に関するものである	*****	会社以外に関するものである
会社が自由勝手にできる	*****	会社が自由勝手にできない
他の誰かが管理できる	*****	他の誰も管理できない

8) 以下の項目はどの程度当てはまりますか。

	全く同意 できない	同意で きない	どちら ともい えない	同意で きる	非常に 同意で きる
この会社は社会が健全であることに 関心をもっている。	()	()	()	()	()
この会社は基本的に不誠実である。	()	()	()	()	()
私は、この会社が事件について 真実を語っているとは信用しない。	()	()	()	()	()
おおかたの場合、この会社の 言うことは信じられる。	()	()	()	()	()
この会社は社会の健全に関心 がない。	()	()	()	()	()
私は、この会社について 良い印象を持ちます。	()	()	()	()	()
私は、この会社を信頼します。	()	()	()	()	()
この会社は、対人関係の方法 について高い基準を維持している。	()	()	()	()	()
この会社はよく管理されている。	()	()	()	()	()

9) 以下の項目はどの程度当てはまりますか。

	全く同意 できない	同意で きない	どちら ともい えない	同意で きる	非常に 同意で きる
この会社の危機処理方法 は、不適當であった。	()	()	()	()	()
この会社は、この危機に うまく対応した。	()	()	()	()	()
この会社は、危機対応方 法に失敗した。	()	()	()	()	()
この会社の危機管理の方 法は、日本の典型だっ た。	()	()	()	()	()

Thank You

9.7 Appendix D1: Sample of Visual Stimulus Materials



9.8 Appendix D2: Case Scenarios (English)

Case Scenario:

Over the last week a number of former guests of three hotels (Naha, Miyazaki, Kumamoto) of the international hotel chain ABC Hotel and Resort have come forward with complaints of skin irritation after using the hotel provided amenities. A subsequent investigation by the hotel chain has revealed that a regional supply manager had switched to a new, non-Japanese low-cost supplier of shampoo and body soap at the beginning of the month. The new products did not conform to Japanese product standards and caused mild skin irritation in some individuals.

Foreigner English Unmatched (FEU): Hotel chain CEO, Michael Cane provided an English language statement at a press conference addressing the crisis. He was accompanied by a Japanese interpreter.

Foreigner English Matched (FEM): Hotel chain CEO, Michael Cane provided an English language statement at an apology press conference addressing the crisis. He was accompanied by a Japanese interpreter.

Japanese English Unmatched (JEU): Hotel chain CEO, Aoki Takehiko provided an English language statement at a press conference addressing the crisis. He was accompanied by a Japanese interpreter.

Japanese English Matched (JEM): Hotel chain CEO, Aoki Takehiko provided an English language statement at an apology press conference addressing the crisis. He was accompanied by a Japanese interpreter.

Foreigner Japanese Unmatched (FJU): Hotel chain CEO, Michael Cane provided a Japanese language statement at press conference addressing the crisis.

Foreigner Japanese Matched (FJM): Hotel chain CEO, Michael Cane provided a Japanese language statement at an apology press conference addressing the crisis.

Japanese Japanese Unmatched (JJU): Hotel chain CEO, Aoki Takehiko provided a statement at a press conference addressing the crisis.

Japanese Japanese Matched (JJM): Hotel chain CEO, Aoki Takehiko provided a statement at an apology press conference addressing the crisis.

9.9 Appendix D3: Survey Content & Questionnaire (Japanese)

Crisis Communication Survey

企業の危機管理コミュニケーションに関するアンケート調査

西南学院大学大学院文学研究

カタリナ バークレー

指導教授：宮原哲

西南学院大学大学院コミュニケーション学専修博士後期課程で、会社の危機的コミュニケーションについて研究をしています。このたびはアンケートにご協力いただき、ありがとうございます。正解や誤りはありませんので、率直にお答えください。

このアンケートの結果は博士論文のデータとして使用しますが、皆様の個人的情報を含みそれ以外の用途で使用することはありません。担当の先生によっては授業のボーナス点として加算されることもあります。また、回答者の中から抽選で1名の方に1万円、3名の方々に1,000円のAmazonギフト券をお送りします。ご協力、どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。

性別： 女 男

年齢： _____ 国籍： 日本 日本以外

Amazon ギフト券の抽選に参加したい方は、メールアドレスを入力してください。（個人的情報はそれ以外の用途で使用することはありません）

先生にあなたのアンケート調査への協力を知らせたい場合は、先生の名前と学籍番号を入力してください。例：[福岡先生 s16AF001]

ABC ホテルアンドリゾート不祥事

この1週間、ABC ホテルアンドリゾートという国際ホテルチェーンの那覇、宮崎、熊本のホテルに宿泊したお客さまから、ホテルの客室に備え付けてあったアメニティを使った結果、肌荒れを起こしたという苦情が何件も寄せられています。その後の当ホテルチェーンの調査によって、地域購買責任者が新しい、日本以外の、そして品質の低いシャンプーとボディークリームに今月の初めに切り替えていたことが判明しました。この商品は日本で定める品質基準を満たしておらず、その結果個人によっては肌荒れの原因となることが分かりました。

[Foreigner English Unmatched]

ホテルチェーンのマイケル・ケーン社長が英語で今回の問題に関して記者会見で日本語の通訳士を通じて話をしました。

[Foreigner English Matched]

ホテルチェーンのマイケル・ケーン社長が英語で今回の問題に関して謝罪会見で日本語の通訳士を通じて話をしました。

[Japanese English Unmatched]

ホテルチェーンの青木岳彦社長が英語で今回の問題に関して記者会見で日本語の通訳士を通じて話をしました。

[Japanese English Matched]

ホテルチェーンの青木岳彦社長が英語で今回の問題に関して謝罪会見で日本語の通訳士を通じて話をしました。

[Foreigner Japanese Unmatched]

ホテルチェーンのマイケル・ケーン社長が日本語で今回の問題に関して記者会見で話をしました。

[Foreigner Japanese Matched]

ホテルチェーンのマイケル・ケーン社長が日本語で今回の問題に関して謝罪会見で話をしました。

[Japanese Japanese Unmatched]

ホテルチェーンの青木岳彦社長が今回の問題に関して記者会見で話をしました。

[Japanese Japanese Matched]

ホテルチェーンの青木岳彦社長が今回の問題に関して謝罪会見で話をしました。

[Image Captions]

画像 [記者会見で謝罪するマイケル・ケーン社長]

画像 [記者会見で話をするマイケル・ケーン社長]

画像 [記者会見で謝罪する青木岳彦社長]

画像 [記者会見で話をする青木岳彦社長]

社長は、_____です。	日本人	外国人
社長の言語は、_____です。	日本語	英語

<p>社長は、</p> <p>すべての危機責任を否定した。</p>	<p><< < o > >></p> <p>• • • • •</p>	<p>すべての危機責任を負った。</p>
-----------------------------------	---	----------------------

社長についてのあなたの正直な印象を教えてください（示してください）

聡明である	• • • • •	聡明ではない
専門家である	• • • • •	専門家ではない
見識が狭い	• • • • •	見識が広い
有能	• • • • •	無能
頭がいい	• • • • •	頭が悪い
不誠実	• • • • •	誠実
自己中心的ではない	• • • • •	自己中心的である
同情的	• • • • •	冷淡
人柄が良い	• • • • •	人柄が良くない
信頼できない	• • • • •	信頼できる
悪徳	• • • • •	高潔
訓練していない	• • • • •	訓練している

社長は、…

私と似た道德感	• • • • •	私とは違う道德感
私の価値観を共有している。	• • • • •	私の価値観を共有していない
人との接し方が私と似ている。	• • • • •	人との接し方が私とは似ていない
容貌が私と似ている。	• • • • •	容貌が私とは違う
外見が私と似ている	• • • • •	外見が私とは違う

全く同意
できない
1

同意
できない
2

どちらとも
いえない
3

同意
できる
4

非常に同意
できる
5

この会社は社会が健全であることに關心をもっている。	1	2	3	4	5
この会社は基本的に不誠実である。	1	2	3	4	5
私は、この会社が事件について真実を語っているとは信用しない。	1	2	3	4	5
おおかたの場合、この会社の言っていることは信じられる。	1	2	3	4	5
この会社は社会の健全に關心をもっていない。	1	2	3	4	5
私は、この会社について良い印象を持ちます。	1	2	3	4	5
私は、この会社を信頼します。	1	2	3	4	5
この会社は、対人関係の方法について高い基準を維持している。	1	2	3	4	5
この会社はよく管理されている。	1	2	3	4	5
私は、ABC ホテルとリゾートホテルに滞在する。	1	2	3	4	5

この会社の危機処理方法は、不適當であった。	1	2	3	4	5
この会社は、この危機にうまく対応した。	1	2	3	4	5
この会社は、危機対応方法に失敗した。	1	2	3	4	5
この会社の危機管理の方法は、日本の典型だった。	1	2	3	4	5

Thank You