

Chapter 16

Kabuki as Multiple Narrative Structures

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ABSTRACT

This chapter seeks to undertake a comprehensive survey and analysis of “kabuki” to aim to explore a narrative generation-reception and narrative production-consumption model of “kabuki” from the viewpoint of an information system, and in particular, a narrative generation system. A fundamental concept of the modeling is “multiplicity,” or multiple narrative structures. In addition, the author associates the model to the concept of the “Geino Information System: GIS,” representing a system model in which multiple narrative generation and production mechanisms or processes are included. This chapter also presents introductory knowledge on “kabuki”, including the history and basic terms, as background for the discussion.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to survey and analyze *kabuki* in order to explore and create a “narrative generation-reception model” or a “narrative production-consumption model” of *kabuki* from the viewpoint of an information system or, in particular, a narrative generation system. A fundamental concept applied to this task is that of “multiplicity” or “multiple narrative structures” in *kabuki*. In addition, this chapter seeks to bridge a comprehensive survey and analysis of *kabuki* based on the concept of multiplicity or multiple narrative structures with a more generalized conceptual model, including both narrative generation-reception and production-consumption processes.

The synthesized narrative generation architecture that the author has been designing and developing, i.e., the “Integrated Narrative Generation System: INGS” (Ogata, 2010; Akimoto & Ogata, 2014), forms the background of this study. Moreover, it represents an objective into which the results of this study can be fed. The INGS has been explained in detail in the introductory chapter of this book. It is a basic or fundamental system that has a narrative generation process by a single subject operating on a basis similar to that of an individual human being. However, the ultimate goal of the author’s narra-

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tive generation project, including the development of INGS, is to involve one or more INGSs to realize various narrative generation application systems and social distribution mechanisms using automatic narrative generation functions, etc. By social distribution, the author means mechanisms to be linked to a new type of business model for social applications using the WWW for the narrative generation system itself, a content business mechanism using narrative generation functions, etc. This chapter anticipates the relevant concepts and directions for the future social distribution of INGS through exploring and constituting a narrative generation model of *kabuki*.

In particular, the conceptual model referred to as the “*Geino* Information System: GIS” (Amino, Kawamura, & Ogata, 2002; Kawamura & Ogata, 1997, 2000, 2002) is associated to INGS in this plan. Although the Japanese word *geino* carries the meaning of entertainment and amusement, it simultaneously has complex and historical signification that includes elements from Shinto shrine rituals and magical tradition. The GIS is designed to be a system model in which multiple narrative generation and production mechanisms or processes perform a social level task using one or more INGSs. It is a framework in which various levels of narrative generation processes can be driven by the authors, receivers, characters, actors, and actresses included in the system. In short, INGS and GIS are designed, respectively, to correspond to narrative generation-reception and narrative production-consumption as an entire system. A *kabuki* play is a collection of multiple narratives built around original scenarios, authentic and related histories, and the actors’ private scenes. It is intended for the construction to be connected with plans for a future narrative generation system comprising several other narrative generation systems. This chapter will explore the conceptual design of the “GIS including INGS” by surveying and analyzing *kabuki* according to the concept of multiplicity and multiple narrative structures.

This study is also related to the “Expanded Literary Theory: ELT” (Ogata, 2002, 2014) that was described in the introductory chapter to this book, which provides some of the background for the author’s research and development project, insofar as this intends to study *kabuki* as a literary and artistic genre using a computational approach. Although narrative generation studies have generally focused on formal mechanisms, it is anticipated that the contents to be represented or used by such formal mechanism are an important factor of narrative generation research in the future. Additionally, tackling Japan’s unique art genre of *kabuki* represents a step in a new direction in cultural approaches to narrative generation. Cultural elements will be used to form a characteristic for each narrative generation system. The *geino* in GIS is strongly associated with a historical flow of artistic tradition in Japanese culture, in which *kabuki* is rooted as a representative genre.

BACKGROUND

This section introduces the following two background models relating to GIS and INGS, respectively: multiple narrative structures and narrative generation.

The Model of Multiple Narrative Structures and GIS

Multiple narrative structures refer to a conceptual model by which a narrative text is multiply constituted; at the same time, the narrative generation process is also multiply executed. For example, a narrative text involves several subjects, such as a narrator inside the narrative and an author outside

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