Volume Proposal

The Handbook of Japanese Sociolinguistics
(Volume editors: Yoshiyuki Asahi, Mayumi Usami, and Fumio Inoue)

1. Editors’ profiles

Yoshiyuki Asahi (Ph.D., Osaka University, 2004)

Mayumi Usami (Ed.D., Harvard University, 1999)

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2. **Timeline**

January 2015: First Submission from the authors  
April 2015: Internal review  
Summer and Fall 2015: Rewriting, and copy-editing  
January 2016: Submission of editor-reviewed complete manuscripts  

3. **Significance and goals of this volume**

This volume is the first comprehensive survey of the sociolinguistic studies on Japanese. Japanese, like other languages, has developed a highly diverse linguistic system that is realized as variation shaped by interactions of linguistic and social factors. This volume primarily focuses on both classic and current topics of sociolinguistics that were first studied in western languages, and then subsequently examined in the Japanese language. The topics in this volume cover major issues in sociolinguistics that also characterize sociolinguistic features of Japanese. Such topics as gender, honorifics, and politeness are particularly pertinent to Japanese, as is well-known in general sociolinguistics. At the same time, this volume includes studies on other topics such as social stratification, discourse, contact, and language policy, which have been widely conducted in the Japanese context. Their achievements would make typological contributions to the understanding of sociolinguistics in general. In addition, this volume introduces “domestic” approaches to sociolinguistics developed in Japan. They emerged a few decades before the development of the so-called Labovian and Hymesian sociolinguistics in the US, and they have shaped a unique development of sociolinguistic studies in Japan. This volume, covering both the issues of general sociolinguistics and the special features of sociolinguistic studies in Japan, is highly unique, and there is no comparable book on Japanese sociolinguistics of this scope in the market. The authors of the articles in this handbook are all leading experts of international or domestic fame. The academic quality of the volume will be insured by the peer review of the manuscripts among the contributors and the volume editors.

4. **Organization of the book**

The book comprises a total of twenty-three chapters that elaborate on major sociolinguistic topics related to the Japanese language. Each chapter will be written according to the shared structure of literature review, case studies, discussions, and future perspectives on the topic covered.

The twenty-three chapters are grouped into four parts, based on the nature of the topics discussed and according to the accessibility of the readers. Part I, entitled “overview”, consists of four chapters that discuss major contributions of Japanese sociolinguistics. After a general overview of the description of the volume in Chapter 1, Chapters 2 to 4 survey the interactions between “domestic” and western sociolinguistic studies.

Part II “Social stratification and gender” consists of six chapters. Chapters 5 to 7 are concerned with classic approaches to the linguistic variation in Japanese. Chapters 8 to 10 deal with the feminist approaches to gender. Part III “Honorifics, politeness, and
discourse” is composed of seven chapters. Chapters 11 to 14 survey studies on the honorifics and politeness phenomena in Japanese. After presenting a traditional approach to honorifics in Chapters 11 and 12, Chapters 15 to 17 examine the current sociolinguistic approaches to discourse. Six chapters of Part IV “Contact and Policy” present research findings on the language/dialect contact in Chapters 18-21 and on the language policy and on Chinese characters in Chapters 22 and 23. These are summarized below, and the full content is presented in the form of abstract in Section 5.

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Part 1: Overview

Chapter 1: Contributions of Japanese sociolinguistics

Yoshiyuki Asahi (NINJAL), Mayumi Usami (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies), and Fumio Inoue (NINJAL)

This chapter elucidates how Japanese sociolinguistic research has contributed to the general theories of sociolinguistics. Due to the nature of Japanese as a language with high degrees of social, regional, stylistic, and contextual variation, numerous studies have been accumulated in Japan dealing with a variety of issues arising from language variation. While social stratification, contact, and language policy are classic research topics not only in Japan but also in other countries, gender and politeness in discourse are among the most extensively studied in Japan through collaboration with related disciplines such as feminist studies, sociology, psychology, and anthropology. This chapter introduces the reader to those topics of Japanese sociolinguistics that have potential to contribute to general linguistics.

Chapter 2: Research methodology

Florian Coulmas (German Institute for Japanese Studies)

This chapter presents a historical overview of how research methodologies in Japanese sociolinguistics have evolved. The earliest sociolinguistic studies in Japan focused on variation. They were undertaken to examine the applicability of hypotheses and theories developed by American and European researchers in and for sociolinguistic settings outside Japan. In a second phase, some original research methods were developed in Japan based on extensive empirical studies conducted by Japanese sociolinguists. Current Japanese sociolinguistics makes use of both research methods originating in Western countries and empirical procedures and analytic tools developed by Japanese scholars. This chapter aims to describe how these approaches were introduced into Japanese scholarship about language and society, and how they interact and complement each other.

Chapter 3: Interactions between US/Canada/UK and Japanese sociolinguistics

Yoshiyuki Asahi (NINJAL) and J.K. Chambers (University of Toronto)

This chapter gives a historical overview of how the sociolinguistic studies in the US, Canada, and the UK have interacted with ‘domestic’ sociolinguistics in Japan. It first outlines the history of sociolinguistics in these countries, and then explains how each country has developed its own framework. Secondly, this chapter takes up two case studies: Takesi Sibata’s work on dialect acquisition and NINJAL’s (the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics) work on real-time language change. The research methodology of the former has been critically examined by researchers working on English, whereas the latter is a pioneering study developed for the first time in the world. These research outcomes will be assessed to clarify how Japanese sociolinguistics has interacted with the related research in the West.

Chapter 4: Gengo seikatsu

Takehiro Shioda (NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute)
This chapter describes the notion and the scope of Gengo Seikatsu (lit. language art of living) studies in the context of ‘domestic’ sociolinguistics. Gengo Seikatsu as a discipline was first proposed by NINJAL in the very first facet of its research activities in the late 1940s. The term Gengo Seikatsu was accepted widely among the domestic sociolinguists until the late 1980s, when it was replaced by another terminology, i.e. Shakaigengogaku, or sociolinguistics, whose idea was heavily influenced by Western sociolinguistics. This chapter firstly shows how the scope of Gengo Seikatsu corresponds to such contemporary sociolinguistics approaches as variationist sociolinguistics and ethnography of speech/ethnomethodology. At the same time, this chapter discusses how much the notion of Gengo Seikatsu is related to the making of the language policy. This chapter will thirdly give two case studies, focusing on quantitative and qualitative Gengo Seikatsu studies in Matsue (NINJAL 1972). The quantitative study is illustrated from the questionnaire-based study, whose aim is to grasp the time the respondents spend talking with their family, listening to the radio, reading newspapers, and writing letters to their friends. The qualitative study, on the other hand, targets individuals’ behaviour in their daily life through the “24-hour survey”. Lastly, this chapter assesses the achievements and limitations of the Gengo Seikatsu studies.

Part II: Social stratification and Gender

Chapter 5: Style, prestige, and salience in language change in progress
Fumio Inoue (NINJAL)
This chapter examines intra- and inter-speaker factors such as style, prestige, and salience in the language change that is currently taking place in Japanese. Relevant concepts especially in ‘domestic’ sociolinguistics such as ‘neo-dialect,’ ‘new-dialect,’ and ‘quasi-standard’ are introduced together with representative case studies. In particular, variationist approaches to on-going language change in Tokyo Japanese are highlighted. By reviewing these approaches, this chapter clarifies the factors that motivate language change and discusses their relevance to the general issues of language change.

Chapter 6: Shūdango
Kazuko Miyake (Toyo University)
This chapter outlines the characteristics of shūdango (lit. ‘group language’) in Japanese, from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives. The notion of shūdango is defined by comparing similarities and differences with the notion of ‘sociolect’ or ‘social dialect’ in the Western sociolinguistic disciplines. The use of this Japanese term was originally restricted to jargon, argot, and professional language, but it was later broadened to apply to youngsters’ and students’ language, and further to the special language of digital media. This chapter examines the methodologies and achievements of the works dealing with the social groups under the purview of the shūdango research.

Chapter 7: Sex differences in Japanese
Yoshimitsu Ozaki (Notre Dame Seishin University)
This chapter deals with a ‘classic’ sociolinguistic topic concerning male-female differences. In Japanese, the male-female differences are manifested in linguistic
forms as well as in speaker’s awareness. After reviewing major works in the previous literature, this chapter will present an analytic framework and survey design, which will be implemented in an analysis of two concrete sets of data: (i) spontaneous speech data of 154 adults, and (ii) questionnaire-based data of 1,000 residents in Tokyo. The analysis will target such items as final particles (-na/-ne, etc.) and the first person pronouns (watasi/ore/boku, etc.). The conclusion will present some future perspectives on the study of sex differences in the language structure and in the speakers’ attitude.

Chapter 8 Japanese sociolinguistic approach to Gender
Orie Endo (Professor Emeritus, Bunkyo University) and Hideko Abe (Colby College)
Gender differences in Japanese have attracted researchers’ attention since the early stage of domestic sociolinguistics. This chapter reviews how they have been investigated within the framework of Japanese sociolinguistics. Beginning with the earliest research by such scholars as Sueo Kikuzawa (Kokugo isōron ‘Japanese sociolinguistics’, 1933), Yuriko Kunida (Nyobo Kotoba no Kenkyu ‘A study on the language of court ladies’, 1964), and Saburo Mashimo (Fujingo no Kenkyu ‘A study on the women’s speech’, 1948), this chapter traces the development of gender studies in Japanese linguistics and discusses the uniqueness of the gender language in Japanese in relation to other languages.

Chapter 9 Japanese language and gender in Western and Japanese contexts
Reynolds Akiba Katsue (University of Hawai‘i at Manoa)
The study of language and gender emerged during the seventies in the United States. Researchers immediately paid particular attention to Japanese, which had long been known as a language with “women’s language.” This chapter, after describing how the study of language and gender reached Japan, attempts to account for this salience by characterizing Japanese in terms of two fundamental concepts developed in the study of gender and language. Firstly, “self-genderization” as opposed to “other-genderization” is particularly dominant in Japanese; distinguishing female Self from male Self as typically seen in the first person pronouns and in various grammatical or sociolinguistic categories (e.g., particles, intonations, and pause fillers). Secondly, some of these differences are “sex-exclusive” (e.g., boku ‘I’ only for males and particle wa pronounced with a rising intonation only for females) rather than “sex-preferential.” This chapter also discusses attempts to deconstruct the principle of self-genderization, presenting the result of a questionnaire study about young female speakers’ use of male first person pronouns. The chapter concludes that genderization is much more systematically encoded in the structure of the language and is therefore more deeply rooted in the mind and heart of speakers in Japanese than in English and other European languages. It points out in conclusion that there are many symptoms that suggest that the principle of self-genderization is giving away.

Chapter 10 Feminist approaches to gender in Japanese sociolinguistics
Momoko Nakamura (Kanto Gakuin University)
This chapter aims to describe the major contributions of feminist studies to Japanese sociolinguistics. The first section introduces previous studies such as Mayumi Usami’s work on Japanese discourse from the feminist perspective, focusing on their implications to the theoretical frameworks, methodology and data of Japanese
sociolinguistics. The second section summarizes the history of the discourse studies, and investigates Japanese women’s language as a language ideology historically constructed by discourse (Inoue 2006, Nakamura 2007). It will be argued that the development of the notions of gender and sexuality in feminism and queer theory have had an important effect on the studies of the relationships of language, identity and ideology.

**Part III: Honorifics, Politeness, and Discourse**

**Chapter 11: Japanese honorifics**  
Takashi Nagata (Kinki University) and Yoshimi Miyake (Akita University)

This chapter focuses on Japanese honorifics from a number of perspectives. Firstly, the theoretical backgrounds on the categorization of the honorific systems in traditional Japanese linguistics are introduced. Secondly, sociolinguistic aspects of honorifics are discussed that influence the choice of particular honorific expressions based on the triad relationship among the speaker, the addressee and the referent. Several cases studies will be illustrated. Thirdly, studies on politeness theory will be discussed with a view to clarifying their contributions to Japanese sociolinguistics. Lastly, contrastive studies of Japanese honorifics with analogous expressions in other languages such as Chinese, English, and Korean are examined.

**Chapter 12: Intersection of traditional Japanese honorific theories and Western politeness theories**  
Masato Takiura (Reitaku University)

This chapter is intended to present a retrospective and prospective view on how research in Japanese honorifics has contributed, and will contribute, to general theories of politeness. Circumstances are analyzed which prevented the highly developed honorific system of Japanese from being a good field of research on politeness. In academic contexts around the end of the 19th century, Japanese honorification was labelled as a symbol of 'Japanese ethos', which led many early thinkers to emphasize the complexity of 'Japanese ways' of expressing respect to others. Outside this mainstream, there have been some pioneering alternatives that adopted pragmatic standpoints and regarded honorification as a means of indexing social relationships from the speaker's point of view. Abstracting the basic function of honorification as 'distancing' its targets, this latter approach has potential to account systematically for the ways in which expressing distance in accordance with the context results in communicating many different pragmatic connotations including deference. As Japanese society has been shifting farther away from rigid social stratification in the past three-quarters of a century, Japanese honorification is becoming more and more discursive in nature. Future research on this shift in the factors controlling the use of honorifics appears to contribute most to the general theories of politeness.

**Chapter 13: Intersection of discourse politeness theory and interpersonal communication**  
Mayumi Usami (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

This chapter aims to discuss intersection of studies on discourse-level politeness and interpersonal communication. The first part reviews politeness studies in both Western
and Japanese sociolinguistic contexts, by clearly distinguishing between descriptive and theoretical approaches. After examining the roles and significances of both these approaches, Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory and studies on Japanese honorifics are re-examined from the viewpoints of discourse-level theory of politeness and interpersonal communication. In the second part, Discourse Politeness Theory (DPT) is introduced with aims to broaden politeness research to encompass the concept of “relative politeness” in addition to “absolute politeness.” The notion of “relative politeness” permits explaining “impoliteness effects” within the same framework of Discourse Politeness Theory and constructing a universal theory of discourse (im)politeness, both as a system of the principles of motivations that induce (im)politeness strategies and as a system of the interpretations of (im)politeness in human interactions. Finally, the future direction of studies on politeness and interpersonal communication is suggested.

Chapter 14: Subjective expressions in Japanese discourse: Its development in Japanese and impact on general linguistics

Yoko Ujiie (Notre Dame Seishin University)

The target of discourse studies is in exploring exact linguistic processes that take place during the exchange of words between speaker and hearer. Since discourse is an outcome of dynamic exchange of participants’ mental states, it is essential to adopt cognitive and pragmatic approaches to investigate in detail the processes taking place in discourses. In particular, subjective expressions can be recognized to be a characteristic of Japanese, and detailed discussions of the processes of Japanese subjective expressions are of great importance. We first introduce a viewpoint developed by the Japanese grammarian Motoki Tokieda (1941, 1955), who took subjective and objective words/expressions as a starting point of analyzing languages. To investigate processes involved in Japanese subjective expressions in discourse, we discuss the structure of words/phrases that enfolds the speaker’s mental processes, in light of Ujiie’s (1986) cognitive theory of a generalized category of subjective words/phrases. We show how Japanese subjective expressions have been created and developed historically (Ujiie 1992). Contrasting these expressions to the ones in other languages including English, similar cognitive activities are hypothesized and illustrated by using paralanguage or subordinate clauses. Encoding or not encoding a particular cognitive or mental state reflects the differences in society (Ujiie 2011). Cognition-based analyses of Japanese have also been applied to other areas such as the honorifics research with successful results (Comrie 1978 and Levinson 1987, 1990). We argue important roles of this approach and potential impact on general linguistic analysis.

Chapter 15: Variation of Japanese discourse behaviours: Exploring discourse of cultural genres: Light novels and keetai novels

Senko K. Maynard (Rutgers University)

Taking a sociocultural view toward the concept of genre, this chapter discusses discourse, rhetorical, and interactional features in contemporary Japanese popular culture, specifically light novels and keetai novels. Firstly, this chapter positions these cultural genres in other genre, by claiming that traditional distinctions between written versus spoken are blurred, and a style “conversational written” is frequently observed. As the rich variations of speech styles play major roles in expressing speaker/writer attitudes and establishing dramatic persons’ and narrators’ “characters,” this chapter
pays a close attention to the creative use of language (in script, for humour, and for inter-genre expressivity) that characterizes contemporary Japanese cultural genres. This chapter further explores and emphasizes the importance of combining multiple analytical approaches for the analysis of real-life cultural products.

Chapter 16: Critical Discourse Analysis

Akira Satoh (Osaka University)

This chapter examines how the critical discourse analysis (CDA) deals with Japanese discourse. After briefly giving the definition of CDA as a type of discourse analytic research that tries to explain, rather than merely describe, specific structures or strategies of discourse through detailed and systematic analysis of text and talk, its salient features are highlighted in relation to its active engagement with social problems, in particular, social relations of power, dominance and inequality. The feasibility of the CDA in the analysis of Japanese will then be discussed against some concrete phenomena, such as Prime Minister Koizumi’s speech on postal privatization in terms of neo-liberal discourse (Izumi 2010) and the classroom activities applying CDA to PR on environmental issues (Kasuya 2011). The chapter will move on to make a critical review of the CDA studies in Japan, pointing out that they have been limited to media discourse, especially journalistic discourse (e.g., Satoh 2001, 2004, Takahashi 2005, Nunoo 2008, Kasuya 2012). This makes it necessary to develop CDA by incorporating variationist (quantitative) and critical approaches to discourse (Satoh 2001, 2004). This new approach enables us to show that speech representations in Japanese journalistic discourse reflect and reproduce the social structure of Japan and the identity of the Imperial Family. At the same time, it also reveals that journalists’ practice mirrors the Japanese media’s ideology that the Imperial Family belongs to a noble class.

Chapter 17: Socio-pragmatics of political discourse

Shoji Azuma (The University of Utah)

This chapter examines the socio-pragmatic features in the Japanese political discourse. After a brief sketch of the previous studies on the function of the political discourse such as “persuasive power” (Charteris-Black 2005) and specialist language (Gee 1999), this chapter looks into a comparative case study of public speeches by Japanese politicians in 1915 and 2013 in order to observe changes in discourse style over a century’s interval, if any, and what rhetorical strategies and framing were used then and now. The chapter focuses on Yukio Ozaki (1858-1954) and Junichiro Koizumi (1942-), both widely considered being exemplary speakers in their own time. The speeches will be analyzed using the theoretical constructs of report talk, a conversational style which seeks status over the audience, and rapport talk, a conversational style which seeks connection with the audience (Tannen, 1984).

Part IV: Language contact and Language policy

Chapter 18: Contact dialects of Japanese

Yoshiyuki Asahi (NINJAL)

This chapter reviews major studies on dialect contact within the context of Japanese sociolinguistics. Contacts among Japanese dialects will be discussed from two perspectives: (i) the standardization of a local dialect under the influence of Tokyo Japanese, and (ii) interactions of different local dialects. The latter include a high dialect...
contact situation that gives rise to a *koine* language. Additionally, this chapter pays particular attention to relatively new studies on dialect contact in such contexts as new towns, plantation society, cultivation communities, and the like to examine contact-induced language change. Comparison will be made with similar sociolinguistic settings in other languages in the UK (Kerswill and Williams 2000), Norway (Omdal 1977), and Fiji (Siegel 1987) to elucidate the uniqueness of the contact-induced changes in Japanese.

Chapter 19: Japanese loanword and ‘lendword’

Frank E. Daulton (Ryukoku University)

This chapter examines both linguistic and sociolinguistic outcomes of the linguistic borrowing and ‘lending’ especially between Japanese and English. This chapter starts with a definition of the loanwords and discusses the factors for the Japan’s borrowing from the English language. Linguistic phenomena of the borrowings are shown such as transliteration, phonological and grammatical transformation, semantic change, and so on. This chapter also examines the Japanese lendwords to the English language and shows linguistic phenomena such as shortening (truncation), lengthening and collocation, semantic extension or shift. Examples for both loanwords and lendwords will be shown to explain each phenomenon. This chapter lastly shows some future directions of research on both Japanese loanwords and lendwords mainly in English.

Chapter 20: Japanese language varieties outside Japan

Mie Hiramoto (National University of Singapore)

This chapter discusses varieties of Japanese used outside of Japan. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Japanese speakers emigrated for political, socioeconomic, and military reasons, bringing their language with them to many parts of the world including South America, the South Pacific, East Asia, and North America, specifically Hawai‘i and California. This chapter overviews the migratory movements to areas such as Hawai‘i, Canada, Brazil, Sakhalin, Taiwan and so forth. Linguistic descriptions in each area will be made to show the unique nature of Japanese. In particular, the degrees of the Japanese impact upon the local koine formation in each area will be examined in light of the ‘founder principle’ (Mufwene 1996).

Chapter 21: Contact languages in Japan

Daniel Long (Tokyo Metropolitan University)

In this chapter we examine language contact and contact languages in Japan, beginning with historical background including the 17th century contact variety of Ainu used by Japanese for trading with them, and the 19th century Open Ports Pidgin Japanese used among Western, Chinese and Japanese residents. We then focus on current usage in several language communities, including language mixing in the ethnic Chinese community of Yokohama, bilingualism in Southern Min and *Uchinaa-Yamatuguchi* (itself a contact language of Japanese and Okinawan), the Mixed Language used among the “Westerners” of the Bonin Islands and contact varieties used in the South American and Indonesian immigrant communities in Japan.

Chapter 22: Chinese Characters: Variation, policy, and landscape

Hiroyuki Sasahara (Waseda University)

This chapter looks into the sociolinguistic aspects of the Chinese characters used in
Japanese. Chinese characters, generally speaking, consist of sub-elements, which potentially lead to a huge number of variant writings in each sub-element. This chapter will firstly examine such variant writings of Chinese characters by paying particular attention to stylistic factors that cause them. Secondly, social factors influencing the character variation are discussed in relation to social class, region, occupation, gender, and age. Thirdly, the question of how the government’s language policy deals with the variation on Chinese characters will be addressed with special focus on personal names and such materials as publicity papers, newspapers, and letter of law.

Chapter 23: Language, economy, and nation

Katsumi Shibuya (Osaka University)

This chapter provides a brief sketch of the language policy, planning, and management of Japanese in relation to other languages spoken in Japan and in the world. The first section surveys principal inter-language problems in Japan and identifies the points of discussion from the viewpoint of language management theory. The second section presents an overview of management of Japanese in relation to other languages executed by the Japanese government from the Meiji era up to the present. The third section highlights societal multilingualism of present-day Japan and describes the current state of language management based on such data as immigration law, websites of national and local government, landscape of multilingual cities, and the varieties of publications related to multilingualism in Japan. The final section compares the language management of Japan with that of such multilingual countries as the U.S., Canada and Australia and tries to elucidate its characteristics by employing the ideas of language and ethnicity, language market, intellectual and emotional value of languages, and language loyalty.