

**JAPANESE SOCIOLINGUISTICS
POLITENESS AND WOMEN'S LANGUAGE***

Sachiko IDE

Japan Women's University, Tokyo

Received May 1982

The most interesting but recalcitrant issue in Japanese sociolinguistics is perhaps honorifics. In Japanese, honorifics are a morphologically well-defined system which is used to express politeness. There are various devices to express politeness in language, but honorifics are the core of Japanese polite expressions.

In this paper I will first present a description of the grammar of honorifics. Honorifics are used when social factors call for polite speech patterns; that is, when we refer to or address a respectable person or when formality is involved. I will then describe who a respectable person is and what formality is in Japanese society – the description here is given in the form of social rules for politeness. It is assumed that our polite behavior is controlled by such social rules. It is in terms of both the grammatical rules and the social rules of politeness that the communicative competence of honorifics is to be described.

In a discussion of polite language, women's language cannot be ignored, for one of the fairly wide-spread features of women's language is its politeness. Japanese women's speech, which has features distinct from men's speech, is no exception. For this reason, Japanese women's speech is briefly discussed to see what features contribute to make women's speech polite in Japanese. Following this discussion, universal features of polite speech are sought.

* The research presented here was supported in part by the Takahashi fellowship founded by the late Dr. Noriko Takahashi, to whom this paper is respectfully dedicated.

1. The structure of honorifics

Japanese polite expressions involve two kinds of honorifics, one expressed by means of changing the shape of nominal elements, and the other by predicative elements.¹ The former type is analogous to the polite expressions which occur in the category of address forms. The latter, on the other hand, is a rather more complex system in which not only the sociological nature of the nominal referent, but also the grammatical relation of such an element needs to be taken into consideration. In addition, the status of the addressee plays an important role in this latter system.

In this section, expressions such as 'respectable person' or 'a person worthy of the speaker's respect' are simply used without defining what constitutes such a person. This question will be taken up in the next section.

1.1. Honorification of nominal elements

Nouns undergo morphological modification when their referents are considered worthy of showing the speaker's respect. Such nouns may refer to people or objects. In this study, nouns and pronouns referring to people are called person referents.

Person referents

The complex forms of person referents in Japanese are roughly grouped into three categories: personal pronouns, names with titles, and professional ranks. They are used both as address forms and as the nominal elements of sentences such as subjects and objects.

In the following lists, in which only representative forms of person referents are presented, the honorific forms are marked with either one or two asterisks (two asterisks indicating a higher degree of honorification).

(1) Personal pronouns

	<i>men's speech</i>	<i>women's speech</i>
(a) first person ²	watakusi**	watakusi**
	watasi*	atakusi*
	boku	watasi
	ore	atasi

¹ For a detailed description of Japanese honorifics written in English, see Harada 1976, in which he discusses the grammar of honorifics in terms of transformational grammar.

² Strictly speaking, these first person pronominal forms are not the same as the other pronominal forms for they do not express the speaker's deference toward the referents.

(b) second person	anata		anata
	kimi		anta
	omae		
(c) third person	ano kata*	'that person'	ano kata*
	ano hito	'that person'	ano hito
	kare	'he'	kare
	kanozyo	'she'	kanozyo

(2) Names with titles (LN: last name; FN: first name)

(a) LN/FN/kinship terms + sama**

(e.g. Satoo-sama, Hanako-sama, otoo-sama 'father')

LN/FN/kinship terms + san*

(e.g. Satoo-san, Hanako-san, otoo-san)

LN/FN + kun (used mainly for male referents)

(e.g. Satoo-kun, Taroo-kun)

(b) (LN) + sensei** (e.g. Satoo-sensei)

(LN) + senpai** (e.g. Satoo-senpai)

Sensei literally means a teacher. But it is also used as a title not only for all kinds of teachers but also for other respectable professionals such as doctors, politicians, and writers. *Senpai* literally means a senior colleague. It is also used as a title in referring to a senior colleague in organizations of many types, e.g. student groups and company workers. *Sensei* and *senpai* can be used as personal referents without last names.

(3) Professional Ranks³

(LN) <i>syatyoo</i>	'president (of a company)'
(LN) <i>senmu</i>	'executive director (of a company)'
(LN) <i>butyoo</i>	'division chief (of a company)'
(LN) <i>katyoo</i>	'department chief (of a company)'
(LN) <i>gakutyoo</i>	'president (of a university)'
(LN) <i>gakubutyoo</i>	'dean (of a university)'
(LN) <i>kyoozyu</i>	'professor'

These professional ranks are either used independently or with last names (e.g. *syatyoo* or *Satoo-syatyoo*). Except for *kyoozyu*, these rank titles co-occur with *sama* and *san* (e.g. *syatyoo-sama*, *syatyoo-san*) with added respect.

Differentiation of these forms is better explained in terms of the notion of formality; the starred forms being used in formal speech.

³ When these rank titles are used by subordinate persons in reference to superiors, deference is expressed, but in the reverse situation only formality is involved.

Nouns with honorific prefixes

Nouns referring to objects may take the honorific prefixes *o* or *go*. *Go* generally goes with Sino-Japanese nouns (those that are borrowed from Chinese), while *o* occurs with other nouns; e.g. *hon*: *go-hon* 'book', *kane*: *o-kane* 'money'. These prefixes are attached to nouns that refer to objects that are linked with respectable persons. The most general case is when a noun refers to an object that is possessed by a respectable person (e.g. *sensei no hon*: *sensei no go-hon* 'teacher's book'). Another use of these prefixes involves a noun whose referent is produced by a respectable person (e.g. *sensei no go-sakuhin* 'teacher's work', *o-tegami* 'letter' used in reference to a letter written by a respectable person).

The prefixes *o* and *go* have variants such as *on* and *mi* which express a higher degree of deference and which co-occur only with specific nouns (e.g. *on-tyosyo* 'book', *mi-te* 'hand').

1.2. Honorification of predicative elements

Honorification of predicative elements can be divided into two types – referent honorifics and addressee honorifics. Referent honorifics occur when the noun phrases of a sentence refer to someone respectable. However, in this case, morphological modification applies not to the noun phrases themselves (as it was the case with the honorification of nominal elements discussed above), but to predicative elements. Addressee honorifics also entail morphological modification of a predicative element when the speaker's deference toward the addressee is expressed.

Referent honorifics

Referent honorifics are further divided into two types. When the subject noun phrase is concerned, one type of honorific form is used. This type is called subject honorifics (SH). Another honorific form occurs when non-subject noun phrases are concerned. This type is called object honorifics (OH).

Subject honorifics

Subject honorifics involve the prefix *o* (*go* in the case of Sino-Japanese predicates) and the ending *ni naru* which is attached to the infinitive form of a verb. Only the prefix is attached when the predicate is an adjective or a nominal adjective.

- (4a) Taroo wa eki made arui -ta.
TOP station to walk PAST
'Taro walked to the station.'
- (4b) Satoo-sensei wa eki made o-aruki ni nat-ta.
'Prof. Sato walked to the station.' (Prof. Sato exalted)
- (5a) Taroo wa isogasii.
busy (adj.)
'Taro is busy.'
- (5b) Satoo-sensei wa o-isogasii.
'Prof. Sato is busy.'
- (6a) Taroo wa genki -da.
high-spirited COPULA
(nom. adj.)
'Taro is high-spirited.'
- (6b) Satoo-sensei wa o-genki da.
'Prof. Sato is high-spirited.'
- (7a) Taroo wa rippa -da.
admirable
(nom. adj.)
'Taro is admirable.'
- (7b) Satoo-sensei wa go-rippa-da.
'Prof. Sato is admirable.'

There are a number of irregular or suppletive SH forms. Sino-Japanese verbals consist of S-J nouns and the verb *suru* 'do'. When these forms undergo subject honorification *suru* is supplemented by *nasaru* or by the super-honorific form *asobasu*.

- (8a) Taroo wa ryokoo si-ta.
travel
'Taro traveled.'
- (8b) Satoo-sensei wa go-ryokoo nasat-ta.
'Prof. Sato traveled.'
- (8c) Satoo-sensei wa go-ryokoo asobasi-ta.

Nasaru and *asobasu* may be used to replace the regular SH ending *ni naru*.

Other suppletive forms are far more idiosyncratic and need to be learned separately.

- (9) $\left. \begin{array}{l} iku \text{ 'go'} \\ iru \text{ 'exist'} \\ kuru \text{ 'come'} \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} o \text{ ide ni naru} \\ irassiyaru \end{array}$
 $\left. \begin{array}{l} kuru \text{ 'come'} \end{array} \right\} \begin{array}{l} o \text{ kosi ni naru} \\ o \text{ mie ni naru} \end{array}$

<i>kureru</i>	'give' (in-giving)	<i>kudasaru</i>
<i>miru</i>	'see'	<i>go ran ni naru</i>
<i>iu</i>	'say'	<i>ossyaru</i>

Besides these *o...ni naru* SH forms, there is a productive SH verb ending. The suffix (*r*)*are* (homophonous with the passive suffix) may be attached to a verb to obtain a SH form.

(10a) Taroo ga hon o kai -ta.
 NOM ACC write
 'Taro wrote a book.'

(10b) Satoo-sensei ga hon o kak-are-ta.
 'Prof. Sato wrote a book.'

Along with SHs, an adverb may be converted into an honorific form with the prefixes *o* and *go* when it modifies the activity of a respectable person.

(11a) Satoo-sensei wa o-hayaku o-kaeri ni nai-ta.
 early (ad.) return
 'Prof. Sato returned early.'

(11b) Satoo-sensei no musuko-san wa go-rippa-ni go-seityoo nasat-ta.
 son remarkably well grow
 'Prof. Sato's son grew up remarkably well.'

Subject honorifics as described above are what is called *sonkeigo*, literally meaning 'respect language' in traditional grammar. On the other hand, object honorifics, to be presented below, are called *kenzyoogo*, meaning 'humble language'. These terms represent the speaker's attitude toward the referent; i.e. by *sonkeigo* the speaker's respectful or deferential attitude toward the subject referent is expressed while by *kenzyoogo* the speaker's humble attitude toward the object referent is expressed.

Object honorifics

Object honorifics involve the prefix *o* (*go*) and the ending *suru* attached to the infinitive form of a verb.

(12a) Watasi wa Taroo ni sono wake o tazune-ta.
 DAT its reason ask
 'I asked Taro the reason.'

(12b) Watasi wa Satoo-sensei ni sono wake o o-tazune si-ta.
 'I asked Prof. Sato the reason.'

When Sino-Japanese verbals undergo object honorification, the prefix *o* is replaced by *hai*. (*Hai* means to bow one's head, while *o* is a prefix to raise the status of the referent.)

(13a) Watasi wa Taroo no syasin o mi-ta.
 POSS photo see

'I saw Taro's photo.'

(13b) Watasi wa Satoo-sensei no o-syasin o hai-ken si-ta.
 S-J morpheme
 of 'see'

'I saw Prof. Sato's photo.'

There are some idiosyncratic suppletive forms.

(14) *iku* 'go' } *ukagau*
 kiku 'hear' }
 au 'meet' } *omenikakaru*
 morau 'receive' } *itadaku*
 tyoodaisuru
 siru 'know' } *zonziajeru*
 yaru 'give' } *ageru*
 sasiajeru

(The status of these forms is subject to changes. In the last few decades *ageru* has become a plain form and is now used as an honorific only among older generations.)

Addressee honorifics

The addressee honorific is what is called *teineigo* 'polite language' in traditional grammar. As illustrated below, it can be applied independently of the referent honorific.

(15a) Taroo ga ki -ta. (plain)
 come

'Taro came.'

(15b) Taroo ga ki masi-ta. (addressee honorific)

(15c) Satoo-sensei ga ki-ta. (plain)

'Prof. Sato came.'

(15d) Satoo-sensei ga irassyat-ta. (subject honorific)

(15e) Satoo-sensei ga ki masi-ta. (addressee honorific)

(15f) Satoo-sensei ga irassyai masi-ta. (subject and addressee honorifics)

In actual speech events, however, the addressee often coincides with the referent.

- (16) Anata wa *irassyai masu* ka. (subject and addressee honorifics)
QUESTION

'Are you coming?'

As shown in examples (15) and (16), AHs are realized with the *masu* ending.

The AH form of the copula *da* is *desu*, or *degozaimasu*, a super-honorific form.

- (17a) Taroo wa *gakusei da*.
student
'Taro is a student.'
(17b) Taroo wa *gakusei desu*.
(17c) Taroo wa *gakusei degozaimasu*.
(18a) Taroo wa *genki da*.
(18b) Taroo wa *genki desu*.
(18c) Taroo wa *genki degozaimasu*.

Humble forms

There are forms which neither exalt the referent nor respect the addressee, but humble the speaker.

- (19a) Watasi ga *iku*.
go
'I will go.'
(19b) Watasi ga *mairu*.
humble form of 'go'

Mairu is not honorific, as it shows the addressee the modesty of the speaker by humbling the speaker's behavior. It is, in principle, independent of AHs, and therefore the following type of expression is possible.

- (20) Saa *mairu zo*.
now
'Now, (I'm) going.'

Zo is a sentence final particle for confirmation used in plain speech addressed to an inferior. Thus, the use of humble forms does not necessarily entail polite speech.

- (21) *iku* 'go' } *mairu*
kuru 'come' }
omou 'think' } *zonzu*
siru 'know' }

<i>aru</i>	'exist'	<i>gozaru</i>
<i>iru</i>	'exist'	<i>oru</i>
<i>iu</i>	'say'	<i>moosu</i>
<i>suru</i>	'do'	<i>itasu</i>

In modern speech forms such as *zonzu* and *gozaru* are seldom used by themselves. Expressions like these are only used in a *samurai* movie by a *samurai*. In modern speech they occur generally with the addressee honorific ending *masu*, e.g. *watasi ga mairi masu*, as an expression of a higher degree of politeness toward the addressee.

The humble forms also co-occur with object honorific forms, and in such combinations a higher degree of respect is expressed toward the object referents.

- (22a) Watasi wa Satoo-sensei ni sono wake o *o-tazune moosi-age masi-ta*.
'I asked Prof. Sato the reason.'
(22b) Watasi wa Satoo-sensei ni sono wake o *o-tazune itasi masi-ta*.

In these examples, the humble forms *moosi-ageru* and *itasu* replace *suru* of the regular object honorific form *o...suru*.

There are humble prefixes such as *gu* 'stupid', *syoo* 'small', *setu* 'bad', and others which are prefixed to certain nouns. Unlike *o* and *go*, which almost freely prefix to any word, the use of these prefixes is limited to specific words. The prefixes, moreover, are used with Sino-Japanese counterparts of such words.

- (23) *tuma* 'wife' *gu-sai* 'my (stupid) wife'
musuko 'son' *gu-soku* 'my (stupid) son'
mise 'shop' *syoo-ten* 'my (small) shop'
bun 'sentence' *setu-bun* 'my (bad) sentences'

These humble forms are used only in referring to the speaker's belongings and thus *gu-sai*, for example, literally means 'stupid wife' but in fact only means 'my wife' with humble connotation.

The humble plural form *domo* is suffixed to the first person referent *watakusi*, e.g. *watakusi-domo* 'we'.

The humble forms are distinguished from what is called *kenzyoogo* 'humble language', expressing the speaker's humble attitude not toward a specific referent, but toward no one in particular, except in some cases when the addressee is the target. When these humble forms are used in referring to the speaker's behavior or belongings, the status of the other

participants is relatively raised. By lowering his own status, the speaker shows his modesty. Thus, humble forms have the same function as the honorifics used for politeness.

2. Social rules of politeness

The preceding discussion is a purely grammatical description of honorific forms. While a grammarian's description may stop there, a sociolinguist's task begins at this point, and the grammatical forms must be correlated with social factors that call for them. We will approach this problem in the following manner. First, the use of honorifics is but one aspect of the polite behavioral pattern, which includes physical behaviors such as how one carries oneself and how one appears. We will therefore look for those social rules that call for polite behavior. Honorific speech is one of the verbal behaviors that result from obeying these rules of politeness. That is, if a rule says 'be polite to a certain person or in such and such a situation', one is to use the appropriate forms, triggering the relevant grammatical rules for subject honorifics, object honorifics, and addressee honorifics as well as selecting the appropriate lexical items.

There are various social and psychological factors involved in the rules of politeness. These factors are numerous and intertwined, but the major ones are (1) social position, (2) power, (3) age, and (4) formality. With regard to these factors we can posit the following three ground rules and an overriding rule of politeness, each of which will be explained separately.

Ground rules

Rule 1. 'Be polite to a person of a higher social position'

By observing this rule, society pays respect to a person for his achievements in socially recognized professional fields. Such a person is recognized because of the titles of his specific profession. Professors, teachers, doctors, lawyers, and politicians belong to such groups, as do high-ranking members of government agencies and leading corporations.

Members of good families are also included in this group. The Emperor, his family and the extended royal families are considered as best families.

When a policeman talks to his neighborhood doctor, for example, he will be more polite than when he is talking to his neighborhood carpenter.

- (24a) (A policeman: talking to the neighborhood doctor)
 Ii o-tenki desu ne.
 good weather SENT. FINAL PARTICLE
 'Fine day, isn't it?'
- (24b) (A policeman: talking to the neighborhood carpenter)
 Ii tenki da ne.

Sometimes we observe a person of a high social position being reciprocally polite to a person of a low social position. For example, a professor may be reciprocally polite to a cleaning woman, and a president of a university may be reciprocally polite to his driver. This may be caused by the egalitarian consciousness of upper-class guilt by which one denies Rule 1 and insists on reciprocity of politeness. This trend is strongly observed in the behavior of women in higher positions. This is the result of a clash of the high professional position and the low status of women in general. As to the social status of women and how it relates to politeness, we will discuss this issue in the next section.

In a setting where professions, roles, or ranks are the immediate concern of the participants at the time of speech, the next rule applies.

Rule 2. 'Be polite to a person with power'

In the setting of an organization, a person who holds a higher rank has power over a lower-rank person. Thus, a subordinate, e.g. a junior officer, will be polite to his superior, e.g. a *butyoo* 'division chief'.

A person has power when performing his role of professional. For example, a police officer has power over an arrested suspect. A professor has power over a student. Similarly, some doctors and dentists have power over their patients.

Money is certainly a factor in establishing power relationships. A person who is in the role of supplying money usually has power. Thus, a customer has power over a merchant, who will be polite to the former.

- (25a) (Customer) Miruku aru. (✓)
 milk exist
 'Is there milk?'
- (25b) (Merchant) Hai ari masu.
 yes
 'Yes, there is.'

People in service professions, such as stewardesses, beauticians, barbers, waiters, and receptionists, will be polite in their working domains because

customers who are paying money for their services have power. Another example would be a bank officer who has power over a customer to whom he loans money, but the reverse power relation is established when a customer deposits money.

Similarly, a person asking a favor will be polite to the person being asked. The amount of difficulty or inconvenience suffered by the person doing the favor will be reflected in the degree of politeness used. In asking a bigger favor, a person is usually more polite. This may be because of the higher degree of formality involved in asking bigger favors (cf. the over-riding rule).

Compared with social position, which is something more or less permanent, this factor of power occurs according to a person's temporal role in a particular setting, and, therefore, is relevant only at the time such a power relationship exists.

Rule 3. 'Be polite to an older person'

Respect for age still prevails in Japanese culture as a basic ethic due to the centuries-long influence of Confucianism. According to this rule, senior citizens are treated politely no matter what the setting may be.

Japanese people have a tendency to act as a group. Within a group, whose membership is assumed to be more or less homogeneous, age is an obvious factor to differentiate one member from another. Within an organization, age is often the prime factor in decisions on promotions. Thus, an age difference even of only one year is a matter of great concern among people within a group. Therefore, in Japan, where the seniority system is in effect, there is little clash of rank and age, which is commonly observed in American organizations.

This behavior may be observed among young people, too. In high school, college sports clubs and other activity groups junior members are polite to senior members. For example, a junior boy will address a senior boy by using his last name + *san* or + *senpai*, whereas a senior boy will non-reciprocally address a junior boy using only the boy's last name (i.e. without a title).

This rule applies even among brothers and sisters. For example, a younger sister usually addresses her elder sister with a kinship term + *sama*, *san* or *tyan* (e.g. *onee-sama*, *onee-san* or *onee-tyan* 'elder sister'), while the elder sister non-reciprocally addresses a younger one with her first name + *tyan*, her first name only, a diminutive, or a nickname (e.g. *Akiko-tyan*, *Akiko*, or *Akko*, a diminutive, or *Tibi* – a nickname).

In actual speech, factors triggering these three ground rules often occur simultaneously. When rules come into conflict, one of the rules usually has dominance over the others. There seem to be relative rankings of these rules according to which dominance can be determined.

Comparing Rule 1 and Rule 2, the latter outweighs. Regardless of social position, in a particular setting power is the key. Thus, a salesperson will be polite to a customer who might be lower in social position. A doctor violating a traffic rule will be polite to an arresting police officer. A parent will be polite to a teacher of his child regardless of their relative social positions.

With respect to Rules 1 and 2 as compared with Rule 3, the first two rules outweigh the latter. Namely, social position and power are more important factors than age. Thus, for example, a person will be polite to a doctor who is younger in age. Similarly, an older person who is subordinate in an organization will be polite toward a younger superior.

However, as noted earlier, reciprocity is observed when rules come into conflict. For example, a customer will be polite to a salesperson, as a teacher will be to a student's parent. Likewise, in those situations where age plays a role, a younger doctor will be reciprocally polite to an older person, as a younger superior will be to an older but subordinate person.

The relative ranking of these rules may be summarized in the following order: Rules 2, 1, and 3. This is the ranking of rules of politeness for the addressee. As to rules for the referent honorifics, a different ranking applies.⁴

Rules for the referent are ranked in the order 1, 3, and 2. Power (Rule 2), which is relevant in an immediate setting and therefore an important factor for the addressee, becomes least important in talking about the referent who is not necessarily present at the time he is spoken about. Social position and age, instead, are relatively important factors for the speaker's choice of polite forms for the referent.

As to the relative importance between the rules for the addressee and rules for the referent, the former is more important. The fundamental reason for this is that while the addressee is always present, the referent is most often absent from the speech situation. The factors for the rules – i.e. dominance in social position, power, and age – are sufficient conditions for the addressee honorifics, but not for the referent honorifics. They are

⁴ According to Martin (1964: 410–411), the relative importance of factors in triggering polite forms is as follows: for the addressee, 1. outgroupness, 2. position, 3. age difference, 4. sex difference, and for the referent, 1. position, 2. age difference, 3. sex difference, 4. outgroupness.

only necessary conditions for the referent honorifics, but under one of the following five conditions they become sufficient for them, too. The conditions are: (1) the referent is an ingroup member of the addressee, (2) the referent is present within earshot, (3) the speaker displays his good demeanor,^{4a} (4) the speaker shows genuine respect toward the referent, and (5) the speaker educates his or her children. To explain these, we need to refer to the four possible combinations of polite and plain forms in the example sentences (15c-f) cited above. The referent in these examples is *Satoo-sensei*, a person with a high social position. If a higher social position is a sufficient condition for the referent, only a polite form, *irassyaru*, is possible – as in (15d) and (15f). However, a plain form, *kuru*, is also used – as in (15c) and (15e). A polite form for the referent will be chosen under one of the following conditions.

When the referent is a member of the addressee's group or related more closely to the addressee, the same degree of politeness is required for the referent as for the addressee. For example, if *Satoo-sensei* is a colleague of the addressee and the addressee is the speaker's superior, respect must be expressed to *Satoo-sensei* as well. Thus, only (15f) is possible. Likewise, even a referent who is a subordinate will be referred to with polite forms if that referent is the son of the addressee who is the speaker's superior.

When the speaker is talking within earshot of the referent, the referent becomes an immediate concern. Then, the ground rules are applied just as they are for the addressee. Thus, when *Satoo-sensei* is within earshot, only (15d) or (15f) is possible.

When the speaker wants to display his good demeanor by the elaborate use of honorifics, the rules are applied with regard to the referent, too. The speaker's choice of attitude will often be affected by what type of person the addressee is. That is, if the addressee is the type of person who calls for the proper use of polite forms, only (15f) is possible. For example, in the presence of a higher-class lady, a young woman will use only (15f) to show her good upbringing.

When the speaker genuinely respects the referent and wants to show his respect, referent honorifics are used. Thus, if the speaker wants to show the addressee his respect for *Satoo-sensei*, he uses (15f). Besides, when the referents are those who have socially recognized respectability, like the Emperor, royal families, God, Jesus, and Buddha, politeness is always expressed. For example, when instead of *Satoo-sensei* the referent is the

^{4a} 'Demeanor' is Goffman's terminology, meaning 'good manner'.

Emperor, only (15d) or (15f) is possible. Even in newspapers and broadcasting, where the reporter's neutral attitude is assumed, the Emperor and the members of the royal family are always referred to with polite forms, even though highest ranking politicians are not.

When the speaker wants to show the proper use of referent honorifics for educational purposes, the polite rules apply. For example, when a mother intends to teach her child the proper use of honorifics, she assumes the point of view of her child and uses a referent honorific form in referring to the teacher of her child. In this case, the politeness need not be expressed toward the addressee, her child; so the addressee honorific is not needed. But the mother may opt for teaching the child general polite speech using the AH ending. Thus, either (15d) or (15f) is used depending on the mother's intentions.

A recent trend is that young people use referent honorifics less (Inoue 1979). This is probably due to a decline of some of the conditions discussed above.

Overriding rule. 'Be polite in a formal setting'

When a conversational setting is formal, participants will reciprocally assume a formal attitude which is expressed, among other ways of being formal, by being polite. We need to touch here upon the relation of formality to politeness, formality being fundamental in governing the overriding rule.

Formality is expressed by the distance maintained between participants, while politeness is expressed by the speaker's deferential attitude toward the other participants. However, their occurrences are partially overlapping, as formality is partly expressed by politeness and vice versa.

Though formality and politeness are closely correlated in their nature, they are distinct when expressed in linguistic forms. We assume three linguistic levels on the axis of formality, i.e. formal, neutral, and informal. Formal speech is characterized by a high-level lexicon which includes honorifics, technical terms, and Sino-Japanese forms. Careful pronunciation and such syntactic forms as passive are among the other ways of rendering speech formal. Informal speech, which is colloquial speech, is characterized by sentence final particles, contraction, slang and local dialects. Rapid or slurred pronunciation also characterizes informal speech. Neutral speech is characterized by the absence of formal or informal features. As to the axis of politeness, we assume two levels, i.e. polite and plain. (We could assume a deprecatory level at the opposite end of politeness, but this is outside the scope of the present paper.) Polite speech is character-

ized chiefly by honorifics, though the high-level lexicon, which characterizes formal speech, also contributes to make speech polite. Plain speech is characterized by the absence of honorifics. The correlation of these levels is represented in fig. 1; examples are given in (26).

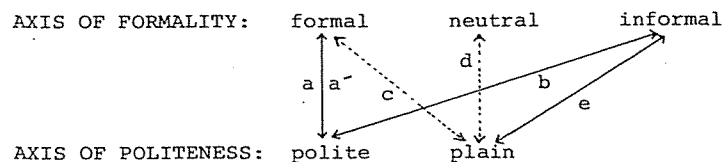


Fig. 1. (Lower-case letters refer to the example sentences of (26).)

- (26a) Suzuki-syusyoo wa sakunen go-hoobei nasai masi-ta. (super for-
prime minister last year S-J form of [mal, super polite]
(formal) 'visit America'
'Prime minister Suzuki visited America last year.'
- (26a') Suzuki-si wa kyonen Amerika e irassyai masi-ta. (formal, polite)
Mr. last year to
(formal) (neutral)
'Mr. Suzuki visited America last year.'
- (26b) Suzuki-san wa kyonen Amerika e irassyai masi-ta yo. (informal, polite)
- (26c) Suzuki-syusyoo wa sakunen hoobei si-ta. (formal, plain)
- (26d) Suzuki wa kyonen Amerika e it-ta. (neutral, plain)
- (26e) Suzuki wa kyonen Amerika e it-ta yo. (informal, plain)

According to the overriding rule, the formality expressed by the formal level calls for polite forms. Therefore, we have the co-occurrence of formal and polite forms as illustrated in (26a) and (26a'). There should be no co-occurrence of formal and plain forms, but we have one illustrated in (26c). In fact, (26c) does not normally occur in conversation but only in writing. (For this reason the arrow in the diagram is drawn as a dotted line. This style is typically observed in newspapers. The other dotted arrow, illustrated in (26d), also indicates the written form.) Therefore, when a conversational setting is formal, calling for a formal speech pattern, polite forms are to be used as the only possible choice.

Formality of a conversational setting is determined by factors such as the natures of participants, occasions, topics, etc.

Formality among participants: when there is no familiarity or solidarity among participants, there is a formal atmosphere. When a person has to deal with a stranger, not knowing that stranger's character, he will assume

a formal attitude. Thus, due to the overriding rule, strangers will be polite to each other. For example, a banker will be formal and talk politely to a salesman sitting next to him in the train and the salesman will do the same, until they reveal their identities and familiarity increases. In this case, the overriding rule supercedes Rule 1.

- (27a) Sono sinbun moo o-yomi-ni nari masi-ta ka.
the newspaper already read
'Have you read the newspaper?'
- (27b) Sono sinbun moo yomi masi ta ka.

The banker, following the overriding rule, will use (27a) because he does not know who the person next to him is. But, he will use the less polite form (27b) when familiarity increases and he finds that his social position is higher. The salesman, on the other hand, may use only (27a) throughout, if he finds the banker to be worthy of his respect.

As familiarity increases with the duration of acquaintance, formality decreases, and politeness will likewise decline.

Very impolite behavior can be observed among total strangers in crowded areas such as in public transport and on the street. The reason is that the overriding rule does not apply to total strangers. It applies only when personal contact is involved.

Among participants with solidarity, formality is avoided. Solidarity is formed among participants who have interests and responsibilities in common. A common cultural, social, or geographical background is the major factor in creating groups of solidarity, such as groups from the same family, same school, same institution, same native region, etc. A feeling of solidarity also grows between people sharing the same ideology or the same field of interest.

Whenever participants find solidarity, they change their attitude from formal to informal. For example, strangers who have just met at a party will suddenly change their speech from formal, as in (28a), to informal, as in (28b), as soon as they discover such solidarity factors as their being graduates from the same school or coming from the same native region. Solidarity, the feeling of having a bond, is expressed by the use of the informal speech style.

- (28a) (to a new acquaintance)
Dotira kara o-ide -ni nari masi-ta ka.
where from S-J morpheme of 'come'
'Where did you come from?'

- (28b) (to the same person after finding solidarity)
 Saikin inaka e it-te nai *desu* yo.
 recently country to go not SENT. FINAL PARTICLE
 'Recently I haven't been to (my home) county.'

In (28b) both a polite form, *desu*, and an informal form, *yo*, are used. That is, politeness and informality are expressed simultaneously, as is shown in the Japanese saying "there is courtesy even among the familiars".

The presence or absence of solidarity determines whether one is part of the ingroup or the outgroup. For the Japanese who is likely to identify himself in terms of the group he belongs to, ingroup and outgroup consciousness is crucial to his behavior. When dealing with an outgroup member, a person will keep that outgroup member at a distance by being formal to him. Formality toward an outgroup member is expressed in a special way, as follows. The speaker lowers the status of an ingroup member to a level as humble as his own regardless of their actual status difference within the group. The humble status of the ingroup member will be expressed by the use of humble forms in referring to him. Thus, the speaker equates the status of an ingroup member with himself, reinforcing solidarity, while relatively raising the status of the outgroup member – which has the effect of being polite to the outgroup member. A secretary, for example, will be polite to her boss within her organization, but in talking to a person from another organization, she will humble her boss as a way to express politeness to that outgroup member.

- (29a) (Secretary: in the company to an ingroup member)
 Syatyoo-san wa go-ryokoo-nasai-te i-masu.
 'The president is traveling.'
- (29b) (Secretary: to an outgroup member)
 Syatyoo wa ryokoo itasi-te orimasu.

Likewise, in talking about the members of his family, a person will be polite to the addressee by using humble forms in reference to his family. For example, a husband will humble his wife by referring to her as *gu-sai* '(lit.) stupid wife' in front of an outgroup member, though he would never do so at home!

Formality of occasions: formality is called for on such occasions as funerals, weddings and commencement ceremonies, church services, business talks, meetings, and lectures. On these occasions, a person will behave formally, regardless of social position, power, or age of the participants

involved. For example, during a formal occasion such as a wedding reception, a professor will be polite even in referring to his student.

- (30) (Teacher of the bride: speaking to bride and audience)
 Hanako-san ga gakkō ni o-hairi ni nat-ta toki ...
 school enter when
 'When Hanako entered school, ...'

In this case the overriding rule prevails over Rule 2.⁵

Formality of topics: when the topic of conversation is serious, one tends to be formal. Basically, the formality of topics depends on the formality of the occasion. But sometimes the topics change in the course of the same occasion. For example, a person talking about business matters may switch his attitude from formal to informal when the topic shifts to such a private one as his childhood memories.

Other factors which constitute formality are the type of by-stander or the channel of communication. For example, a formal by-stander produces a formal atmosphere, just as talking on the telephone or on radio or TV is more formal than a face-to-face talk.

What we have described here are the social rules of politeness according to which one decides whether or not to use honorific forms. Knowledge of these social rules of politeness together with the grammatical rules of honorifics constitutes the communicative competence of polite speech.

With this communicative competence, we carry on conversation smoothly, applying different social rules according to the factors of a particular conversational setting. Beginning and closing a conversation are usually formal occasions, too. Thus, the overriding rule is applied and formal forms are used at the beginning and the end of a conversation. Of course, as time passes the degree of familiarity between participants increases. Accordingly, forms at the beginning of a conversation change to informal. As the topic of a conversation shifts, formality also tends to shift.

In an interview, one can observe that the interviewer will be formal at the beginning and the end of each topic. The interviewer realizes his role and observes Rule 2 (power) at those moments, thus expressing politeness to the interviewee who is in the role of having the power to give information.

⁵ On these formal occasions formal clothes and behaviors are required accordingly. These, together with formal forms of language, work to keep a distance between oneself and others. Thus, on formal occasions, especially during ceremonies, one is put in a context where one is neither imposing nor imposed upon. Non-imposition is a way of being polite. Therefore, the observance of ceremonies involves politeness.

While we behave according to social rules of politeness, we, at the same time, manipulate these rules to express our psychological attitude toward the other participants. Since the speaker feels psychologically distant from the addressee when the social rules of politeness are applied, which has the effect of making the setting formal, he will in turn use polite forms to express such feelings of distance as tension, coldness, dislike, irony or estrangement. Thus, when the speaker feels some tension toward a friend, he will switch from his normal plain forms to polite forms, as follows:

- (31a) *Kimi wa soo iu kedo ...*
 though
 'Though you say so, ...'
 (31b) (with tension)
 Anata wa soo ossyaru kedo ...

Conversely, the speaker can manipulate these rules so as to express his feelings of closeness to the addressee by dropping polite forms and using informal forms. Feelings of closeness such as intimacy, empathy, sympathy, love, etc. are expressed by the use of informal forms. Thus, a woman interviewer may drop the normal polite forms and use a sentence final particle to express her feeling of empathy toward an interviewee.

- (32a) *Haj wakari masi-ta.*
 yes understand
 (formal)
 'Yes, I understood.'
 (32b) (with empathy)
 Ee, wakat-ta wa.
 yes SENT. FINAL PARTICLE
 (informal)

We also manipulate these social rules in order to protect ourselves from others. In our contemporary society we find honorifics being widely used among people living in cities.⁶ This is likely to be the result of the trends of urbanization and individualism. Urbanization has forced people to live in congested areas, which results in their living closer together than they would choose to. By using honorifics as a useful device for keeping others away, people can maintain a distant relationship. Thus, they protect

⁶ A survey on urbanization and the use of honorifics has found that urbanization is a factor contributing to the more elaborate use of honorifics (Shibata et al. 1980).

their own individual space and their privacy. This is an instance of the manipulative use of the overriding rule.

Another instance of manipulation of these rules in our contemporary society is the increasing use of polite forms in the domain of business. An extensive use of honorifics is observed by salespersons and other people engaged in the service industry. They manipulate Rule 2 and make customers feel good by confirming the status of power customers have. As the competition of business becomes keener, the use of polite forms seems to escalate to the extent where hypercorrection is not rare (e.g., *o-iriguti* 'entrance', a sign at the entrance of a department store).

The rules of politeness discussed so far are generally observed by most Japanese. We can, therefore, convey our attitude based on these generally accepted social values for politeness. However, just as language has variations according to the speaker's attributes and social background, we find variations according to the speakers' differing estimations of these social rules. Speakers' attributes such as sex, generation, and ideology affect the degree of observance of these rules. As will be discussed in the next section, women tend to observe these rules more strictly than men. People of the older generation tend to observe them more strictly, while liberal people tend to observe them less strictly. Such backgrounds as geographical area, social class, and upbringing also affect the degree of recognition of these rules. People in rural areas and lower-class people tend to observe them less strictly, while people with a good upbringing observe the rules more strictly.

Sometimes we find conflicts of recognition of these rules. For example, an old man resents a young man's use of plain forms in a setting where polite forms are expected according to the old man's norm. In this case the conflict is the result of a generation gap.

It becomes a problem when participants assume that they have a common norm, but in fact have different norms. For example, when a person uses plain forms in a setting where the addressee expects polite forms, the addressee may take it as an expression of the speaker's contemptuous attitude toward the addressee. This case may well lead to a misunderstanding of the speaker's attitude, which is likely to develop into further emotional conflict.

It is because of this aspect of variations of social rules of politeness that we are constantly concerned about the proper use of honorifics even after having mastered them. There is a vast amount of literature on honorifics, which shows the degree of the public's concern on this topic. This topic presents perennial problems as it is concerned with the social rules which are subject to change according to changes in social values.

3. Women's language

Women's speech is often said to be more polite than men's (cf. P. Brown 1980; Zimin 1981). We will therefore examine what makes Japanese women's speech more polite. The first notable characteristic of Japanese women's speech is the frequent use of honorifics as was verified in three surveys on sex differences in language use (Peng et al. 1981). It was found that the ratio of the occurrence of honorifics in women's speech was higher than in men's speech.

The high frequency of the use of honorifics by women partly results from the women obeying social Rule 1, i.e., 'be polite to a person of a higher social position'. Men's dominance over women in social positions, a legacy of feudalism, is still maintained as a basic social norm, despite the improvement of women's status in the last few decades. Women, therefore, are expected to be more polite than men. By the frequent use of honorifics together with other polite expressions, women express their deferential attitude.

As noted earlier, honorifics are not always used as the expression of the speaker's deferential attitude, but can also be used as an expression of the speaker's demeanor.⁷ The elaborate use of honorifics is considered as a manifestation of good upbringing, a higher social class, just as careful pronunciation is a marker of a higher social class in English. Therefore, the elaborate use of honorifics is considered as well mannered behavior. Women, who attach much importance to demeanor, tend to use honorifics frequently as a manifestation of their propriety. Sometimes they use them as a means to impress others. And sometimes not knowing the proper use of honorifics, they use such a hypercorrect form as the following.

- (33) Ototoo ni *o-tanomi* *si-te* oki *-masu*.
 younger brother DAT ask see to it
 'I'll see to it that I ask my younger brother.'

To use a referent honorific, *o-tanomi suru*, for the speaker's ingroup member constitutes an improper use of honorifics, as the speaker has to humble the younger brother, an ingroup member, in talking to an out-

⁷ Neustupný (1978: 193, 198-199), examining politeness forms in several languages, broke down politeness into deference and demeanor. His analysis is somewhat different from what is presented here, as he states "deference is an expression of individual status relationships, while demeanor refers to status relationships between social groups" (193).

group member. However, it has come to be generally accepted as a formal utterance. It is used, not to show a deferential attitude toward the younger brother but to make the utterance formal by means of the honorific, which is considered as an expression of good demeanor. This type of honorific usage is often observed in the speech of women, especially those women who aspire to gain membership of a higher social class.⁸

There is another kind of honorifics most typically used by women. They are called beautification honorifics and are different from referent and addressee honorifics in that they are used only to beautify speech. Therefore, they can be used even in referring to the speaker's actions or belongings.

- (34a) *sensei no o-heya* (honorification)
 'teacher's room'
 (34b) *watashi no o-heya* (beautification)
 'my room'

The prefix *o* in (34a) functions to show the speaker's deferential attitude toward the referent, *sensei*, but *o* in (34b) prefixed to the speaker's belongings functions only to beautify speech. Thus, *o* in (34a) is a deferential honorific, but in (34b) it is a beautification honorific. Other beautification honorifics include forms such as:

- (35) Nouns
 (a) *kasi* 'sweets' *o-kasi*
tenki 'weather' *o-tenki*
 (b) *kane* 'money' *o-kane*
mesi 'rice, meal' *go-han*
sake 'sake' *o-sake*
 (c) *biiru* 'beer' *o-biiru*
tomodati 'friend' *o-tomodati*
yasai 'vegetable' *o-yasai*
 (36) Adjective
umai 'delicious' *oisii*
 (37) Verbs
nomu 'drink' } *itadaku*
taberu 'eat' }
kau 'buy' *motomeru*
neru 'sleep' *yasumu*
sinu 'die' *nakunaru*

⁸ It is interesting to look at this phenomenon in parallel with the hypercorrect women's speech observed in the studies by Labov (1972) and Trudgill (1972).

Beautification nouns are divided into three categories according to whether they are used by men or women. The beautification forms in (35a) are commonly used by both men and women, and those in (35b) are used mostly by women, but men can use them along with the forms without *o* or *go*. The ones in (35c) are exclusively used by women and children and if they are ever used by men they have an effeminate connotation. However, men engaged in professions that deal with women and children – such as beauticians, pediatricians, and salesmen – will use them in order to show empathy toward the addressee. *Oisii* falls into category (b), and men can use it along with *umai*. The verb forms are used by both men and women. They are suppletive high-level forms just as 'purchase', 'dine', and 'pass away' are suppletive high-level forms of 'buy', 'eat', and 'die' in English.

Unlike other honorifics which are used in accordance with social rules of politeness, beautification honorifics can be used indiscriminately. Their function is to raise the speech level in order to show the speaker's seeming demeanor, not the kind of demeanor expressed by the proper use of honorifics following the social rules of politeness. In this sense, beautification honorifics have a function similar to that of hypercorrect honorifics.

Secondly, politeness in women's speech is found in the women's frequent use of high-level/formal forms. As can be seen in the examples of (1a), first person pronouns in men's speech are different from women's. *Watasi*, for example, is a polite form in men's speech, but a plain form in women's speech.

When two people of different status talk to each other, the person of lower status has to use a higher form to express his deferential attitude toward the other person. For example, a man of lower status has to use *watasi* when the other man uses *boku*. From this it appears, that we can say that women who use *watasi* as a normal form are more polite than men who use *boku* as a normal form.

In a survey of the use of honorifics in Sapporo City, Ogino (1981) found that higher verb forms are more frequently used by women. There are, for example, five levels of the verb 'did'; i.e., *itasi-masita* (humble + AH), *si-masita* (plain + AH), *sita* (plain), *yari-masita* (deprecatory + AH) and *yatta* (deprecatory). Given the same setting, *itasi-masita* and *si-masita* are more frequently used by women, while *yari-masita* and *yatta* are more frequently used by men. We find in this data that women use higher-level forms more often and are thus more polite.

Thirdly, women's speech is said to be more polite because women do not normally use vulgar expressions. Men's speech has such deprecatory personal pronouns as *ore* 'I', *omae*, *kisama* and *temee* 'you', but women's speech lacks such pronouns. Such profanities as *tikusyoo* 'Damn!' and *kuso* 'Shit!' are found exclusively in men's speech. Obscenities also belong to the men's repertory. The deprecatory suffix *yagaru* (e.g., *aruki-yagaru* 'walk') is used only by men. Sentence final particles *zo* and *ze* and reduction forms *sugee* (< *sugoi* 'great') or *umee* (< *umai* 'delicious'), which have a derogatory connotation, are part of the male vocabulary. These forms are lower level forms than normal forms. Comparing women's speech with men's as a whole we find that women's speech leans toward much higher level forms than men's. As mentioned above, the use of higher forms makes speech more polite.

Finally, the fourth characteristic of women's speech contributing to its politeness is found in women's use of softening expressions. To make a statement 'soft' is a way to make it polite, for it weakens the imposition of the statement upon the addressee. Using high-level/formal forms is one way to be polite and using softening expressions is another way (cf. section 4).

Wa and *kasira*, sentence final particles exclusively used by women, are among the devices to soften speech.

(38a) Boku wa Taro ga suki da.
like

'I like Taro.'

(38b) Watasi wa Taro ga suki da wa.

Wa pronounced with a rising intonation makes the statement sound soft. Thus, women's speech (38b) is more polite than men's speech (38a). There is no softening sentence final particle in men's repertory of speech. Men's particles are *zo*, *ze*, *yo*, *na* and others, which indicate self-confidence, assertion, or confirmation.

Kasira consists of *ka*, a question particle, and *sira*, the shortened form of *siranai* 'I don't know'. The sequence of *ka* and *sira* means 'I wonder'.

(39) Sensei wa o-kaeri-ni naru *kasira*.

'I wonder if the teacher will return.'

Men would use *kanaa* in place of *kasira*. *Kanaa* is a sequence of *ka* and *naa*, a lengthened variety of *na*, a mild confirmation particle with rough

nuance. *Kanaa* also means 'I wonder'. But, *kasira* carries a tone of uncertainty more strongly because of the meaning of *sira* 'I don't know'. Thus, *kasira*, a women's particle, is less imposing than *kanaa*, the men's counterpart. In this way, women tend to be more polite by their use of softening sentence final particles.

We may speculate that the reasons for women's use of more polite speech are women's lower status and women's concern for good demeanor. Just as a lower-status person is more polite, women generally hold a lower position in society and thus feel the need to express politeness, whether by the frequent use of honorifics, the use of high-level/formal forms or the use of softening expressions. Women tend to be concerned with how they appear more than with what they are, owing to their label-less status in society. Thus, by using honorifics, markers of good demeanor, they try to impress others as being a member of a prestigious group. They also show good demeanor by their use of beautification honorifics and the avoidance of vulgar expressions.

4. Honorifics and politeness

We have considered honorifics, a major linguistic device for politeness in Japanese. What, then, are honorifics in the context of the universal framework of politeness?

Honorifics are morphologically well-defined language forms that are used to make speech polite. How do they function as a polite expression?

First, honorifics are used as high-level/formal forms just as the plural pronouns V as opposed to T (e.g., *vous* as opposed to *tu* in French) in European languages are used as singular high level forms (cf. Brown and Gilman 1960). V-forms function as polite forms, and so do honorifics. Formal forms function as polite forms in the following way. When formal forms are used, they create a formal atmosphere where participants are kept away from each other, avoiding imposition. Non-imposition is the essence of polite behavior. Thus, to create a formal atmosphere by the use of formal forms is to be polite.

Second, an examination of honorifics will reveal that they have the formal characteristic of being indirect expressions. Their indirectness is manifested in their being longer, objective, or ambiguous.

For example, adding honorific endings to verbs, *o...ni naru*, *o...suru*, or *masu*, makes an expression longer. Verbs used for honorifics are converted

into infinitive forms, i.e. nominalized forms (e.g. *aruki* < *aruku*). By nominalizing forms, one removes the actor from the act and thus renders the expression indirect. Some suppletive forms are homonyms, which means they have other possible meanings. For example, *irassyaru* is an honorific form for *aru* 'exist', *iru* 'exist', *iku* 'go' and *kuru* 'come'. It means one of these four verbs, leaving the other three as possible options. By using *irassyaru*, an ambiguous verb, one can obscure expressions. These features of honorifics contribute to make expressions non-direct. And, through indirect expressions one can lessen the sense of imposition on the addressee.

There is another device to make expressions polite. It is not the use of formal forms, but the use of other linguistic devices to avoid direct and imposing expressions. One of these devices is to use softening sentence final particles – as we have seen in section 3 on women's language. By using a softening expression, we can render its effect upon the addressee less imposing. Other devices are paraphrasing by inserting hedges, using question, negation, and others. Paraphrasing into a negative question is a device typically used to make a directive indirect and less imposing.

- (40a) Tate.
stand
'Stand up!'
- (40b) *O-tati-ni nat-te kudasai.*
'Please stand up.'
- (40c) *Tat-te kure nai?*
'Won't you stand up?'

There are two ways to render the plain imperative form in (40a) polite. In (40b), still an imperative form, honorific forms are used. Example (40c), on the other hand, is an example of paraphrasing into a negative question.⁹ By turning it into a question, the speaker makes the directive less imposing as he leaves room for the addressee to reject the idea. By making it negative, the speaker implies that he thinks it not very probable that the directive will be acted upon. Thus, negative questions are employed as a device to make an utterance polite. In (40b) politeness is expressed by a formal form, while in (40c) it is expressed by a non-formal form.

⁹ In actual speech they occur in combination, expressing a higher degree of politeness.

(40d) *O-tati-ni nat-te kudasai mase n ka.*
NEG

'Won't you please stand up?'

Let us compare these two devices for polite expressions in Japanese with those of other languages. In languages without honorifics such as English, we find that both formal and non-formal devices are also used to express politeness. In English, for example, formal forms, such as title plus last name as opposed to first name, are used as a formal device for politeness. Similarly, the high-level form *dine* as opposed to *eat* is used as a formal device for politeness. In English, paraphrasing into question, tag question, past tense, progressive tense, negation or question intonation are among the many other devices that can make statements less imposing to the addressee (e.g., 'Would you open the window?', 'Will you open the window?', 'Open the window, will you?'). In fact, these non-formal devices constitute most of the polite expressions in English and other languages without honorifics.¹⁰ In Japanese, on the other hand, a major device for polite expression is a formal device as there exists a highly rigid system of honorifics.

As we have seen, both formal and non-formal expressions function as devices for politeness and they all tend to be winding, obscuring, and longer expressions. Examining the features of polite expressions cross-linguistically, we can conclude that an underlying universal characteristic of politeness in language is indirectness.

References

- Brown, P., 1980. How and why are women more polite: some evidence from a Mayan community. In: S. McConnell-Ginet, R. Boker, N. Furman (eds.), *Women and language in literature and society*, 111-139. New York: Praeger.
- Brown, P., S. Levinson, 1978. Universals in language usage: politeness phenomena. In: E. Goody (ed.), *Questions and politeness*, 56-324. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Brown, R., A. Gilman, 1960. The pronouns of power and solidarity. In: T. A. Sebeok (ed.), *Style in language*, 253-276. Boston: MIT Press.
- Harada, S. I., 1976. Honorifics. In: M. Shibatani (ed.), *Syntax and semantics*, vol. 5: Japanese generative grammar, 499-561. New York: Academic Press.

¹⁰ Lakoff (1975) postulates three rules of politeness: 1. formality: keep aloof, 2. deference: give options, and 3. camaraderie: show sympathy. Rule 1 (by L.) is realized with what we call formal devices and Rule 2 with non-formal devices.

Brown and Levinson (1978) postulate a universal framework of politeness in which formal devices are treated as just one of the devices for a larger frame called 'negative politeness', a non-formal device.

- Inoue, F., 1979. Wakamono no keigo koodoo [The use of honorifics by the youth]. *Gengo* 8-6, 38-46.
- Labov, W., 1972. The study of language in its social context. In: id., *Sociolinguistic patterns*, 183-259. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press.
- Lakoff, R., 1975. *Language and women's place*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Martin, S., 1964. Speech levels in Japan and Korea. In: D. Hymes (ed.), *Language in culture and society*, 407-415. New York: Harper and Row.
- Neustupný, J. V., 1978. The communication of politeness. In: id., *Post-structural approaches to language*, 185-212. Tokyo: Univ. of Tokyo Press.
- Ogino, T., 1981. Keigo ni okeru tukaiwake no taikai to sono koozooteki kankei [The structure of the use of honorifics]. *Kokugogaku* 125, 81-92.
- Peng, F. et al., 1981. *Male/female differences in Japanese*. Tokyo: The East-West Sign Language Association.
- Shibata, T. et al., 1980. *Tosi no keigo no syakaigengogakuteki kenkyuu* [Sociolinguistic study of honorifics in the city]. A publication of the Dept. of Linguistics, Univ. of Tokyo.
- Trudgill, P., 1972. Sex, covert prestige and linguistic change in the urban British English of Norwich. *Language in Society* 1, 179-195.
- Zimin, S., 1981. Sex and politeness: factors in first and second-language use. *International Journal of Sociology of Language* 27, 35-58.