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978-1-107-07226-8 — The Social Life of the Japanese Language
Shigeko Okamoto, Janet S. Shibamoto-Smith
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The Social Life of the Japanese Language

Why are different varieties of the Japanese language used differently in social interaction, and how are they perceived? How do honorifics operate to express diverse affective stances, such as politeness? Why have issues of gendered speech been so central in public discourse, and how are they reflected and refracted in language use as social practice? This book examines Japanese sociolinguistic phenomena from a fascinating new perspective, focusing on the historical construction of language norms and its relationship to actual language use in contemporary Japan. This sociohistorically sensitive account stresses the different choices which have shaped Japanese and Western sociolinguistics and how varieties of Japanese, honorifics and politeness, and gendered language have emerged in response to the sociopolitical landscape in which modernizing Japan found itself. Okamoto and Shibamoto-Smith also examine these sociolinguistic phenomena in relation to Japanese language ideology as shaped in Japanese modernity, by employing the notion of poly-indexicality, which forms the basis of a theoretically coherent account of the dynamic and diverse relationship between language norms and situated language practice.

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Cultural Discourses and Situated Practice

Shigeko Okamoto

and

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Notes on orthographic and naming conventions

Abbreviations used in this study for word/morpheme classes are as follows:

A, adjective; Adv, adverb; AH, addressee honorifics; AN, adjectival noun; AUX, auxiliary verb; COMP, complementizer; COP, copula; GN, genitive marker; HPX, honorific prefix; HSX, honorific suffix; IMP, imperative; N, noun; NEG, negative auxiliary; NOM, nominalizer; OH, object honorific (or humble form/*kenjōgo*); OM, direct object marker; PASS, passive; PFX, prefix; PLN, plain form; PRG, progressive aspect; PRT, particle; PST, past tense; Q, question marker; RH, referent honorific; SFX, suffix; SH, subject honorific (or respectful form/*sonkeigo*); SM, subject marker; TI, title; TM, topic marker; and V, verb. (RH includes both the respectful form (*sonkeigo*) and the humble form (*kenjōgo*).) The subscript_{RSP} refers to *sonkeigo* and_{HUM} refers to *kenjōgo*.

The transcription conventions used are:

.	falling intonation	,	slight fall indicating continuity
?	rising intonation	*	prominence
::	lengthened segment	[xxx]	nonlexical phenomena (e.g. [laughter])
[xxx]	“xxx” overlapping with “yyy”		
[yyy]			

The transliteration conventions used are:

Long vowels are written as /ā/, /ō/, /ū/, /ei/, and /ii/. For proper names, such as personal names and place names, long vowels are often written without distinguishing them from short vowels (for example, Tokyo instead of *Tōkyō*). In this book the above conventions for long vowels are used (for example, *Tōkyō* rather than *Tokyo*).

For the syllabic nasal, /n/ is used consistently, and not /m/ before a bilabial stop (for example, *shinbun* ‘newspaper’ rather than *shimbun*).

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Naming conventions used are:

Non-Japanese names are in English order, Japanese names (including cited Japanese authors writing in Japanese) are in Japanese order, and Japanese names of authors writing in English are in English order.

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the authors'.