

Osaka Aunties: Negotiating Honorific Language, Gender, and Regionality

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Ideas about Japanese Language and Gender (based mainly on studies of SJ)

- Prescriptive ideas:
 - Women use:
 - sex specific sentence final forms & pronominal forms;
 - high[er than men] frequencies of honorific & distal forms;
 - use of these forms (above) are indirect indices of *feminine* characteristics such as: restraint, softness, indirectness, and so on.
 - Men use:
 - sex specific sentence final forms & pronominal forms;
 - low[er than women] frequencies of honorific & distal forms;
 - use of these forms (above) are indirect indices of *masculine* characteristics such as: direct, aggressive, [but] stoic & silent.

Ideas about Japanese Language and Gender (based mainly on studies of SJ)

- Empirical Observations:
 - Women:
 - Frequencies of sex specific final forms & pronouns are context-, stance-, position- & interactional goal-based (Matsumoto 2002; Okamoto 1995; Miyazaki 2004; Lunsing and Maree 2004).
 - Uses of honorifics, distal and neutral forms are likewise based on speaker 'identity' in the moment-to-moment interaction (Cook 1998).
 - Men:
 - Very little empirical work done on SJ speaking men.

Why Regional Women?

Why Kansai Women?

- Regional Needs:
 - How do women regionally positioned respond to SJ language norms?
 - How do regional women's linguistic practices articulate with code choice(s)?
- Kansai Dialect (KD) Practices:
 - It is easily identified by all; it is a prestige dialect.
 - Speakers routinely deny switching to SJ when traveling outside region.
 - It can be heard on mainstream TV throughout the archipelago.

Kansai in the Domestic Imagination

- *Omoroi Yatsu* 'That Interesting Guy'
 - Makes up for a lack of sports and scholastic abilities (aligned with Standardness) with friendliness, familiarity, and jokes. (Sato 2000)
- *Doketchi Obachan* 'Super Cheap Auntie'
 - For items already on sale, she asks for a discount.
 - When a store is selling something with a limit of "only 3 per person," she makes her family go along to buy the item. (Maegaki 2005)

Recognizable Regionalisms

- *~hen* (SJ: *~nai*; negation)
 - *Iku* ('to go') – *ikanai* (SJ) – *ikahen* (KD) = 'not go'
- *Ya* (SJ: *da*; copula) and its relative forms
 - *Yanai* (SJ: *janai*) = 'isn't'
 - *Yaro* (SJ: *daro*) = 'probably'
 - *Yakara* (SJ: *dakara*) = 'therefore,' 'because'
- *Haru* (SJ: *Nahara/Nasaru*; Other Honorific)
 - *Ikinasaru* -- *ikiharuru* ('go' [+ other honorific])
- *Nen* (SJ: *ne*; Sentence final form)
- *Akan* (SJ: *dame*; 'no,' 'don't,' 'prohibited')

Salient Standardisms

■ Distal forms

- Desu/masu [+ politeness but not honorific]
- Deshoo [polite form of 'daro' ('yaro(o)' in KD)]

■ Sentence Final Forms

- Stereotypically strongly feminine (Okamoto 1995):
 - Verb/Adj + no yo ne
 - Verb/Adj + no yo
 - Kashira

Participants: Groups 1 & 2

Same participants, two different occasions

Conversations: 4020, 4015

NAME	OCCUPATION	AGE
Ami	Admin. Assistant	39
Hana	Law Clerk	32
Akiko	Office Worker	41

Participants: Group 3

Conversation: R001

NAME	OCCUPATION	AGE
Kaori	Housewife	64
Michiko	Housewife	61
Naoko	Housewife	62

Participants: Group 4

Conversation: 4039

NAME	OCCUPATION	AGE
Asako	Ikebana Teacher (Housewife)	58
Sachi	Ikebana Student (Housewife)	63
Reiko	Ikebana Student (Housewife)	76

Data: ~*haru* (information in () indicate conversation number and speaker)

■ Ex. 1 (R001)

- Itsumo *joozu* ni shi*haru yo ne*
 '[She] always does it well, doesn't she.'

■ Ex. 2 (R001)

A: Kazoku de *ikarerun*, okusan mo issho ni

B: Asoko mago wa ite*haraHEN yo ne*

A: 'They go as a family, the wife also goes with [them].'

B: 'The grandkids haven't gone though, right?'

Blue = SJ
 PINK = KD
 Blue = SJ SFP
 PINK = KD SFP
 Bold = KD honorific

More ~*haru*

■ Ex. 3 (4039, Sachi)

Tsu*KOO*te kure*hattara EE NA*:

'If [they'll] make it for you, that's good!'

■ Ex. 4 (4039, Reiko)

Demo sensei son'nan iute*haraHEN* kara,
 shiri*hareHEN* no *CHAU kana*:

'But the sensei hasn't said that, so you can't know it, do you, right?'

Data: *Janai*

■ Ex. 5 (4020, Akiko)

Yappari ki ni naru kara futto nanige ni
ashimoto mitara, hiiru *janai* *NEN*, chotto futsu
no . . .

'And, because I had noticed [her height], I
casually glanced down at her feet and it
wasn't heels [she was wearing] it was just
regular [shoes].'

Data: Desu, ~masu, and deshoo

■ Ex. 6 (4015, Ami, Hana & Akiko)

Ak: tomodachi wa itteta ('my friend told me')

H: on'na no hito soto derare*HEN* no *deshoo*
'women aren't allowed outside, you know?'

A: kon'nan koomutte ('they suffer so . . .')

H: kao dashitara *AKAN* *iimasu yo ne*
'they say they can't even show their face.'

A: nan *YA*ttake, nanka kina *AKAN*katta *yo ne*
'what's that thing? That thing they have to wear?'

Data: Sentence Final Forms

■ Ex. 7 (4039, Reiko)

Genki na hito ikan, iki*haru* hito mo *ORU* *kashira*

'Healthy people can't go, but I wonder if there will be
some there, too?'

■ Ex. 8 (R001, Michiko)

Ima goro kara *UMAKU* detekitara, de, kyonen wa sore
de kekko *KIREKATTA* *no yo*

'If they bloom nicely from now . . ., uh, last year with
that [treatment] they were quite pretty.'

Discussion:

■ Uses of *Haru* and SJ honorific forms

- Use of dialect *haru* far greater than SJ honorific forms.
- Use of SJ honorific forms tend to be sarcastic and/or highly formulaic.
- Aside from its virtual exclusive use, the occurrence of *haru* is unremarkable; that is, its context of use is in line with descriptions found in reference guides.

Discussion:

- Use of distal forms
- Almost exclusive use of *deshoo*
 - Avoidance of dialectal *yaro(o)*?
- Exclusive use of *janai*
 - Avoidance of dialectal *yanai*
 - Exclusive use of dialectal copula *ya* and avoidance of SJ copula *da*
- Use of sentence final forms
 - Use of stereotypically feminine forms definitely present
 - Appears highest among over 50 speakers.
 - Use of gender neutral forms also present

Some (in)Conclusive Thoughts:

- National Imaginary and Kansai
 - *Omoro* *yatsu*, *obachan*, old merchant/shopkeeper
 - What might it mean to be a 'Japanese woman' amidst standard and regional ideologies?
 - Not lower class
 - Not masculine
 - Not old
 - Not rural
- But *still* clearly Kansai, female, and *not* Tokyo

Continuation of (in)Conclusive Thoughts

- How can/does one claim membership simultaneously in a non-Tokyo region and yet index the savvy of ideological 'Japanese woman' among friends?
 - Linguistic practices:
 - KD: *haru, hen, ya*, and a few other "pieces"
 - SJ: *deshoo, desu/masu, janai*
 - Linguistic avoidances:
 - KD: *yaro, yanai*,
 - SJ: *da, naharu/nasaru*,

A final (in)Conclusive Thought

- With regard specifically to gender & region:
 - Potential for *haru* to be statistically gendered; and thus, an index of stereotypically feminine gender?
 - Potential for *yaro* & *yanai* to be an index of stereotypically masculine gender;

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