

Today's topics:

- **Sociolinguistics**
- **Prescriptive/descriptive grammar**
- **Language and gender in Japanese**

Background preparation:
(none)

0. Today's objectives

After today's class, you should be able to:

- *(Review:)* Distinguish between **prescriptive** and **descriptive** discussion of language structure, and identify when each type is **useful**
- Define **sociolinguistics** and give examples of **social factors** that differentiate **language communities**
- Discuss some normative/**prescriptive** expectations of the role of **gender** in Japanese and consider how to collect data to test these expectations

1. Warm-up / review

Work groups

- What is the difference between **prescriptive** and **descriptive** discussions of language?
 - Which are we more likely to find in a general-purpose **dictionary** or in a second-language **textbook**?
 - Do we ever find the other kind in sources like this as well?
 - Which of these two approaches do **theoretical linguists** typically take, and why?

1. Warm-up / review

- Approaches to language

Prescriptive	Descriptive
How people “ should ” use language - Who gets to decide?	How people do use language
Typical for dictionaries , L2 textbooks - Some do also record descriptive information	Useful for investigating mental grammar

- Prescriptive/descriptive approaches can also be applied to **language use in social/cultural context**

2. Language variation and Japanese

Work groups

- What are some **factors** causing different people to talk differently / have different language behavior?
 - Can you think of **examples** of language variation you have observed based on these factors?

2. Language variation and Japanese

- **Language communities** can differ in language use
- Speakers can communicate aspects of their **identity** or **group affiliation** through their language use
- Community or identity can be identified by...
 - region
 - age (or time)
 - socioeconomic factors
 - cultural, ethnic, racial factors
 - gender, gender identity
 - sexual orientation
 - ... etc.!
- **Sociolinguistics** is the study of **language variation** and how it relates to **social factors** such as these

2. Language variation and Japanese

- Social and cultural factors affect language use in Japanese in ways that are very salient even at the introductory L2 level, especially:
 - Vocabulary choice
 - Morphology
- Thus, Japanese L2 textbooks provide a fair bit of **prescriptive** discussion of social factors
 - To consider: How do these prescriptive rules compare with **naturalistic language data**?

2. Language variation and Japanese

Work groups

- What are some **social / cultural factors** that affect language use in Japanese?
 - What is **explicitly taught** to L2 (or L1) speakers?
 - What have you **observed** speakers doing?
 - Have you noticed any **mismatches** between prescriptive rules and naturally occurring language behavior (descriptive)?

2. Language variation and Japanese

- We will look at several social / cultural factors in the next few classes:
 - Gender (gender role, gender identity)
 - In-group vs. out-group
 - Social distance and relative social position
 - (- Regional dialects, historical change → later in the course)

2. Language variation and Japanese

- *Genki I* textbook (1ed.), pp 156-7, on social factors determining use of **informal** vs **formal** morphology
 - Two people who are **close friends or family members** speak with [informal] forms at the ends of sentences, using them as a sign of **intimacy**.
 - The use of [formal] forms [...] tends to imply the speaker's intention to “keep a proper **distance**” from the listener.
 - Japanese speakers are often very conscious of **seniority** [in the use of formal forms].
 - License to use [informal] forms is **not mutual**.
- This was the only discussion of social factors I found in skimming *Genki I*

2. Language variation and Japanese

- To what extent do **native speakers** of Japanese acquire the prescriptively expected social/cultural patterns of language use **naturalistically**?

Example: There are lots of websites and books about using polite language correctly

- If you read Japanese, check out this resource:
[社会人の敬語ドリル](#) *Syakaizin-no keego doriru*
[Polite language drills for professionals]

3. Background on language and gender

- Many languages are said to have gender-specific language patterns
- But investigating this is complicated:
 - Effects of gender must be distinguished from effects of **power** or **status**
 - Example: Do US-English-speaking men interrupt more often than women?
 - Speakers can **construct** their social identity
 - Speakers can choose to use more or less masculine- or feminine-coded language

3. Background on language and gender

- In Japanese, there are many characteristics that are traditionally thought to vary according to the gender of the speaker
- Can we investigate language use empirically to evaluate these claims?

4. Gendered language patterns in Japanese

Quick discussion

- Japanese speakers and language students:
 - What are some things you have observed, or have been taught, about how the language is used by speakers of different genders?
 - Have you observed language use that did not seem to follow the “typical” gender-related patterns?

4. Gendered language patterns in Japanese

- Some commonly discussed examples:
 - Pronoun choice
 - Sentence-final “particles”
 - Patterns of politeness / honorific use
 - Pitch (fundamental frequency) of speech
- Let's examine some of these a little further...

5. Pronoun choice

- Japanese speakers and language students:
 - What have you learned or observed about **pronoun choice** and speaker gender?

5. Pronoun choice

- Traditional description (Ide & Yoshida 1999)

Table 16.2 Sociolinguistic structure of personal pronouns

<i>Person</i>	<i>Style</i>	<i>Speaker</i>		<i>Young child</i>	
		<i>Adult</i>			
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
First person pronoun	Formal	<i>watakusi, watasi</i>	<i>watakusi, watasi</i>	None	<i>watasi</i>
	Normal	<i>boku</i>	<i>watasi, atasi</i>	<i>boku</i>	FN**+ <i>tyan</i>
	Deprecatory	<i>ore</i>	None	<i>ore</i>	None
Seond person pronoun	Formal	<i>anata*</i>	<i>anata*</i>	(<i>kimi</i>)***	(<i>anata</i>)
	Normal	<i>kimi</i>	<i>anata</i>	FN + <i>kun</i>	FN + <i>kun</i>
				FN + <i>tyan</i>	FN + <i>tyan</i>
	Deprecatory	<i>omae</i>	None	<i>omae</i>	None

* not applicable in addressing superiors

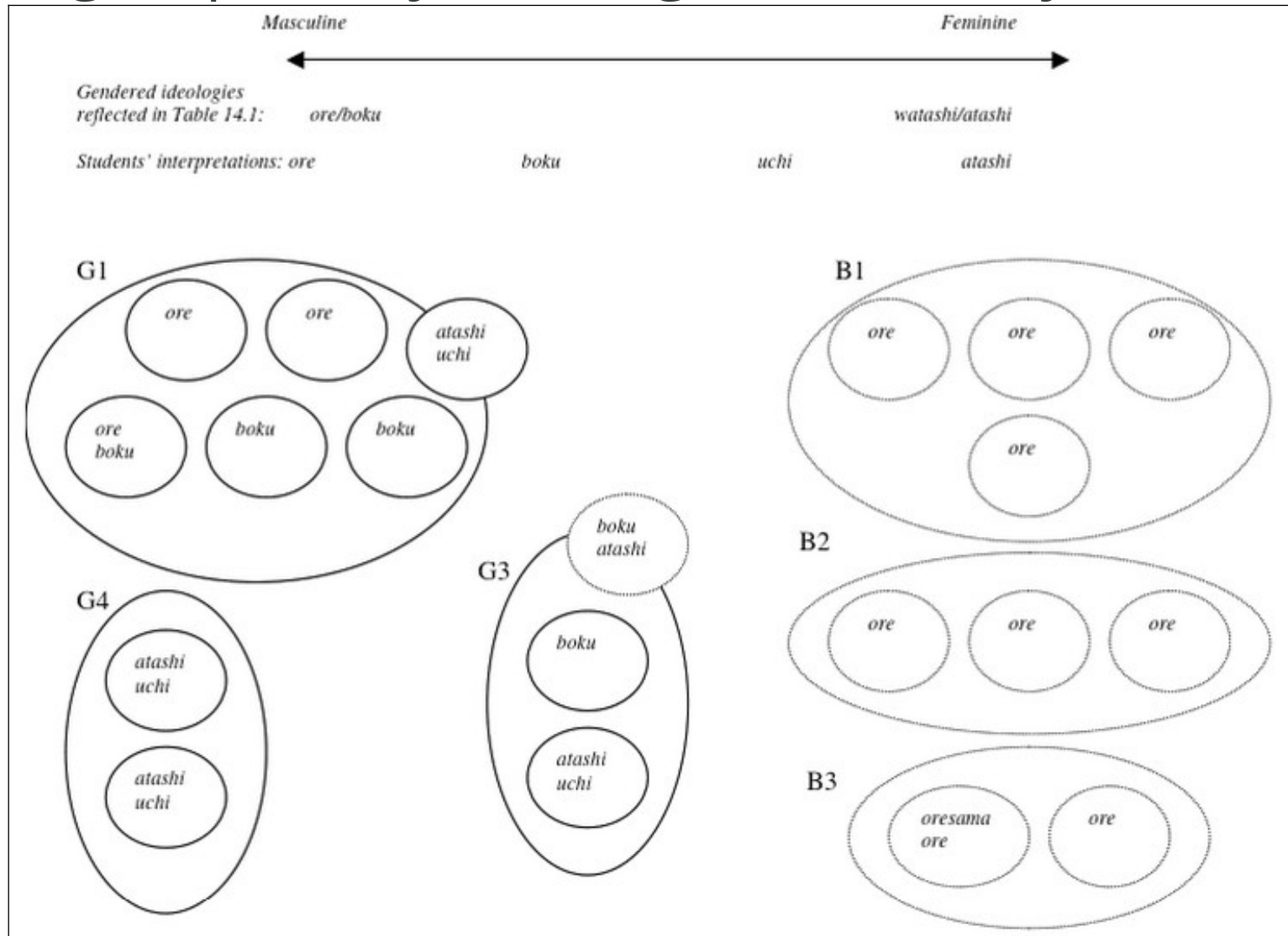
** FN represents first name

*** () begins to appear around the age of five

(Ide & Yoshida 1999: 471)

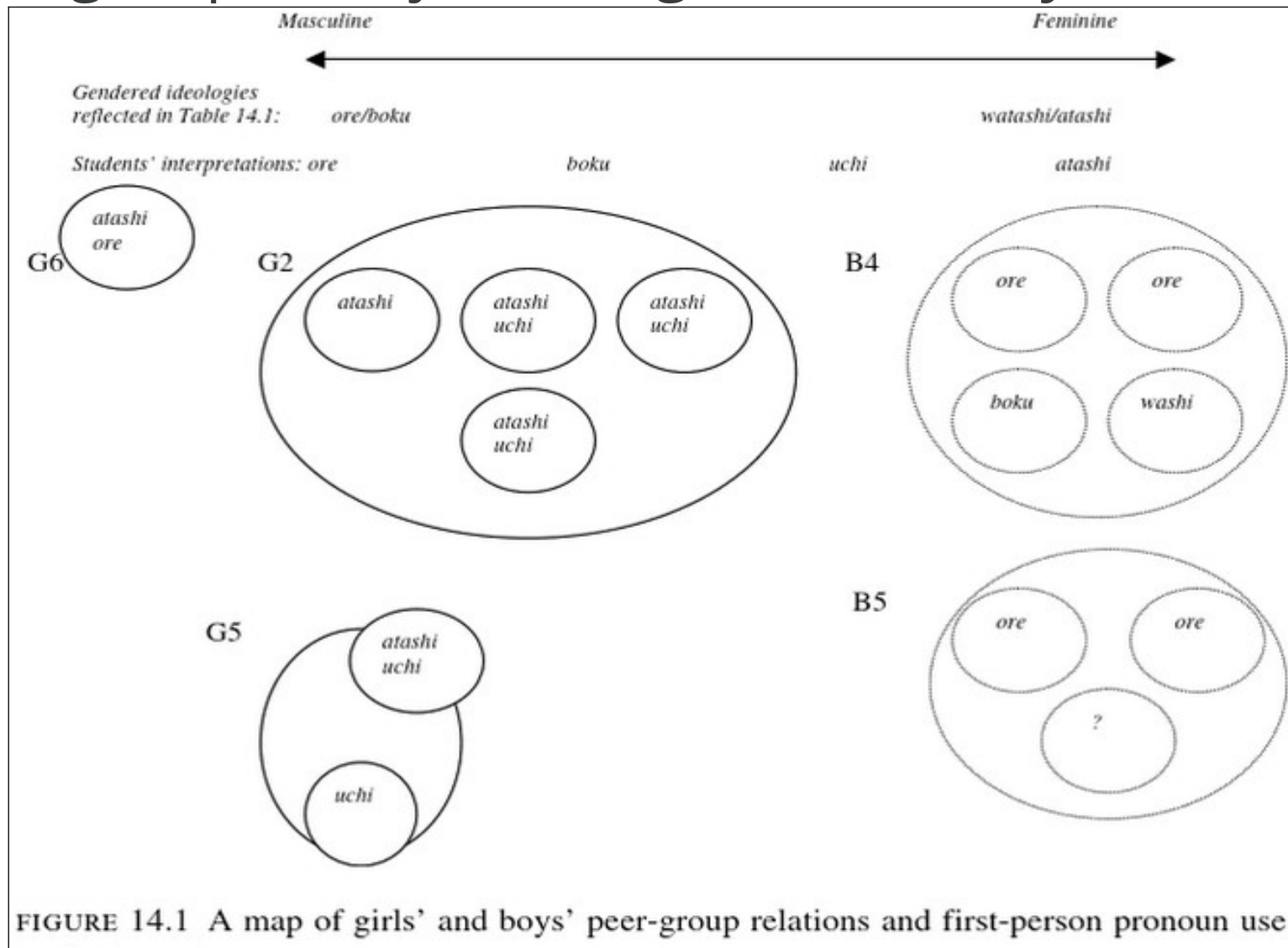
5. Pronoun choice

- Peer groups in a junior high school (Miyazaki 2004)



5. Pronoun choice

- Peer groups in a junior high school (Miyazaki 2004)



5. Pronoun choice

- Two students' comments (Miyazaki 2004)

Ndee, onna no ko ni kakomareteru tokii, nan to nakuu, ore tte icchau n da yo ne. Tte yuu kaa, "Aa, jibun ga otoko da ttara, kore zenbu jibun no onna na no ni naa" tte omottari suru toki ore nan da yo ne. Chotto kawatteru deshoo? . . . Atashi nee, nan daroo nee, nnn, dotchi katte yuu to, boseehonnoo yori moo, otoko no ko ga yowatchii onna no ko mamoritaku naru, ano kanji no hoo ga tsuyoi ka mo shinnai, boseehonnoo yori.¹

‘And when I’m surrounded by girls, I’ll say **ore** [a strongly masculine first-person pronoun]. Or when I imagine, “Ahh, if I were a boy, these girls would be all mine,” I’ll say **ore**. Aren’t I strange? . . . I, I wonder, if I had to choose one, I’d say that I have more of a boy’s instinct to protect weak girls than a maternal instinct’. (13-year-old girl)

Ore ga niau hito tte iru n desu yo. Tatoeba, supootsukee ga dekiru hito toka . . . Ore tte itte kimaru hito iru jan. Boku nanka zenzen kimannai jan.

‘**Ore** suits some people. For example, people who are good at sports . . . There are people who sound cool with **ore**. I wouldn’t sound cool at all if I used **ore**’. (13-year-old boy)

5. Pronoun choice

- What do we conclude from the junior high school pronoun study? (Miyazaki 2004)
 - Do the students choose pronouns as “expected” for their gender?
 - Is gender the only factor involved here?
- Will these students maintain these patterns as they grow older?
 - Is this a **generational** or an **age-related** difference from “expected” patterns?

6. Sentence-final particles

- Japanese speakers and language students:
 - What are some examples of **sentence-final particles**?
 - Have you noticed, or been taught, gender differences in SFP usage?

6. Sentence-final particles

→ The proportion of use by male speakers ← The proportion of use by female speakers	
kaa	
yona	
yona	
ze	
monna	
monna	
tara	
zo	94.4%
naa ↗ *	94.1%
na	90.2%
saa	86.2%
ka	84.0%
wakeyo	83.3%
ke	79.2%
yo	66.5%
kanaa	64.3%
mon	59.0%
yoo	52.4%
kedo	51.9%
yone	50.0%
	51.8%
	52.3%
	53.3%
	54.5%
	58.3%
	60.0%
	62.7%
	62.8%
	63.2%
	72.5%
	77.8%
	77.8%
	85.7%
	88.9%
	92.3%
	97.2%
The proportion of use by female speakers	
	yone
	ne
	sa
	kana
	wake
	nano ↗
	yuuka
	toka
	no
	yoo
	no ↗
	monne
	none
	nano
	wa
	naa ↘ **
	noyo
	wane
	noyone
	kashira
	nanone
	wayo

Key: ↗ indicates rising tone ↘ indicates falling tone

Figure 16.6 Frequency of the use of sentence-final particles according to the gender of the speakers

Source: Ide 1979: 8–9

- Graphic from Ide & Yoshida (1999: 465)
- Data originally from Ide (1979)
- Any thoughts or potential follow-up research questions?

6. Sentence-final particles

→ The proportion of use by male speakers ←		The proportion of use by female speakers ←	
kaa			
yona			
yona			
ze			
monna			
monna			
tara			
zo	94.4%		
naa	94.1%		
na	90.2%		
saa	86.2%		
ka	84.0%		
wakeyo	83.3%		
ke	79.2%		
yo	66.5%		
kanaa	64.3%		
mon	59.0%		
yoo	52.4%		
kedo	51.9%		
yone	50.0%	yone	
	51.8%	ne	
	52.3%	sa	
	53.3%	kana	
	54.5%	wake	
	58.3%	nano	
	60.0%	yuuka	
	62.7%	toka	
	62.8%	no	
	63.2%	yoo	
	72.5%	no	
	77.8%	monne	
	77.8%	none	
	85.7%	nano	
	88.9%	wa	
	92.3%	naa	
	97.2%	noyo	
		wane	
		noyone	
		kashira	
		nanone	
		wayo	

Key: *↗ indicates rising tone **↘ indicates falling tone

Figure 16.6 Frequency of the use of sentence-final particles according to the gender of the speakers

Source: Ide 1979: 8–9

- Potential follow-up questions
 - Are there any **confounds** with power or status?
 - Would a **contemporary** study show similar patterns?
 - Are there (also) **regional** or **class-related** differences?

7. Levels of politeness / honorific use

- In English, what are some different ways to ask to borrow a pen?
 - Imagine asking different types of people
- What are some options in Japanese for asking this same question?

7. Levels of politeness / honorific use

Background: Politeness

(a) American speakers

- Graphic from Ide & Yoshida (1999: 459)
- Data from Hill et al. (1986: 358)

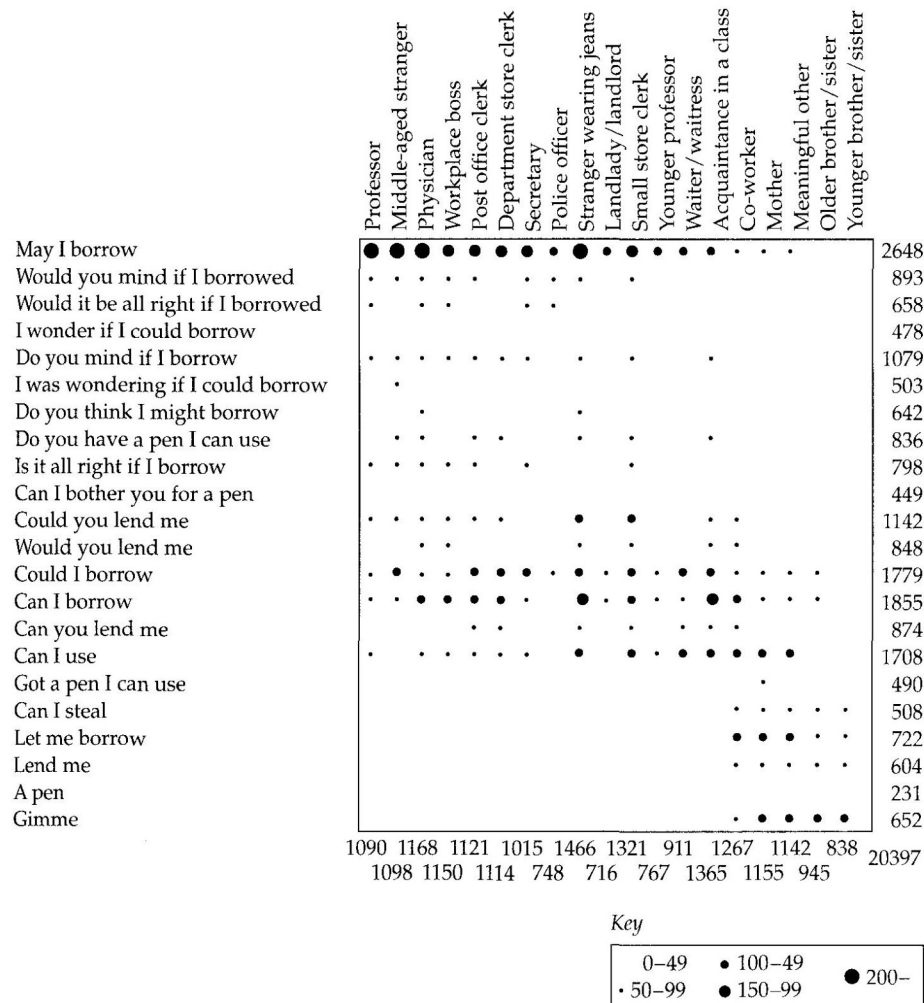


Figure 16.3 Correlation of linguistic forms and addressees: Americans
Source: Hill et al. 1986: 358

7. Levels of politeness / honorific use

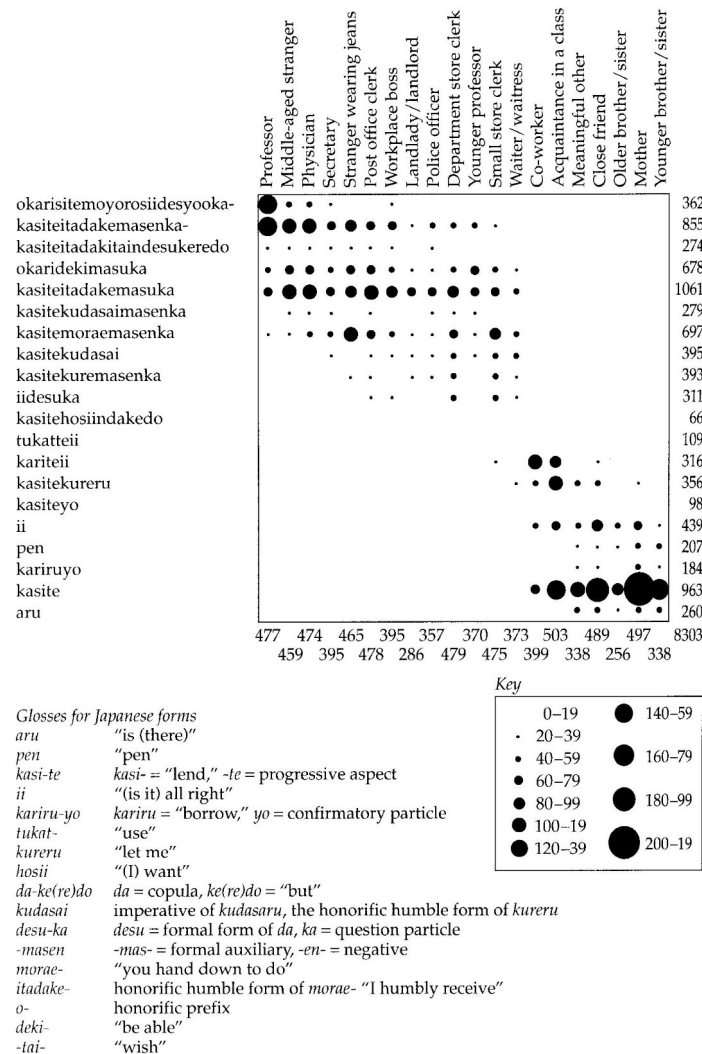


Figure 16.2 Correlation of linguistic forms and addressees: Japanese
Source: Hill et al. 1986: 357

Background: Politeness

(b) Japanese speakers

- Graphic from Ide & Yoshida (1999: 458)
- Data from Hill et al. (1986: 357)

-
- What differences do we see between American and Japanese politeness patterns, in general?

7. Levels of politeness / honorific use

- Are there gender differences in **politeness level**?

Table 16.1 Average politeness level used for a category of addressees as rated by 500 male and female subjects each (Ide et al. 1986a: 30)

<i>Types of addressee</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
a. Child	1.39	1.15
b. Spouse	1.41	1.85
c. Delivery person	2.19	2.39
d. Friend	2.15	2.55
e. Workplace inferior	1.91	2.39
f. Same-status colleague	2.41	2.45
g. Neighbor	3.72	3.25
h. Spouse's friend	3.53	3.99
i. Parent at PTA meeting	3.83	3.50
j. Instructor of hobby group	3.99	4.31
k. Daughter's or son's professor	4.19	4.40
l. Workplace superior	4.31	4.39

- Graphic from Ide & Yoshida (1999: 467)
- Data originally from Ide et al. (1986)

7. Levels of politeness / honorific use

Response to: “What form of *sitte-iru* ‘I know’ would you use?”
(Ide & Yoshida 1999: 468-9; data from Ogino 1986)

Male speakers

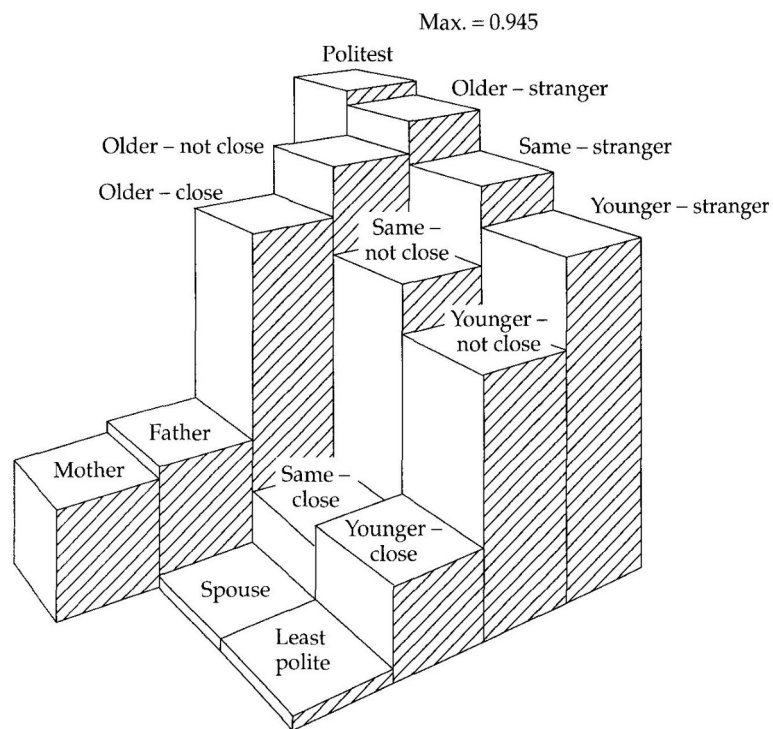


Figure 16.7 The politeness level of linguistic forms used towards addressee by male speakers
Source: Ogino 1986: 45

Female speakers

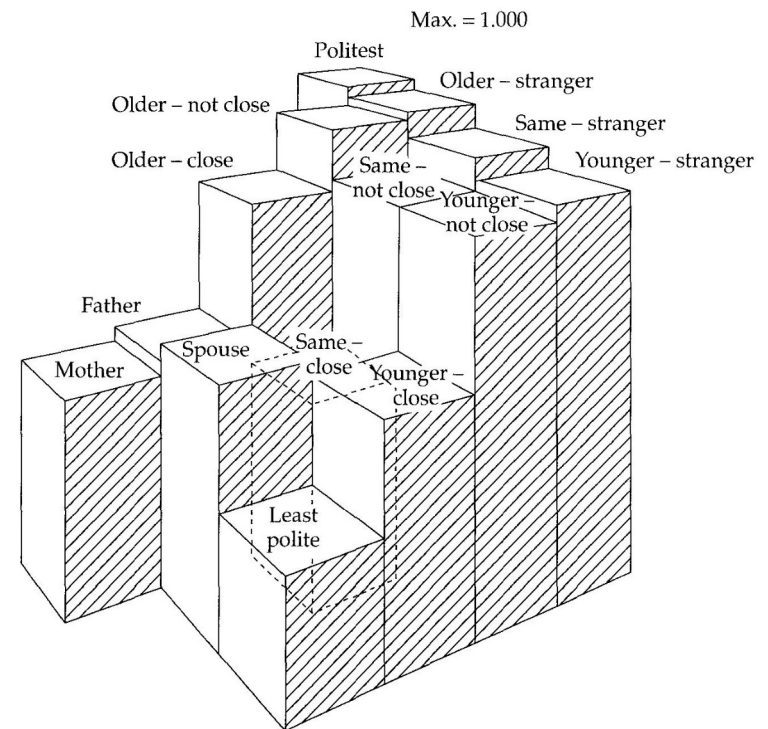


Figure 16.8 The politeness level of linguistic forms used towards addressee by female speakers
Source: Ogino 1986: 46

7. Levels of politeness / honorific use

- Did the studies reviewed by Ide & Yoshida (1999) show evidence for gender-related differences in levels of politeness?
- Any thoughts or follow-up research questions?

7. Levels of politeness / honorific use

- Potential follow-up research questions (same as above)
 - Are there any **confounds** with power or status?
 - Would a **contemporary** study show similar patterns?
 - Are there (also) **regional** or **class-related** differences?

8. Summary — Gendered language in Japanese

- There is some evidence to support claims about gender differences in language use
- But, consider the lessons learned more generally from studies of language and gender:
 - Is gender the only factor at play?
 - Are patterns changing over time?
 - Do speech communities differ with respect to gender-based patterns?
- Also: Are speakers making choices about identity?

9. More about Japanese sociolinguistics

- Gender differences in language use can potentially influence many different components of Japanese language structure
 - Pronoun, particle choice → Lexicon/morphology
 - Interaction with politeness/formality → Another sociolinguistic area (which involves phonology, lexicon, morphology, syntax)
- Some of the work that explores language and gender is not as careful about linguistic structure and linguistic analysis as it could be
 - You may be able to do a better job!

9. More about Japanese sociolinguistics

- Interested in sociolinguistics of Japanese? There are some ebooks available through “Course reserves” to get you started (and see References section below)
- Many possible final project topics here
 - Pay careful attention to designing your study (avoid confounding factors!)
 - Bring in as much understanding of the linguistic structures at play as you can

10. For next time

- No assigned preparation (Tues is a well-being day)
- Recommended: If you haven't looked over the final project information yet, this is a good time

References

- Hill, B., S. Ide, S. Ikuta, A. Kawasaki, and T. Ogino. 1986. Universals of linguistic politeness: Quantitative evidence from Japanese and American English. *J Pragmatics* 10: 347-71.
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- Ogino, T. 1986. Quantification of politeness based on the usage patterns of honorific expressions. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 58: 37-8.
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