## Honorifics and syntactic structure

- I. Two honofiric constructions
- **(1)** Some **morphology** for the two kinds of politeness marking we are about to see

HONORIFIC prefix (HON, HP) (a) o yom-i ni nar-u 0kake 0 ni

'read' nar-u vom-

'hang, suspend; call (phone)' kake-

'become' (b) o vom-i su-ru narkake si- su- se- 'do' (irreg.)0 su-ru

(c) What might we propose for the word class of *yomi* and *kake*?

Additional data: (Ivana & Sakai 2007)

sensei-ga o-kak.i-no 'the book the teacher wrote' hon HP-Write-GEN teacher-NOM book

o-kaer.i des-u ka? 'did *pro* already go home?' pro moo

нр-до. home already COP C. OUESTION

- (d) Side note: this supports the view that the /-i-/ that appears on consonant verbs with certain suffixes is a *morpheme* that has a "zero" counterpart for vowel verbs
- (2) Some lexical items

'teacher,' but also used for writers, politicians, etc. sensei

> this is a title: use as a referent, or as a form of address

> > use alone or as a suffix to a name

1st person sg "pronoun" watasi

used in male-typical and female-typical speech if formal

- characteristic of female-typical speech if informal
- (3) Under what social circumstances are the o-V-ni nar- and o-V-si- constructions used?
  - Context: Mariko is speaking these sentences to a friend. Aya is another friend.
    - The symbol '#' indicates 'infelicitous' grammatical, but inappropriate to the context.
    - The usual disclaimers apply about the use of -ga on a main-clause subject.
  - (a) (i) Aya-ga koohii-o non-da.

coffee drink-PAST

- (ii) Sensei-ga koohii-o o-nom-i-ni nat-ta.
- (iii) # Sensei-ga koohii-o o-nom-i sita.
- (b) (i) Watasi-ga Aya-o tazune-ta.

visit

- (ii) Watasi-ga sensei-o o-tazune si-ta.
- (iii) # Watasi-ga sensei-o o-tazune-ni nat-ta.

- hanas-ita. (c) (i) Watasi-ga Aya-ni koto-o sono discuss that matter (ii) Watasi-ga sensei-ni koto-o o-hanas-i si-ta. sono (iii) # Watasi-ga sensei-ni koto-o o-hanas-i-ni nat-ta. sono (iv) Sensei-ga watasi.tati-ni koto-o o-hanas-i-ni nat-ta. sono us (v) # Sensei-ga watasi.tati-ni sono koto-o o-hanas-i si-ta.
- (4) Reminder: **SSS** ("socially superior to the speaker") (Harada 1976)

  o + V(+i) + ni naru
  o + used when \_\_\_\_\_ is SSS
  o + V(+i) + suru
  o + used when \_\_\_\_\_ is SSS
- (5) What happens when both conditions are met?

Tanaka-sensei-ga Yamada-sensei-ni sono koto-o o-hanasi-ni nat-ta. # Tanaka-sensei-ga Yamada-sensei-ni sono koto-o o-hanasi si-ta.

(6) How do these referent honorifics relate to performative politeness (formality)?

Sensei-ga o-kaer-i-ni nat-ta. / Sensei-ga o-kaer-i-ni nar-imas-ita.

# Sensei! O-kaer-i-ni nar-u? / Sensei! O-kaer-i-ni nar-imas-u ka?

Ame-ga hut-ta. / Ame-ga hur-imas-ita.

rain fall fall-FORMAL

# Ame-ga o-hur-i-ni natta. / #Ame-ga o-hur-i si-ta.

- II. Honorifics and syntactic structure
- Under what **syntactic conditions** can we use *o-V-ni nar-*? What about *o-V si-*?
- (7) Watasi-ga sensei-no o-nimotu-o o-moti si-mas-u.

  HP-luggage hold (carry)
- (8) Sensei-no o-nimotu-ga todoi-ta.
  - # Sensei-no o-nimotu-ga o-todok-i-ni natta.

## For further reading

Harada, Shin-Ichi. 1976. Honorifics. In Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), *Japanese Generative Grammar*. Syntax & Semantics 5. New York: Academic Press, 499-561.

Ivana, Adrian, and Hiromu Sakai. 2007. Honorification and light verbs in Japanese. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 16(3): 171-191.

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