A Study of Joseigo: Gendered Language of Japanese Women Workers in Ubud

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Abstract

This study examines joseigo (japanese women's language) differences usage found in the conversations of two Japanese women who work in a formal and informal sector in Ubud varies in ages. The research was conducted between July and August 2016. The corpus of this study was from the conversation transcripts, interview results, questionnaire results, and observation. This study examined difference strategies used in joseigo's linguistic features such as personal pronouns, adverbs, interjections, sentence-final forms, honorifics, and imperative sentences. The results showed that the level of formality is inversely proportional to the frequency of use of joseigo and the amount of variation used. The verbal data were majorly occurs in the formal background, joseigo forms are used less and less varied compared with the speech data that mostly occur in the informal background. On a formal background, neutral language variants (without gender attributes) are more frequently used.

Keywords: Joseigo; japanese; sociolinguistics; work sector.

INTRODUCTION

Japanese language marks male/female differences at different levels of grammar: morphology (e.g., *bikago* or the beautifying prefix *o-* attached to certain types of nouns, adjectives, and adverbs used more frequently by women than by men), sentence ending particles (men and women use sentence final particles differently), and the lexicon (e.g., first person pronouns: *boku* is used only by men). These differences in men's and

women's speech are particularly salient in informal contexts (Mishina, 1994).

Okamoto and Shibamoto-Smith (2016: 219) mention that the topic of a certain kind of language is shown as a manifestation of the stylistic characteristics of modern Japanese femininity. This is one of the main topics in Japanese language and gender research today. Okamoto and Shibamoto-Smith then explain some of the stylistic characteristics that are generally regarded as qualities of Japanese women: polite, gentle, elegant, not overt, empathic,

un assertive (considered as positive qualities) and talkative and emotional (considered as negative qualities).

In fact, this gender-associated Japanese language variety is used with different intensities and variations between men and women. There are several things that affect its use, for example the age and type of work (Adnyani, 2018). This is similar to the opinion of Abe (1998) which describes one element of *joseigo*, the final particle sentence. It is said that the use of final particles of sentences depends on the age, sex, and degree of formality. In addition, it is mentioned also that the more formal the situation, the fewer particles the end of the sentence is used.

One of the things that affect the formal or informal situation facing Japanese women is the kind of work done. Studies of Japanese women in urban areas show that they are becoming more active in social participation outside the home such as working part time and following volunteer activities (Fujimura-Fanselow and Kameda, 1995).

Broadly speaking, generally the type of work done can be divided into formal and informal sectors. Idris (2016) stated the characteristics of the characteristics of the informal business sector are not having sophisticated production tools, do not have special education / expertise, few number of employees, and narrow economic scope.

While Faqih (2010) mentions that the key variable of the differences between formal and informal sector jobs is the rationalization level of the job, whether the workers are set on a permanent and regular salary or not. Formal companies are generally run with professional management where all activities of the company are recorded well. While in the informal sector, business activities are run by themselves and managed traditionally.

Today, there are many Japanese working women who migrate abroad. The Japanese Ministry of Justice (2018) mentioned that 17.116.420 Japanese nationals leaving Japan in 2016 while only 4.948.366 did so in 1985. This shows that in two decades the number of Japanese tourists traveling abroad has increased more than three-fold.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the number of Japanese nationals overseas has been increasing and has surpassed one million since 2005. This figure encompasses both permanent residents ("eijyūsha"), who constitute 31.1 percent of the total number of Japanese national overseas, and expatriates who reside abroad for longer than three months (chōkitaizaisha). In the category of expatriates who reside abroad for longer than three months, some people voluntarily reside abroad while others are sent by their employer/company or the government of Japan. MOFA figures for expatriates include people such as expatriate workers (government officials, corporate workers, and journalists) and their families, entrepreneurs, those with professional skills (such as artists), researchers, students, and tourists.

It is interesting to look at the Ono data that links between migration and work with the following Moore opinions that link between work types and the specific language features developed.

Moore (2002) mentioned that occupations develop their own special language features, and use those of the common language in novel or distinctive ways. Occupations are a source of language change, while attitudes to language may in turn be causes of change in the way occupations work. It is in the nature of some occupations to make every language interaction have a formal character so that it fits a system, while others may need more

flexibility. Language interactions may occur between or among those within a given occupation, or between those inside and those outside (customers, clients, the “general public”). This distinction will affect significantly a speaker's (or writer's) language choices.

On Japanese women who are no longer living in Japan but have migrated to other countries and are working in the country, is there any difference in the use of women's vernacular between formal and informal women workers? The question will be answered in this article.

METHODS

The research approach used in this research is qualitative research approach. This research was conducted on Japanese women who work in Ubud District, Gianyar Regency, Bali and volunteer to Ubud no Hon no Kookankai community.

The research location used is Ubud, Bali, Indonesia. Japanese women selected as research subjects are Japanese women working in both formal and informal sectors. The reason is because they play the role of a modern woman who reflects something different from the traditional concept of femininity attached to Japanese women as housewives. For more details on research data retrieval, it will be explained in subsequent chapters.

The corpus of data in this study is the conversation corpus in the form of Japanese female spontaneous conversations using Japanese language, interview results, questionnaire results, and observation results. The subjects of the study were two Japanese women who lived and participated socially in Ubud area of varying ages (age 36 and 76). The total recording that was collected was then given a code based on the location of the study as well as the order of taking the recorded conversation. The total number of recorded files used was 8

recording files. The duration of per-subject recording files varies, but remains within the same range of 2.5 hours / subject. Data analysis was performed after written data had been collected and classified.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data on the use of *joseigo* in the domain of social are shown in table 1. The research subjects are divided into two categories based on the conditions at which the recording data is taken, namely category (1) Working on the formal sector (Akane, 36 years old) and category (2) Working on the informal sector (Hitomi, 76 years old).

Akane is included in category 1 related to her job as a hotel employee. The background she faces when the recording data were taken is a formal or official background, especially when conversing with Japanese guests. While Hitomi, who teaches craft courses at home, works in the informal sector. The expose of research data in Table 1 is supported by analysis by presenting several corpus data considered to represent the use of *joseigo* form in the formal and informal employment sector.

Table 1. Comparison of *Joseigo*'s Usage between Category I and II

No	<i>Joseigo</i> 's Feature	Category I	Category II	Comparison
1	Feminine personal pronoun	Not shown	<i>Atashi, atashitachi, atashira, uchi</i> (frequency: 48 times)	Appears more often and more varied in category II
2	Sentence Final Particles	Strong Feminine (SF) : <i>wane, nano, none, monne</i> frequency: 8 times Moderate Feminine (MF) : <i>deshoo</i> Frequency	Strong Feminine (SF): <i>wa, wane, nanoyo, noyo, none, noyone, kashira, monne</i> frequency: 34 times Moderate Feminine	Both SF and MF are more varied and more frequent in Category II

		: 2 times	(MF): <i>mon</i> , <i>no</i> (declarative), <i>deshoo</i> (frequency 58 times)	
3	Speech formality levels	Dominant: formal speech	Hyper Polite : 1 speech Formal : 14 speeches Semi formal : 2 speeches Informal : 198 speeches	The dominant type of speech corresponds to the job sector
4	Honorific Prefixes <i>O</i> dan <i>Go</i>	Frequency: 14 times	Frequency : 26 times	Appears more often in category II
5	Adverbs	Dominant: Adverbs of Degree Frequency : 18 times Most-used adverbs : <i>mou</i>	A. Adverbs of Manner and Circumstance; frequency: 43 kali, Most-used adverbs: <i>chanto</i> , <i>yappari</i> B. <i>Adverbs of Degree</i> ; frequency: 171 times, Most-used adverbs: <i>mou</i> , <i>chotto</i> C. <i>Adverbs of Predication</i> ; frequency: 29 times, Most-used adverbs: <i>mada</i> , <i>mochiron</i>	Equally dominant in using Adverbs of Degree, but the frequency of category II is higher
6	Feminine Imperative	Not shown	<i>Plain negative imperfective form + copula – de + ne</i> (frequency: 1 time)	The type and frequency of feminine imperative sentences appear more in category II
7	Interjection	Most-used category: <i>positive and negative responses</i> Most-used interjections : <i>sou!</i>	Most-used category: <i>fillers</i> Most-used interjections: <i>anou</i>	The dominant Interjections are used differently

The comparison of the use of *joseigo* between category I and II in the domain of social participation shows that the level of formality is inversely

proportional to the frequency of use of *joseigo* and the amount of variation used. In Akane's speech data that mostly occur in the formal background, *joseigo* form is used less frequently and less varied compared with Hitomi's speech data that majority occur in informal background.

One of the evidences is on the pronouns persona used. In Category I, the feminine person pronouns used are not present. In the second category, the feminine personal pronouns used are *Atashi*, *atashitachi*, *atashira*, and *uchi* with usage frequency 48 times. This suggests that there is a tendency to use more frequent and varied forms of *joseigo* in the informal situation, i.e. in subjects in Category II. Thus, *joseigo* is included in a variety of informal languages because it is more commonly used in an informal situation. More about the use of *joseigo* per study subject will be explained as follows.

1. Akane

Akane works as a Japanese hotel extracurricular teacher and teacher at a high school in Ubud. Akane's remarks on the domain of social participation include many conversations with his guests at the hotel. When talking with her guests, namely Mrs. Kobayashi, Akane uses a lot of formal language and hyper-polite. The variety of formal languages is characterized by the use of polite suffixes *-masu* and *-desu*, while the hyper-polite variety is characterized by the word *gozaimasu*.

(1)

Kobayashi: それと、ねえ、ちょっと伺いたい、あたしあのう、インドネシアようの変換機持って来たの、なんかちょっと違うかな。こちらにおいてらっしゃる？変換機はにおいてらっしゃる？

Soreto, nee, chotto ukagaitai.
Atashi anou,
Indonesia you no henkanki
mottekitano,
nanka chotto chigau kana,
kochirani oiterassharu
henkanki wa. oiterassharu?
 And again, yes, I want to ask.
 I carry an electric adapter for
 use in Indonesia,
 but it seems a bit different.
 Do you have it here?
 Is there any adapter here?

Akane: はい、ございますよ。はい、
hai, gozaimasu yo. Hai.
 Yes, there is, yes.
 (E1.0)

(2)

Kobayashi: 車降りた時にね、何時から、
 何時って。
Kuruma orita toki ni ne,
nanji kara nanjitte
 When you get off the car,
 please tell me what time
 until what time..

Akane: もう言っております。
Mou itte arimasu.
 I told the driver already

Kobayashi: この前の方、八時半に
 行きますって、
 出た時にいてくれたんで。
Kono mae no kata,
hachiji han ni ikimasutte,
Deta tokini ite kuretanda
 The previous driver said
 he will pick up at 8.30.
 But by the time I got out,
 he was ready to pick up

Akane: そんな感じで、
 ピックアップいたしますので
Sonna kanji de,
Anou pikkuappu itashimasunode
 You will be picked up
 in that way
 (E4.0)

The use of *keigo* (respectful variety of languages) such as *gozaimasu* and *itashimasu* is one of the characteristics of *joseigo*. Basically *keigo* is used to refine the language used by the first person (speaker or writer) to respect the second person (the listener or reader) and the third person (in question). The use of *keigo* depends on the context of the utterance including first person, second person, and third person (Sudjianto, 2004: 189). The use of *keigo* by Akane serves to express respect by Akane against Kobayashi who is a guest at the hotel where Akane works. Of the variety of languages used Akane, it can be seen that in the formal background, the range of speech used is generally neutral. Differences in the variety of languages by gender are not widely used.

2. Hitomi

Hitomi is a lecturer in crafting Japanese ceramics (*Tougei*). The course was held at Hitomi's house and at this time only followed by 2 participants who were Hitomi's friends. Hitomi's speech on the domain of social participation included many of Hitomi's conversations while teaching the course.

(3)

Hitomi :うん、あたしの
 せいにしんといてや
Un, atashi no sei ni shintoiteya
 Well, it's not my fault

Student 2 : はい。大丈夫です。
Hai, daijyoubu desu
 Yes, it is okay

Hitomi :火のせいやから
Hinoseiyakara
 It's because of the fire
 (B3.1)

Hitomi uses the first person's informal and feminine pronouns with a higher frequency than the use of the first person pronoun neutral *watashi*. This is due

to several things. First, Hitomi teaches how to make *tougei* (Japanese-style ceramics) in his own home. Second, the two students are close friends of Hitomi. Student 1 and 2 students are Japanese women living in Ubud. The familiar place and partner of speech made Hitomi choose feminine pronouns for use when she was teaching, thus creating solidarity and familiarity between Hitomi, student 1, and student 2.

(4)

Student 1 : うん、それでちょっと。

Un, sorede chotto.

Well, its a bit..

Hitomi : ベジずしそれこそ やさいだけの

おすしも作ろうかなとか。

だって、主食が食べられへん

のやからな、

どないしようかしら思って。

心配がなくなった。

*Bejizushi sore koso yasai dake no
osushi mo tsukurou kana toka.*

*Datte, sushoku ga taberarehen no
yakarana,*

dona ishou kashira omotte.

Shinpai ga nakunatta.

Sushi vegetarian, I probably plan to make sushi made from vegetables only. The problem is,

I cannot eat the main meal

I think, "what should I do?"

Then I became not worried.

(B3.2)

Kashira, typically used by women, indicating a tentative question or uncertainty at the end of sentence. The masculine equivalent is *kana*, both in function and in casualness of tone (Chino, 2012). To show doubt, women can use *kana* word, but if you want to sound more feminine, women can use *kashira*. Just like *kana*, this particle can be used in polite form, but it is generally used in informal situations (Lammers, 2005). *Kashira* particle has three functions, namely: (1) showing uncertainty, (2) showing a

question to a person: "doubt," and (3) indicating indirect hope and request: "presumably".

Hitomi as the oldest research subject (70s) is the only subject of research that uses *kashira* particle which has a strong feminine nuance. In data (4), Hitomi shows doubt by using *kana* (neutral) particles followed by *kashira* particle (feminine). Although both have a sense of doubt, but in the last section, Hitomi wants to highlight her femininity with *kashira* particle that functions in accordance with the function number 3, which shows Hitomi's hope to be able to eat by making vegetarian sushi. The reason Hitomi accentuated her femininity was to establish an intimate and relaxed atmosphere with student 1 and student 2.

CONCLUSION

The comparison of the use of *joseigo* in the domain of social participation shows that the level of formality is inversely proportional to the frequency of use of *joseigo* and the amount of variation used. In the speech data that the majority occur in the formal background, *joseigo* forms are used less frequently and less varied compared with speech data that the majority occurs in the informal background.

From the analyzed data, it was found that the weaker and softer utterances, for example the use of the form of the suffixes *kashira* and *wa* to present the speaker's opinion in a friendly style and convey the subtlety of the speaker's language. A straightforward and informal explanation is often associated with youthful and gentle speech associated with traditional Japanese women. Therefore, there are times when the choice of the kind of language used by the subject is motivated by the desire to make a present or traditional impression of themselves.

Varied languages can be found in the same speech situation, to the speech

partners, and to the same speaker. This linguistic variation generally reflects the present social situation that women are more facilitated to have many choices in their careers and lives. This suggests that the expansion of their social and career domains has an impact on the expansion of the variety of linguistic varieties they can use.

The analysis of the linguistic form chosen by the study subjects to be used suggests that, unlike general and traditional assumptions about Japanese women's stable, gentle, and feminine speech, different expressions of emphasis and speech are used in conversations. The diversity of speech styles found in Japanese women may be attributable to their age old enough to have a variety of experience and social roles and young enough to feel the equality in the field of social participation that can be felt by Japanese women today.

Akane who works in the formal sector more often use a variety of neutral languages and do not show much variation in the use of *joseigo*. While Hitomi as a subject working in the informal sector, using a consistent range of language choices and broadly in line with *joseigo* ideology. It can be argued that in a formal setting, more neutral languages (without gender attributes) are more widely used. In contrast to an informal setting, *joseigo* is mostly used by Japanese women workers. Thus, *joseigo* can be incorporated into informal language because it is used more often in informal situations.

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