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An Analysis of Language Use in Japan Viewed from Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory

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0. Purpose of the study

The present paper tries to present a new view of the Japanese language as a development of my previous paper (Hori 2002), which reviewed the honorific usages in Japanese within the framework of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. There have been many syndromes in Japan which might be foretelling the approach of a new era in which people seem to be leaving the old hierarchical society and entering a new society of equal individuals. Since language change occurs in accordance with societal change, I will first review main changes in society which appear to be indicating the change in people's mind and behaviour. The main point of discussion will concern the positive politeness phenomena in language and in society.

1. Recent changes in people's behaviour in public

Tokyo Disneyland celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2003 and hosted several special entertainments for its visitors. According to a report in the newspapers, 98% of the visitors so far were repeaters, that is, almost all people who had once visited Tokyo Disneyland came back again to the same site. It is really remarkable when most of the amusement parks in Japan have been undergoing a long term decline in admission and some of them have closed or are thinking of closing or looking for some foreign enterprises to take over. Why is it that Tokyo Disneyland is far from the decline?

There could be many reasons for the visitors coming back many times. Some repeaters say they simply love the Disney characters and enjoy attractive events and parades. But the

greatest reason must be the friendly atmosphere in the park. "You're a different person once you step in there," says one of the repeaters, "because everything there welcomes you, not only the Disney characters dressed in costumes but also all the workers such as assistants and cleaners greet you and talk to you with a big smile. Where else in Japan can you receive such a warm welcome?"

Tokyo Disneyland's scheme was exactly to the point; they were well aware of the delicate character of Japanese people. In the real society, people must always be careful not to offend others so that they are afraid to talk to anyone except those who they are sure will accept them. Such a defensive attitude helps to increase distance from one another. Here in Disneyland, you can be sure you are welcomed and greeted by your favorite Disney characters. The huge-headed characters in costume don't utter a word, but that doesn't matter. Their exaggerated gestures convey how much they welcome you. You are liberated from daily tasks and can enjoy being treated so warmly as a member of the Disney world.

The place could be comparable to the specially segregated 'houses of ladies' for men flourished in a feudal era in the 17th-19th centuries. Those houses were just for rich and powerful men, but Tokyo Disneyland is for everybody. You just pay a little money and you are treated as if you were their close friends. It satisfies people's want for 'being close to one another', which is forbidden in a hierarchical society. Visitors to Disneyland seem to enjoy experiencing a warm human relationship in a temporary fantasy in a dreamland.

The executives of Tokyo Disneyland are very clever in utilizing the characters in the way they do. People in the life-size Mickey Mouse costumes never reveal their own identity. They simply walk around in the park, not doing any particular acts. Therefore, once in the costume an inexperienced performer can instantly become a Mickey Mouse, and thus it is possible to provide a sufficient number of characters according to the number of visitors so that every visitor might feel satisfied to come close to one of those Mickeys, shake hands, take pictures together, and exchange a friendly conversation, though nonverbally. Thus, it becomes a land of liberty and love, which the real Japanese society has never been since ancient times.

The most recent report of the Tokyo Disneyland group says that the number of the visitors to Tokyo Disneyland and Disney Sea from April to September in 2003 was 12.3 million, which is not only 350,000 more than that of the same period in the year before but the highest in their history in Japan. It is an exceptional increase when almost all other enterprises have been suffering downfalls in admission for many years.

Another big phenomenon was observed in September, 2003. On 15th of September a base-

ball team called the Hanshin Tigers won the Central League championship for the first time in eighteen years after the last victory in 1985. As the team won one game after another since the beginning of the season, there arouse more and more applause in and outside the stadium. All the stadiums where the Tigers played were full of their fans. The whole audience became one, singing the Tigers' songs and shouting out in unison the name of the batter at the moment. The people were all strangers to one another but they were united as the Tigers' fans. Under the self-made flags and boards, with Tigers' colour megaphones, they instantly became friends and comrades, sharing enthusiasm and disappointment at every throw and hit in the field. They were literally feeling solidarity like soldiers in the battlefield.

This exuberance did not stop in the stadium; people gathered in the bars, eating houses, stores, and watched TV singing and shouting just as the audience in the stadium did. When the Tigers finally won the league championship, the main street of Osaka City, their hometown, was packed with people, leaving only two lanes for cars. In spite of the fact that all the places, streets, roads, bridges, even rivers were full of people, there was no accident nor fighting (except a youth's accidental death in the river), and those strangers continued exchanging congratulations till late into the night.

Such an overt expression of happiness in unison in public is in fact a very new trend, which never happened in the past. When a political demonstration is held, though very rarely anyway, pedestrians are quite indifferent and never join in the parade, even when they agree to the message. There is a kind of invisible curtain separating individual strangers in a public place and it interferes their communication. One soft pull of the curtain, and they may rush into raptures of feeling togetherness. Tokyo Disneyland and the Hanshin Tigers must have worked as an ideal pull to open the curtain and made the Japanese mind set free.

2. A hidden thirst for positive politeness

Based on the above phenomena, I have come to realize that there is a hidden thirst for emitting close feeling overtly. Once people know the situation allows them to open and reveal their own selves, the thirst for exhibiting the innermost feeling and share it with other people bursts out as a flood. That was exactly what was observed in the exuberance of repeaters to Tokyo Disneyland and the Hanshin Tigers fans. While I was wondering when and how such a thirst for showing closeness openly started, I happened to find an essay written by a forty-year-old mother and sumitted to a newspaper column *'Onna no Kimochi'* (Women's Feelings) in

Mainichi Shimbun.

She describes how her thirteen-year-old girl shows her love to her. The mother says she is happy as the daughter loves going shopping with her, clasping her by the arm. Also the daughter gives a big smile when she comes back from school and says 'Thanks, Mum, for the lunch!' I thought this might be a new tendency of showing love overtly to one's parent, which was quite rare in the past. I wanted to know how university students would appreciate such behaviour. Fortunately as I was asked to give three-day lectures entitled 'Communication' at Gifu National University in August of 2003, I decided to do a small scale research.

I prepared a questionnaire concerning this essay with three questions about it: (1) "Did you do a similar act like 'walking with your mother clasping her by the arm when you were about the same age as this girl?" (2) "Have you seen a girl or a boy of this age doing a similar act?" (3) "What do you think of such an act?" I also provided four choices for each question which could reflect their appraisal of this outright expression of love to mother. The result was amazing.

While 84.1% of the respondents (30 boys and 39 girls, aged between 18 and 20) say they have never shown such an outright love to their mothers and 76.8% say they have never seen anyone doing such an act, 62.3% of them appreciate it because it well reflects the girl's honest feeling. Only 34.7% of the respondents show a negative feeling toward it. There are not many differences by the sexes.

Their response as a total reveals the following: (1) the majority of the students have not experienced exhibiting such an outright love to their mothers; and (2) they seldom witnessed other youngsters doing a similar act; however, (3) they think it good and perhaps they want to do the same if possible. They admit they have a hidden want to overtly show their honest feeling of love. This is a big change from the traditional suppression of love in Japanese society.

Strange to say, however, these students did not talk to one another in class. As my lecture was a selective course and they came from various departments, most of them did not know one another; they were really strangers. It is clear, however, as one of them confessed at the end of the course, that they wish to communicate with other students, want to know them, and hope for more friendly relationships, but there is something that prevents them from starting to talk to a stranger. They need a gentle push from outside, such as an instruction of the professor, which I really did by asking them to make a small group of discussion for the presentation at the end of each day. Then they could start talking, free from the oppression to open a conversation, and could continue talking and discussing. Deep in heart, they want to talk freely and friendly

but cannot do so straightforwardly.

A similar indifference to one another has been observed widely in many universities; even after sitting in the same class for one semester, students do not start to communicate with one another. Why? What prevents them to approach other students? What is standing in their way as a barrier to come close and express friendly feeling? Will there be anything to do with the system of *keigo* (honorifics) which is hierarchically ordered with the presumption that all humans are not equal? What will people do when they feel equal, close, and friendly to other people? There are ways of expressing closeness, though not recognized as 'correct Japanese'. Let us see what kind of language they are in the next section.

3. Closeness and rudeness, inseparable in one term

According to Brown and Levinson's positive politeness chart (1987: 102), interlocutors try to attend to each other's positive face by claiming 'common ground', by way of conveying the message that 'the other person is admirable, interesting', and that they are both 'the in-group members' as well as they both share a 'common point of view, opinions, attitudes, knowledge, and empathy'. They also convey that they are 'cooperators, knowing, supporting, and reciprocating each other's want'. This is the fundamental of Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies.

There are words and phrases in Japanese similar to the expressions included in their positive politeness strategies, which embody 'assertion', 'agreement', 'intensified interest', and 'jokes'. Such expressions are usually exchanged in speech among *uchi* (in-group) members, to emphasize and enhance a no-distance-between-us feeling. This no-distance feeling is first conveyed by the lack of *desu* and *masu*, the honorific verb endings. The absence of *desu/masu* is the most significant grammatical feature of showing 'no-distance'. Besides, there are many 'in-group identity markers', such as sentence final particles like '*ne*' and '*sa*' which are frequently added even in the middle of the utterance. There are other features such as contracted pronunciations in rapid speech, and incomplete sentence forms often uttered in a rising tone as if the speaker were waiting for the hearer's immediate response.

To these speech styles, the hearer usually cooperatively elicits supporting responses, verbally and nonverbally. When both parties are engaged in a conversation of this style, they feel they are really 'in-group members', sharing 'common ground', 'common points of view, opinions, attitudes, knowledge, and empathy as cooperators', 'supporting and reciprocating each

other's want'. Thus, the strategies found in this style are identical to Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies. However, there is no built-in system for these usages in Japanese.

While honorifics are regarded as the manifestation of negative politeness strategies, very little has been said about these positive politeness strategies in traditional grammar or in modern linguistics. The system of honorifics is an established mechanism to differentiate people on the vertical high-low scale based on status, but there is no similar linguistic system for arranging people on the horizontal close-distant scale based on solidarity[3]. It is as if words and phrases which convey closeness had been outcast from the 'authentic' language as belonging to vulgar speech or women's speech, just as *hiragana,* a simplified writing system, had long been neglected by the elite as 'women's letters' and 'letters of uneducated people'[3].

Rudeness in English, as well as politeness, is often conveyed by supra-segmental features such as pronunciation, intonation, and enunciation, and not so much by the choice of vocabulary. Sometimes slang terms convey the speaker's impolite attitude as well as his/her close feeling, though. Of course Japanese has a pool of such slang terms but the pronunciation does not affect the speaker's attitude toward the addressee as much as English. What affects most is the choice of vocabulary items, the choice of nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. some of which automatically arrange the interlocutors on the hierarchical scale.

Tragedy exists here. There are only two choices for the speaker of Japanese, whether to employ honorifics or not. Non-use of honorifics means either closeness or rudeness, and there is no linguistic distinction that sets rudeness apart from closeness. For example, it is very common to use a direct imperative like *'Kocchi ni kite'* ('Come here') to your close friend as well as to your children. To your friend, it means closeness but to your children it is a mild imperative. It is not at all rude but you cannot use it to someone higher in status or distant in relation; you must add *'kudasai'* ('please', lit. 'give me your favour of') and make it a bit longer, *'Kocchi ni kite kudasai',* though this expression is not at all polite to someone really high in status. While a simple addition of *'kudasai'* makes the utterance honorific, it instantly alienates the addressee who might be wishing to be close to the speaker.

The most serious problem is whether one should end a sentence with an honorific verb ending, *desu* or *masu.* (Which of them to choose depends on the grammatical feature of the preceding verb, with no effect on the politeness level.) Even if you and your senior workers have been working together for a long time in the same company and know each other very well and you want to show your close feeling to him/her, you cannot omit honorific endings right away. You

should first make sure that s/he would not regard you as being too close and consequently a little arrogant.

This dilemma has especially been irritating young people who, having been influenced by American casualness, want to show closeness rather than respectfulness to their seniors but cannot find an appropriate expression. Many students of my Communication class have raised this problem as one of their unsettled conversational problems. Japanese grammar provides nothing about how to express closeness without offending the interlocutor. It seems as if the language were reluctant to admit the people have a thirst for expressing a close feeling with a rich inventory of vocabulary items of expression of closeness.

Such is the situation the Japanese language faces now: there is no established system to express close feelings comparable to the system of honorifics. Since there always exists a fear of invading the addressee's territory by using 'intimate' words, people naturally recede into the safer ground of honorifics, which endlessly keep distance and hinder intimate communication even with longtime acquaintances and closely united seniors.

4. A new social situation and a new type of honorifics

There has appeared a new type of honorifics which are in fact judged erroneous in the traditional grammar but often observed in the speech of young people who work part time at super markets, convenience stores, fast-food restaurants, and the like. It is true that they are ignorant of the correct usage of honorifics but it is also true that they feel it necessary to use some honorifics when speaking to customers. Their erroneous use of honorifics, conveniently named *'baito keigo'* (lit. honorifics used by part-timers), might be a reflection of their search for a new honorific system of Japanese.

These young people do not use honorifics among themselves or at home either, perhaps. Since they live in the world of closely related members alone, they are satisfied with the most casual style of speech. Once they take a part-time job, however, they for the first time face real strangers, the customers, to whom they are expected to express respect by using honorifics. In order to avoid customers' complaints, some shop owners have started to prepare a list of honorific expressions for their workers, most of whom, nonetheless, cannot use them properly and have invented their own honorifics, *'baito keigo'*. While the preceding part is not perfectly honorific, the utterances end with *desu/masu*; therefore, they do not sound utterly rude.

On the other hand, some of these young people say they feel uncomfortable when they use

honorifics to their close seniors, such as high school teachers, senior members of the sport club, etc., because honorifics keep them away from their seniors. They say they are looking for some proper terms usable toward close seniors. In fact, the term 'close seniors' itself is contradictory as 'seniors' used to be 'distant'.

Another contradiction occurs when 'the manager is younger than the speaker', as 'the manager' used to be 'older' in the past. Many of the questions raised during my Communication classes in 2003 were about how to speak to one's manager who was younger in the part-time workplace. When a college student works in a shop or a restaurant, it often happens that the manager is younger because s/he is a high school graduate and has been working for two or more years. The college student is at a loss whether s/he should add *desu/masu* when talking to this younger manager. The age and the status do not go hand in hand as they used to.

4. 1. Closeness in shortened forms

Some of the Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies are similar to those which the young generation tends to take in order to express close feelings. They often avoid long phrases and clauses and instead make the message as short as possible. It might be a reflection of 'conceptual distance' being in proportion to 'grammatical complexity' (Croft 2001), that is, when the conceptual distance is small the grammatical complexity diminishes, and vice versa. This relationship is discussed in Hori (2002) concerning pain expressions in Japanese, and the similar relationship seems to exist in the politeness phenomena, too.

My students tend to ask me saying, '*Hori Sensei, kondono getsuyoubi, daigaku ni ki-masu ka?*' ('Professor Hori, will you come to the university next Monday?'). This question lacks actor honorifics in the verb base '*ki-*' (the root of 'come') but retains addressee honorifics in the verb ending '*masu*' in the verb phrase '*ki-masu ka*'. The authentic honorific verb to be used here is '*oide-ninari masu ka*', which they seldom hear or use among friends. The basic structure of this verb base is '*o ...ninaru*' which is similar to another honorific base '*o...suru*' (the former raises the addressee and the latter lowers the speaker). Such similarity in forms with the opposite directions in honorification disturbs young speakers and helps not to employ either. Thus, they shorten the first part to make the utterance sound 'more democratic' in their understanding perhaps, but keep the least respect by adding '*masu*'. It is in fact a mixture of two styles, plain and honorific, but this mixture may reflect their complicated feeling.

A more commonly used strategy to diminish distance is phonetic contractions. One of my friends told me that her nephew usually talks to her saying '*Yacchaunsu yo*' ('I've done it') or

'*Soossu yo*' ('That's it'), the former being the contracted form of '*Yatteshimau no desu*' + '*yo*' and the latter '*Soo desu*' + '*yo*'. Her nephew keeps the lowest level of respect and distance by retaining '*desu*', though contracted to a single mora '*su*', but is trying to show close feeling to her by the contracted verb form, '*yacchau*', and by the addition of a sentence final particle '*yo*'. This is similar to a popular greeting, '*Ossu!*' ('Hi!'), exchanged predominantly among males on close relations. It is an extremely shortened form of '*Ohayoo gozaimasu*'.

4. 2. Distance in lengthened forms

The most notorious phrase is the one used almost always at checkout counters of super markets, convenience stores, and the like, uttered by the cashier to assure the amount of money the cashier has received from the customer: '*Sen-yen kara oazukari-shimasu*' (lit. 'We've received from 1,000 yen', perhaps meaning 'We'll take your payment from 1,000 yen'). In fact, the cashier should not insert '*kara*' (from), which is unnecessary in this phrase, and could simply say, '*Sen-yen oazukari-shimasu*' ('We've received 1,000 yen'), and then give the change if necessary. But it seems they feel the correct phrase is not sufficiently respectful and add the meaningless '*kara*' while this particle has no sense of honorifics. They might feel that even such a small particle will help to make the phrase a little longer and as a consequence make it sound a little politer.

Another new and very prevalent phrase is a verb phrase '*ni-narimasu*' used instead of the honorific copula, '*de gozaimasu*'. Young waiters and waitresses who bring the well-cooked *tempura* to your table say, '*Tempura ni narimasu*' (lit. 'This will become *tempura*'). The authentic expression should be '*Tempura de gozaimasu*' ('This is (honorific) *tempura*'). There is no knowing why they employ the verb '*naru*' (become) instead of the copula '*desu*' (be). It seems that they feel the plain copula '*desu*' is not respectful enough, but they have never used the more honorific copula '*de gozaimasu*'. Some of them might think that '*ni-narimasu*' could work fine as they often say it when telling the customer the total sum of the payment at the checkout counter, as in '*Sen-en ni narimasu*' (lit. 'The total becomes 1,000 yen', in which 'become' means 'amount to'. It is a common usage and not ungrammatical in any sense).

There is still another example of lengthening a sentence by adding an unnecessary auxiliary verb, '*itadaku*'. Its literal meaning is 'to receive something from someone deferentially', whose grammatical subject is the receiver. Now it has changed its function from 'receiving' into an honorific auxiliary verb ending without any meaning of receiving, no matter who the grammatical subject is.

Its correct usage is something like, '*Otegami itadaki-mashita*' ('I deferentially received your letter'), in which '*itadaku*' functions as the main verb and the implied actor of receiving is the speaker. An extended honorific usage of it is found in posters put on the door of a closed shop, such as, '*Honjitsu wa kyuugyoo sasete itadaki-masu*' (lit. 'Today we deferentially receive someone's making us close our shop'). It seems as if the shop owner were afraid to announce to close the shop by his/her own will by saying, '*Honjitsu wa kyuugyoo itashi-masu*' (lit. Today we deferentially close our shop') and add a complex auxiliary '*sasete itadaku*' (lit. deferentially receive someone else's enforcement). Thus, the phrase '*sasete itadaku*' has two functions: (1) to emphasize the speaker's deferential attitude and (2) to efface his/her responsibility of an act. Such a circumlocution is favoured by all the Japanese.

The worst and really ungrammatical usage goes like this, '*Kochira de reshiito o itadaite kudasai*' (lit. 'Please deferentially receive the receipt here'), often uttered by a sales clerk to a customer. It is clear that the speaker has no idea toward whom the deference is directed. This phrase is literally asking the hearer to receive the receipt deferentially from the speaker, which of course is just the opposite of what is intended by the sales clerk. What is common to all the above examples is that the speakers imagine any phrase which sounds like an honorific and makes their speech longer would work as an honorific and be respectful enough.

Summing up the on-going phenomena in present-day Japan, it seems that there are two directions in the language use, one going toward emphasizing closeness, based on the concept of egalitarian human relationships, and the other going toward expanding interpersonal distance, especially among strangers, such as between customer and shop assistant. It may mean that the 'vertically' ordered society is undergoing a radical change toward a society of the close-distant scale based on solidarity. There is no knowing whether it is a foretaste of an egalitarian society or a simple reflection of the increase of poorly educated youngsters, but it will be of use to view the two types of society on parallel using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory.

5. Tentative charts of politeness strategies in Japanese

The urgent need in the sociolinguistics of Japanese is to find what is undergoing in the language now and to describe it as clearly and systematically as possible. For this purpose, I will use Brown and Levinson's theory as the starting point. Although there have been several researchers who cast doubt about Brown and Levinson's theory from the viewpoint of their own languages, such as Ide (1989) who proposed a term 'discernment' (*wakimae* in Japanese) as the

ruling concept of Japanese honorifics, I believe that honorific phenomena should not be minimized as a particularized phenomenon in Japan. I picked some of such critical papers and discussed the problem of politeness and honorifics in Japanese as well as in Javanese and Tibetan in my former paper (Hori 2002). I would like to add some modifications to Brown and Levinson's theory and will make some new models to explain the reality of the Japanese language.

The chart of Brown and Levinson's 'Possible strategies for doing FTAs' (1987: 69) is reproduced in Figure 1. On the basis of it, I have drawn a chart for the traditional system of the Japanese language in Figure 2. The distinction between them lies in two points: (1) Brown and Levinson's politeness comes into existence only when the speaker wants to do a 'Face Threatening Act' (FTA), while my Japanese version occurs when the speaker wants to do an act 'A', not necessarily an FTA; (2) while Brown and Levinson's chart ends with 'positive politeness' and 'negative politeness', my chart has another node 'P(ower)-value' after them. Brown and Levinson state that the choice of a strategy depends on the W(eightiness) of an FTA one is going to do. In the Japanese context, however, the P(ower) in W has an exceptional weight and overshadows the other two values, D(istance) and R(anking). That is why I put it after the nodes 'positive politeness' and 'negative politeness' and before the following strategies. This P-value determines the use/non-use of honorifics and its insertion here in Figure 2 is a new idea of taking honorifics in a system of politeness strategies. The following charts in Figures 3 and 4 illustrate how this P-value functions in negative/positive politeness strategies in the present-day Japanese. The numerals preceding each strategy are in accord with those in Brown and Levinson's charts.

5. 1. Negative politeness in Japanese

A tentative chart for negative politeness strategies in Japanese is shown in Figure 3. It starts with the entry of P(ower) because 'power' is the most dominant entity in regulating honorifics; thus, the negative strategies are divided into two groups, one starting with S>H, i.e., S(peaker) is more powerful/higher than H(earer), and the other with S<H, i.e., S is less powerful/lower than H. Thus, some of the Brown and Levinson's negative strategies are arranged under S>H and the others under S<H.

When S>H, there is no strategy "Don't do FTAx", that is, the speaker can do any act A, including an FTA, and can do any act A "on record" without redressing. If S<H, on the other hand, the speaker must always remember there are some acts, not necessarily an FTA, which

s/he should never do to his/her boss. That is why "Don't do an A" comes before "Do an A". The important point is that there are some strategies taken only in the context of S>H, such as (4) "Minimize the imposition, R (anking) of A", (8) "State the A as a general rule and (9) "Nominalize", while there are other strategies taken only in the context of S<H, such as (3) "Be pessimistic", (5) "Give deference", (6) "Appologize", (7) "Impersonalize S and H: Avoid the pronoun 'I' and 'you'", and (10) "Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H" (cf. Brown and Levinson's chart, 1987: 131).

Thus, all the strategies of negative politeness are included either under S>H or S<H, though some are included under both nodes, (1) "Be conventionally indirect" and (2) "Question, hedge", perhaps because they are universally basic strategies for redressing.

5. 2. Positive politeness in Japanese

Figure 4 gives a chart of Japanese positive politeness strategies, which also starts with P. One important difference from Brown and Levinson's model is that a part of the strategy (2) "Exaggerate approval, sympathy with H" is omitted in the context of S<H, leaving only "Exaggerate interest". It means that a lower person is not allowed to praise or sympathize with a higher person. Direct words of appreciation are often taken to be evaluating the higher person and direct words of sympathy sound to be invading the higher person's inner domain, and thus both strategies are quite offensive. It is the fundamental concept that a lower person is not in a position to say anything about the higher person, whether it concerns good things or bad things.

A powerful speaker can do any act, not necessarily an FTA, either "with redress" or "without redress, on record, baldly", the No. 1 strategy in Brown and Levinson's chart for doing FTAs (1987: 69). There are a wide variety of strategies if s/he chooses "with redress", such as; (1) "Notice, attend to H", (2) "Show interest, approval, sympathy with H", (4) "Use in-group identity markers", (8) "Joke", (9) "Show concern for H's want", and (11) "Be optimistic" (cf. Brown and Levinson's chart, 1987: 102). If a higher person takes one of these 'positively polite' strategies, s/he will be regarded as a good person, not domineering but acting friendly. So, it is a good way to show a close feeling toward one's subordinate.

If the speaker is less powerful, however, s/he cannot do an act freely "without redress", even if it is not an FTA. The first choice should rather be "Don't do an A". Even when s/he does a safe act, s/he needs to do it "with redress", taking strategies such as (2) "Exaggerate interest", (3) "Intensify interest to H", (6) "Avoid disagreement", (10) "Offer, promise", (13) "Give reasons", and (15) "Give gifts". The most important thing is that all the sentences

spoken to a higher person must end with an honorific verb ending, *desu* or *masu.*

It is obvious from Figure 3 and Figure 4 that Brown and Levinson's strategies of negative politeness are all transported onto the Japanese chart of negative politeness but not all of their positive politeness strategies. The discarded positive strategies are (5) "Seek agreement", (7) "Presuppose/raise/assert common ground", (12) "Include both S and H in the activity", and (14) "Assume or assert reciprocity". They are all intensifiers of equality, common ground, and reciprocity, all of which are observed only between intimates and/or equals in a Japanese context and therefore not included in either chart, as these charts are based on 'unequal relationships' by inserting P in the beginning.

Now it has become clear what is lacking in the system of language use in Japan, namely, the system of positive politeness based on the equal human relations. This is why a manifestation of positive politeness cannot find a proper position in the grammar of Japanese. In spite of the rich vocabulary of words and phrases which convey closeness, friendliness, and solidarity, there is no term to cover all of them, like *'keigo'* for honorifics. They are not regarded as sharing an important part of the language, still less sharing a part of politeness. There has been a strong want, especially among young people, for some rule to guide them in using proper expressions among equals, not only of the same age or the same status but also of different age groups and different social statuses. In the next section I will try to draw a chart which may represent young people's language usage, which is now commonly observed in spite of loud accusations from the established groups.

6. Future strategies of language use in Japan

Figure 5 is a tentative chart which is constructed to illustrate the Japanese language use in the near future. The difference from Figure 2, which represents the present situation of Japanese, is that P is taken off and instead some of the second nodes in Brown and Levinson's charts are inserted: (5.3.1) "Claim 'common ground'" and (5.3.2) "Convey that S and H are cooperators" for positive politeness and (5.4.3) "Don't coerce H" and (5.4.4) "Communicate S's want to not impinge on H" for negative politeness. (The numerals correspond with those in Brown and Levinson's charts of positive and negative politeness on pp. 102 and 131, respectively.)

The nodes "claiming common ground" and "conveying S and H are cooperators' lead to most of the positive politeness strategies such as those showing interest to H, in-group member-

ship, and shared opinions, etc., and thus function to emphasize equal status and diminish distance between the interlocutors regardless of the status differences. This is exactly what many of my students said they wanted to know, that is, how to speak to their seniors who are in fact older, more experienced, but who they feel quite close to.

In the same way, "not to coerce H" and "to communicate S's want to not impinge on H' lead to most of the negative politeness strategies reflecting the speaker's intention to keep distance from the hearer as well as to show some respect. This is nothing but a part-time worker's attitude to the customer who s/he is to serve at the checkout counter of a store or a restaurant. The customer's age, status, or other factors have no effect on the assistant's verbal behaviour—the only scale being the distance.

A trial chart for strategies between equals is drawn in Figure 6, which is based on Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies but recomposed so as to illustrate the Japanese language use. Compared to Figure 4, this chart has fewer strategies, perhaps because seeking equality does not require too much exaggeration or compliment but a fair balance in the relationship. In this sense, it may not be a chart of 'positive politeness' but rather a chart of 'equality-seeking politeness'. Figure 7 is constructed for strategies used more or less among strangers, mostly retaining Brown and Levinson's negative politeness strategies. Since the original chart was constructed on the basis that S is trying hard to keep distance from H so as not to intrude his/her territory, the recomposed one is very much similar.

Brown and Levinson state positive politeness is "the expression of solidarity" and negative politeness is "the expression of restraint" (1987: 2). It may be natural, then, that Japan has not yet established a system of positive politeness as its manifestation of solidarity, since the sense of 'solidarity' only comes from egalitarian interpersonal relations in a democratic society. But the time will not be very long off as the social phenomena have already shown that people's mind is toward solidarity, as seen in the examples of Tokyo Disneyland and the Hanshin Tigers described at the beginning of this paper.

It is my pleasure if these charts are of any help in describing the present and future situation of the language use regarding politeness in Japan.
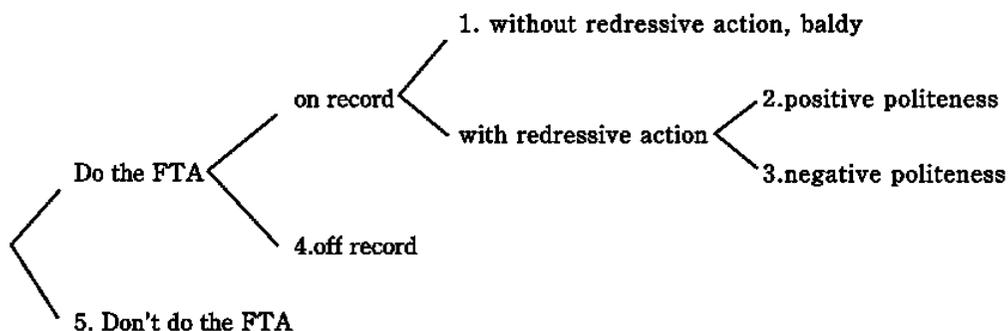
Figure 1. Possible strategies for doing FTAs (Brown and Levinson 1987: 69)
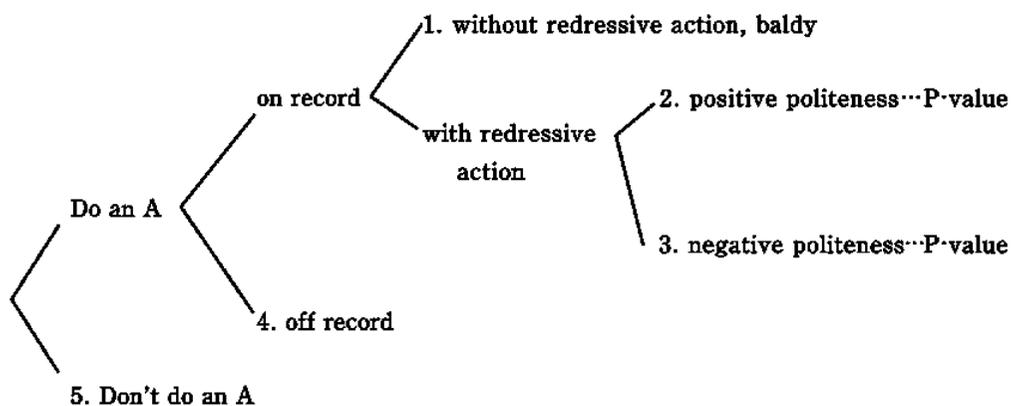

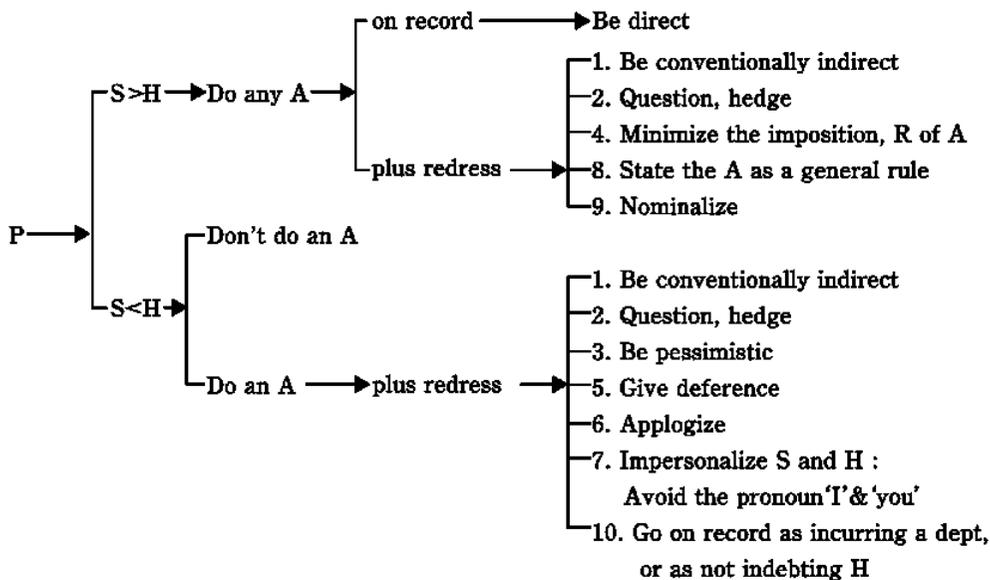Figure 2. Possible strategies for doing an act (A) in Japanese

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                                    ┌on record ─────► Be direct
                                    │                ┌1. Be conventionally indirect
          ┌S>H ──► Do any A ──►     │                ├2. Question, hedge
          │                         │                ├4. Minimize the imposition, R of A
          │                         └plus redress ──►├8. State the A as a general rule
          │                                          └9. Nominalize
P ──►     │         ┌Don't do an A
          │         │                                ┌1. Be conventionally indirect
          └S<H ──►  │                                ├2. Question, hedge
                    │                                ├3. Be pessimistic
                    │                                ├5. Give deference
                    └Do an A ──► plus redress ──►    ├6. Applogize
                                                     ├7. Impersonalize S and H :
                                                     │    Avoid the pronoun 'I' & 'you'
                                                     └10. Go on record as incurring a dept,
                                                          or as not indebting H
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Figure 3. Chart of strategies: Negative politeness in Japanese context

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                                  ┌without redress ─────► on record, baldly
                                  │                      ┌ 1. Notice, attend to H
          ┌S>H ──► Do any A ──►   │                      ├ 2. Show interest, approval,
          │                       │                      │     sympathy with H
          │                       └with redress ──►      ├ 4. Use in-group identity
          │                                              │     markers
          │                                              ├ 8. Joke
P ──►     │                                              ├ 9. Show concern for H's
          │                                              │     want
          │                                              └ 11. Be optimistic
          │                                              ┌ 2. Exaggerate interest
          │         ┌Do an A ──► with redress ──►        ├ 3. Intensify interest to H
          │         │                                    ├ 6. Avoid disagreement
          └S<H ──►  │                                    ├ 10. Offer, promise
                    │                                    ├ 13. Give reasons
                    └Don't do an A                       └ 15. Give gifts (goods alone)
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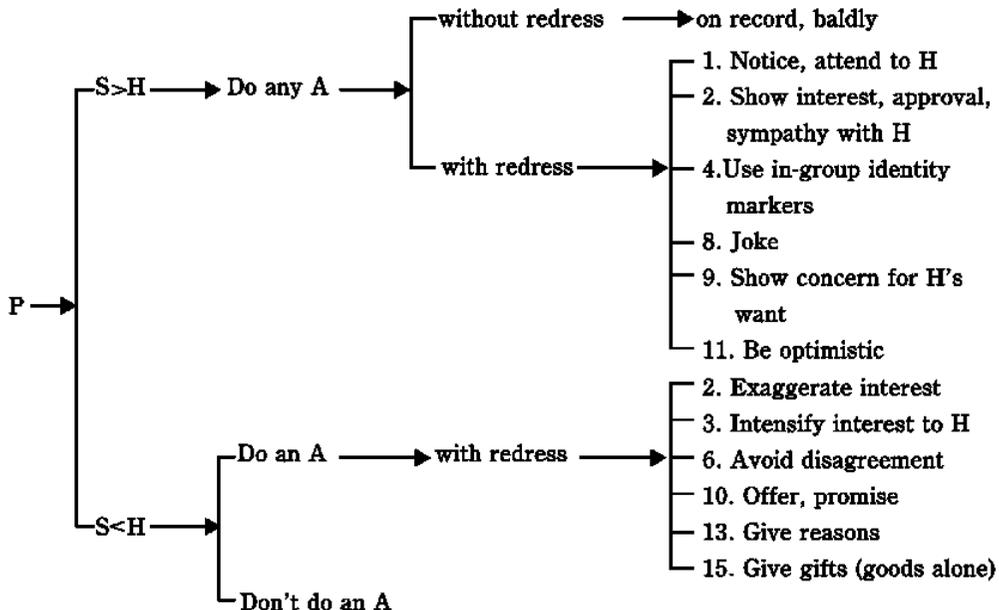
Figure 4. Chart of strategies: Positive politeness in Japanese context

1. without redressive action, baldly

on record

with redressive action

2.positive politeness
5.3.1 Claim common ground
5.3.2 Convey S and H are
cooperators
3.negative politeness
5.4.3 Don't coerce H
5.4.4 Communicate S's want to
not impinge on H

Do the A

4. off record

5. Don't do the A
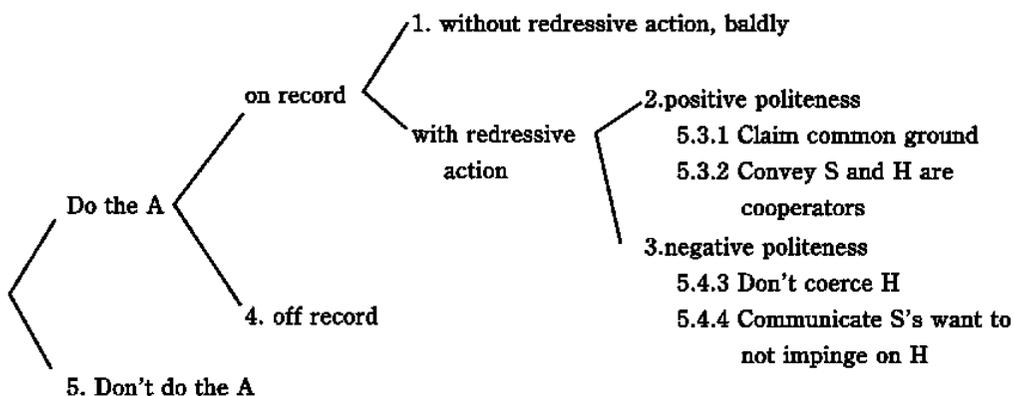
Figure 5.   A new chart of strategies for doing an act A in Japanese

Claim 'common ground'
1. Notice, attend to H(his interests, wants, needs, goods)
4. Use in-group identity markers
5. Seek agreement
6. Avoid disagreement
7. Presuppose/raise/assert common ground

Convey that S and H are cooperators
10.Offer, promise
12. Include both S and H in the activity
13. Give (or ask for)reasons
14. Assume or assert reciprocity
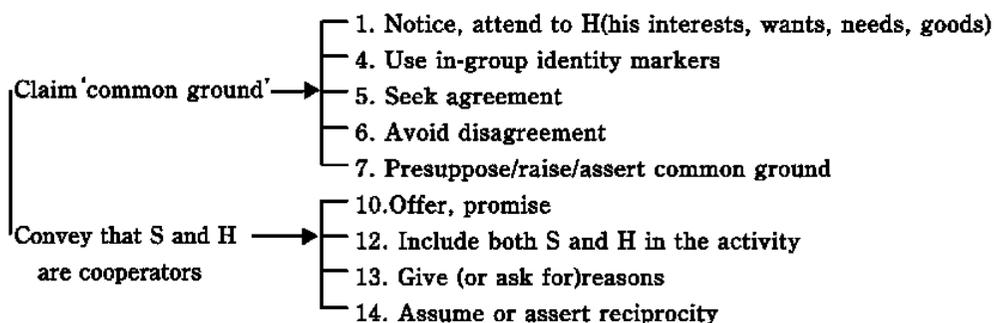
Figure 6.   Equality-seeking strategies, based on Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies

Don't coerce H (where x involves H doing A)
1. Be conventionally indirect
2. Question, hedge
3. Be pessimistic
4. Minimize the imposition, Rx
5. Give deference

Communicate S's want to not impinge on H
6. Apologize
7. Impersonalize S and H:Avoid the pronouns'I'and'you'
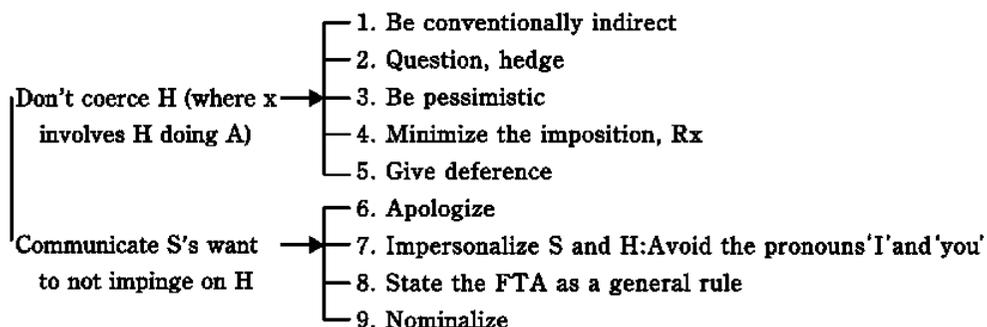8. State the FTA as a general rule
9. Nominalize

Figure 7.   Distance-keeping strategies, based on Brown and Levinson's negative politeness strategies

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Notes:

(1) A part of this paper was presented at the Spring Workshop of Japan Association of Systemic Functional Linguistics (JASFL) at Niigata University on 14th of June, 2003; and then at the *Gengo Kenkyuukai* (Language Study Meeting) at Kansai Gaidai University on the 10th of July, 2003. At both workshops, only Figures 2 and 3 were presented. I am thankful for the comments and suggestions given by anonymous referees to this version.

(2) *Keigo* (honorifics) has long been a favorite subject in the discussion of Japanese, both as a system and as individual terminologies. When a sequential publication on Japanese appears, there is always at least one volume under the title of '*Keigo*', whether the series is on the history of the Japanese language or on the modern description and interpretation of the language. The followings are just a few of such series: *Nihongo no Rekishi*, published by Heibonsha during 1960s; *Iwanami-Kooza Nihongo*, published by Iwanami Shoten during 1970s; *Kooza Nihongo-gaku*, published by Meiji Shoin during 1970s-1980s; *Nihongo-Kooza* published by Taishukan Shoten during 1970s. However, there is no single series that has given an independent volume to words and expressions outside the *Keigo* system, nor is an independent book dedicated to such non-honorific expressions. They are described to some extent, though with negative connotations, in chapters on mass media (Tsujimura 1976) or on public movement (Nakamura 1976) or touched upon only sporadically in a few lines on discourse (Kuno 1982) or on the relationship between Japanese and foreign languages (Mizutani 1982). It is only very recently that books started to be published with a focus on regional dialects and social dialects (Inoue 1998 and 2003) and on young people's language use (Yonekawa 1998; Kobayashi 1998; Hori et al. 2000). They document lots of casual speech spoken daily by men and women, young and old, though their main focus is on the rapid change occurring in Japanese, which is often regarded as deviation from the traditional language. There is not a single trial by a traditional grammarian or a modern linguist to systematize such casual speech. That is, casual speech which embodies Brown and Levinson's positive politeness strategies in Japanese has seldom been regarded as worthy of mentioning, still less of studying its system.

(3) The world famous literature of Japanese, *the Tale of Genji*, was written in *hiragana* because the author was a woman. Since *hiragana* was exclusively for women and Chinese characters were exclusively for men, a male writer who lived in the same period of *the Tale of Genji* wrote a diary in *hiragana* under the guise of a woman. He wanted to express subtle feelings freely using *hiragana* as it could faithfully depict every sound of Japanese (Ono 1980). Such a low status of *hiragana* in Japanese society is historically reviewed in Yamada (1966) and Okamura (1977).

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