

SPEECH PATTERNS OF JAPANESE CAREER AND NON-CAREER WOMEN

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I

Many studies assume that sex differentiation in language is universal and they attribute this linguistic discrepancy to social inequity between men and women (Bodine, Ide, Jugaku, Kramer, Nomoto, Reynolds).

In the United States, spurred by the women's movement, the issue of female speech has been given a great deal of attention along with many other spheres of sex differentiation. Lakoff, a leading sociolinguist who specializes in women's language, points out a number of interesting phenomena on women's speech in English. One of the pertinent examples she cites is that English speaking women tend to use rising intonation more frequently than men in the same context. Lakoff accounts for this by saying that women are generally less secure about themselves, and that culture imposes an image of women as "fragile" and unable to assert themselves; as a result, female speakers tend, consciously or not, to seek to conform to the image, using rising intonation even in declarative sentences as if "seeking confirmation" (Lakoff, 17).

Japanese, a language in which male and female speech is different to a significant degree, provides an excellent case for further aspects of sex differentiation in language. Where differentiation exists, it is universally understood that female speech is always more polite than male's (Bodine, Ide, Kramer, Reynolds). Japanese is no exception to this and the women's choice of polite speech reflects their realization of lower status in Japanese society.

According to Nakane, the Japanese are a rank conscious people. In characterizing Japanese society as "vertical" she suggests that without consciousness of ranking, life could not be carried on smoothly in Japan (Nakane, 31). The speaker's choice of speech level is

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derived from this principle of verticality. Ruth Benedict points out that realizing one's own position in the Japanese society is an art because it requires quick unconscious evaluation of innumerable factors of rank such as social status, age, sex, degree of intimacy, etc. (Benedict, 48).

As women's language "submerges a woman's personal identity" (Lakoff, 7), it is of interest to see how women's choice of speech level in Japanese is affected by the recent trends toward feminism and more equality through belated influence of the American women's movement.

II

This paper considers and compares the structure of Japanese verb forms and final particles (*shuujiushi*) through which the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer is manifested in a variety of levels.

The Japanese verb is always placed at the end of the sentence and the verb form determines the speech level as to the degree of formality or informality (Jordan 1963). Japanese final particles on the other hand, are attached at the end of the verb form and are used in spoken Japanese (except *ka*, a question marker). Although they bear no relation to the rest of the sentence grammatically, final particles give extra-linguistic information about the speaker's attitude toward the hearer in the conversation. Among other final particles of various meanings, eight of the most common ones in modern spoken Japanese are dealt with in this paper.

With this survey, the speech pattern used by women, specifically by career and non-career women, will be compared and analyzed on the basis of social and psychological aspects.

Women's choice of speech level is considered to be more polite than men's in Japanese society. What makes women's speech more polite than men's speech correlates to numerous and intertwined sociopsychological factors such as social position, power, age, formality (Ide 1982). Ide describes high frequency of the use of polite speech by Japanese women as a result of "men's dominance over women in social position, a legacy of feudalism" (Ide 1982, 378). Women are therefore expected to be more polite than men and to express their deferential attitude in using polite speech. Despite this social norm still being maintained in Japanese society there has been an improvement of women's status in the last few decades. With the assumption in mind that social status and speech level are interrelated, this paper attempts to discover and compare the difference of speech patterns and its sociopsychological implication between career women, who are competing with men at a professional level in a changing society, and non-career women, who are seemingly more "traditional" than career women. Among the grammatical features to mark politeness in Japanese, the use of verb form and final particles by career and non-career women is specifically dealt with in this paper.

As a preliminary study, two career and two non-career women were chosen randomly. The distribution of informants according to age, marital status, education, ethnic background

of the spouse and the length of stay in the U.S.A.¹ is shown in Tables 1-5.

AGE

	CAREER	NON-CAREER
30-40	1	
41-50	1	
51-60		2

Table 1

MARITAL STATUS

	CAREER	NON-CAREER
MARRIED	2	2
UNMARRIED	0	0

Table 2

EDUCATION

	CAREER	NON-CAREER
HIGH SCHOOL		2
COLLEGE	2	

Table 3

ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF THE SPOUSE

	CAREER	NON-CAREER
JAPANESE		1
NON-JAPANESE	2	1

Table 4

LENGTH OF STAY IN THE U.S.A.

	CAREER	NON-CAREER
5-9 YEARS		2
10-14 YEARS	2	

Table 5

The method employed for collecting the data was an interview with each informant. Since the interviewer (the writer of this paper) had not known the informants previously, the interview session at each informant's house took place in a rather formal atmosphere. Although the true aim of each interview was to discover their speech patterns, the informants were told that the interview was for anthropological research on Japanese Americans. In this way the informants were able to express themselves freely without becoming too self-con-

¹ The data taken from the same informants were originally used for my term paper submitted to the University of Hawaii.

scious about their speech, thus less artificial and more reliable data could be expected. In fact, the data do serve to reveal the background information of the informants.

The first thirty minutes of each interview was tape-recorded and the utterances of each informant were written down afterwards as data for the comparison.

III

The backgrounds of the two career women and two non-career women are described as follows:

One career woman (CW), Atsuta (pseudonyms are used for informants), in her early forties, is an executive at a press company in Honolulu. The company publishes newspapers for tourists in both Japanese and English and Atsuta is a general manager for the Japanese edition. She is married and has a 16 year-old son. With her husband, an Englishman whom she met in her college days in Japan, Atsuta has traveled quite extensively in European and Asian countries, as well as Canada. As an answer to the question of which country suited her most, she replied that she liked Canada best because people there are not so closed as the Japanese or English, nor are they so open as the Americans. She appeared to appreciate certain formality in Canadians.

Atsuta considers herself a feminist, however, a few "anti-feministic" viewpoints were observed. First, she is critical of women who claim equality before they prove it by performing a job in a comparable manner to men. In other words, Atsuta believes that in order to have men approve of equal rights for both sexes, women should build a good, solid foundation beforehand. It is men's judgement and approval that Atsuta values most, not the principle of equality. Secondly, she considers that the duty of a wife is to provide a man with a comfortable place from which he can go out to pursue his career to the fullest extent. To the question of in what sense marriage is meaningful for a woman, she replied that it was a means for her to grow as a human being. She stated that she could not tolerate a man doing domestic chores, because he should spend time and energy on something more important, such as a career.

The second woman, CW, Hara, 35, a Certified Public Accountant, is a member of the Hawaii Political Women's League and is an active feminist. She says that her grandmother, mother and her sister had great impact on her becoming a feminist. Hara recalls that her grandmother was physically very masculine and that she sat with her legs crossed like a man and smoked a pipe all the time. She was no traditional Japanese woman. Unlike her grandmother, Hara's mother, a daughter-in-law to her grandmother, is rather like an artist. Hara describes her mother as being creative and curious. At the age of 42, Hara's mother began to say that she wanted to attend class on women's studies at college in Kyoto, which she did. It was very unusual for an older person to go back to school in those days. Hara's sister was extremely political and was interested in the movement of *Zengakuren*, the National Federation of Students' Self-Government Association, and was a subscriber to *Akahata* (Red Flag), the newspaper of the Japan Communist Party. She encouraged Hara to read various books

such as de Beauvoir's *the Second Sex* which Hara's sister had read in her junior high school days. Hara is married to an American and has no children.

The third woman, a non-career woman (NCW), Murano, 60, is a full-time housewife who came to Hawaii five and a half years before to remarry her present husband, a Japanese-American resident of Hawaii. She is religious and is an active member of a Japanese religious group in Honolulu. She told the interviewer that her love of literature and performing arts was the direct cause of her divorce because she was not interested in practical matters such as accounting and bookkeeping which she was supposed to do for her ex-husband, a wholesale store owner. Murano reminded the interviewer of an adult version of a "bungaku shoojo" in Japanese, a girl who lives in a world of poetry and literature rather than a world full of realistic and practical problems and obligations. To the question of what cultural differences between Japan and Hawaii she had noticed, Murano replied that she came to realize more than ever that the Japanese culture was superb in every respect, e.g., the delicacy of food, *shibusu* (the taste of austere elegance, one of the Japanese aesthetic values) of performing arts and fine arts, although she admitted that they had their own culture in Hawaii which was represented by western music, ballet and hula dance.

Murano is well informed, which is not unusual considering her love of books, and she is able to analyze the daily problems in an objective manner. For instance, she compares the present condition of traffic in Honolulu to that of five and a half years ago when she first came to Hawaii. She attributes the present traffic jams and the high rate of traffic accidents to the tragedy of civilization rather than saying, "It's terrible," or "I hate it," in an emotional tone of voice.

The fourth woman, NCW, Hatsumi, 54, is a full-time housewife who came to Hawaii five and a half years before from Okinawa. She had been separated from her Filipino husband for twenty years while he, as a military man, went to war in Korea, Vietnam, and other places. While her husband was away, she lived in Okinawa together with her mother, and her brother and her two sons.

Hatsumi describes her Filipino husband as a very kind-hearted, understanding and sympathetic man who had never missed sending her money to cover monthly expenses while he was away from his family for twenty years. She commented several times that she is very fortunate to have a husband like him. Most of the time during the interview, Hatsumi responded briefly to only what she was asked. However, when it came to the question about her family, she talked repeatedly about how nice, helpful and considerate her mother, brother, sister, her husband and her sons were. She emphasized very proudly that since childhood she had never fought with any of her family, not to mention with her husband. Although she gave elaborate description of her family members, Hatsumi minimized her discussion to the question about the difference between Okinawans and non-Okinawan Japanese, Japanese and Americans, and the difference between Japanese and Filipinos, saying, "I guess everybody is the same". To the question of what she thinks about the Japanese young people of today, she simply stated that they were fine. As she said that she did not go out anywhere while her husband was away, except to places where she could take her sons, the people to whom she spoke were mostly her neighbors and her kin.

IV

Every Japanese sentence ending may be said to express the speaker's attitude toward the hearer: If the speaker is ranked as inferior to the hearer, he/she will be inclined to end the sentence with a more polite "mode" than the hearer might use, and vice versa. How the ranks are determined is difficult to define precisely, but it is certain that sex, age, and social position are among the major variables.

The paper focuses on two linguistic categories that are especially relevant for differentiation of speech level: verb forms and final particles.

Japanese verbs come at the end of the sentence and there are two styles of ending which indicate the degree of formality. One is called the *desu/masu* style, *desu* being the copula and *masu* being an auxiliary form attached to the regular verb. This style is categorized as formal. (Their equivalent forms of the past tense, *desi-ta/masi-ta* are also called *desu/masu* style for convenience sake.) The other is called *da/φ* style, *da* being the copula and *φ* being the plain verb form with nothing attached. Along with their equivalent past tense they are classified as informal.

Desu/masu style: Formal

- (1) *Hanako wa gakusei desu.*
TOP² 'student' COPULA
'Hanako is a student.'
- (2) *Hanako ga hanasi-masi-ta.*
SUB³ 'speak' PAST
'Hanako spoke.'

Da/φ style: Informal

- (3) *Hanako wa gakusei da.*
TOP 'student' COPULA
'Hanako is a student.'
- (4) *Hanako ga hanasi-ta.*
SUB 'speak' PAST
'Hanako spoke.'

The *desu/masu* style is known as *teineigo* 'polite language' in traditional grammar and it is used to show politeness and/or courtesy to the hearer (Kitahara 1977). The *da/φ* style on the other hand, is used in formal writing. When used in conversation, it is usually accompanied by a final particle (FP). The *da/φ* style with no FP "sounds too brusque or gives the impression that the speaker is indifferent to the hearer's viewpoint. It is almost prohibitive in women's speech" (Reynolds, 5).

2 TOP is a short form of topic. The particle *wa* indicates that the noun preceding it is the topic of the sentence. The topic of the sentence may or may not be identical with the subject.

3 SUB denotes subject.

The Japanese FP attached at the end of the verb form, both in the *desu/masu* and *da/φ* styles, are used exclusively in conversation and it expresses politeness, intimacy, assertion, hope, doubt, excitement, etc., depending on the type of FP used. Since FP expresses such feelings, an utterance with FP conveys something “personal” or a certain familiarity. Consequently, an utterance without FP lacks this faculty and so it becomes rather “impersonal”. For this reason the *desu/masu* style with no FP is used in a less personal speech act such as a public speech or lecture. It is normally used in conversation between adults who are not close friends in a formal situation or from a person of lower status to a person of higher status, e.g., student → professor, salesperson → customer, etc. It may be possible to say that this *desu/masu* style with no FP is the most polite level of speech due to its lack of undue familiarity. By not using FP, the speaker keeps her distance and is more reserved, hence more polite.

The subtle semantic features of FP are difficult to define in precise terms at the present stage of knowledge. One feature that can be discussed with some confidence is the relative degree of assertion, which can be better described by using the superior-inferior relation as a framework. In addition to FP of assertion in declarative sentences, the use of FP in confirmative sentences and in soliloquy are focused on in this paper.

The FP in the declarative sentence are *zo*, *ze*, *yo* and *wa*. The FP that sounds most assertive is *zo*, and the utterance with *zo* is appropriate only when the speaker is superior to the hearer in social ranking, e.g., father → son, senior student → junior student, etc. The FP *zo* has a “strong overtone that it accompanies sentences of assertive illocutionary act types such as revealing, warning and pointing out, and it occurs with sentences initiating conversational situations rather than in sentences responding to something already said” (Reynolds, 6).

- (5) *Ore wa iku zo.*
 ‘I’ TOP ‘go’ FP
 ‘Whether you agree or not, I am going.’

The FP *ze*, a vulgar variation of *zo*, is almost equal to *zo* in its degree of assertion but it is less authoritative. Unlike *zo* it can be used among equals as well.

- (6) *Ore wa iku ze.*
 ‘I’ TOP ‘go’ FP
 ‘I don’t know about you, but I’m going.’

The FP *yo*, the most widely used declarative particle implies emphasis and assurance. In addition to the feature of assertiveness, the main function of *yo* lies in calling the hearer’s attention. This particle can be used in inferior → superior as well as superior → inferior situations.

- (7) *Iki-masu yo.*
 ‘go’ FP
 ‘I tell you, I’m going.’

The FP *wa* is different from any of the FP mentioned above because of the weakness of the speaker's intention to involve the hearer in the speech act. The speaker "neither imposes his/her standpoint nor invokes the hearer's opinion" (Reynolds, 8). It is mostly used with sentences stating the speaker's own state of mind or intention.

(8) *Onaka ga suita wa.*
 'stomach' SUB 'empty' FP
 'I feel I'm hungry.'

(9) *Watashi nantoka yatte iki-masu wa.*
 'I' 'somehow' 'do' 'go' FP
 'I intend to manage somehow.'

The FP *wa* is readily associated with politeness and can be used in inferior → superior situations where speaker does not necessarily want to get the consent of the hearer.

In summary, the declarative FP *zo*, *ze*, *yo* and *wa* express different degrees of assertion, from strongest to weakest, respectively. The use of these FP is related to rank relationship between the speaker and the hearer. More assertive FP are easily available to those with superiority. Hence, the two most assertive FP, *zo* and *ze* are exclusively used by male speakers and *yo* by both sexes and *wa* mostly by female speakers.

In addition to the above declarative FP, there are two other FP occurring in confirmative sentences in modern spoken Japanese; *na* and *ne*. These FP denote the speaker's intention to involve the hearer in asking confirmation or expecting the hearer's agreement in a conversation. The speaker may either be uncertain about the statement or be afraid of appearing too affirmative. An utterance with one of these FP is comparable in function to English tag-questions (Reynolds). Applying the same ranking framework that we used for declaratives, we can determine that *na* is more dominant and assertive than *ne*. The FP *na* is exclusively used by male speakers in superior → inferior situations while *ne* is used by both sexes in inferior → superior situations and among equals.

(10) *Eraku kangaekonde i-masu na.*
 'very much' 'think' FP
 'You are absorbed in thought, aren't you?'

In soliloquy the hearer is the speaker oneself. Although the speaker's choice of FP is affected to a certain degree by the presence of the other participants in a conversation, the speaker's rank consciousness is weaker in soliloquy than declarative or confirmative sentences. The FP occurring in such a speech act are *kana* and *kashira*. The *ka* in both *kana* and *kashira* is dubitative *ka* which is used in question sentences. The FP *kana* is stronger in assertion than *kashira*. Sentences with these FP can be translated into English as the "I wonder ..." construction. The FP *kana* is used mostly by men while *kashira* is almost always used by women.

(11) *Docchi ga yar - are - ta kana.*
 'which' SUB 'defeat PASS PAST FP'
 'I wonder which one was defeated.'

(12) *Kore de nani wo kaou kashira.*
 'this' 'with' 'what' OBJ 'buy' FP
 'I wonder what I should buy with this money.'

The speech levels determined by verb forms and the use of FP can be produced schematically by two 2-way opposition of formal vs. informal, and deferential⁴ vs. intimate (Figure 1)⁵.

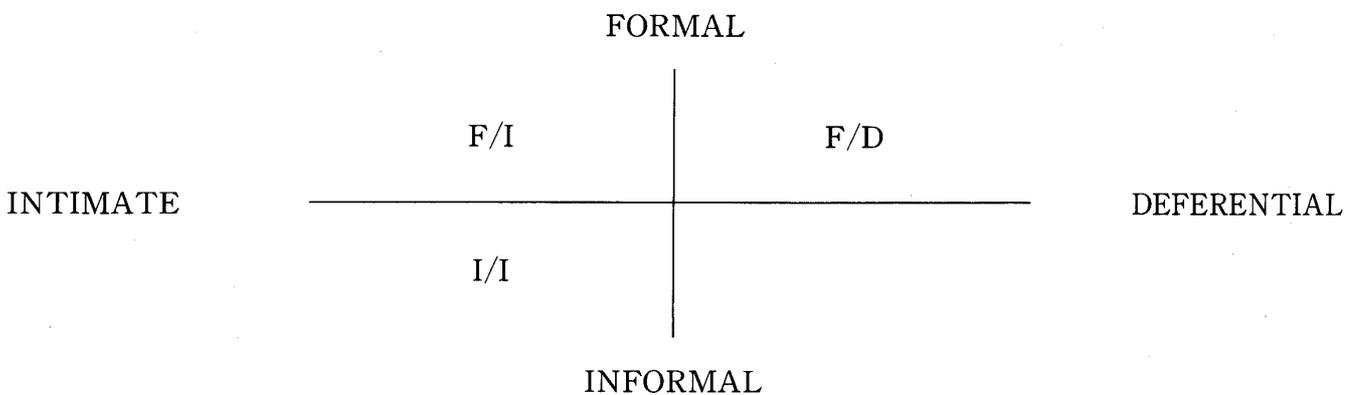


Figure 1

An utterance is deferential if the verb is not followed by FP. The formal/deferential speech level (F/D) is characteristically used in very formal speech acts, such as lectures and public speeches, by both men and women:

A. Formal/Deferential

(1) *Hanako wa gakusei desu.*
 'Hanako is a student.'

(2) *Hanako ga hanasi-masi-ta.*
 'Hanako spoke.'

When FP is attached to the verb, the utterance is intimate. In spoken Japanese this pattern is predominantly used. When FP is attached to formal verb forms (*desu/masu* style), the utterance is formal/intimate (F/I) :

4 Instead of the word 'polite', 'deferential' is used here as an opposite pole of 'intimate' in order to avoid confusion with the general meaning of politeness.

5 The speech level of informal/deferential is not dealt with here for the reason described on p. 102. It is not relevant for the women's speech patterns under discussion.

B. Formal/Intimate

(13) *Hanako wa gakusei desu yo.*

FP

‘You know, Hanako is a student.’

(14) *Hanako ga hanasi-masi-ta yo.*

FP

‘I tell you, Hanako spoke.’

When FP is attached to informal verb forms (da/ ϕ style), then the utterance is informal/intimate (I/I) :

C. Informal/Intimate

(15) *Hanako wa gakusei da yo.*

FP

‘You know Hanako is a student.’

(16) *Hanako ga hanasi-ta yo.*

FP

‘Say! Hanako spoke.’

The varieties of FP and the degree of assertion which are incorporated with the usage within the superior - inferior framework are shown in Table 6.

	DECLARATIVE	CONFIRMATIVE	SOLILOQUY
SUPERIOR → INFERIOR MALE	<i>zo</i> <i>ze</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>kana</i>
EQUAL MALE AND FEMALE	<i>yo</i>	<i>ne</i>	
INFERIOR → SUPERIOR FEMALE	<i>wa</i>		<i>kashira</i>

Table 6

V

We have seen the Japanese verb forms and FP as two linguistic categories relevant for differentiation of speech levels. The choice of speech levels such as F/D, F/I and I/I and the choice of FP by CW and NCW would reveal their unconscious awareness of relationship with the interviewer (35 year-old female graduate student) in the recent trends toward feminism and equality.

The results of the interview with two CW and NCW are illustrated in Figure 2. The fi-

Figure in each plane represents the number of utterances of each speech level made by each informant within the first thirty minutes of the interview session.

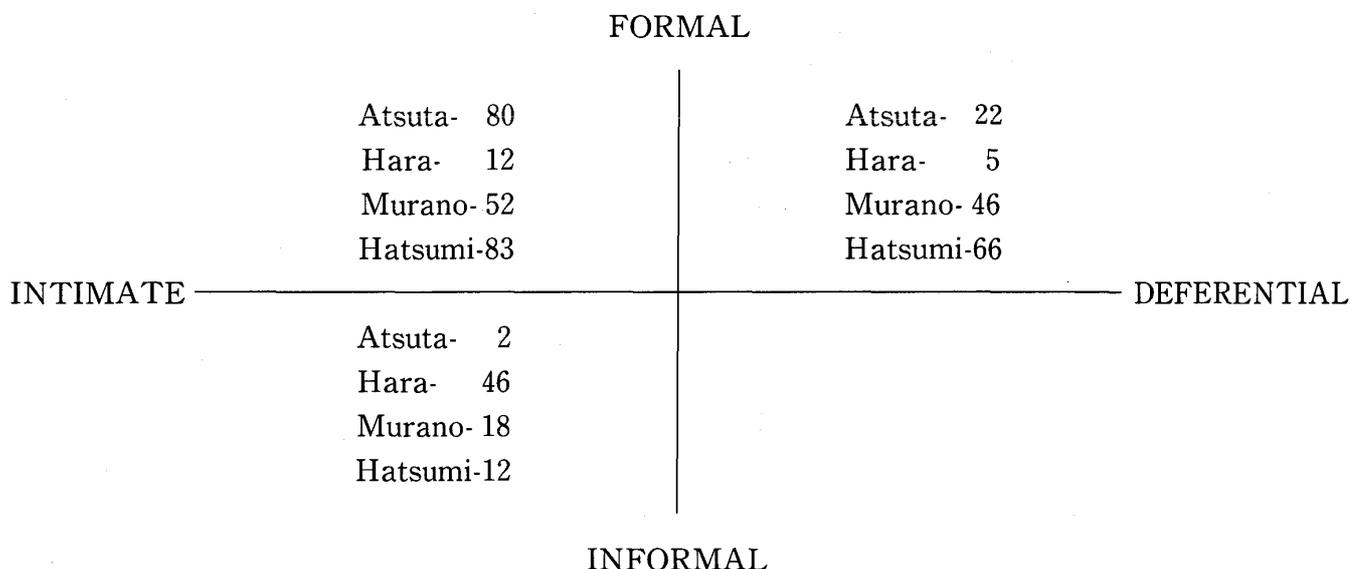


Figure 2

In Table 7, the number of utterances of each speech level along with the average frequency is shown.

THE NUMBER OF UTTERANCES OF THREE SPEECH LEVELS

	CW			NCW		
	Atsuta	Hara	AVE.	Murano	Hatsumi	AVE.
F/D	22	5	13.5	46	66	56
F/I	80	12	46	52	83	67.5
I/I	2	46	24	18	12	15

Table 7

Note: F/D level is the one ending with the *desu/masu* style with no following FP; F/I ends with *desu/masu* style followed by FP; I/I is the one ending with *da/phi* style with FP.

It is remarkable from Figure 2 and Table 7 that the number of uses of each speech level is very similar between NCW whereas between CW, Atsuta and Hara, the difference is maximal. In other words, NCW speak in a similar manner whereas CW vary in their speech patterns. Another notable result is the striking number of uses of F/D by NCW versus those by CW. Hatsumi used this pattern three times more frequently than Atsuta and twelve times more frequently than Hara. Although Murano uses this pattern less often than Hatsumi, the number of her uses of F/D is far more frequent than both CW. The average frequency of this speech level for CW and NCW is 13.5 and 56, respectively. As described earlier the speech pattern F/D is the most formal speech level when used in conversation. This speech level is most appropriate in situations like inferior → superior, e.g., student → professor, employee → employer, job applicant → interviewer, etc. by both men and women. Although NCW were

overly nervous and perhaps stood on ceremony during the course of the interview, the overwhelming use of F/D can be accounted for as a manifestation of the notable age gap between the informants and the interviewer. One may show distance in age as well as relation by using "impersonal" polite language represented by F/D. However, the fact they selected the most polite speech level in the interaction with the interviewer who was apparently young enough to be their daughter implies that NCW considered the interview as something "special". They seemed to take the interviewer as some kind of an authoritative figure by whom they were being questioned. From the observation described above, it can be inferred that NCW used the most polite F/D because they perceived themselves to be inferior to the interviewer in this particular "academic" situation. Among NCW, Hatsumi used this level of speech more frequently than Murano. By comparing the characteristics of both Hatsumi and Murano, it is naturally accounted for that an occasion like this interview is more "special" to Hatsumi than Murano considering Hatsumi's life having been more confined in the household.

CW, on the other hand, were cooperative to the interviewer, and even verbally sympathized with her by saying that they knew what it was like. The fact that they did not perceive the interview as a rare occasion that only "special people" were engaged in is shown in their fewer uses of F/D. They would want to appear sociable, friendly or sophisticated rather than polite.

CW Atsuta's use of F/I (80 times) as opposed to I/I (2 times) is significant.

As a general manager, when speaking to the people working for her, Atsuta must show her dignity by using formal speech level while maintaining friendliness with the use of FP. Also she must have carried over the same speech pattern of hers to the present interview as she might use in many other occasions similar to this to meet new people at work. Her choice of F/I rather than I/I can be attributed to her fondness of formality as implied by her preference to Canadians and influence from her English husband, supposedly more formal than an American.

Compared to Atsuta, Hara, also CW used a quite different speech pattern. Despite the fact that the interview session was her first meeting with the interviewer, the considerable number of her uses of I/I indicates that her rank consciousness is weaker than any of the informants described above. This may be due to the closeness of age between Hara and the interviewer, and/or egalitarian principle as an active feminist. At any rate, Hara's frequent use of I/I illustrates that she is the least bound by the stereotyped women's status in which being polite is the norm.

It can be concluded that CW differ greatly in their choice of speech patterns. Comparing NCW who are similar in choosing the speech patterns, CW can be said to have more options to choose from; from the polite traditionally expected pattern for women to the intimate and less formal one in the same given situation. This fact may be seen as a transitional stage of change toward equality. According to the findings, it may be possible to say that the change is taking place in the direction of the following order: Hatsumi → Murano → Atsuta → Hara.

As mentioned earlier, there are various sociopsychological factors involved in rank consciousness; social position, sex, power, age, formality, etc. With regard to the choice of speech

level, it is evident that formality, i.e., the formal setting or occasion, overrides other factors when the participants in the speech act are of the same sex. This was illustrated by NCW's considerable choice of F/D in the interview with a much younger person.

Further comparison of FP will exhibit other interesting argument about rank consciousness of CW and NCW. Tables 8-9 show the number of uses of each FP in declarative and confirmative sentences.

DECLARATIVE

	CW		NCW	
	Atsuta	Hara	Murano	Hatsumi
<i>zo</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>ze</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>yo</i>	4	5	3	16
<i>wa</i>	0	0	0	0

Table 8

CONFIRMATIVE

	CW		NCW	
	Atsuta	Hara	Murano	Hatsumi
<i>na</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>ne</i>	28	2	21	16

Table 9

The FP used exclusively by men in the situation of superior → inferior, i.e., *zo* and *ze* in declarative and *na* in confirmative sentences, were not used by any of the informants. It appears that women, irrespective of their status, do not yet have access to these FP with strong assertion.

Not only the sex-exclusive FP, *zo*, *ze* and *na* were unused by any of the informants, but *wa* as well. The reason may be due to the very fact that *wa* is too weak in assertion to be used in the situation where answering the specific question is the main factor.

The FP *yo* of assertion accessible to both men and women, was used by all the informants. Although the difference in the number of uses of this FP between CW and NCW is very small, it is understandable that this FP was used more frequently by CW than NCW, except for Hatsumi. Hatsumi's remarkable use of this FP of emphasis, assurance and calling the hearer's attention was concentrated in the utterances wherein she praised her family members: Moreover, each time she praised them, she repeated the same utterance.

- (17) *Yasashiin desu yo.*
 'kind-hearted' COPULA FP
 'You know, my husband is kind-hearted.'

- (18) *Nihongo joozu desu yo.*
 'Japanese' 'good' COPULA FP
 'I tell you my son speaks good Japanese.'

From the utterances shown above, we can interpret the excessive use of FP of assertion as her strong attachment to her family.

In regards to the confirmative FP *ne*, the findings show that the number of this FP is very close with NCW whereas between CW the difference is great. Note that FP *ne* is comparable in function to the English tag-question which denotes the speaker's intention to involve the hearer in asking confirmation or leaving decisions open and not imposing the speaker's mind, views or claims on the hearer (Lakoff, 18). Judging from the previous findings that NCW selected the most polite F/D more frequently than CW, the greater number of choices of this FP by both NCW is predictable. By the same token, Hara's (CW) less frequent use of this FP (2 times) is also predictable. However, how can one interpret Atsuta's (CW) prominent use of this polite FP whose function is to reduce the strong sense of assertion, insistence or self-confidence? Ide interprets the polite speech "used by a person in higher status to a person in lower status as a manifestation of good upbringing, a higher social class, just as careful pronunciation is a marker of a higher social class in English" (Ide, 1979 378). In other words, polite language is not only used by a person in lower status to express respect to a person in higher status, but also is used to show the speaker's dignity and prestige as her identity (Ide, Inoue 1992). Taking into account her notable use of F/I, we may speculate that Atsuta's choice of speech level and FP is a good indication of her identity as an executive in her career.

Now let us turn our attention to the last criterion, the choice of FP by CW and NCW in soliloquy where the speaker is the hearer oneself. Table 10 represents the number of uses of *kana* and *kashira* by the informants.

SOLILOQUY

	CW		NCW	
	Atsuta	Hara	Murano	Hatsumi
<i>kana</i>	15	19	2	2
<i>kashira</i>	8	2	2	1

Table 10

As mentioned earlier, *kana* conveys a strong degree of assertion in comparison with *kashira* and is used mostly by men. However, notice that both CW and NCW use *kana*. Although CW's use of this FP is much more frequent than NCW, each NCW uses this FP twice in the course of the interview. This fact illustrates that in soliloquy where women need not worry about ranking so much as in other situations, they are relatively free in selecting FP. That is, the speaker's rank consciousness is weaker in soliloquy than in declarative or confirmative sentences. Although Atsuta showed her formal politeness by using F/D and FP *ne* considerably in comparison with Hara, another CW, it seems that she is close to Hara in her speech pattern when she is released from rank consciousness.

VI

The findings of this paper have demonstrated that there is a correlation between women's speech pattern and their view of their role in society. The choice of Japanese verb form and FP reflects the speaker's rank consciousness. As women's social position improves in current feminism, their speech pattern is bound to change accordingly. Career women, in the front line of the changing society, and non-career women, presumably remaining in the stereotyped role, did show a difference in the choice of verb form and FP.

In the case of verb forms, both NCW chose the most formal level; this can be regarded as an indication that the basic norm imposed on women in the society is maintained in NCW, while among CW, fluctuation in the choice of verb form was observed.

The results also revealed that a formal conversational setting, or occasion, overrides seniority as a rule to choose polite speech level. The striking use of F/D by NCW in the interaction with a much younger interviewer supports this premise.

A few other findings connected with the choice of FP by CW and NCW disclosed their internal composition in realizing their status. One feature of FP, the relative degree of assertion, was used as a framework to determine superior-inferior relation. Although "males have access to the entire gamut of declarative FP and can express assertion in the most straightforward manner available in the language, women barely express assertion and, if so, in the subtlest manner possible" (Reynolds, 14). The fact that *zo*, *ze* in declarative and *na* in confirmative sentences were not used by any of the informants signifies that these FP of strong assertion are not yet available to women. However, when they are at liberty to choose FP in soliloquy where they are relatively free from ranking, both CW and NCW chose *kana*, FP of stronger assertion. Remarkably frequent use of this FP by CW displays the tendency toward equality between the sexes.

The FP *wa* of the weakest assertion was not used by any of the informants: The FP *wa* is too weak in assertion to be used in responding to questions in the interview. The FP *yo*, the one which both men and women have access to, was used quite extensively by all the informants. Hatsumi's overwhelming use of this FP (16 times) in comparison with the other NCW Murano (3 times) was attributed to her strong attachment to her family.

Atsuta's striking use of F/I and FP *ne* revealed an interesting phenomenon of polite speech: Polite speech is not only used by a person of lower status to pay deference to a person of higher status, but also used by a person of higher status to show dignity and prestige to a person of lower status. Atsuta's speech pattern exemplifies a dilemma between the needs of authority demanded by her status, which is represented by her choice of F/I, and her feminine identity, which is represented by her use of *ne* and *kashira*.

Although the number of informants was small in this preliminary study, the results clearly showed the relationship between speech patterns and social status. From the speech patterns employed by CW and NCW, we can conclude that the change in women's speech pattern is under way.

From the results of this research it is probable that the most stereotyped women's

speech represented by Hatsumi will be ultimately displaced by the speech pattern used by Hara, which is least associated with the predominant women's role. Several articles have pointed out that sex differentiation in Japanese is decreasing. A recent trend is that younger Japanese women use *zo*, *ze* and *na*, male-exclusive FP of strong assertion. The tendency toward equality eventually permeates the sphere of language. Further research will reveal new stylistic variations to accommodate newly emerging values.

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