

# Language Choice and Language Shift in Language and Sex

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## 1. Language and Sex

The study of the relationship between language and sex has been popular in the past 30 years, ever since the publication of Robin Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* in 1975. Preceding this, there have been other outstanding studies on women's language, such as the one by Otto Jespersen in 1922 and the other by Mary Haas on Koasati in 1944.

Jespersen has pointed out some introspective aspects on women's language from the point of a male linguist. Haas has pointed out the phonological differences between male and female Koasati speakers and the two types of world languages in terms of formal differences between the sexes. Although the two studies on male and female languages were innovative for the field, they were not so sensational as Lakoff's.

Lakoff's study has been enhanced by the rise of minority groups in American society, such as the groups of blacks, immigrants and women, in the years of Civil Rights Movement and Post-Vietnam War. She has pointed out characteristics of female language based on the observation of her own speech, the speeches of her acquaintances, and those used in mass-media. Her claims have triggered off other studies, such as the ones by Janet Holmes (1988, '92, & '93), Deborah Tannen (1986, '89, & '90) and Senko Maynard (1989, & '97). They have brought the full bloom of the research into language and sex toward the end of the twentieth century, as women across the world have gained higher social status and

more economic power.

Female professionals and feminists have brought their government to the negotiation table for equal civil rights between men and women. As a result they have achieved most of their claims, with some exceptions, such as equal pay for equal work.

As society has shifted toward equal opportunity for both sexes, the old-fashioned male-chauvinistic social structure has been gradually collapsing, and a new system is beginning to emerge in our society across cultures. In the transition from the old to the new, both men and women need to change their minds and attitudes toward each other and to their rapidly changing society. Various women's associations, such as NOW, and also men's movements, such as Promise Keepers, have been formed in the United States to cope with the changes. Various social psychologists have tried to account for the reasons of the anxiety of the people who are involved in these changes. John Gray (1994) has tried to account for the communication problems between men and women in terms of cultural differences, saying the one comes from Mars and the other from Venus. According to his account, due to cultural differences, men and women have difficulties in understanding each other. They need special cross cultural communication skills with special counselling.

From the human evolution point of view of David Geary (1998), there is no such thing as cultural differences, but rather each sex is choosing the best selection for their survival. They choose the most comfortable living environment for their life. The male selection for the fittest survival environment is simply different from that of women's. Long years of human evolution has created tremendous difference between male and female living conditions, including their languages. Those studies in the past show various perspectives and theories to view the language differences between men and women.

## 2. Robin Lakoff's claim in her book, *Language and Woman's Place*

Robin Lakoff is *the* leading researcher in the field of women's language. Her book, *Language and Woman's Place*, was published in 1975 from Harper and Row, New York. It came out to the world as one of the results of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's. During the Viet Nam War, minority groups, such as blacks and women, came into society to work for the men who went to fight in Viet Nam. Because of labor shortages, they obtained entrance to the job market and tried to win the same privileges as those of men. Women workers at AT&T fought for equal opportunity and equal pay for the first time in American history. They insisted on equality so that they could work for life not for leisure. This first step gained much support from women workers and their friends, which eventually led them to participate in the Washington Rally with the blacks and other minority groups who were campaigning for equal civil rights with those of their white counterparts.

As minority groups in American society, where male WASPs had been ruling for decades, both powerless blacks and women shared the common cause for the campaign. With this cause, Lakoff came to argue for women's equal social status with that of men. She started to argue with this fact that language uses people as much as they use it. The language used by female speakers and the language which is used when people talk about women reflect their social status in which they are placed.

In the book Lakoff has argued that girls are taught to be obedient and polite, while boys are allowed to be more spontaneous. The former are not allowed to express their feelings, while the latter can do so freely. This linguistic behavior in society has been natural and has been taken for granted for years. Girls are traditionally taught to be little ladies. These social habits have formed the disparity between the language of women

and that of men. It can be observed in vocabulary, suprasegmentals, grammar, and the use of tag questions. If a person lives in the environment where particular habits and customs are common, he or she will assume them naturally as they grow older. Likewise, linguistic behavior in our society becomes part of our language as we grow older. Such social behavior can be observed among the people who wear similar clothes in the same area, behave similarly in a close-knit community, and speak the same dialect in the same district. Thus, Lakoff's claims are worthy of close examination. She argues that because women's social status is low, they speak uncertainly and ask for confirmation and that they are spoken of as social inferiors.

The claim is similar to the psychological claim that human cognition is controlled by what they experience in real life: 'imprinting' (*surikomi*)<sup>1</sup>. The term is exemplified by the fact that if newly hatched birds see a person swimming with them, they follow the person taking him or her as their parent. Likewise, if women are raised in a society where they are secondary citizens, they do not question their secondary status unless they experience something different somewhere else.

People across cultures tend to put themselves in the center of thoughts and activities against what is different, that is, 'ethnocentrism'. In a male dominated society men want to show themselves as central in society and women as peripheral. Obviously men have had better social positions throughout human history across cultures, and they have given a secondary social position to women. This tradition has been reflected in our language.

## 2.1 'Woman' and 'Lady'

The words, 'woman' and 'lady', are defined and are exemplified in dictionaries, such as *the Oxford English Dictionary* and *the Random House English Dictionary*, as follows:

### 2.1.1 'Woman'

The non-sexist spelling for 'women' is 'womyn' and the word is often used as phrases, such as 'men, women, and children', and 'women and children'. It can be used with some negative connotation, such as in this sentence, 'She is now quite a woman.'

It is also used idiomatically, such as 'Men make houses, women make homes.'

It is used descriptively for a discipline such as 'a woman researcher' and 'woman doctor'.

It also has negative overtones if a woman is identified as, 'That woman over there,' compared to the phrase, 'That lady over there.'

### 2.1.2 'Lady'

The word, 'lady' is used for a socially higher-ranked woman, especially for an aristocratic woman.

It can also be used for plain women so as to elevate their social positions, such as 'a sales lady', 'The First Lady'. At the same time, it may sound deprecating if it is used for professionals, such as 'a lady reporter' and 'a lady artist'.

Both of the words mentioned above can refer to an elevated, a neutral, and a degraded woman. The following table shows the three different references to women.

**Table 1. The Three Different References to Women**

Elevated	Neutral	Degrading
sales lady ladies, first cleaning lady young lady	woman plumber woman doctor womanaut woman of letters	to play the woman the little woman the old woman one's old woman the other woman the woman in the street woman of the world lady reporter lady artist

Table 1 shows the fact that there are more degrading references to women than those of elevated and neutral terms, even in major dictionaries. It reflects our social linguistic behavior.

## **2.2 'Man' and 'Gentleman'**

The word 'man' is used for an adult male, in contrast to 'woman'. It is often used in such expressions as 'men's wear' and 'to become a man'.

It can express the excellent ability of man, in such phrases as 'a man of action', and 'Man with the head, woman with the heart,' which are habitually used.

### **2.2.1 'Man'**

'Man' is also used for 'homo sapiens', such as 'prehistoric man', and 'Man is mortal.' It is also used regardless of sex, such as in 'Any man can do it,' and in 'So many men, so many minds.'

'Man' is used for 'husband' as in 'man and wife.'

It is also used for 'subjects' or 'followers', such as 'the king's men', 'the number one man of the boss', and 'Like master, like man.' This use is now used for an employee, such as 'a Secret Service man', and 'a man

from a phone company', and 'Our man in Tokyo scooped the bribery case.' It can express camaraderie, as in 'You are my main man,' and 'Now, now, my good man, please calm down,' and 'I'm your man.'

In American slang, 'the man' or 'the Man' means the important man in your life or your master. Such expression as this, 'The only way to beat the man is to go to school.'

It is also used for major drug dealers.

As has been seen, the word 'man' has the connotation of male adult, male adult with outstanding ability, all the people, husband, employee, and the key person. It does not connote much sexuality as the counterpart 'woman' does. The parallel expressions, 'my man' and 'my woman' denote 'the trustworthy fellow worker' and 'the speaker's girlfriend' respectively.

### 2.2.2 'Gentleman'

The word 'gentleman' is used for a man of well bred, upper-class, and high-ranked social position. He is a learned man and behaves well in public. He also has a large estate, which allows him to enjoy his freedom from secular work. This bears out the expression, 'Now I'm completely a gentleman.'

It is also used as a polite expression for a man, especially when he is in front of the speaker: He says, "Do you know that gentleman over there?"

It is used as an addressing term to male audience, such as 'Gentlemen!' It is used in the beginning of formal letters, addressing a general audience, such as 'Ladies and gentlemen'.

In the US Congress, both in the Senate and the House of Commons, male congressmen are habitually addressed as 'gentlemen', such as 'The chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.'

In our daily life, we use 'Gentleman' on men's lavatory doors.

In a negative sense, 'gentleman' is used for a man, such as 'my

gentleman,' which is an ironic or ridiculing term for a man.

As has been observed, the connotation of 'gentleman' is a well-educated, good-mannered, high-ranked male adult. It expresses politeness in its use. It can be used sarcastically, as well, when used for the man who does not obviously have the former characteristics. It is not so often used for a common, secular man who does not deserve being called as 'gentleman', but if they are called as such, then, it denotes sarcasm toward the man being addressed as 'gentleman'. This use of the word makes a clear contrast of the use of the word 'lady' for a woman. Men do not need seeming elevation or beautification of their social position whereas their counterparts do.

### **2.3 Outfits for Men and Women**

Outfits for men and women were originally similar in the old days. They were made pieces of cloth, which looked loose and simple. As time went by, they became distinct from each other for their distinct social roles after the industrial revolution in the 19th century. In the present days, men wear suits at work and on formal occasions, whereas women seem to enjoy various selections.

Men's garments look simpler than those of women's. Bourgeois women try to show off their class with their decorative dresses, hats, gloves and bags. On the other hand, men began to wear suits, which have eventually become more or less uniform for men at work. They have been deprived of luxuries, such as lacework and long tails, which their ancestors had enjoyed.

In war time, both men and women wore simple outfits, but when in peace, as nowadays, in work places men and women wear similarly-styled suits, and they both wear pants which enable them to move quickly and efficiently in modern offices and in various city traffic systems.



## 2.4 Names.

The addressees' sex often determines whether the person should be called by the first or the last name. Lakoff (1975: 40) remarked the fact that women are more apt to be called by their first names. She noticed that they are called by their first names in casual situations, such as in TV shows.

On television discussion shows, or commentary, or topical comedy (of the Bob Hope kind, a woman will be called or referred to by her first name where a man might not. Again, this is not a hard-and-fast rule, but depends upon the respect accorded to the woman due to her age, position, and attractiveness: it seems as though the more attractive a woman is, the less she can be taken seriously, and the more she is considered a decoration, able to be addressed by first name only. ... This usage is perhaps to be compared with the tradition of calling children freely by their first names, and may be parallel to the use of "girl" for "women" discussed earlier. (*Ibid.*, 40)

This remark on addressing terms for women is found to be true in Japanese society. They are called by their first names, which express the speakers' endearment. At home, women of all ages can be called by their first names; at work, younger women tend to be called casually by their first names. In formal occasions, such as at school, they are formally called by their last names. The degree of formality of settings decides the selection between the first and the last names. Younger women are more often called by their first names.

After lunch on weekdays, there is a popular live TV show for housewives. Some of them are called young ladies, (*ojoosan*) although they are in their fifties or sixties. The host is obviously abusing his female audience, who do not seem to be educated and are of the working

class. He also takes advantage of his role in the program as the host, and allows himself to use such an impolite expression to his audience at his disposal, but actually he is accepted with much laughter in the show.

## **2.5 Changing World and its Reflection on Language**

The Equal Opportunity Employment Amendment was issued in Japan 1998, and now Japanese women seem not to be segregated in employment. In most of the industrialized G8 countries, women are now working in almost every field in society. They are not only engaged in office work but also outdoor manual labor. They are truck drivers, road constructors, company bosses, doctors, or lawyers. Depending upon their abilities and good fortune, they can choose what they want to do in the world.

Robin Lakoff (1975) pointed out the fact that the low social status of women triggered their use of women's language: in other words, language reflects their position. Probably it is true even today, but women now have a range of language choices depending upon the settings in which they are placed. In public speech they select to use neutral standard language, the same one used by men in the same situation. In political speech they select to use political language and terms, the same ones used by male politicians. In their private and domestic lives, they tend to use female language depending upon the relationship with their addressees. They are not inhibited from using varieties of language, which are appropriate to the settings in which they are then placed.

The world is now equally accepting both men and women in almost every domain of society. As they are free to choose their work in the world, they are free to choose their language for each situation.

Interestingly enough, their costume reflects their freedom of choice as is shown in their language choice. They change language as they change their costume. In their formal dresses they select to speak

formally; in their casual outfits they choose to speak casually. People are now, both men and women, enjoying a wide range of choices for their lives. Women now seem to enjoy freedom of choice much more than men do. They are truly enjoying the choices of language, work, and clothing. These three elements seem to reflect the changing awareness of women as society has changed its attitude toward them. In what follows, such choices by women are demonstrated in data collected mainly in Japanese society.

### **3. Profession and Sex**

Traditionally women have been excluded from professional society. They have been home-bound, taking care of children and husbands. Thus, their status has been low both at home and in society. As Lakoff (1975) has pointed out, their social status has been reflected in their powerless language. Especially during and after wars, every society needed an additional work force, even women, to make up for the labor shortage. This phenomenon of advancement of women into society was remarkable after World War II and also after the Vietnam War in American society.

In the 70's, American women were literally working in every field of society, although the number was small in the beginning of the movement. At present, in 2000, the number of working women is increasing and their social conditions have been improved in that they can work in their offices while their children are under day-care supervision, and their domestic chores are taken care of by computer-controlled electronic facilities. Most of the American middle class men and women work even after marriage, and they enjoy a double income. This American social habit has also influenced Japanese society.

In Japanese society, women, especially young women, are now

making their way into the professional world after their graduation from college. Even the rate of female students in colleges is larger than that of male students. They are very active in their colleges.

At Fukuoka Jo Gakuin College, there are two faculties: Humanities and Human Relationships. The Faculty of Humanities has twenty-six full-time teaching members. Seven of them, a little over one fourth of the whole faculty, are women. The Faculty of Human Relationships has thirty-three full-time teaching faculty members. Twelve of them, a little over one third, are women. The seven faculty assistants are also women. The rate of women faculty members is far less than that of their American counterparts. However, this rate is fairly high compared to that of public universities in Japan.

In a summer seminar on undergraduate education, there were forty-three participants; some of them were presidents of universities, and many of them were professors. This seminar enjoyed only three women teachers, participated in this seminar: one professor, one associate and an instructor. The rate of women is almost one fourteenth of the whole participants. Considering this rate, women still have to work to get a large share in the years to come.

In Japanese academic society both men and women choose to use standard Japanese, a middle class dialect, which is a neutral language or an academic dialect. There is no sexual difference in language choice in public academic society.

In formal meetings people tend to wear formal dress. Both men and women wear dark or drab-colored business suits. Dark blue, black, dark grey, or light grey are common colors for official occasions. The colors represent the serious attitudes of the people in the situations in question. They also choose to use the standard dialect of the Japanese language. The same phenomenon can be observed in students' recruiting campaigns. They wear drab-colored suits and go for job interviews, and they select

a standard linguistic variety. Thus in academic society both men and women, professors and students, all choose a standard linguistic variety on public occasions to show their serious attitude. And also they choose to wear dark-colored business suits. This observation leaves a question whether women's choice of language and suits reflects male dominance in business settings and whether women are simply adopting men's social habits in order to ease business transactions with them.

Educated middle class women have now larger domains for their activities. They were once confined to home, but now they have equipped themselves with various abilities which enable them to be active in business, research, and in almost every aspect of social life. They can now choose their language depending upon the settings in which they are placed. They have varieties of language choices including foreign languages depending upon the addressees they then have. They choose to use standard dialect with colleagues; peer language with friends; female language with family members; regional dialect with neighbors. Thus, they are free to choose other varieties than the standard. Middle class women can now enjoy a larger world with various types of people and various language choices, just as they can enjoy other choices in their lives. The women of the working class may have less chances of language choice as they are limited to a smaller world and less varieties of experience. Women's language choices thus depend upon the degree of freedom that they can enjoy. If they have ten different aspects of life, then they have ten roles and have ten choices of language which are directed to ten different addressees. If they have five different domains, then they have five roles in the domains and five different language choices.

The language choice coincides with the choices of addressing terms to the woman in question. If she is addressed as Professor Smith, then she chooses her formal language which suits her role as a professor. If she is addressed as Jane, then she chooses her informal language, probably

female language to her colleagues, friends or to her husband. If she is addressed as Mother, she chooses formal language to her children. If she is speaking to a foreigner, she chooses to use the common language that they share. The following table shows that Professor Jane Smith has three different domains with five different interactants. Her choices can be described as in the following table.

**Table 2. The Domains of Women and Their Language Choices**

Domain	Addressing Term	Interactant	Formality	Intimacy	Linguistic Variety
Work	Professor Smith	Chair	+ High	- High	Standard Dialect
Friendship	Jane	Colleague	- High	- High	Standard Dialect
Friendship	Jannie	Old Friend	- High	+ High	Female Language
Family	Jane	Husband	- High	+ High	Female Language
Family	Mother	Child	- High	+ High	Standard Language

(The binary symbols +/– in the table above indicate the presence or absence of the feature in question.)

It is worth noticing that she chooses the standard dialect when interacting with her child. This fact reflects her prescriptive language attitude when she is in the role of an educator to a child.

#### **4. Language Selection**

Robin Lakoff (1975) has claimed that women uses female language because of their low social status. She has given the reason that they cannot express clearly in public what they want to say. Their attitudes have been observed in the uses of hedges, fillers, uncertain expressions, tag-questions, and rising intonation. These linguistic devices conveying their uncertainty have been particular to women, because they have been in a subordinate place in society.

Her claimes have been further investigated with substantial data by other contemporary linguists, which have altered some of her findings. One of the findings is that hedges and fillers have been used by men who

are from the working class. Thus, they are not the features of female language but 'powerless forms' (Holmes, 1992), which are used by powerless people in general. Another finding is that women tend to focus on happy relationship among conversants, which inhibits them to avoid confronting remarks. On the other hand, men tend to focus on information in their conversation, which makes their discourse contending. Thus, the feature of female discourse is not solely caused by their subordinate social status but also by their unique discourse principle.

Senko Maynard (1997) has found that women are now have varieties of language selections because they are now active in various work places and in various social situations. If they are of the same social class, men and women use similar language in similar settings. They tend to select male or female language when they think it is more appropriate for a particular situation. Language selection in public settings will be investigated next.

## 4.1 Language Selection

In the present-day Japanese, male and female speakers distinguish their language in their uses of particular vocabulary, such as first person pronouns (*jishooshi* 自称詞), second person pronouns, third person pronouns (*taishooshi* 対称詞), and final particles (*shuuji* 終助詞). These words differentiate male speakers from female speakers in written or spoken discourse. The language difference is illustrated by current written Japanese discourse since 1960's and current spoken discourse collected from TV programs.

### 4.1.1 Written Discourse

Samples of current written discourse were collected from four different novels by four popular female writers, YAMASAKI Toyoko, SONO Ayako, SATO Aiko, and SETOUCHI Jakuchoo. The translations are mine and in parentheses, Romanized Japanese language is given.

(1) F: I am glad to hear what you just said, ... If it was not successful, I thought I could not see Mr. Sone any longer.

(F: *sooitte itadakereba —watashi, moshi, umaku yukanakattara, sone san ni kao no oawase no shiyoomo nai to omotte orimashita no*)

M: Oh, no. Ginshiro did his best, not me. He is the best student in our French major class, and he was asked to work in the graduate school for further research. But somehow he has devoted himself to the management of a dressmaking school which is totally different from what he has been doing. I cannot imagine what in the world made him crazy about dressmaking. He should have his own ideas. He is a very brilliant and talented man, indeed.

(M: *iya boku yori, ginnshiroo no hooga yoku nebari mashita yo, aitsu wa bokutachi futsubun no shuusai de, kyooshitsu ye nokoru yooni nozomareta hodo no yatsu desu ga, yoosai gakkoo to yu tohoomonai hatake chigai no shigoto ni joonetsu, iya, sukunaku tomo muchuuni natte imasu ne, bokutachi niha kenntoo mo tsukanai kedo, kare niwa kare narino kanngae ga aruno deshoo. tomokaku atama no ii, shigoto no dekiru yatsu desu yo, aitsu wa ...*)

(YAMASAKI Toyoko, *Onna no Kunsho*, 1965)

In (1) male and female speakers speak differently in personal pronouns and beautification as is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Speech Differences in (1)

Difference	Male	Female
first person pronoun	<i>boku</i>	<i>watashi</i>
second/third person pronoun	<i>Ginshiro</i> <i>yatsu</i> <i>kare</i> <i>aitsu</i>	<i>Sone-san</i>
beautification	—	<i>oawase (to see)</i>



As shown above, male and female speeches differ in first, second and third person pronouns, the addressing term without ‘-*san*’ as in ‘*Ginshiro*’, and the beautification of a verb with the addition of ‘*o*’ before the verb form ‘*au*’.

(2) F: Your mother wishes to have her grandchild.

(*okaasama wa mago no dekinai koto wo kinishite irassharu deshoo*)

Kyoko sounded as if it were her responsibility.

(*kyoko wa kooyuubai sugu jibun no sekinin no yoona kuchi wo kiite shimatta*)

M: Oh, no, Tobiko has three children.

(*iya iidaroo tobikon tokoro ni san nin mo irun dakara*)

F: How about you?

(*anata wa doo nano*)

M: I do not want to have a child.

(*kodomo nan nka betsuni hoshiku nai*)

(SONO *Ayako*, *Tennis Court*, 1961)

In (2), male and female speeches differ in the first person pronoun, the addressing terms, the polite form and the particle as are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Speech Differences in (2)

Differences	Male	Female
first person pronoun	<i>boku</i>	—
addressing term	<i>Tobiko</i>	<i>okaasama</i> <i>anata</i>
polite form		<i>irassharu</i>
particle		<i>deshoo</i>

The man refers to himself as ‘*boku*’ and did not use honorific epithet ‘*san*’ for *Tobiko*, because she is his sister. On the other hand, the woman used the polite addressing terms ‘*okaasama*’ for her mother-in-law. She also used the polite form of ‘*iru*’ as ‘*irassharu*’, and also the Japanese tag

question, 'deshoo'.

(3) My daughter's monthly allowance was 10,000 yen. With this news, her classmates sympathized with her and they all signed a petition for a raise.

- Tomorrow I will bring the signed petition, all right? said my daughter. Then, I said,

*(ashita shomei no kami motte kuru karane, to musume. sokode, watashi wa itta,)*

- I don't want it! Instead, they should all come here and make a line; Mama will preach to them the truth.

*(sonnamono iran. kawarini minnade ieye kite ichiretsuni narabinasai. Mama ga sekkyoo shite yaru.)*

- Ok! Ok! Ten thousand yen will do!

*(wakatta yo, ichiman yen de ii.)*

.....

- What did you do then?

*(sorede doo shita no)*

- I donated ninety yen.

*(shita yo, kyuujuu yen.)*

- Ninety yen! It's an odd amount for a donation, isn't it?

*(kyuujuu yen toha mata hamm̄pa dane.)*

(SATO Aiko, *Aiko no Shin-Shin Kakugen*, 1988)

(3) illustrates part of the conversation between a mother and a daughter. Both speakers are using casual Japanese. Their sentences are short with the omissions of the first person and the second person pronouns. The mother's characteristic use of the first person noun, 'Mama' for the pronoun 'I' has made the conversation intimate, but authoritative to her daughter with the clear statement of the speaker's

relation to the addressee. The particles, 'no', and 'dane' used by both speakers are also used by male speakers. The particles have not shown any sex differences of the speakers.

(4) a. M: My religious teacher KON Tookoo said to the youngsters who said such things:

- "Then, you bastards! Kill yourself right now!" exclaimed he.

(*jaa temeetachi sugu shinnjimaeto donatte ta*)

"If you are not grateful for your life, and if you spoil your life, you are food eaters. You are not worth while for the food which you are having. To save such food, kill yourselves right now!"

(*ikite iru koto o arigata gara nee de benben to ikite iru yaroo wa gokutsubushi to iuun da mottai nai kara shinde shimaeto*)

b. F: "Yes, I agree with you. All of them encourage me. Nowadays, I often visit my mother-in-law. She understands my loneliness.

(*ee, watashi mo soo omoete kimashita minasan mo hagemashite kudasarun desu kono goro shujin no okaasan no tokoro ye dekirudake kao o dasu yooni shiteimasu ichiban watashi no sabishisa o wakatte kurerun desu*)

(SETOUCHI Jakuchoo, *Jakuan Seppoo*, 1988)

In (4), male and female speeches differ in the first person pronoun, the addressing terms, and particles, and beautification as are shown in Table 5.

In (4a) the male speaker used rough terms for addressing, '*temee tachi*' and '*yaroo*', while the female speaker used polite forms of '*minasan*' and '*okaasan*'. He did not use polite particles, either, while she used them. Thus, the man sounded rough and the woman sounded polite.

**Table 5. Speech Differences in (4)**

Differences	Male	Female
first person pronoun addressing term	— <i>temee tachi</i> <i>yaroo</i>	<i>watashi</i> <i>minasan</i> <i>shujinn no okaasan</i>
particle	<i>da</i> <i>shimae</i>	<i>desu</i> <i>mashita</i> <i>masu</i>
beutification		<i>okaasan</i>

The above excerpts from modern Japanese novels have shown the major differences between male and female speeches which lie in the uses of the first person pronouns, addressing terms, polite forms and beautification of some vocabulary.

#### 4.1.2 Spoken Discourse

The discourse for this observation was collected from a popular TV program in Japan, entitled “Omoikkiri Terebi” (Real TV Show). The speakers in the present data are discussing Caesar Salad.

(5) M: What’s this? 【Looking at a bowl of salad.】

(*kore wa?*)

F: This is Caesar Salad.

(*shiizaa salada desu*)

M: This salad is particularly good for women. It does not have a cheese-like smell, it is an ideal food for a diet.

(*korewa tokuni josei ni tabete itadaki tai. shikamo chiizu ga zenzen kini naranai daietto ga shitai nannte yuuhito ga itara kore tabete mitara?*)

The host of the show is talking casually in front of a group of middle-aged women in the studio. The hostess is with him in front of them. On the stage there are four guests, who are popular movie stars and popular

writers.

His speech sounds casual and brief, such as '*kore wa*' for '*kore wa nan desu ka*'. He sounded the same in his final line, '*kore tabete mitara*' for '*kore wo tabete mite kudasai*'. He used a casual suggesting form instead of a polite form.

The hostess on the other hand sounded formal and polite as she appears in her formal suits. She answered in formal and polite Japanese to his casual question, such as '*shiizaa salada desu.*'

In (5) the middle-aged host sounded casual and the middle-aged hostess sounded formal and polite in the same program.

In a hotel restaurant, a middle-aged woman in a dress is answering an interview about the salad which she is having now at the table.

(6) I do not care for cheese, but I can enjoy this salad.

(*chotto cheezu wa nigate nan desu kedo korenara oishiku itadake masu*)

The middle-aged woman in her dress used formal polite Japanese with the final particle '*desu*' and '*masu*'.

In the following setting, three women, probably in their forties, in their cotton pants and cotton shirts are having Caesar Salad at a table with a white table cloth. Obviously they are asked to judge the salad for the TV program.

(7) Oh, good, OK, OK, I can have this one, good, good!

(*aa! kekkoo -- daijoobu daijoobu watashi taberarezu zoo -- oishii oishii*)

The three women spoke in casual Japanese as they appeared to be.

Then, a doctor in white appears on the screen and explains the effect of Parmesan cheese on lettuce salad. He speaks in formal polite Japanese

in formal authentic tones.

- (8) The combination of lettuce and Parmesan cheese is most ideal, because the copresence of lactoferine in cheese with vitamin A and C in lettuce produces more immuno-effect.

*(jitsuwa, pasumezan chiizu to letasu no kumiawase to yuno wa rini kanatte irun desu chiizu ni fukumareru rakutoferin ga letasu ni fukumareru bitamin A toka C to kyoozon surukotoni yori yori fukai menyeki kooka wo hakkishi masu)*

The doctor in white used formal Japanese to indicate the truthfulness of his information about the effect of Parmesan cheese and Vitamin A and C.

A voice asked whether they noticed any change in themselves after having Parmesan cheese for several days. The three informants appeared on the screen in their casual outfits. And one of them answered as follows:

- (9) F: This morning, I noticed, after washing my face, before make-up, my face felt smoother. I didn't realize why it was so smooth, but now I can tell why.

*(watashi kesa nanda kedo ne - asa kao arattara okeshoo suru mae ni hada ga tsurutsuru shiteita no yo nanndaka wakaranakute aa sookatte sakki omoidashita no yo)*

The middle-aged woman spoke casually with the rest of the informants who obviously became friends with each other now. The other two informants listened to the speaker quietly.

A voice said, "after five days ladies expresses this anxiety."

The three women appeared on the screen.

- (10) F: I am worried about calories.

*(yappari karorii ga)*

F: It is too rich with high calories.

(*karorii ga takai daroo to*)

F: It has much fat also. If I have much salad, I will grow fat.

(*shiboobun mo ooishi ne ... takusan tabereba futoru darooshi*)

F: Oh, no! I don't want to be any heavier.

(*un, koreijoo futoritaku nai yo ne*)

F: If I have the salad every day, I am sure I will be ...

(*mainichi tabereba korewa tekimenda ne*)

The three women spoke casually in their everyday speech with close friends, expressing their anxiety about getting fatter after having Caesar Salad for five days.

The middle-aged doctor in his white uniform appeared on the screen, and explained the merits and demerits of the salad.

(11) M: Caesar Salad is well-balanced food. But one of its demerits is the absence of minerals. So if you add seaweed to the salad, which contains a lot of minerals, such as kalium, then it discharges salt from your body. The salad will become even more perfect food for you. (*shiizaa salada wa hijooni baransu no toreta eiyoookooka no takai tabemono desu tada hitotsu no ketten wa mineraru bun ga fusokushiteiru koto desu desukara mineraru tokuni kariumu wo ooku fukumu kaisoo wo mazete agereba embun mo haishutsu sarete kanzen eiyooshoku to iyeru deshoo*)

The doctor in white uniform spoke formally about the vitamins and minerals in Caesar Salad.

The following was a case of consultation. The speaker's voice was in the studio, which was loud enough for all to hear. The host answered the call.

(12) M: Hello, hello...

(moshi moshi)

F: Hello? hello? ...

(moshi moshi)

M: What happened to you? What's the problem?

(aa dooshimashita)

F: It's my son. ..

(musuko no koto nandesu kedo)

M: How old are you?

(anata ikutsu)

F: I'm 67 years old.

(rokujuu nana sai desu)

M: What happened to your husband?

(de goshujin wa)

F: He died two years ago.

(ninen mae ni takai shimashita)

M: And your son?

(de musuko san wa)

F: Gambling. ...

(gyamburu nan desu)

M: What kind?

(donna gyamburu)

F: Pachinko.

(pachinko nandesu)

M: Doesn't he have any girlfriend?

(kanojo inai no)

F: No, he doesn't.

(inain desu)

M: He must be lonely. But how does he look?

(sabishiin daroo ne de mitame doo na no)

• • • •



The host asked brief questions in casual form. The female voice spoke formally and politely, although her speech is also short, giving only the focused information.

The above data, both written and spoken Japanese discourse, have revealed these facts:

- (a) Men spoke roughly and briefly.
- (b) Women spoke politely and formally.
- (c) Men in uniform spoke formally.
- (d) Women in cotton shirts and pants spoke casually.
- (e) Women in formal dresses spoke politely and formally.

Japanese society has undergone many changes for the past ten years. It has experienced a low birthrate, which has brought the population imbalance between the younger generation and the older. It has thus welcomed more female students and more adult working women than ever before. The changes have influenced the Japanese language and have changed it considerably. The following chapter will discuss some of them.

## 5. Language Shift.

Some Japanese words were used only for men, and others were used only for women. Some of those words, especially those words with pejorative connotation, have now become obsolete. On the other hand, new coined words, which can be used for both sexes, are beginning to be used in Japanese society, as in English-speaking societies.

### 5.1 Obsolete Words for Men.

Words referring to a 'husband', such as 'master' *shujin* (主人), 'house master' (*teishu* 亭主), and 'house master' with pejoration *yadoroku* (宿六), have become obsolete. Younger generation of Japanese women are now

referring to their husbands as *otto* (夫) or by their last names.

The word referring to a widower, 'male widow' *otoko yamome* (男やもめ) is not used nowadays; instead, a casual word for a single man *hitorimono* (独り者). The same word can also be used for a single woman.

The word which used to refer to a handsome guy, *dateotoko* (伊達男) is now completely obsolete. In the past there were some men who tried to attract women by their appearance, but not with their ability. They were called *dateotoko*. The word became obsolete because they are now encouraged to polish up their appearance by the cosmetic industry.

The word referring to a son-in-law, *muko* (婿), is also becoming obsolete, as the traditional marriage system between his family and hers is now going to disappear. Marriage used to be a matter of a family event, but it is now an individual affair.

## 5.2 Obsolete Words for Women.

Words referring to one's own wife, such words as *nyooboo* (女房) and *gusai* (愚妻) are now obsolete.

*Nyooboo* referred to the chamber where a lady lived in the *Heian* and Feudal Eras. A lady who lived in the chamber is also called *nyooboo*. The word now sounds archaic.

*Gusai*, 'a foolish wife', was used by a husband who tried to show his humbleness to his addressees. But nowadays, a man does not call his wife as foolish even when he wants to be humble, rather he uses a neutral word, *tsuma* (妻).

The word for divorce, *demodori* (出戻り), is now obsolete. Once divorce was not accepted socially. Divorcers or divorcees were looked down on as socially unethical people. But now they are increasing in number, which has given rise to a casual word *batsuichi* (ばついち). The word, however, connotes the negation of divorce.

The word *hakoirimusume* referred to a young woman who has been brought up with much care by her parents just as a doll in a box. It is not used any longer. Young women are not any longer dolls, that is, the object of parents' care, but rather they are allowed to be independent of their parents and to be active socially.

The word *kimusume* (生娘), which denotes a virgin, is now obsolete as society accepts different sexual habits of the younger generation.

The following table shows some reactions of young women<sup>2</sup> to the words which were common for the older generation to use.

Table 6. Uncommon Words for Younger Generation Women

Words <sup>3</sup>	Frequency of use				
	a	b	c	d	e
<i>musume</i>	5	67	38	35	10
<i>musumesan</i>	4	63	40	46	2
<i>ojoosan</i>	0	30	59	61	5
<i>hakoirimusume</i>	0	48	49	53	5
<i>tekireiki</i>	8	44	62	40	1
<i>oorudomisu</i>	1	10	84	26	34
<i>koshikake</i>	0	31	54	50	20
<i>nyooboo</i>	6	9	71	67	2
<i>yamanokami</i>	0	1	66	18	70
<i>jochuu</i>	0	6	74	3	62
<i>yadoroku</i>	0	0	28	12	15

The alphabet, a to e in the table, indicates the frequency of use.

a: I use it very frequently.      b: I use it once in a while.

c: I do not use it at all.      d: I heard older people use it.

e: I have not even heard of it.

In Table 6 the words, *oorudomisu*, *yamanokami*, and *jochuu*, are now obviously obsolete and younger women are not using them any longer.

### 5.3 Newly Coined Words

Because society has beginning to accept more women, it has also accepted newly coined words which can refer to both men and women. Women are not regarded as part of the household goods any longer. Their social and economic independence of their parents and of husbands has caused them to coin new words to socially express the change. These words are mainly used by the younger generation and can refer to both men and women.

The word *freeter* (フリーター), referring to one who is not employed on a regular basis, but as a part time worker, can be used unisexually. As society needs more work force, women have more chances to get jobs and have more chances to be independent of the patriarchal home.

The younger generation in Japanese society now enjoys childish freedom even after their graduation from high school or college. They work only when they want to. Such young men and women are called *parasite single* (パラサイトシングル parent-dependent singles). Sometimes they are also called *freeter* (parent-dependent part-timer). They are allowed to be irresponsible for their own lives both socially and economically because their parents willingly provide them with room and board and also with fees for their social security. Approximately 160,000 youngsters below 30 are now enjoying irresponsible lives as *parasitesingles*.

When *parasite singles* need money, they work part time. Such part-timers are called *arubaito* (アルバイト). The word refers to both young men and women. In the past the word was used for students who worked for tuition and fees. When housewives work for life, they are not called *arubaito* but rather *paato-san* (パートさん). The word denotes middle-aged female part-timers who engage themselves in manual labor. They work regularly for a certain period of time every day. Because they are not regular employees, the employer can dispense with their social secu-

rity fees.

Sitting on the pavements or grounds in public places, and sometimes even in trains is a conspicuous social behavior of youngsters. They are called *jibetarian* (ジベタリアン). The word was coined by the blending of a Japanese word *jibeta* (地べたground) and an English suffix '-ian', such as in 'vegetarian'. This word also refers to both men and women.

There are some youngsters who wear white towel on the head. They are called *towler* (タオラー, one who wears towels on their heads). This word is another case of blending of the word towel and an English suffix '-er'. The rule originated in a derivation, such as in 'teach' - 'teacher'. Of course, a noun 'towel' does not derive 'toweler' in normal English. It is interesting to notice that second language learners over-generalize an English derivational rule in coining new Japanese words.

Other words, such as *silver* (シルバー), *anchor* (アンカー), *diskjockey* (ディスクジョッキー), are all written in *katakana* in Japanese, and they can refer to both men and women who are senior citizens, who are in broadcasting business respectively.

The following table 7 shows some new words introduced by the younger generation<sup>4</sup>, referring to both men and women.

Table 7. Some New Words used for Both Sexes

Word <sup>5</sup>	Frequency of use				
	a	b	c	d	e
<i>gyaru</i>	71	71	10	2	1
<i>kyariawuman</i>	61	67	20	7	0
<i>herupaa</i>	61	67	20	7	1
<i>deeto</i>	96	32	7	0	0
<i>batsuichi</i>	42	77	23	13	0
<i>sekuhara</i>	54	80	13	8	0

The alphabet, a to e, indicates the frequency of use (cf. p.27).

The above table shows the newly coined words in *katakana*, which can

refer to both sexes, and are now commonly used by younger women.

The investigation of obsolete and new words, and the language shift, has revealed these facts:

- (a) Old Japanese words differentiated men from women.
- (b) The old Japanese words, which degraded women, were used as humble expressions.
- (c) Newly coined words are now written in *katakana* and are used unisexually.
- (d) Coinage reflects some Japanese social phenomena which have become recently noticeable.
- (e) Blended words, which are formed with Japanese stems and English suffixes, are used unisexually.

These findings have revealed that new words, which are coined to express new social phenomena, are used unisexually, because men and women are now seen in the same social settings. In contrast, the obsolete words clearly differentiated between them because they were seen in different settings.

As Japanese society has accepted more women, the Japanese language reflected the change. As men and women are seen in the same settings, they are now referred to with the same words which can denote both sexes. When Robin Lakoff observed her society after the Viet Nam War in the 70's, women were still treated as inferiors to men, and were the powerless people in society. But American society has accepted the requests of working women and has accepted new words which can denote both men and women in the same social position. This social change is now observed in the language shift both in the English language and in the Japanese language.

## NOTES

### 1. Imprinting:

Imprinting is a specialized form of learning seen at a very young age among some social animals. The best example of imprinting is the chicks, or geese to their mother during the first day of life. Farmers have often noticed that chicks or ducklings hatched without the natural mother present will very readily follow a human being or any other animal or object acting as a mother substitute. The young birds may even treat a broom moved on the floor as if it were their real mother. This attachment to a mother substitute may become so strong that if the actual mother appears, the young completely ignore her despite her efforts to entice them to her. In many cases, where young birds have become highly attached to the mother substitute and will have nothing to do with the real mother, the adult social and sexual behavior of the birds is directed to objects of the mother-substitute kind and not to members of their own species.

The ability of various species and even breeds to imprint varies greatly. The observed variation appeared to be positively correlated with the degree of domestication in the species or breed in question. Wilder species imprint better. Research has shown that, in addition to ducks, chicks, and geese, social imprinting occurs in turkeys, South American bitterns, various doves, moorhens, pigeons, quails, and bullfinches.

The Viennese zoologist Konrad Lorenz first studied how young birds attach themselves to their mother. Lorenz called the rapid and firm attachment process *Pra gung* ("stamping in") because it seemed to him that during the young's initial exposure to the parent the parent's characteristics are somehow "stamped in" the young bird, which had tacked with the potential of becoming socially attached to any of a large number of different social objects. Lorenz also noted that imprinting occurred best during the first day of life.

#### a. Age for Imprinting and Degree of Imprinting.

Imprinting of a young bird to the parent very often occurs within the first hours after hatching. This is especially true in birds whose newly hatched young can move under their own power and must become attached to the parent as soon as possible so that they will stay near it for protection. Laboratory experiments by Eckhard H. Hess and others have verified that there is indeed a specific age period—the first day of life—during which there is maximum imprintability. This maximum ability,

in terms of later test scores, occurs at the age of 13 to 16 hours for both chicks and ducklings. Hess also showed that at this age the amount of time spent with the mother-object during imprinting does not in itself determine how strong the imprinting is. Rather, it is the amount of work the young bird performs in order to satisfy its drive to be near the mother that influences the degree of imprinting. For example, when a young bird follows a mother or mother substitute, the strength of imprinting increases dramatically as the distance they travel increases from 0 to 50 feet (0-15 meters), but following for greater distances causes little change in the strength of the imprinting.

In species where the young are not able to move about for some time after hatching, imprinting occurs somewhat later in the species that are quickly able to move. Erick Klinghammer of Purdue University found that in doves, for example, imprinting occurs on the eighth day after hatching even though no following takes place. In such cases, imprinting probably involves other kinds of motor responses.

b. Comparison with Classical Conditioning.

In classical conditioned learning the animal is initially neutral to the object that later stimulates the learned behavior. The behavior is elicited by this object (the conditioned stimulus) only after repeated association with another object (the unconditioned stimulus) that already elicits the desired behavior. Moreover an animal may learn new behavior through conditioning at any age. In imprinting, on the other hand, the object imprinted —the mother substitute, food, or surroundings — innately elicits and reinforces the behavior in question without the need for any association with an unconditioned stimulus, and the learning occurs only during a specific, biologically determined period.

Imprinting also differs from conditioned learning in that the imprinted object becomes a permanent reinforcer of the behavior it elicits. The object may even become a reinforcer of other behavior. Investigations have reported that imprinted ducklings will readily learn to peck at a key to be able to see an imprinted object, while unimprinted ducklings will not learn the key peck to see the object because the object has no reinforcing value.

(Eckhard H. Hess, University of Chicago. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 14. 1829, Gloria Incorporated.)



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2. The survey was carried out on September, 27 and 28, 2000. The informants were Fukuoka Jo Gakuin University students who were around 20 to 21 at that time.

3. The words listed in Table 6 :

*musume* (娘): daughter, *musume-san* (娘さん): daughter with honorific epithet, *ojoosan* (お嬢さん): young lady with honorific epithet, *hakoirimusume* (箱入り娘): a daughter in a box, *tekireiki* (適齢期): the best timing for marriage, *koshikake* (腰掛け): a young female worker who undertake her job for a short time only before her marriage, *nyooboo* (女房): a housewife, *yamanokami* (山の神): a housewife with the connotation of fear, *jochuu* (女中): a maid, *yadoroku* (宿六): a husband with despise.

4. The same survey as in the note 2.

5. The words listed in Table 7 :

*gyaru* (ギャル): young women, *oorudomisu* (オールドミス): spinster, *kyariawuman* (キャリアウーマン): women with career, *herupaa* (ヘルパー): helper, *deeto* (デート): dating, *batsuichi* (バツイチ): divorcer or a divorcee.

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