

## **ORE AND OMAE: JAPANESE MEN'S USES OF FIRST- AND SECOND-PERSON PRONOUNS<sup>1</sup>**

Cindi L. SturtzSreetharan

### **Abstract**

First- and second-person pronouns have been one of the centerpieces of the literature on language and gender differences in Japanese (Shibamoto Smith 2003). Most of our understandings of *real* (empirical) pronominal use comes from investigations of female speakers of standard Japanese. Our understandings of how dialect speakers and/or men use pronominal forms in daily linguistic practice are not well informed. This article undertakes an investigation of Japanese men's uses of pronominal forms; each participant was born and reared in the Kansai (western) area of Japan and uses a dialect variety of Japanese (Hanshinkan Dialect). Literature which addresses pronominal usage in Japanese indicates that these forms are risky since they always serve to position speaker and hearer in specific ways relative to one another; as such, pronouns are something to be avoided. The findings of this paper indicate that pronouns are used by Japanese men; however the uses are contextually governed and have little to do with delineating speaker from hearer and have more to do with specific conversational goals.

**Keywords:** First- and second-person pronouns; Language and gender; Japanese; Dialect.

### **1. Introduction**

First- and second-person pronouns have been one of the centerpieces of the literature on language and gender differences in Japanese (Shibamoto Smith 2003). Indeed, they are one of the most oft-cited gender/sex-exclusive forms<sup>2</sup> (c.f., Ide 1993; Reynolds 1991). Additionally, pronominal forms are inextricably and ideologically intertwined with politeness in Japanese and thus such terms (especially pronominal forms) are thought of as something to avoid given their potential to insult the interlocutors in any conversation (Niyekawa 1991). Insights into pronoun use come mainly from surveys and/or introspection rather than empirical investigations (for exceptions see Shibamoto 1985; Lunsing and Maree 2004; Miyazaki 2004). Empirical explorations have tended to focus

---

<sup>1</sup> Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Center for Japanese Studies at the University of Michigan and to Professor John Taggart Clark's graduate seminar in sociolinguistics. I thank the various members of these audiences for their valuable feedback. These data and many of the analyses have benefited greatly from the comments of Janet S. (Shibamoto) Smith, Shigeko Okamoto, Miyako Inoue, and Michael Silverstein. The collection of the data was made possible by grants from Kobe College Corporation/Japan Education Exchange ([www.kccjee.org](http://www.kccjee.org)) and the National Science Foundation (Grant #BCS9817943).

<sup>2</sup> Sentence final particles are the other centerpiece of difference in investigations of Japanese language and gender issues.

on female speakers of Standard Japanese (usually from the Tokyo area). Consequently, our understandings of how other (non-female, non-Standard) Japanese speakers use pronouns in their everyday conversations are limited.

While recent scholarship has begun to provide a correction to this lack in the literature (e.g., Lunsing & Maree 2004; Miyazaki 2004), virtually none of these investigations have focused on Japanese male speakers use of pronouns (see Kanemaru 1997 as an exception). Drawing on naturally occurring informal Japanese men's conversations, this paper aims to ascertain the frequency and kinds of first- and second-person pronouns used by Japanese men. In addition, while most investigations of Japanese pronouns have been confined to Standard Japanese, this paper draws its data from a dialect region of Japan, the Hanshinkan Dialect<sup>3</sup> (HKD). This dialect is part of the Kansai dialect spoken in the Western region of Japan; although it is not Standard Japanese, it is considered a prestige dialect throughout the archipelago (Sugimoto 1997; Wada 1985) having managed to maintain its strong foothold despite dialect eradication during the Meiji period (1868 – 1912) (Inoue 2006; Miyake 1995). This paper sheds light on the linguistic practices of non-standard Japanese male speakers.

## 2. Japanese language, gender, and pronouns

### 2.1. Japanese language and gender

The Japanese language is purported to have a true women's language (Kindaichi 1942) as exhibited by language whose "features include the use of more polite linguistic forms, the use of more formal forms of personal pronouns, avoidance of deprecatory personal pronouns, [and the] avoidance of vulgar expressions . . ." (Ide 2003: 228). In the article from which the above quote is drawn, Ide states several times Japanese women's linguistic practices are "more *x*;" the use of the comparative begs the question of "more *x*" than who. As has too-often been the case, women's linguistic practices are often implicitly compared to the assumed linguistic practices of men; however, there is a dearth of literature which empirically examines Japanese men's linguistic practices and styles. Female speakers report to use more polite and formal language and male speakers report to use fewer of these forms; however, as several scholars have demonstrated, speakers - men and women - have concrete notions of how they *should* speak but less of a grasp on how they actually *do* speak (Ide 1991; Okamoto and Sato 1992). Much recent literature has underscored the range of diversity in Japanese women's linguistic practices including female speakers using stereotypically masculine forms for sentence final particles (Okamoto & Sato 1992), Japanese mothers using informal and formal forms of speech in seemingly asymmetrical ways (Matsumoto 2002), and female junior high school students using stereotypically masculine first-person pronouns (Miyazaki 2004). These investigations have revealed that women use language which both conforms to and rejects so-called women's language norms. Likewise, investigations of gay and lesbian speech styles have demonstrated that gender-salient language features such as pronouns are exploited in order to adopt

---

<sup>3</sup> "Hanshin" is made-up of the Sino-Japanese readings for Osaka and Kobe City, Hyogo (*Han* = Osaka; *Shin* = Kobe) referring to two of the major areas in the Kansai region. This part of the Kansai dialect is defined for those speakers who reside in a narrow band stretching along the Osaka Bay from Osaka City, Osaka to Kobe City, Hyogo (c.f., Hirayama 1997; Wada & Kamata 1992).

particular stances (e.g., masculinity, femininity, authority, deference) across particular contexts (c.f., Lunsing & Maree 2004; Abe 2004; Ogawa & ShibamotoSmith 1997). Heteronormative men's linguistic styles should not be an exception to this.

Investigations of normative men's speech styles are harder to come by; recent findings by SturtzSreetharan have shown that Japanese men's linguistic practices are diverse and do not conform to any one notion of men's speech. While it is commonly assumed that men have access to and use stereotypically masculine language which corresponds to vulgar and deprecatory forms, in point of fact, the picture is not so simple. SturtzSreetharan finds that stereotypical masculine speech in Japan is used infrequently by men; in fact, if stereotypically rough speech forms are being used, it is most likely by young men, in particular students, compared to company men or retirees. Specifically, she has shown that with regard to sentence final particles (SFPs), in casual conversations young Japanese men (students) have significantly higher frequencies of stereotypically masculine SFPs and significantly lower frequencies of clause-final politeness relative to middle-aged *sarariimen*<sup>4</sup> and retirees (2004b, 2006); she also notes that men use dialectal stereotypically masculine SFPs in order to claim a stance of solidarity and big-brotherness rather than to claim masculinity per se (2004a). While it is commonly assumed that male speakers rely on masculine first- and second-person pronouns, investigations into men's speech practices, as outlined above, demonstrate that men do not necessarily use language in stereotypical ways, at least not all men, and not all of the time. Pronouns are examined, then, in order to identify the ways in which male speakers use first-and second-person pronouns.

## 2.2. Japanese pronouns

Pronouns are parts of speech which have received much attention in the literature on Japanese language use. In many languages, English included, first-, second-, or third-person pronoun anaphoric reference is obligatory whereas in Japanese zero forms are wholly acceptable and widely used. Maynard and others have suggested that the Japanese language "lacks a pronominal system" (1997:105; see also (Shibamoto)Smith 2003); she notes that other referential terms - names or descriptive phrases - are used instead. The avoidance of pronouns is directly linked to issues of politeness (Maynard 1997; Niyekawa 1991). Niyekawa notes that one of the most important aspects of speaking politely is choosing an appropriate pronominal form (1991:74). Maynard notes that "in Japanese, any and all elements are left unsaid as long as what is unsaid is assumed to be understood or unnecessary. Nouns, verbs, and particles are frequently omitted, especially in speech" (1997: 104). She goes on to note that this style indicates politeness and competency in the language because "giving unnecessary information is a sign of clumsiness in Japanese, as it indicates a lack of the expected language skills" (ibid). Native linguistic ideology, therefore, recommends keeping information to the very minimum required for communication to take place. Given the above, and the potential for insult if the wrong form is chosen, pronouns are typically considered something best avoided.

---

<sup>4</sup> I use the Japanese term *sarariiman* (white collared male company worker) in this paper; when necessary, I pluralize it according to English grammar rules, thus *sarariiman* becomes *sarariimen* even though no such plural term exists in the Japanese language.

When pronouns are used, however, they are considered to exhibit sex/gender differences as well as social position/hierarchy differences. Similar to Matsumoto's (1989) claim that the Japanese language does not provide a "neutral choice" in terms of clause-final speech-level forms, some scholars suggest that there are no neutral pronouns either (e.g., Maynard 1997; Niyekawa 1991). This seems to be particularly the case for second-person pronouns. For all terms of reference/address, much attention has been given to the restrictions placed on the form chosen depending on the sex, class, social status, and age of speaker as well as situational context (e.g. Ide 1979; Shibamoto 1985; Shibatani 1990). Takeuchi states that the "truly distinctive feature" of Japanese pronouns is the extent to which they are conditioned by the gender of the speaker (1999:64). Thus, great importance is attributed to using pronouns which match the (perceived) sex of the speaker and addressee (see Lunsing & Maree 2004 and Miyazaki 2004 for detailed examinations of cases where perception of speaker-sex and pronoun do not match.) Given this, it is expected that men use stereotypically male pronouns and women use stereotypically female ones.

Prescriptive first- and second-person pronoun choices in Japanese according to sex of speaker and context are shown in Tables 1 and 2. It is important to remember that the tables below are for Standard Japanese, which means that they are created for middle-class Tokyo women and men (Inoue 1996); moreover, they reflect ideological and stereotypical usage of pronouns based on prescriptive grammars and dictionaries rather than empirical investigations of real linguistic practices. Drawing on Hirayama (1997), Kanemaru (1997), and Makimura (1984) I have added the (prescriptive) pronouns of Hanshinkan Dialect (in bold) where possible. As the tables demonstrate, with regard to Standard Japanese, both first- and second-person pronouns offer forms which are exclusive to men but there are none exclusive to women.

Table 1: First-Person Pronominal Forms by Gender and Context (adapted from (Shibamoto)Smith 2003)

	Context Formal ----- Informal
Men	<i>ware watakushi watashi boku ore washi watai</i> <i>wareware<sup>5</sup> wate wai</i>
Women	<i>watakushi watashi atashi uchi watai</i> <i>(atakushi) atai wate ate</i>

<sup>5</sup> This is a plural first person form ('we'); I include it as it is used extensively by the retirees.

Table 2: Second-Person Pronominal Forms by Gender and Context<sup>6</sup>[illegible]

Most studies of pronoun usages are drawn from introspection and self-report surveys of Standard Japanese language practices. Peng's (1973) self-report survey of first- and second- person pronoun use among junior high school students is no exception. His results report clear patterns of cross-sex differences; his findings also clearly highlight that, at least among the junior high school students he surveyed, female speakers tend to avoid using second-person pronouns over two-thirds of the time (Peng 1973). In a rare example of early empirical work, Kurokawa (1972) investigated actual usage of first- and second-person pronouns by (male and female) teachers of Japanese as a foreign language at a US university.<sup>7</sup> He found that men use a larger repertoire of pronouns than women do. Specifically, Kurokawa finds that men regularly use both *boku* and *ore* - the latter which shows "manliness" compared to *boku* (1972: 231). Men report using *ore* to their wives, younger siblings, and younger friends; they also report using it to their older siblings and parents, albeit less frequently (ibid). Kanemaru (1997) lists *ore* as a pronoun exclusively used by men (in Standard Japanese) and claims that it is used to interlocutors who are of equal or lower status than oneself; she also notes that it is not used in formal contexts. Ide (1991) lists *ore* as a deprecatory first-person pronoun, adding that there is no matching category of pronouns for women speakers.

In terms of second-person pronouns, Kurokawa finds that men report using *anata*, *kimi*, and *omae* more frequently than other forms. Men further report using *kimi* and *omae* to their male friends but *anata* to their female friends (1972: 234). Like its first-person counterpart *ore*, *omae* is noted prescriptively to be deprecatory and used exclusively by men (in Standard Japanese); it is heard as rough and vulgar (Ide 1991). Thus, the tables above depicting who uses which pronoun in a particular context needs to be viewed with some caution (see (Shibamoto) Smith 2003).

Recently, there have been empirical investigations within the language and gender literature; for instance, Ogawa and Shibamoto-Smith (1997) have found that Japanese gay men are able to exploit stereotypically feminine linguistic forms (e.g., SFPs, pronouns) in order to claim a stance of femininity in particular contexts. Miyazaki (2004) in a longitudinal study of junior high school students (in Shizuoka) finds that certain girls use the so-called masculine pronouns *ore* and *boku* to show resistance to

<sup>6</sup> Many of the forms listed here are historical forms used in narrowly defined contexts; for detailed explication of their uses and changes over time see Hirayama (1997), Kanemaru (1997), Martin (1975) Niyekawa (1991), and Sakuma in Suzuki (1978).

<sup>7</sup> Kurokawa's (1972) method of investigation appears to be a questionnaire and observation although he does not state explicitly his methodology; his study consisted of twenty individuals (ten male, ten female) between the ages of 26 and 45.

dominant gender norms<sup>8</sup>. Miyazaki notes that these girls also engaged in various other activities (such as disdainful dances depicting the loathing of skirts) which served to resist the status quo for them as *girls* (262). Boys, on the other hand, had various strategies for using *ore* versus *boku*; for some of the boys, *ore* was, quite simply, too masculine and thus avoided for fear of having the form (and ultimately themselves) rejected by their peers. Lunsing and Maree's (2004) study of lesbian and gay linguistic practices, eloquently illustrates how speakers' negotiation of gender and gay sexuality norms intersect with their individual sense of self and contextual/situational pressures (93). Speakers use of self and other reference becomes quite fluid in this case, challenging the very ways in which pronouns (and linguistic practices in general) are all-too often linked directly to supposed gender/sex identities. They show that a person's linguistic choice - including pronouns - changes depending not only on his/her own identity **at the moment** but one's political stance and ongoing articulation with dominant ideologies are also critical to the so-called "choice." In both of these investigations, one thing is extremely clear: Speakers shift their usages depending on the external context as well as speaker-internal context (or stance); speakers may choose a particular form because of a formal context, but they may ignore context and refuse to switch forms due to an internal stance that they refuse to compromise. In short, linguistic practices and choices are incredibly complex and can not simply be predicted nor predicated on standard (or dominant) language ideology.

While the studies reviewed above are critical to understanding how speakers use language to negotiate their daily lives, it still remains that Japanese men's linguistic practices are under-investigated. Men's linguistic practices and pronouns are particularly interesting because this nexus allows insight into how men use language, not only as a site to create (or index) normative gender, but also to resist it. Moreover, because pronouns are highly salient markers of hierarchy, empirical investigations into actual speech use sheds light on the ways that pronouns may be used to create, maintain, and negotiate hierarchy in moment-to-moment interactions. Finally, explorations into real language use allow us to understand how linguistic forms can be exploited far beyond their commonly assumed functions. Stereotypically, men are associated with a set of first- and second-person pronouns which are vulgar (rough), rude, and deprecatory such as *ore* and *omae* (c.f. Ide 1993; Kanemaru 1997; Reynolds 1991). This association is arrived at through a process of indexing wherein particular speech forms (such as vulgar first-person forms) are associated with a stance of aggression and roughness. These stances are indirectly associated with local levels of salient gender ideologies (e.g., men are aggressive and rough) which links male persons with these stances through the process of indirect indexing (see Ochs 1992; Silverstein 1985). Consequently, first- and second-person pronouns are an ideal space to gain insight into how often and in what contexts Japanese men's linguistic practices match the so-called "men's speech style" (*otoko kotoba*).

This current paper hopes to fill a gap in the language and gender literature, or at least begin to, by investigating real Japanese men's linguistic practices with regard to first- and second-person pronoun usage. Specifically, I will describe the frequencies of usage of first- and second-person pronouns and then I will focus on the contexts of usage by some of the Japanese men. For the purposes of this paper, I include any

---

<sup>8</sup> While the use of *ore* by women has been noted elsewhere, for example by Ibaraki-dialect speaking women, the use has typically been explained as part of the local dialect (Sunaoshi 2004); this explanation does not hold for Shizuoka.

instance of one of the forms found in Tables 1 and 2; the literature is clear that these forms of self- and other-reference are dispreferred whether they act as a term of address/reference, an interjection, or as the subject/topic of an utterance. As previously stated, my goals are to ascertain the instances/frequencies of these forms and to understand how they are employed and negotiated by particular speakers and hearers in particular contexts. As such, HKD is particularly of interest given that it is a dialect that is considered to be prestigious yet non-standard. It is an easily recognized dialect, with whole TV programs conducted in it (usually those which are comedic in nature). In contrast to other regional speakers (e.g., Tohoku (northeastern) dialect), HKD speakers claim pride in their language style and deny switching to Standard Japanese regardless of the situation or context (Inoue 2006). Investigations of the ways in which HKD is used as a linguistic practice are few; yet, an understanding of the ways that regional speakers employ various language forms available to them is desired in order to shed light on non-standard language communities.

Finally, I hope to make visible the linguistic practices of men who are dialect speakers. My findings can not be generalized to the larger Kansai (western Japanese) population of male speakers. Rather, my findings show that men use pronominal forms of address and reference - dangerous and risky though they may be - in particular ways to achieve particular goals (e.g., distancing, solidarity, masculinity, politeness, inclusive framing, etc.) contrary to prescriptive goals which typically explain the use of such forms as a means of hierarchy recognition or rejection.

### 3. The data

The data are drawn from eight conversations involving eighteen men (ranging in age from 19 years old to 68 years old) and totaling over ten hours (over 9000 utterances) of naturally occurring informal friendly conversations based on fieldwork conducted in Osaka and Hyogo prefectures in Western Japan, from July 1998 through January 2000 and June - September 2000. All of the data were recorded on a MiniDisc portable recording device; I was not present for any of the recordings. Conversational participants were engaged via second-order network ties. Once an initial contact had been identified, he was asked to select two or three other men he knew to serve as his conversational participants. Thus, the men were already well-acquainted and accustomed to interacting socially on a regular basis with one another, thereby reducing the potentially distancing consequences of linguistic formality. The men carried out their recorded conversations in comfortable places such as restaurants, coffee shops, small lounges, and so on. Participants were provided information regarding the linguistic-nature of the research; specific linguistic forms of interest, however, were not stated. Instructions given to participants were limited to recording time (e.g., "please record for a minimum of 45 minutes."). No instructions as to topic or other conversation-related guidelines were provided. See footnote 21 for participant-designed guidelines. Table 3 provides the biographical information for the interlocutors under consideration.

Table 3: Biographical Information for Conversational Participants

Conversation Group		Name <sup>9</sup>	Age, Status
Students	Group 1	Kondo	19, Student
		Yoshimoto	19, Student
		Kinoshita	19, Student
	Group 2	Sakai	23, Sarariiman (First-year)
		Sakaguchi	23, Student
		Kawamura	23, Sarariiman (First-year)
Company Men			
	Group 3	Satoo	42, Sales Division
		Okumoto	29, Cosmetic Sales Division
		Yamada	38, Electronic Sales Division
		Hamada	45, Manager
	Group 4	Hamada	45, Manager
		Ohashi	47, Wholesale Goods Buyer
		Harada	44, Wholesale Goods Buyer
	Group 5	Tanaka	40, Company Man
		Hamada	45, Manager
Retirees			
	Group 6	Ito	67, Banker; Retired
		Kado	67, Japanese Dessert Company Manager; retired
	Group 7	Kobayashi	68, HS teacher; Retired
		Mihara	68, Insurance Company; Retired
		Murakami	67, Forest Product Company CEO; Retired

In each conversation, the participants are close friends and have known each other for quite some time. All men were born, reared, and educated in the Kansai region. Their comfort and ease with one another is confirmed by their linguistic practices which exhibit zero instances of morphologically honorific forms; their friendship status is further exhibited by their exclusive use of informal first- and second pronouns and other address terms. The Group 1 students are all freshmen at the same university in the Kansai area; they have known each other for the past eighteen months. The Group 2 students have all completed four years of university together; two of them have just graduated from university and joined companies where they are considered "freshmen" in their respective companies. They are all meeting up during the winter holidays to have a conversation about their lives going separate directions since graduation.

The company men in Group 3 all work together at a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) store in the Kansai area. Hamada, who appears in each of the "Company Men" conversations, is the manager of the chain of DIY stores and has known the men in Group 3 for quite some time. In Group 4, two of the men are wholesale goods providers who typically sell merchandise to Hamada for the DIY store he manages. They all started at their

<sup>9</sup> All names are pseudonyms.



respective companies around the same time and thus form a cohort, although not at the same company. In Group 5, the two men have been friends since college; they do not work together but they are close friends whose families know one another and who often get together for social gatherings.

The retired men in Group 6 are connected through their children and grandchildren; they typically spend their afternoons together looking after their youngest grandchildren while the parents are at work. They have known each other for a number of years but since retirement have found themselves spending more and more time together as they help their families out with daily tasks. The men in Group 7 have been friends since attending the same high school over fifty years ago; they frequently get together for golf or other social gatherings. They are a tight knit group of men who have actively maintained their friendship over a long period of time.

The conversations were transcribed by native speakers of the Hanshinkan Dialect and then reexamined and coded for a variety of features by me. Clausal units were determined based on psychological completeness; these units were coded for various features including type (utterance, interrogative, fragment, etc.), honorification, modality, sentence final particles, and politeness (see Sturtz 2001 for a full accounting of features coded and a detailed explanation of methodology). All utterances were tallied to ascertain the total number of times a pronoun was possible (whether it was used or not); then, first- and second-person pronoun usages were counted for each speaker. The total number of pronouns used divided by the total number of utterances wherein a pronoun *could have occurred* was then calculated. These results, represented in percentages, appear below. Tests of significance were conducted using Chi-square analyses (these results are given below when appropriate).

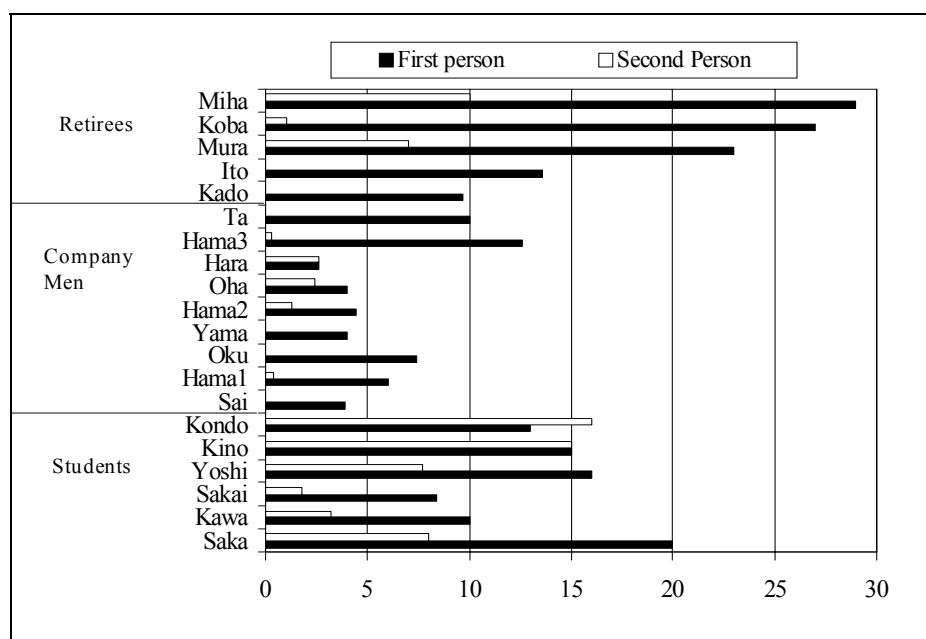
## 4. Results

### 4.1. Quantitative results

In looking at frequencies of use, the most common pronoun usage is a non-occurrence; that is, if we count "zero occurrence" as one of the possible variants of a pronoun in Japanese, this would have the highest frequency in the current data set across all speakers.<sup>10</sup> In accordance with reports in the literature, discussed above, the use of second-person forms relative to first-person forms is infrequent. Figure 1 shows this distribution. Dialect forms of first- and second-person pronouns were virtually nonexistent. As such, the results and subsequent discussion will focus only on Standard forms of first- and second-person pronouns used across the various conversations. Overall, the use of formal forms of pronouns is infrequent; this was expected given the casual contexts of the men's conversations. Instances where formal forms occurred in formulaic openings and closings were excluded from analysis.

Figure 1. Distribution of First- and Second-Person Pronouns Across All Speakers

<sup>10</sup> Ide states this to be the typical situation for Japanese pronoun usage (1991).



As this figure demonstrates, in most cases the use of second-person pronouns is far fewer than that of the first-person pronouns. Moreover, we see a pattern of higher productions at the top and bottom of the figure, older and younger speakers respectively, than we do in the middle of the figure. That is, middle-aged men (the company workers) as a group avoid pronouns compared to the retirees and the students.

#### 4.1.1. First-person pronouns

The first-person pronouns produced in this corpus include *watashi*, *ware ware*, *boku*, and *ore*. Across all first-person pronouns, the students and retirees have the highest production; or, to rephrase, the middle-aged men use the fewest first-person pronouns. For example, the retirees, Miha, Koba, and Mura, exhibit the highest frequencies of first person pronouns with 29%, 27%, and 23% respectively. After this group, the students use the highest frequencies: Saka uses first-person pronouns 20% of the time, Yoshi 16%, and Kino 15%.

Looking within the range of possible first-person pronouns we see that there is a sharp delineation among speakers who use the “manly” *ore* versus the “less-manly” *boku*: Younger speakers use *ore* while older speakers use *boku*. Given that *ore* is the most stereotypically masculine first-person pronoun available, the high frequencies of this form found among the young students is in line with previous findings for stereotypically masculine sentence final forms (see SturtzSreetharan 2004a). Table 4 gives the raw data for the frequencies of *wareware*<sup>11</sup>, *watashi*<sup>12</sup>, *ore*, and *boku* across the speakers.

<sup>11</sup> As noted above, the first-person pronoun *wareware* is a plural form; I've included it here as it is used extensively by (some of) the retirees whereas it is not used by the other men.

<sup>12</sup> Instances of the first-person (formal) pronoun *watashi* which occurred in formulaic contexts [either at the beginning of the conversations or at the endings] were excluded from quantification.

Table 4. Distribution of *Wareware*, *Watashi*, *Ore* and *Boku* Across All Speakers.

		<i>wareware</i>	<i>watashi</i>	<i>boku</i>	<i>ore</i>
<b>Students</b>					
	Saka	0	0	4/283 <sup>13</sup> (1.4%)	54/283 (19.0%)
Group 1	Kawa	0	0	3/304 (1.0)	26/304 (8.6)
	Sakai	0	0	0	30/379 (7.9)
Group 2	Yoshi	0	0	1/792 (0.13)	123/792 (15.5)
	Kino	0	0	0	39/253 (15.0)
	Kondo	0	0	3/523 (0.57)	63/523 (12.0)
<b>Company Men</b>					
	Sai	0	3/189 (1.9%)	3/189 (1.9%)	0
Group 3	Hamada	0	3/285 (1.0)	0	13/285 (4.9%)
	Oku	0	0	8/107 (7.4)	0
	Yama	0	2/203 (0.9)	6/203 (3.0)	0
Group 4	Hamada	0	2/229 (0.9%)	5/229 (2.2%)	3/229 (1.3%)
	Oha	0	3/125 (2.4)	1/125 (0.4)	1/125 (0.4)
	Hara	0	1/78 (1.3)	0	1/78 (1.3)
Group 5	Hamada	0	5/348 (1.4%)	25/348 (7.2%)	14/348 (4.0%)
	Ta	0	5/345 (1.4)	26/345 (7.5)	2/345 (0.6)
<b>Retirees</b>					
	Kado	2/186 (1.1%)	13/186 (7.0%)	3/186 (1.6%)	0
Group 6	Ito	1/272 (0.4)	30/272 (11.0)	1/272 (0.4)	2/272 (0.7%)
Group 7	Mura	20/145 (13.8%)	7/145 (4.8%)	3/145 (2.1%)	2/145 (1.4%)
	Koba	6/105 (6.0)	1/105 (1.0)	21/105 (20.0)	1/105 (1.0)
	Miha	1/143 (0.7)	9/143 (6.3)	28/143 (20.0)	0

As the table indicates, the distribution of *ore* vis-à-vis *boku* is a mirror in the sense that there is a high frequency of the informal form *boku* among the older speakers and there is a high frequency of the deprecatory form *ore* among the younger speakers. In terms of percentages, Koba's production of *boku* and *ore* is 20% and 1% respectively while Saka's is 1.4% and 19%. Among the middle-aged speakers, there are varying frequencies of both *boku* and *ore*; neither one is used more-or-less exclusively. In conversation 40, Hamada is the only speaker to use *ore* while the other three speakers (Sai, Oku, and Yama) use *boku*.<sup>14</sup> In the conversations of Groups 4 and 5, Hamada uses both *ore* and *boku*, with a higher frequency of *boku*. The middle-aged men have relatively low production of pronouns in general, especially relative to the younger and older speakers<sup>15</sup>. The differences in the use of *boku* and *ore* across all groups are

<sup>13</sup> The numerator represents the number of occurrences of that pronoun; the denominator represents the total possible times a pronoun could have grammatically occurred.

<sup>14</sup> Sai divides his usage between *boku* and *watashi* (1.9% each).

<sup>15</sup> While more data across more speakers is needed, I suggest that the low use of pronouns by these company men is a politeness strategy based on a rule of pronoun avoidance. Moreover, Group 3

significant; however differences in usages within groups are not. That is, in tests of significance, when comparing the usages of *boku* and *ore* across the students and company men the differences were statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 226.62$ ,  $p < .0001$ ); when students are tested against retirees and retirees against company men the results are all significant ( $\chi^2 = 289.77$ ,  $p < .0001$  and  $\chi^2 = 10.63$ ,  $p = .001$  respectively).

Turning to the more formal pronouns *watashi* and *wareware*, we find that it is the men over sixty who use these forms more than the other speakers. For example, Ito and Kado exhibit the highest frequencies of *watashi* with 11% and 7% respectively, while Mura uses *wareware* 13.8% of the time, *watashi* 4.8%, *boku* 2.1%, and *ore* 1.4%. Koba and Mura, however, rely mainly on the informal (plain) form, *boku* (20% each). In this respect, the retirees use a higher variety of forms than any other group.

#### 4.1.2. Second-person pronouns

Second-person pronouns are used much less frequently than first-person pronouns by all speakers. The specific second-person pronouns produced in this corpus were *anata*, *anta*, *omae*, and *kimi*. The raw data for these four forms across all speakers is given in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of Second-Person Pronouns *Omae*, *Anata*, *Anta*, & *Kimi* Across all Speakers

		<i>anata</i>	<i>anta</i>	<i>omae</i>	<i>kimi</i>
<b>Students</b>					
	Saka	0	0	24/283 (8.5%)	0
Group 1	Kawa	0	0	10/304 (3.3)	0
	Sakai	0	0	5/379 (1.3)	2/379 (0.6%)
	Yoshi	2/792 (0.25%)	0	59/792 (7.4%)	0
Group 2	Kino	0	0	38/253 (15.0)	0
	Kondo	0	0	82/523 (15.7)	0
<b>Company Men</b>					
	Sai	0	0	0	0
Group 3	Hamada	0	1/285 (0.4%)	0	0
	Oku	0	0	0	0
	Yama	0	0	0	0
Group 4	Hamada	1/229 (0.4%)	0	1/229 (0.4%)	1/229 (0.4%)
	Oha	0	1/125 (0.4%)	2/125 (1.6)	0
	Hara	0	0	2/78 (2.6)	0
Group 5	Hamada	0	0	1/348 (0.3%)	0
	Ta	0	0	0	0

participants are varied in age; this may contribute to more formal style across this conversation. Clearly more research is needed here.

Retirees					
Group 6	Kado	0	0	0	0
	Ito	0	0	0	0
Group 7	Mura	1/145 (0.7%)	3/145 (2.1%)	4/145 (2.8%)	2/145 (1.4%)
	Koba	0	0	0	1/105 (1.0)
	Miha	5/143 (3.5)	7/143 (5.0)	1/143 (0.7)	2/143 (1.4)

The table shows clearly that many of the speakers used very few, if any, second-person pronouns<sup>16</sup>. Peng's (1973) self-report survey of junior high school students showed that girls reported (66.3%) to avoid second-person forms while boys reported a lesser avoidance rate (39.5%). Although I cannot address female speakers of the Hanshinkan Dialect, it is clear that the men in my study also practice second-person pronoun avoidance; the younger speakers are the exception to this pattern.

Among the younger men, the stereotypically (vulgar) masculine form *omae* is used almost exclusively. This is to be expected given their overwhelming use of *ore* to refer to themselves, the symmetrical second-person pronoun would be *omae*. Kino and Kondo each exhibit a frequency of 15% for this particular form; Saka and Yoshi exhibit a frequency of 8.5% and 7.4%, respectively. Turning to the retired men's patterns of use, two of them (Kado and Ito) do not use any second-person pronouns<sup>17</sup> whereas the other three retired men (Mura, Koba, and Miha), together, manage to use at least one instance of each form available. The form most utilized across the speakers is *anta* (7.1%), followed by *anata* (4.2%), Miha's usage accounts for the many of these utterances; Mura uses *omae* 2.8% of the time, but he is the only one among the three to use this form with any frequency at all.<sup>18</sup> In general, like their younger counterparts, the older men's usage is not unusual given that their choices of first-person pronouns were among the plain and/or formal forms - *boku* and *watashi*, for example. But the discrepancy in uses across these three speakers is curious; and, I suggest it can only be explained by looking more closely at the context of the conversations.

#### 4.1.3. Discussion

It should be acknowledged that the uses of pronouns across these groups are varied and diverse. Some of the variation can perhaps be accounted for by differences that arise from a conversational group consisting of two people (Group 5 and 6) versus three (Groups 1,2,4, and 7) or four (Group 3). In fact, one might assume that in a dyad, pronouns, given their dispreferred status, would be used very rarely if at all; this holds true for second-person pronoun forms but not for first-person forms (see usages by Groups 5 and 6 in Tables 5 and 6). Is it plausible that distinguishing of self in a two-party conversation is critical while distinguishing "other" is not? That is, given the assumption that in a dyad first-person pronouns aren't necessary for communication

<sup>16</sup> Due to the lack of data (that is, the lack of use), statistical analyses could not be performed on the second-person pronouns.

<sup>17</sup> Ito's son is married to Kado's daughter; as such they both address each other as *otoosan* 'father' from the perspective of their own children. In this way, they avoid second-person pronouns altogether and rely on kin reference terms.

<sup>18</sup> Miha does use it, but only once.

(which, as mentioned above, is the argument given by Maynard (1997) for *any* Japanese conversational interaction), then when they do show up it should alert us to meanings beyond grammatical and/or referential. While this line of inquiry is fascinating, further discussion of the effect of group number of pronominal forms is beyond the scope of the current paper but begs for additional investigation.

Among the conversational interactants, it is the young students who come close to using pronouns in ways that the literature often asserts that men do; that is, the students exhibit high frequencies of so-called deprecatory first- and second-person pronoun use (*ore* and *omae* respectively). The company men generally avoid pronouns, while the retirees tend to use more prescriptively formal forms (compared to the students) of both first- and second-person pronouns. The company men's avoidance of pronouns leads me to confirm, as Maynard indicates (1997), that avoiding pronouns is *more polite* than using a formal form; while this is undoubtedly the case for second-person pronouns, it may well be true for first-person pronouns as well. This is corroborated by my previous findings that among all three groups of men, it is the company men who exhibit the highest frequencies of clause-final politeness (SturtzSreetharan 2006). In this way, the lack of pronouns by these male speakers is "matched" with their high usage of polite verb forms.

In light of the above findings, two things are clear: 1) men, at least many of the men in this data, do not avoid pronouns; and, 2) men's linguistic practices with regard to first- and second-person pronouns are greatly varied. Recall that Maynard (1997), among others, recommended keeping unnecessary information (like pronouns) to a minimum, otherwise a speaker risks proving himself to be linguistically clumsy as well as offending his interlocutors by asserting a social ranking among the interlocutors with the utterance of the pronoun (especially a second-person form). The men in this data set are all friends; however, they use pronouns more than is necessary for communication to take place. These men are using pronouns beyond their mere first-order deictic ability to sort out addresses and referents; they are choosing to index themselves (and others) in particular ways, underscoring their own knowledges, desires, and feelings about themselves.

In order to shed light on how the men are using first- and second- person pronouns, I turn next to look qualitatively at the contexts of use. Due to space limitations, I will focus my discussion on the use of first- and second-person pronouns by the retired men; specifically, I undertake a closer examination of their uses of formal first-person plural form *wareware* and informal, deprecatory second-person form *omae*.

## 4.2. Qualitative results

### 4.2.1. *Wareware*<sup>19</sup> – First-Person Plural Pronoun

This formal first-person plural pronoun is used only by the retirees (all at least 67 years of age in 1999). In the conversation that includes three men (Mura, Koba, & Miha), it is Mura who uses this form 20 times (13.8%). It represents the most-used pronoun for this speaker. Koba and Miha both use the first-person form *boku* the most (each 20% of the

---

<sup>19</sup> No other plural pronouns are used by any other speaker in the entire data set. Why *wareware* is preferred over a form like *bokura* is beyond the scope of this paper.

time) which is to be expected. *Boku* is to be expected among these men precisely because of their age. This first-person pronoun is described as neither formal nor informal; it is "plain" (Ide 1991). Suzuki notes that in the 1952 paper "*Kore kara no keigo*" [Honorific Language for the Future], written by the *Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyuujo* [National Language Council] in Japan, *boku* was described as a pronoun which is "used by male students" who should be "encouraged to replace it with *watashi* once they go out into the world;" furthermore, *boku* should be limited to close friends (1978: 121). The men in this conversation would have been about 18 years old at the time that the National Language Council came out with this recommendation. As such, they are linguistically attuned to using *boku* as the friendly, informal form among friends; *ore* would have been truly vulgar and rough for these men. This gives us insight into why the older men's uses of *boku* are so much greater in frequency than the younger men's (both students and company men) uses. Thus, beyond the fact that they use *boku* frequently, which counters common assumptions that pronoun forms are avoided, their use of this first-person form is unremarkable.

In turning to consider the first-person (plural) form *wareware*, then, it becomes even more important to understand the contexts in which this form was used. Mura's instances of *wareware* are highly contextualized and act as framing devices for indexing an "us" generation versus "them" generation where the "them" is variously the youth of today, people from before the twelfth century, and foreigners. The examples (1) and (2) below show the use of this form.

- (1) Mura: *wareware terebi izen none*  
'We were around before television, weren't we?'
- (2) Mura: *wareware kara mitara kono goro no kotoba wa*  
*waka mono no kotoba wa midare(te) oru to . . .*  
'If looked at from our perspective, young people's speech these days is corrupted.'

As the above two examples show, when Mura uses the first-person plural form he is invoking a context of "we, the over sixty-year old men." It seems very much in tune with anecdotal accounts of the universal phenomenon: Older people in a society certain that the young people of their society are ruining the language. Mura uses this form to draw a line of inclusion/exclusion around his friends and himself, leaving the young people on the outside. This form is not contested by Koba or Miha thus assuring Mura that his own viewpoints and experiences are shared by his other interlocutors. In the following examples, Mura switches who is the younger generation by using *wareware* to index that he and his interlocutors are the newer generation and/or the generation from which to learn.

- (3) Mura: *:Nara, yamato ne, ano jidai no ninmei nante, sora wareware zettai yomenai wa*  
'People's [written] names during the Nara or Yamato period, there is no way that we could read those [names].'
- (4) Mura: *21 seiki ni haittara na, motto kawaru ne, nihongo wa*  
(Miha: *Daroo ne*)  
*Kawaru yaro ne. Dakara genzai kore wareware toshi yori no*

70sai mae no rojin ga ya na, ma, wareware ga nihongo  
 no dentoo o mada uketsuideru hoo no kamo waken nai na  
 'As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Japanese language will change even  
 more. (Miha: yes probably.) Yes, it will probably change. Thus, for  
 the time being those of us just shy of 70 years old, well, we are the ones  
 from whom the [next generation] will inherit the traditions of Japanese  
 [language], from us maybe.'

In example (3) above, Mura is including himself, Koba, and Miha among the people who can not read the historical Chinese characters used during the Nara and Yamato periods; they are talking about the reading of people's written names, which even today is recognized as difficult given the large number of possible readings for each name *kanji* (Chinese ideograph). However, this conversation was actually initiated by Koba (a former high school teacher) who was complaining that students nowadays can not read Chinese characters (*kanji*) very well at all, and neither can they read his (Koba's) handwriting. So, while his *wareware* includes, again, all of his interlocutors it still serves to exclude the young people of today who have no manners or reading skills. In the final example above (4), this theme continues. In example (4), Mura is very clear in indicating who he means by *wareware* - he means the three men who will turn 70 years old in the next few years. They together are shouldering the heavy burden of passing on traditions, including traditional language usage, to the next generation. Mura's use of *wareware* is quite interesting as a strategy for including all participants (and to some extent all men/women in their age group) within his generation. *Wareware* extends far beyond the three interlocutors, indexing a package of shared experiences, opinions, and responsibilities especially vis-à-vis the younger generation of "youth" who do not speak properly or carry themselves appropriately.

#### 4.2.2. *Omae* – Second-Person Pronoun

*Omae* is a second-person pronoun typically viewed as socially symmetrical with the first-person form *ore*. In the data set, as shown above, it is the youngest men who exhibit the highest frequencies of this form; however, the retirees also use it, albeit sparingly. When they do use it, I suggest they do so conscious of its full linguistic ideology as a deprecatory and aggressive second-person pronoun. The ways in which they use the pronoun can best be described as a means of rebuking the recipient. The following lengthy discussion among the three retirees Mura, Koba, and Miha shows a contextualized example of this form. This example is presented in a different format than the above examples; this is intended to give the reader a sense of how the conversation flows from one speaker to the next<sup>20</sup>. In this example, Mura has just introduced the topic of "natural disasters" in general<sup>21</sup>; we join the conversation when

<sup>20</sup> As such, interlinear gloss is not given. Transcription conventions: Words that occur between ^ these symbols indicate backchannels; upward arrows ↑ indicate a rising intonation; the words which occur between → these symbols ← indicate insertions by another speaker; (laughter) is indicated by the word appearing between parentheses; words which are drawn out are indicated with colons (ri:::ght); words which appear <<between these symbols>> indicate simultaneous speech.

<sup>21</sup> I was not present for any of the recordings and topics were not assigned to the groups. Most groups of men met together and chatted for 50 - 60 minutes. The retirees followed this pattern with one small modification: at the beginning of the conversation, prior to turning the recording device on, they



Miha begins discussing his personal theory about why earthquakes happen in the places that they do.

(5)

#	Mura	Koba	Miha
001	^nn_v ^nn_v	^nn_v ^nn_v	<i>iya kore mo ne</i> well, this, too
002			<i>boka: terebi no chishiki nan yakedomo</i> might be "TV mentality" but
003			<i>saikin toruko ni jishin ga</i>
004			<i>atta ^_v ne ^_v</i> recently, there was an
005			earthquake in Turkey, right? <i>sore kara Taiwan ni mo</i> and then, Taiwan had an <i>jishin ga atta</i> earthquake, too, right?
006	<i>sore kara girisha mo atta ga</i> And, Greece,		
007			<i>Girisha mo atta,</i> Greece also had one
008		<i>mekishiko mo atta n janai,</i>	
009		<i>7.5 ka nan ka</i> And, didn't Mexico also have one, 7.5 or something	
010	<i>saikin</i> ↑ Recently?		
011		<i>nn</i> yeah,	
012			<i>jitto ne kangaete mitara</i> If I think about it for awhile
013			<i>kore boku no jasui kamo</i> <i>wakaran yo</i> this might just be my
014			suspicion alone or something
015			<i>rironteki na koto wa nani mo</i> <i>nai n dakedomo</i> it's not very logical or
016			anything like that, but <i>nan ka ne</i>
017			<i>koshinkokude, yoku</i> <i>jishin ga aru no yo</i> it just seems that there are a lot of earthquakes in third world countries <i>tatoeba yooroppa no,</i> <i>igirisu furansu na,</i> <i>doitsu de anmari kiita koto</i> <i>nai ne,</i> For example, in Europe, you rarely hear of earthquakes in England, France or Germany

had devised a list of topics that they wanted to cover in the 50 - 60 minutes they had planned to talk. Each speaker came up with 2-3 topics to be covered. One of these topics was "natural disasters."

018			<i>yoruko toka girishia toka kora, mata shitsurei na</i>
019			<i>iikata kamo wakran kedo ne, nan ka yappashi ne,</i>
020			But in Turkey or Greece, well, this might be a rude way to say it but, well, it just seems,
021			<i>senjuuminzoku wa soo yuu tokoro no</i> places where there are indigenous peoples, and such <i>anmari jishin no nai yoo na tokoro o saki senkyo shi</i> <i>yotta n chau ka na:</i> well, places that were first colonized [by others] seem not to be prone to earthquakes
022	<i>dakedo, omae girisha toka toruko tte no wa ichiban rekishi no furui kuni da yo</i> But, Greece and Turkey have the oldest history!		
023	<i>sono: yooroppa bunmei no hasshoo no chi da yo</i> →← It's the cradle of European civilization!		→ <i>dakedomo ya na:</i> ← but, well .
024	<i>nn, oriento to no sakai dakedo</i> It's the border of the Orient but,		
025	<i>toruko wa ma: girisha nan te soo da na: masa ni</i> Well, Turkey, and how would you say it, Greece, well, hmm,		
026			<i>nn: shikashi ima kara mitara ne</i> Well, however, if you look back
027			<i>keizaiteki na yuutaka na kuni demo nai shi, ne</i> they're countries that aren't very rich economically
028	<i>n::, ma:ne</i> <i>we:l::, hmm,</i>		
029			<i>yutaka na kuni de anmari jishin nai yo,</i> rich countries don't have very many earthquakes you know;
030			<i>ne, sore to ya ne,</i> and, well,
031			<i>sore ga hitotsu fushigi na gensho ya na to omou</i> I think that's a mysterious

			phenomenon you know
032	<i>soya!</i> That's right!		
033	<i>rosu-anzerusu mo jishin atta na</i> Los Angeles had an earthquake!		
034		<<atta, atta>> LA had one	<i>soya, rosanzerusu wa</i> <<aru na:>> That's right, Los Angeles . . . has them
036	<i>atta yo na</i> LA had one, didn't they!		
037	<i>nihon no koobe datte anta</i> Hey you, Japan's Kobe had one!		
038	<i>senshinkoku da yo</i> ^ <sub>v</sub> Japan is an industrialized country!		^ <i>a soo ka</i> <sub>v</sub> oh yeah,
039	<i>n:, ma: sono dono hen kara yuu no ka</i> Well, hmm, where's the cut off point,		
040	<i>jishin to yuu eiji kara yuutara sono, kantoo daishinsai datte</i> If we think of an "Age of Earthquakes", Kantoo had the "Big Earthquake" remember?		
041	<i>soo daroo shi na . . .</i> yep, that's right . . .		
042			<i>to yuu koto yooroppa ni nai to yuu no ga ne, yooroppa de anmari kiita koto nai</i> So, that means that to say there are no earthquakes in Europe really means that we just don't hear about them very often
043	<i>dakara, sora pureeto no mondai ya de</i> It's a plate problem, actually.		
044	<i>pureeto no ue ni notteru ka</i> Is the country located on top of the plate?		
045	<i>pureeto no sakaime no tokoro no kuni tte yuu ka</i> or, is the country on the border of plates		
046	<i>to yuu mondai ya to omou wa</i> I think that is the real issue		
047			<i>dakara soko o umai koto, yooroppa jin wa mitsukeyotta to omotte sa</i> (laughter),
048			<i>ne, anmari jishin no nai yoo na</i> That's where the Europeans
049			

			did a really good job in finding a place where there are very few earthquakes (laughter) (continues briefly)
--	--	--	---

As this lengthy excerpt demonstrates, Miha has an elaborate theory as to why earthquakes happen in the areas in which they occur. This theory is based largely on the idea that earthquakes happen in "unsophisticated" locals like Turkey and Greece. Mura disagrees with Miha's theory and begins his rebuke of him in line 022 using *omae*. He combines his use of *omae* with the stereotypically strongly masculine sentence final form *da yo* pressing his point to Miha that his theory ignores the fact that these "unsophisticated" places were once the cradle of much of European civilization and culture. This sentence final form, *da yo*, is a standard form that is prescriptively characterized as very rough and aggressive<sup>22</sup>; it is also categorized as "stereotypically strongly masculine" (Okamoto & Sato 1992). Thus, Mura's use of *omae* is accompanied by a very strong and rough sentence final form. He uses it three times (022, 023 and 038); two of these (022, 038) are in conjunction with second-person pronouns. In the entire data corpus, among all speakers, the use of *da yo* is negligible (see SturtzSreetharan 2004a); however, in this case, we can see that Mura is using it in conjunction with ideologically aggressive or rough forms as a package in order to press his point.

After the second *da yo*, Miha tries to break into Mura's speaking turn (023), presumably to explain himself but is unsuccessful. Miha changes his tack slightly by saying that these countries are not economically wealthy and perhaps this is the reason that they have earthquakes. During the time that Miha is stating his adjusted theory of earthquakes, we can tell by Mura's *so ya!* 'that's it!' that he (Mura) has been trying to think of something. We find that Mura is trying to articulate that Los Angeles is prone to earthquakes as is Kobe (Japan) - both cities located in unarguably industrialized countries. In this sequence of the rebuke, Mura uses *anta* (a friendlier, more intimate second-person pronominal form) and *da yo* rather than the stronger and more condescending *omae/da yo* collocation used previously. But, we should also note the postposition of *anta*. Prescriptively, Japanese is a verb-final language; however, in conversation placing the subject/topic after the verb is not uncommon (see Shibamoto 1985). Nonetheless, scholars argue that doing so has discursive implications. Hinds (1982) argues that postpositions are used to make sure there is absolute clarity in ellipted items of the utterance. Postpositions open up a space grammatically to make the unutterable (e.g., the unnecessary to utter) utterable. So, it is perhaps *nicer* than *omae* but its postposition gives extra emphasis by indicating the target of the utterance. Moreover, any *niceness* that *anta* might encompass vis-à-vis *omae* is overshadowed by the strong sentence final form.

The uses of strongly assertive (and stereotypically masculine) sentence final forms packaged with deprecatory second-person pronouns are uncharacteristic of these

<sup>22</sup> This sentence final particle is typically described as "stereotypically strongly masculine;" this is not to imply, however, that in everyday instances of language use, women do not use this form. They do (see, for example, Matsumoto 2002; Okamoto and Sato 1992). However the occurrences of *da yo* among HKD speakers are extremely low (see SturtzSreetharan 2004b); as such, an interpretation that allows for its full stereotypical force, especially in conjunction with a stereotypically derogatory second-person pronominal form, seems plausible.

men's conversations. In fact, the highly masculine instances of the SFP *da yo* are the only ones which occur in this particular conversation and the only instances of use aside from the few instances used by the students (see SturtzSreetharan 2004a); these strong forms are combined with *omae* as a package of "strength" or "emphasis." One interpretation of Mura's use of these particular forms is to suggest that he is invoking a youth/adult framework. Mura may be establishing a context in which Miha is the younger person who needs to be taught about how earthquakes actually occur; thus, to point to Miha's ignorance and lack of knowledge he phrases his "corrections" in strongly traditionally masculine forms. As such, Miha does not resist this presupposition; rather, Miha tries to explain himself and his (erroneous) thinking - he "backpedals," making excuses and further explanations for his ideas, similar to a child/student trying to negotiate his/her way out of an incorrect answer. We could also interpret this sequence of uses of *omae* coupled with *da yo* as an assertion of power or status over Miha. This hasn't been the case in the conversation previously, but perhaps something about earthquakes brought it out in Mura; perhaps he is asserting his position as a man who is more knowledgeable than Miha when it comes to earthquakes and natural disasters, in general. Indeed, analyses that rely on status or hierarchy asymmetries are common ways in which such seemingly non-appropriate (or asymmetrical) uses of second-person pronouns have been explained; however, I have a further explanation which relies heavily on further contextualization of the conversation.

In order to understand Mura's uses in this part of the conversation, it is necessary, I believe, to look at Mura's utterances which occur *immediately prior* to this topic of natural disasters being introduced. As a way of moving the conversation in a particular direction, Mura says:

*ma, daitai kore de, hajimatte kara 50 pun hodo keika shitan desu kedo ato, toku ni sakkon no kikoo jotai toka taifuu, jishin, sono ta . . .*

'Well, about 50 minutes have passed since we started; there's the meteorological conditions nowadays, or typhoons, earthquakes, and other remaining [as topics of discussion] . . .'

I suggest that Mura is trying to wind down the conversation with these statements and thus segue into a "closing" (c.f., Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974; Goodwin 1981). When he says that they have "the meteorological conditions nowadays, or typhoons, earthquakes, and other remaining" he is not asking Miha and Koba to choose one more topic to discuss.<sup>23</sup> Mura is saying that they have fulfilled the minimum time requirement with their fifty minutes; in fact, the tone of his voice implies an almost group-congratulatory<sup>24</sup> sense, but clearly conversation-ending. Indeed, in the recording (which took place at Mura's home), the sound of ice being put into glasses is audible; undoubtedly, the men (at least Mura) can see that snacks and drinks are being readied. Mura wants to end the conversation at this point. However, Miha (at least) seems to

<sup>23</sup> Recall that this particular group of speakers made a list of topics to discuss during the recording time; how closely they followed their list is not clear.

<sup>24</sup> Most groups had very few reservations about participating in my research, but one somewhat common reservation expressed (by participants or those close to them, e.g., spouses, friends, etc.) was being able to talk for at least 50 - 60 minutes. Most speakers, across all conversations, have very little difficulty; in fact, many express surprise at the end of their conversation to realize that "time flew" during the recording of their conversation.

interpret the statement (thus ignoring other cues which are present but not part of *their* conversation) as an invitation to choose another topic. Subsequently, Miha takes up the topic of earthquakes.

Given this extended contextualization, it appears that Mura is trying to finish the topic of earthquakes, and the taping session in general. He is trying to “shut down” Miha by using disdainful, potentially rude, and deprecatory forms - both pronominal and sentence final. Given his infrequent usage (or, non-usage in the case of *da yo*) in the previous parts of the conversation, the forms Mura is now choosing stand out. And, his usage most likely stands out to everyone. As we can see, Koba stays virtually silent for the duration of the earthquake discussion - neither helping Miha extend the conversation nor assisting Mura in ending it.

When Mura switches to *anta* (037) from *omae*, it is possible that he, himself, has realized how he sounds. He may be trying to mitigate the roughness of his usages; however, he does not forgo the *da yo*. Another possible interpretation is that he is trying to distance himself from Miha and his erroneous ideas about earthquakes<sup>25</sup>. If so, then Mura is attempting politeness as a mechanism of correction to his “*omae*.” Whatever interpretation one chooses, it is very clear that Mura is trying to do more than just be disdainful and rude to Miha. I suggest that he is trying to hurry the conversation along. In this way, his lack of clause-final politeness, his use of the blunt form *omae*, and the stereotypically masculine SFP *da yo* all serve not to show power or superiority over Miha per se, but power over the topic and conversational direction and to wind down the topic of earthquakes in general. He is not asserting any gender-related identity, stance, or position; rather, he is betting on the ideological force that *omae* and a rough SFP will carry: Shut the topic down.

## 5. Discussion/conclusion

In the above conversational excerpts, men use various pronominal forms as a means of inclusion/exclusion as well as a means of rebuke. These are only some of the ways that pronouns are used. However, their uses of pronominal forms goes beyond the mere usage of indicating addressee and referent. Rather, the men use the pronouns for specific purposes depending on their goals in the interaction.

Quantitative and qualitative investigations of first- and second-person pronoun use by Japanese male speakers of the Hanshinkan dialect demonstrate more complexity of linguistic practices than has previously been noted for male speakers. Overwhelmingly, as prescriptive grammars would indicate, the men avoid the use of both first- and second-person pronouns relative to the places where they could be used; however, they neither avoid them completely nor do they use them only in times when communication clarity is at risk. The men use pronouns in creative ways to manage and assert particular stances and positions across various contexts. The men's uses of these pronouns show the ability to call on and exploit dominant linguistic ideologies often for one's own purposes. For example, Mura uses *warware* as a means of including his interlocutors and other sixty-years old plus people in Japan among those who are responsible for training the next Japanese generation in matters of tradition. He is

---

<sup>25</sup> *Anta* is a distal form whereas *omae* can be interpreted as a medial form. I thank Kataoka Kuniyoshi for offering this possible interpretation.

asserting his own (and others') knowledge regarding proper Japanese traditions, especially with regard to language issues. Mura later uses a combination of both the deprecatory second-person pronoun plus a stereotypically strongly masculine sentence final form in an attempt to end a conversation about earthquakes that Miha is carrying on. In both of these cases, the pronoun forms are not serving the mere function of naming referents and addressees; rather, the speaker is using them to index a host of other meanings (e.g., inclusion, exclusion, frustration at length of conversation, etc.). In fact, many of the cases of pronoun use by the men in this data set (across all eight conversations) are functioning in very diverse ways according to the men's goals – individual and group. These men's linguistic practices show them using stereotypically masculine speech forms but not always for the purpose of creating a masculine stance. The data demonstrate multiple styles of "masculinity" in that each group of men use various forms of pronouns (in this case) to achieve different ends than other groups of men. Clearly, the idea that gender and linguistic practice is a one-to-one mapping is much too simplistic.

This article has drawn attention to the various ways in which men use first- and second-person pronouns across various topics and contexts. Drawing on empirical instances of pronominal use, we can see how the men call on the dominant ideological interpretations of some of the forms (e.g., *ore* and *omae*) to achieve a particular goal. This goal was not to create a particular identity or stance; rather, it was to achieve a specific conversational end. Analyses such as this contribute to our understandings of how gendered forms are used not only to create identities (masculine or otherwise) but also to call on the indirect indexical meaning these forms carry to do "work" beyond that of stance. It is important that more cases of men's speech interaction be investigated in order to further our understandings of how men use language at the everyday local level to create and negotiate their lives vis-à-vis linguistic practices. Additionally, since other features of conversational interaction can do the work of pronouns (e.g., gestures, eye gaze), it will be important to include data which captures these non-verbal aspects of language in order to understand more fully how pronominal forms are avoided and yet successful self- and other-reference in conversation is successfully achieved. It will also be important to include a consideration of conversation contexts/topics: arguments and/or rebukes versus storytelling (for example) to understand how pronouns are employed to do specific conversational work across various topics. Nonetheless, an examination of first- and second-person pronouns demonstrates, as noted elsewhere, that the men who occupy positions of hegemonic masculinity in Japan (white collared company workers) (see Roberson & Suzuki 2003) are not the men using the most stereotypically masculine pronouns; indeed, they are avoiding pronouns altogether. Further research is needed to understand more fully how Japanese (normative) men use language across various contexts and interlocutors for particular purposes including identity claiming and disclaiming.

## References

- Abe, Hideko (2004) Lesbian bar talk in Shinjuku, Tokyo. In Shigeko Okamoto and Janet Shibamoto Smith (eds.), *Japanese language, gender, and ideology: Cultural models and real people*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 205 - 221.

- Goodwin, Charles (1981) *Conversational organization*. New York: Academic Press.
- Hinds, John (1982) *Ellipsis in Japanese*. Edmonton, Canada: Linguistic Research.
- Hirayama, Teruo (1997) *Osaka-fu no kotoba*. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin.
- Ide, Sachiko (1979) *Onna no kotoba otoko no kotoba*. Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Tsuushinsha.
- Ide, Sachiko (1991) How and why do women speak more politely in Japanese. In Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin (eds.), *Aspects of Japanese women's language*. Tokyo: Kurosio, pp. 63-79.
- Ide, Sachiko (1993) Sekai no joseigo, nihon no joseigo (women's language of the world, women's language of Japan). *Nihongogaku* 12: 4-12.
- Ide, Sachiko (2003) Women's language as a group identity marker in Japanese. In Hellinger, Marlis and Bussmann Hadumod (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and me*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company 3: 227- 238.
- Inoue, Miyako (1996) The political economy of gender and language in Japan. St. Louis, MO: Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Washington University.
- Inoue, Miyako (2002) Gender, language, and modernity: Toward an effective history of Japanese women's language. *American Ethnologist* 29.2: 392-422.
- Inoue, Miyako (2006) *Vicarious language: Gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kanemaru, Fumi (1997) Ninshoo daimeshi, koshoo. In Sachiko Ide (ed.), *Joseigo no sekai*. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, pp. 33-41.
- Kindaichi, Kyosuke (1942) *Zooho kokugo kenkyuu*. Tokyo: Yakumoshorin.
- Kurokawa, Shozo (1972) Japanese terms of address: Some usages of the first and second person pronouns. *Journal of Japanese Linguistics* 1: 228-238.
- Lunsing, Wim, and Claire Maree (2004) Shifting speakers: Negotiating reference in relation to sexuality and gender. In Shigeko Okamoto and Janet Shibamoto Smith (eds.), *Japanese language, gender, and ideology: Cultural models and real people*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 92-112.
- Makimura, Shiyoo (1984) *Osaka kotoba jiten*. Tokyo: Kodansha.
- Martin, Samuel (1975) *A reference grammar of Japanese*. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company.
- Matsumoto, Yoshiko (1989) Politeness and conversational universals - observations from Japanese. *Multilingua* 8.2/3: 207-221.
- Matsumoto, Yoshiko (2002) Gender identity and the presentation of self in Japanese. In Mary Rose Sarah Benor, Devyani Sharma, Julie Sweetland, and Qing Shang (eds.), *Gendered practices in language*. Stanford: CSLI, pp. 339-354.
- Maynard, Senko (1997) *Japanese communication: Language and thought in context*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Miyake, Yoshimi (1995) A dialect in the face of the standard: A Japanese case study. *Proceedings of the Twenty-First Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society: General Session and Parasession on Historical Issues in Sociolinguistics/Social Issues in Historical Linguistics*, pp. 217-225.



- Miyazaki, Ayumi (2004) Japanese junior high school girls' and boys' first person pronoun use and their social world. In Shigeko Okamoto and Janet (Shibamoto)Smith (eds.), *Japanese language, gender, and ideology: Cultural models and real people*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 256-274.
- Niyekawa, Agnes (1991) *Minimum essential politeness*. Tokyo: Kodansha.
- Ochs, Elinor (1992) Indexing gender. In Alessandro Duranti and Charles Goodwin (eds.), *Rethinking context: Language as an interactive phenomenon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 335-358.
- Ogawa, Naoko, and Janet (Shibamoto)Smith (1997) The gendering of the gay male sex class: A preliminary case study based on *rasen no sobyoo*. In Anna Livia and Kira Hall (eds.), *Queerly phrased: Language, gender, and sexuality*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 402-415.
- Okamoto, Shigeko, and Shie Sato (1992) Less feminine speech among young Japanese females. In Kira Hall, Mary Bucholtz and Birch Moonwomon (eds.), *Locating power: Proceedings of the 2nd Berkeley women & language conference*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 478-488.
- Peng, Fei (1973) *La parole* of Japanese pronouns. *Language Sciences* 25: 36-39.
- Reynolds, Akiba Katsue (1991) Female speakers of Japanese in transition. In Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin (eds.), *Aspects of Japanese women's language*. Tokyo: Kurosio, pp. 129-146.
- Roberson, James, and Nobue Suzuki (eds.) (2003) *Men and masculinities in contemporary Japan: Dislocating the salaryman doxa*. New York, N.Y.: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Sacks, Harvey, Emmanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson (1974) A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation. *Language* 50: 696-735.
- Shibamoto, Janet (1985) *Japanese women's language*. London: Academic Press: Harcourt, Brace, and Janovich.
- Shibamoto Smith, Janet (2003) Gendered structures in Japanese. In Hellinger Marlis and Hadumod Bussmann (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company 3: 201-225.
- Shibatani, Masayoshi (1990) *The languages of Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Silverstein, Michael (1985) Language and the culture of gender: At the intersection of structure, usage, and ideology. In Elizabeth Mertz and Richard Parmentier (eds.), *Semiotic mediation*. Orlando/London: Academic Press, pp. 219-259.
- Sturtz, Cindi (2001) *Danseigo da zo! Japanese men's language: Stereotypes, realities, and ideologies*. Unpublished Dissertation. Davis, University of California at Davis.
- SturtzSreetharan, Cindi (2004a) Japanese men's conversational stereotypes and realities: Conversations from the kanto and kansai regions. In Shigeko Okamoto and Janet Shibamoto Smith (eds.), *Japanese language, gender, and ideology: Cultural models and real people*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 275-289.
- SturtzSreetharan, Cindi (2004b) Students, *sarariiman* (pl.), and seniors: Japanese men's use of "manly" speech register. *Language in Society* 33: 81-107.
- SturtzSreetharan, Cindi (2006) Gentlemanly gender? Japanese men's use of clause-final politeness in casual conversations. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 10.1: 70-92.
- Sugimoto, Yoshio (1997) *An introduction to Japanese society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sunaoshi, Yukako (2004) Farm women's professional discourse in Ibaraki. In Shigeko Okamoto and Janet (Shibamoto)Smith (eds.), *Japanese language, gender, and ideology*. New York and Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, pp. 187-204.

Suzuki, Takao (1978) *Words in context: A Japanese perspective on language and culture*. Tokyo: Kodansha.

Takeuchi, Lone (1999) *The structure and history of Japanese: From yamatokotoba to nihongo*. London/New York: Longman.

Wada, Minoru (1985) Sasameyuki no gengo seikatsu. In Munemasa Tokugawa (eds.), *Kamigata kotoba no sekai*. Tokyo: Musashino Shoin, pp. 7-40.

Wada, Minoru, and Ryooji Kamata (1992) *Hyogo no hogen, rigen*. Kobe: Kobe Shinbun Sogoo Shuppan Sentaa.