



Università  
Ca' Foscari  
Venezia

Corso di Laurea magistrale in  
Lingue e istituzioni economiche e giuridiche  
dell'Asia e dell'Africa mediterranea

Tesi di Laurea

—  
Ca' Foscari  
Dorsoduro 3246  
30123 Venezia

# Contested ideas about womanhood and female speech in contemporary Japan: a comparative research made at Italian Universities

**Relatore**

Ch.mo Prof. Patrick Heinrich

**Correlatrice**

Ch.ma Prof.ssa Marcella Maria Mariotti

**Laureanda**

Ilaria Rotili

Matricola 817730

**Anno Accademico**

2014 / 2015

*Ai miei genitori.*

## 要旨

この論文は、いわゆる「女性語」あるいは「女の言葉」について述べる。

女性語の社会言語学現実、民族主義、儒教や他の国と競争で形作られた社会的文化的現実の結果の一つである。これらすべての要因は「男女の役割」の成形に広く貢献していた(遠藤-2006)。

女性語の現在における使用を詳しく検討することが不可欠である。なぜなら、言語研究は特定の国の過去も社会の変化も良く理解するのに役立つからである。また、このような検証で、日本の様々な意見、イデオロギー、習慣など共存しているということを理解できると思う。

女性語に関していくつかの研究があるが(遠藤、井上、中村、岡本、レイノルズ、などが様々な詳しい研究をすでに行われた)、それらの貢献はほとんど言語の歴史的な側面やその起源と普及に焦点を当てている。この論文の目標は、言語の歴史と習慣も検討することである。

女性語が明確に定義された言語であると認識することは不可能である。女性語を話す人の中には、その言葉を変更して使用する者もいるが、それをしない者もいる。つまり、日本の社会言語学的状況は、言語構造と言語使用のアイデアより複雑であると言えるだろう。

女性語と男性語は、イデオロギー的な運動によって導入されていた。従って、今日でも言語イデオロギーは、現代女性語は常に存在し、また日本国民の最も特徴的な伝統の一つであると主張している。いわゆる「女性語」と「女の言葉」は日本人女性の自然な女性らしさと優しさを表していることも主張される。

普及したイデオロギーの影響が言語を単純化するようになる。

今日、多くの日本人が根深いイデオロギーに従っていることに気が付かず、日本語を理想化する傾向も検証できる。その人によって言語イデオロギーは自然な生活の送り方や振る舞い方である。

しかし、現実には女性語の使用はイデオロギーの主張するようには普及していない。全ての女性の話し方は自分のライフスタイルや社会的背景を反映する。その結果として、必ずしも全ての日本の女性は同じ女性語を使用するわけではない。全ての日本の女性の話し方は、年齢、学歴、社会的階層、地域の起源などによる形成される。だからこの言語構造や使用に影響を与えるさまざまな要因にもかかわらず、支配的なイデオロギーは、ユニークな女性語を定義することによって、これらの条件の全てを単純化するになる。そして、その定義によるユニークな女性語が、日本の女性が話すために使用される唯一の方法だと説得される。

支配的なイデオロギーを解体することと、そのイデオロギーが社会言語学的現実を単純化したアイデアのシステムを明らかにすることは一つの事実であるが、社会言語学的状況を理解することはまた別のものである。この論文では、今日の状況をも研究することを目的とする。

女性語の背後にあるイデオロギーは明確であるが、日本の社会言語学的現実は明確ではない。また、これは日本語を話す日本人コミュニティに完全には属していない人々に真である。例えば、本や教科書でのみ特定の言語表現を勉強し、現実にはそのどれもを実際に使用されている場面ではほとんど聞いたことがない外国人などである。

この論文によって、明らかにしたい事は以下のものを含める：

- (1) 外国語として日本語を勉強しているイタリア人は、日本語の女性語の支配的な言語イデオロギーに精通しているのかどうか。
- (2) 外国語として日本語を勉強しているイタリア人は、日本の女性と接触したときに、言語イデオロギーに影響されるのかどうか。

本研究は、さまざまな大学生の間で日本語のアンケートを配布した。このように、私はイタリア人の大学生のクラスで勉強した女性語が言語習慣にどのように関係するかと検討したいと思う。このように、日本女性の社会的相互作用のシステムと、日本の女性語の両方を知覚する方法が理解できると思う。

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Contested ideas about womanhood and female speech in contemporary Japan: a comparative research made at Italian Universities

<b>CHAPTER 1 - History of women's language</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Women's language in ancient Japanese literature	1
1.2 The Japanese feudalism and the beginning of the andro-centered social system	3
1.2.1 The woman's role defined by the Buddhist thoughts	4
1.2.2 The woman's role defined by the Confucian values	5
1.2.3 The invention of the "nyōbō-kotoba" ideology and its spread	6
1.3 The Edo period and the exacerbation of the rules to follow in women's language	8
1.4 The Meiji period and "schoolgirl speech"	9
1.4.1 The school reform and the appearance of the "schoolgirl speech"	11
1.4.2 The detraction of "schoolgirl speech" and the ideology of "good wife and wise mother"	12
1.4.3 The "schoolgirl speech" as the language of consumers and as legitimate women's language	14
1.5 The Taisho Period, the Showa Period and the nationalism behind the idealization of women's language	16
1.6 From post-war women's language to the modern "ryūkōgo"	17

<b>CHAPTER 2 - Dominant ideas behind women's language</b>	<b>20</b>
2.0 Introduction	20
2.1 Idealization of the female gender	20
2.1.1 Ideologies behind the etiquette books	21
2.1.2 Ideology of the women as “chatterboxes” and the “humorless” gender	26
2.2 Girls' social interactions at school	29
2.2.1 Examples of interpersonal interactions adopted by girls in the school environment	30
2.2.2. Redefinition of speech identities in a Japanese high school	32
2.3 The role of the woman in the working place	36
2.3.1 Being a female teacher in a Japanese school	39
2.3.2 Being a female manager in a Japanese firm, the case of Mrs. Yoshida	41
2.3.3 Being a female politician in Japan	45
2.4 Fear of “the death of the women's language” and the influence of the mass-media on preserving it	47
2.4.1 Readers columns of the major newspapers	50
2.4.2 Misleading questions in public surveys	52
2.5 Modern translations of foreigner books, movies and interviews	55

<b>CHAPTER 3 - Understanding how the genderization of the Japanese language is perceived among Japanese language learners in Italy</b>	60
3.0 Introduction	60
3.1 A working definition of womanhood and female language	60
3.2 Purpose of the research	63
3.3 Expected results	64
3.4 First person pronouns and sentence final particles most used among Japanese teenagers and adults	64
3.5 The questionnaires	65
3.6 Analyzing the questionnaire conducted among native Japanese language teachers	69
3.7 Analyzing the questionnaire conducted among Italian students of Japanese language	79
3.8 Comparing the results of the two surveys	90
<b>CHAPTER 4 - Conclusion</b>	93
<b>References</b>	97
<b>Online References</b>	101
<b>Appendix 1</b>	102
<b>Appendix 2</b>	109

## **CHAPTER 1 - History of women's language**

In this chapter I will summarize the historical path that has been followed by women's language until it reached its current form. The general idea that a lot of Japanese people have about women's language is that it is characterized by a long and rich tradition and that it has been handed down for centuries for generations. This is just an ideology, but is true the fact that Japanese women's language have a history that brought it to its present formation and spreading.

### **1.0 Introduction**

When Japanese people are asked "How old is the women's language? When did it take form?" a big part of them cannot give an appropriate answer. This happens because the linguistic ideology made sure that the usage of women's language was believed to be a characteristic inherent in the Japanese language, and speaking it was therefore considered common sense since always.

In the next pages I will explain what were the circumstances and the historical contexts from which women's language emerged. I will focus on the ideology that supported it and on the sociological processes that have favored its spread nationwide.

### **1.1 Women's language in ancient Japanese literature**

Until now it hasn't been found any trace of women's language in Japanese ancient literature. In fact, when examining direct speeches reported in texts written before the Heian period, in many cases it is particularly difficult to understand if the speaker is a male or a female (Endō 2006).

In the works dating from the Nara period there are no works or passages that show that the figure of the woman was considered lower or subject to the man. In fact, they were likely considered even. Among the most important examples there are the Japanese gods creators of the land of Japan Izanami and Izanagi. In one of the myth of the *Kojiki* they created the Japanese islands the day they got married, and during their union Izanami said *Ana-ni-yashi e wotoko wo*, "How good a man!", while Izanagi said *Ana-ni-yashi e wotome*

wo, “How good a woman!”. The two sentences are identical except for the words *wotoko*”man” and *wotome*”woman” (Endō 2006:5).

By analyzing the many *tanka* and *chōka* of the *Man'yōshū* does not exist any form of genderized speech. A valuable example is given by the linguist Orié Endō, she reported the following lines translated from the *Man'yōshū*:

*Nigita-zu ni funanori sen to tsuki mateba*

*shio mo kanahinu ima wa kogiide na*

We have waited for the moon o board ship at Nigita harbor, and  
with the moonrise the tides too are right. Now let us set out.

*Shirogane mo kogane mo tama mo nani semu ni*

*Masareru takara ko ni shikame ya mo*

What worth is there in silver or gold or jewels? For there is indeed  
no treasure greater than a child.<sup>1</sup>

It is very difficult to understand if the speaker is a woman or a man. The entire *Man'yōshū* and the major works dated before the Heian period do not show different expressions based on gender distinction.

In the Heian period there had been sociocultural changes that lead to a more patriarchal social system than in the past (Fujimura, Fanselow 1995).

While at the end of the Nara period had reigned a total amount of twenty four empresses, including the legendary empress shaman Jingu, starting from the Heian period onwards there had been no more female empresses, except for a couple of women who become empresses in the Edo period that were puppets of the Tokugawa family like every other emperor.

In the *Genji monogatari* we can find hints of this sociocultural change in several volumes, including volume 26, entitled “Wild Carnations”, in which a woman from the countryside

---

<sup>1</sup> Orié ENDŌ, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women's Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006, p. 6.

goes to court and shows a strange way of behaving and speaking compared to the women who lived in the court. Murasaki describes her way of speaking as too quick, too squeaky, too emphatic and inelegant (Endō 2006).

In the *Makura no sōshi*, section 182, Sei Shōnagon writes about the jokes the Major Counselor and some women were exchanging. He says the women “replied without the slightest embarrassment, freely arguing with him and contradicting his remarks when they disagreed. I was absolutely dazzled by it all and found myself blushing without any particular reason” (Endō 2006:20).

By analyzing the works of the Heian period we cannot find a particularly genderized language, but is noticeable the fact that the society was oriented toward a patriarchal structure where women were not supposed to answer back openly to men. They were preferred to use elegant manners and to speak with a low tone of voice (Endō-2006:34).

Another idea that became part of the cultural background of the population was Buddhist idea that all women were impure because they were bound to menstruation and childbirth, and therefore to blood (Endō 2006).

Until the end of Nara period the female figure was not seen as impure. Oriie Endō writes “the gods of the *Kojiki* did not view menstruation as unclean, but by the beginning of the Heian period, there were records of the imperial princesses who served at Ise Shrine undergoing ritual purification in a river” (Endō 2006:21).

With the arrival of the feudal era, Buddhism spread all over the country, and the strong influence of this religion changed several aspects of the Japanese socio-cultural background. Women lost more and more political power and influence in the social arena, finding themselves to be considered noisy and not intelligent.

## **1.2 The Japanese feudalism and the beginning of the andro-centered social system**

With the onset of feudalism and the emergence of shoguns, Japanese society became divided into defined social castes. Every subject of the emperor was tied to a social rank from which he could not move, everyone had to follow the rules that were imposed to their status. The same destiny happened to the women, their roles became defined, they

were expected to have an appropriate behavior that reflected not only their social position, but also their gender.

There appeared a differentiation between the two sexes, which was fueled by various factors such as Buddhist thoughts, the doctrines of the Confucian philosophy and a tight social hierarchy.

### **1.2.1 The woman's role defined by Buddhism thoughts**

Before Buddhism and the Confucian thoughts spread in Japan women could hold high position both political and religious. This was possible thanks to the Japanese religion of Shintoism, according to which some women were so important to be *kami* or figures related to *kami*. The highest Japanese divinity was the female entity Amaterasu, goddess of the sun. There were a lot of shrines dedicated to her where untouchable high priestesses worked. Another respected female figure was the *miko*. The *miko* were shaman women who were believed to have mystical powers that could get them in contact with the gods. However, the arrival of other beliefs placed the figure of women in another social position. During the Kamakura period there was a thorough spread of Buddhism, and the Buddhist theories indicated women as sinners. Every woman is born with the same characteristics that distinguish her as the treacherous creature that hinder men in their spiritual path. Orié Endō reported what the monk Mujū wrote in his *Tsuma kagami* (The mirror for wives):

It is written throughout the scriptures that women in particular are very sinful. *Nanzan no Senritsushi* states that women are guilty of seven sins. The first is causing men to feel sexual desire; the second is being prone to jealousy; the third is lying, so that what they say with their mouths differs from what they think in their hearts; the fourth is being vain and greedy; the fifth is telling many lies and not much truth; the sixth is burning with desire and knowing no shame; the seventh is having impure bodies and passing blood often<sup>2</sup>

In the same period, in addition to Buddhist writings also spread disciplinary books the topic of which was women's appropriate behavior. Those books suggested the proper

---

<sup>2</sup> Orié ENDŌ, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women's Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006, p. 24.

attitudes a woman should have had in both the private and the public sphere. This kind of books can be considered a forerunner of the etiquette books. Among the most significant works there is *Niwa no oshie* (Lessons of the garden), translated by Momoko Nakamura, where it is written:

And even if something good happen, do not say you are happy or that it is good...Concerning your mind, your life, and others, speak ambiguously and do not show your emotions. Keep everything in your mind. It is bad to speak carelessly.<sup>3</sup>

There were also disciplinary books on how little girls should be raised called *Menoto no sōshi* (The nursemaid book). It has been studied by Oriie Endō, who reported the following instructions written in *Menoto no sōshi*:

When a girl becomes ten years of age, take her deep into the chambers and ensure that she is not seen by others. Keep her in a calm frame of mind, and raise her to speak in a soft, low voice. Do not allow her to play as she pleases, to speak roughly, or to sprawl about near the veranda.<sup>4</sup>

In conjunction with the spread of Buddhist precepts, at the end of the Heian period, there occurred a change in the political and administrative system because of the arrival of the samurai caste and the militarization of Japan that helped considerably in affirming the male dominance in the empire.

Moreover, the Confucian values arrived from China took root in Japan and the Confucian doctrines became widespread all over the country.

### **1.2.2 The woman's role defined by the Confucian values**

In the feudal era, not only Buddhism but also the Confucian doctrines acquired great importance in Japan. It reached the archipelago and it quickly spread, until the Confucian precepts became the moral and social guide for all inhabitants of the country.

---

<sup>3</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, "Discursive Construction of the Ideology of "Women's Language": From Kamakura, Muromachi, to Edo periods (1180-1867)", *Nature-People-Society* 34, 2003, p.24.

<sup>4</sup> Oriie ENDŌ, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women's Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006, p. 25.

According to the historical records, even though Confucius placed women in the lowest rung of the hierarchical society, he was not a misogynist, but during the Song dynasty (year-year) it took place a new interpretation of the Confucian thoughts, called Neoconfucianism, through which women became because they were considered naturally inferiors (<http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/essay-04.html>).

This led to new social rules, including the one where widows had to remain chaste, and the one where every family could abandon undesired daughters. Furthermore, in order to limit women's mobility, the painful practice of foot-binding was created.

Some rules and practices from the Neoconfucian doctrines, like the foot-binding, didn't reach Japan, but the majority of them did.

Women had to live a life of obedience to the men of the family. Three Obediences instruct woman to worship and submit themselves to the men who will command them during their lives "When she is young, she obeys her father; / when she is married, she obeys her husband; / when she is widowed, she obeys her son."<sup>5</sup>

Confucianism and Buddhism constituted two of the most influential factors in the change of lifestyle of the majority of Japanese women and the echo of their precepts is still audible in the contemporary hierarchical society of Japan and in women's language.

### **1.2.3 The invention of the "nyōbō-kotoba" ideology and its spread**

As we saw above, the feudal period brought several substantial changes to the Japanese social structure, and the most appropriate way for women who belonged to the literate elite was to speak and express their thoughts was by talking indirectly and elegantly. These rules applied especially at court, where the etiquette used to be taken very seriously. Women who lived and worked at court were therefore subjects to strict rules of behavior that prevented them to express themselves freely.

However, some women invented a "secret language" who could be spoken only by a small group of women at court. This "language" allowed those women to speak freely about topics that were considered unseemly at court such as food or items like comb and make-up that belonged to the private life of their bedrooms. This was possible because

---

<sup>5</sup> "Gender Difference in History Women in China and Japan", *Women in World History Curriculum*, 1996-2013, Retrieved from <http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/essay-04.html>.

these women invented new words for a lot of object and items, and by doing so the persons “outside” the group could not understand them when they were referring to a certain tool or ingredient. These words were known as “nyōbō kotoba” because “nyōbō” was the word associated to court women, the ones that belonged to the royal family and the daughters of ministers.

Born in the Muromachi period, the *nyōbō kotoba* spread quickly and easily, it spread to such an extent that also young women of lower classes started to learn it. Some of them used to go to work at nobles’ houses for a few months, where they learned the *nyōbō kotoba* which they kept using it even after they went back home.

The spread of this language was very consistent and it stopped to be a “code language” soon to become a part of the register of a language elite. In this way it provided the opportunity to raise the status of every woman who spoke it (Endō 2006:37).

The most common alterations that the *nyōbō kotoba* did to “normal words” mainly consisted in the addition of the prefix *o-*, which served as honorifix to soften the word, and in the addition of *-mono* or *-moji* (letter; character) at the end of the word to make it more ambiguous and indirect. There were also abbreviations and substitutions.

Some examples of *nyōbō kotoba* are:

*Sushi* ‘sushi’; *su-moji*

*Tako* ‘octopus’; *ta-moji*

*Ika* ‘squid’; *i-moji*<sup>6</sup>

*imo* “potato” -> *o-imo*

*yu* “hot water” -> *o-yu*

*sakana* “side dishes” -> *o-sakana*<sup>7</sup>

Some of these words have survived through the centuries and they still belong to the Japanese language, like *onaka* (stomach) or *take* (abbreviation of *takenoko* = bamboo).

---

<sup>6</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, “Discursive Construction of the Ideology of “Women’s Language”: From Kamakura, Muromachi, to Edo periods (1180-1867)”, *Nature-People-Society* 34, 2003, p.39.

<sup>7</sup> Orië ENDŌ, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women’s Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006, p.32.

### 1.3 The Edo period and the exacerbation of the rules to follow in women's language

In the Edo period the Buddhist and Confucian precepts that we saw a few pages ago, were so widely disseminated in the cultural background of Japanese society that for the majority of the population it became impossible to live one's own life without naturally following those doctrines (Endō 2006:40) .

Women were encouraged to stress their femininity through submissive behavior and indirect and hesitant expressions. The publication of disciplinary books increased, they were called *jonkun sho* and the written rules to be followed increased the psychological pressure on women, especially those belonging to noble families.

The ideal woman was a docile person with reduced knowledge on every subject. Since women were supposed to spend big part of their lives inside the domestic walls there was no need for them to have particular skills, other than household skills.

In *Onna nidai no ki* (Records of two generations of women), Kikue Yamakawa wrote:

All women should be illiterate. A woman with ability encounters large obstacles. They do not need to study anything. Being able to read books written in *kana* is sufficient. Of course, they should never be permitted to train in the martial arts. Women merely spend the day idly at home, so trivial matters are their sphere of knowledge.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the words of the daimyō and counselor Matsudaira Sadanobu were clear, the number of women who learned to write and read increased exponentially until the end of the Edo period, so much that it also increased the variety of the *jonkun sho* and the number of the publications (Nakamura 2003:23). In these volumes there were suggestions not only on how feminine expressions should be, but also on how a distinction between boys and girls and the segregation between the two genders should be drawn.

Momoko Nakamura reported an interesting quotation from the section *Onna Chōhōki* of the encyclopedia *Chōhōki* (particularly widespread in that period), where were written the following statements:

---

<sup>8</sup> Kikue YAMAKAWA, *Onna nidai no ki*, (Records of two generations of women), Nihon hyōron shinsha, 1956, p.30.

Women should not be raised up near men. Those who are brought up among men will have a man's heart and learn men's words. It is harsh and unpleasant to listen to women who use men's language. Women's words should be ambiguous and soft. It is bad to use difficult words and try to appear sophisticated. Add *o* and *moji* to every word to make it soft.<sup>9</sup>

The reference on *o* and *moji* obviously concerns the *nyōbō-kotoba* that in the Edo period were considered appropriate expressions for women's language, and it was expected that respectable women preferred them to the original words.

Another important aspect of women's language was the total absence of words with Chinese origins. Sino-Japanese words used to be considered tough and rude, they were unpleasant to listen when they came out of a woman's mouth, women should have used only Japanese words (*yamatokotoba*) and expressions that were not related with the Chinese language, because they were more vocalic and pleasant to hear.

In the written form too, since the Heian period, women should avoid to write in *kanbun*, a Sino-Japanese style full of Chinese ideograms that was only used by men.

For women learning to write in *kana* was considered sufficient. Only to a few girls of the upper-classes were taught *kanbun*, and it was done with the only purpose of letting them have access to Chinese texts devoted to Confucian thoughts. Reading other kind of books written in *kanbun* was thought to be ridiculous and unseemly for a woman (Endō 2006:45).

#### **1.4 The Meiji period and “schoolgirl speech”**

The Meiji Restoration started in 1868 brought very relevant changes. The last Tokugawa shogunate fell and the Meiji emperor made several changes in the political, governmental and economic structure of Japan. The country opened to the world after two hundreds of years of almost total isolation. Under the pressure of reform, Japan begun its run for the

---

<sup>9</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, “Discursive Construction of the Ideology of “Women’s Language”: From Kamakura, Muromachi, to Edo periods (1180-1867)”, *Nature-People-Society* 34, 2003, p.27.

“modernization”, that is, trying to catch up with the governmental administrations and industrial policies of the western countries.

The climate brought by the Restoration instilled the Japanese people with a great sense of competitiveness that sharpened the spiritual bond of the Japanese people (Inoue 2006). This new ideology of nationalism pushed a lot of scholars and intellectuals to demand for the creation of a standard language, which until then had never existed. Thanks to various language reform movements, especially the *genbun itchi* movement, the written language underwent a steady simplification. The written forms of *kanbun*, *wabun*, *sōrōbun* and *wakan konkōbun* were slowly substituted by the simplified form of *genbun itchi* style. By the year 1903 all the schoolbooks were written in *genbun itchi* style, and in a few years almost every book and novel was written in *genbun itchi* style, the standard written language (Inoue 2006).

An important change regarding the school were the “schoolgirls”. This term refers to female students of the secondary school, they appeared as a new phenomenon of the Japanese society. The schoolgirl constituted an unprecedented category of Japanese women. Miyako Inoue explains:

Although the majority of young women were producers (workers) who eventually married to become reproducers (wives and mothers), schoolgirls occupied a newly defined interstitial space for the duration of their schooling, being neither producers nor reproducers.<sup>10</sup>

The schoolgirls have been an essential element in the history of women’s language because they used expressions that at the time were considerate most peculiar, such as the utterance-endings *teyo*, *noyo dawa* and *koto*, which were generalized by the epithet of “schoolgirl speech”.

---

<sup>10</sup> Miyako, INOUE, *Vicarious Language: Gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.41.

### 1.4.1 The school reform and the appearance of the “schoolgirl speech”

The Meiji Restoration brought the establishment of the school system, proclaimed by the government in 1872 by making compulsory the secondary school to everybody, included girls. Initially only young girls belonging to the upper class went to the secondary school, but within thirty years the number of girls who attended the secondary school increased enormously until the secondary school classes were filled with girls from every social class (Inoue 2006).

The main characteristic of the schoolgirl speech consisted in the addition of the utterance-endings *teyo* and *dawa* used mainly to communicate surprise, hesitation or to emphasize an exclamation. Due to those utterance-endings the schoolgirl speech was also called *teyodawa kotoba* (teyo-dawa speech).

In the following passage we can read some typical expressions of the schoolgirl speech that had been registered and reported by Ozaki Kōyō in his essay “Popular Expressions” published in 1888. The linguist Oriie Endō translated and reported the following part of Kōyō’s work:

Ume wa mada sakanakutte **yo**. [...]

“The plum blossoms haven’t bloomed yet, you know?” [...]

[...]Ara, mō saite **yo**.

[...] “Oh! Now they have bloomed, you know!”

Sakura no hana wa mada sakanai n **da wa**

“The cherry blossoms haven’t bloomed yet.”<sup>11</sup>

Other typical aspects of the schoolgirl speech consisted in the lack of honorifics and in the abbreviation of the honorifics. The young schoolgirls used to say “*sō-desu*” instead of “*sō-de-gozai-masu*” which was largely preferred at the time because considered very appropriate for a woman while *desu* wasn’t enough deferential (Inoue 2006:60-61).

The honorific *nasaru* was abbreviated. The schoolgirls used the abbreviated form “*nasutte*” to the appropriate one “*nasari-mashita-ka*” [did? or have done?], in the same way “*i-(t)teyo*” had substituted “*yuki-mashita-yo*” [I have gone] (Inoue 2006:62).

---

<sup>11</sup> Oriie ENDŌ, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women’s Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006, p.64.

In addition to these changes, schoolgirls also liked to use words of Chinese origins (which were always been related to men because they were considered too rude for a woman) and English loanwords.

#### **1.4.2 The detraction of “schoolgirl speech” and the ideology of “good wife and wise mother”**

The schoolgirl speech spread very fast among young women, so much that its strong presence worried many intellectuals who decided to dedicate essays and articles that argued about the loss of grace and femininity of young girls, who were speaking a language that was vulgar, hasty and without honorifics that was making those girls look silly and frivolous (Inoue 2006).

Due to the strong critics from the side of male intellectuals who were pointing at the “degeneration” of the women’s language brought by the *teyodawa kotoba*, the public opinion began to be against such use of language, and a lot of people interviewed in newspapers and in the magazines expressed their disapproval on that language. This increased the growing general though that the women’s language was “contaminated” and rude (Inoue 2006).

Among the factors that took to the formation of the *teyo-dawa kotoba* there are proves that it most likely came from the following environments: the teahouses, some samurai families and the pleasure quarters of Tokyo. The intellectual Yanagihara Yoshimitsu in his essay “The reform of Teyo-Daya Speech” complained about the evolution of the schoolgirl speech by writing:

The recent speech of Tokyo spread from the pleasure quarters to the upper class and has become habitual. For example, as with *iyada-wa*, *ikenai-wa*, or *nani-nani-shi-teyo*, etc., girls heavily abuse *wa*, *teyo*, and so on. What is even more outrageous is that they use *nasu(t)te* when they mean to say *nasaru-ka* [Are you going to do such-and such?], and thus they shamelessly mistake the past tense for the future tense (and this is called “low class language”).<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Yoshimitsu, YANAGIHARA, *Teyodawa kotoba no kairyō: mazu hyōjungo wo tsukure* [The reform of teyo-dawa speech: First, establish the standard Japanese language], Jōkan, 1908, 18(I): 13-15, p.14.

The public opinion started to associate the figure of the schoolgirl with the image of a rude girl, ungainly, who is ashamed of nothing, who speaks quickly and ignores the use of honorifics. She was compromising the purity of women's language with her *teyodawa kotoba* and her Chinese and English words. Furthermore, the jovial and carefree attitudes that were linked to the figure of the schoolgirl clashed with the image of the silent and submissive woman (Inoue 2006). Endō reported what the Japanese essayist Morita Tama wrote about the attitudes of the schoolgirls:

What I detest most is a young woman who formally greets someone without blinking an eye. It is preferable for young women to be a little uneven in their speech, and to pause forgetfully and blush a little when uttering the phrases taught by their mothers [...] There is nothing more unpleasant than hearing school girls on trains and buses talking among themselves without reserve or the minimum of decorum.<sup>13</sup>

What was considered most disturbing about the image of the schoolgirl talking in schoolgirl speech was that it was opposed to the image of the “good wife and wise mother”. The “good wife and wise mother” (*ryōsai kenbo*) was a Confucian concept that had its period of greatest spreading from the Meiji era to the end of World War II. With the Restoration and the arrival of capitalism, the ideology behind the gender rules involved different tasks for men and women. Men had to be involved in academic research and manual labor, in order to be productive and to contribute to the economic and industrial development of the empire of Japan. On the other hand, women had to commit themselves to homecare and to the moral growth of their progeny, sons and daughters that in the future would have been contributed in the progress of Japanese values and economy (Inoue 2006).

To ensure that women absolved properly their “patriotic duty” (Sievers 1983:111) in female high schools, the government ensured that some specific subjects gained more attention. Inoue writes:

---

<sup>13</sup> Oriie ENDŌ, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women's Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006, p.78.

The school curriculum added a new emphasis on scientific and efficient home management, including hygiene, saving, and household accounting, in addition to a range of gender-specific skills and body of knowledge that constituted a new middle-class female sociality and forms of social distinction, including sewing, cooking, flower arrangement and so on.<sup>14</sup>

Considering the social atmosphere of the time and the social role of women, it is easy to understand why the schoolgirl speech was not appreciated and why there was a controversy over it.

#### **1.4.3 The “schoolgirl speech” as the language of consumers and as legitimate women’s language**

Despite the controversy and the resentful atmosphere towards the schoolgirl speech, the storm calmed down soon, and in the first two decades of the twentieth century the unusual particles of the *teyodawa-kotoba* became part of the women’s language.

This happened mostly because print capitalism brought the publishers to consider women as active consumers. In order to gain the attention of the female audience, especially the young one, they reported schoolgirl slang that was so widespread at the time.

Among the publications, whose target were young women there were the *kaitei shōsetsu* (domestic novels), novels that sold easily and had a largely female audience. The female characters of these stories were mostly young schoolgirls or young women, romantic and very sentimental, whose dialogues were full of *teyodawa-kotoba*. In this way the readers were able to empathize more easily with the characters.

The passage of the *teyodawa-kotoba* from vulgar slang to women’s language can be even seen in the early novels of the twentieth century where it was already present. In the direct speeches written in the book *Sanshiro* by Natsume Soseki (published for the first time in 1908) there are several sentences that end with the particles *da-wa*, *da-ne*, *da-yo* and *da-koto* (Inoue 2006).

---

<sup>14</sup> Miyako, INOUE, *Vicarious Language: Gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.46.

Thanks to capitalism and print-capitalism, women gained a very active role in the consumption of products, therefore they became valuable consumers. Since not only men, but women and men were both active consumers the market implemented a genderization of the consumers, in this way the circulation of the female magazines and domestic novels full of *teyodawa kotoba* became national.

The most popular Japanese magazines were the *joseigo* (women's language) was widely reported were the '*Fujin sekai*' (Women's world) and the '*Jogaku sekai*' (Schoolgirls world). The audience which these magazines addressed was mostly female, so the pages dedicated to the advertisements were usually about body products or make-up products sponsored by girls who talked *teyodawa kotoba*. The reason of this marketing choice was made due to the fact that every woman belonging to the middle class bourgeois, like schoolgirls, family mothers or workers, was considered a potential consumer that could buy a lot of products, if those items were only introduced properly (with the proper expressions) to the female sector of society.

The passage below is a short conversation reported by Inoue. Two sisters are talking about a menstrual garment called 'Victoria', the older sister is giving an advice about the item to the younger one:

Sonoko: [...] I can't make it tomorrow-**noyo**.

Older Sister: Oh, how come?

Sonoko: But...but, I have been in the moon disease all day-**nano**.

Older Sister: Period?...Sono-chan, don't you know about a menstrual garment called Victoria? If you wear it, you will not have to worry at all for hours-**wa**.

Sonoko: Ah, my friends are actually all *using* Victoria-**desu-wa**. Why didn't I think about that! Sister, I will go home right away and will definitely *visit* you tomorrow-**teyo**.

Older Sister: Oh my, you suddenly look all cheered up-**none**.<sup>15</sup>

It was thanks to the constant use of the *teyodawa* speech disseminated through the media that the schoolgirl speech, initially deplored for being a rude version of women's language,

---

<sup>15</sup> Miyako, INOUE, *Vicarious Language: Gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.145.

not only became the language of prosperity and consumerism, but it also became part of the women's language.

### **1.5 The Taisho Period, the Showa Period and the nationalism behind the idealization of women's language**

In the first half of the twentieth century, Japanese nationalism played an important role among the factors that influenced the Japanese language and the women's language (Nakamura 2003). The empire of Japan was going through a significant historical period. The colonialist campaign in China, Manchuria and Korea, the victories against the Russian army, the participation to World War I were all factors that allowed the government to push the subjects of the Japanese empire to embrace the ideology of the Japanese racial superiority.

The Japanese language was one of the main elements that supported that ideology. There were several scholars that shared the thought that the national language was the most important power of the USA and the European nation-states. Their linguistic cohesion gathered their citizens under the big "nation-state roof", enforcing their national loyalty and pushing them to work hard to make their nations become the most powerful and developed in the world (Inoue 2006).

This ideology about the importance of the national language made the woman's language being part of the Japanese national language.

"Language ideologies before the war were clearly sex-differentiated" (Nakamura-2004:30). Before then, women's language was not part of the national language, but starting from World War I women's language was included within the Yamato language, and "grammar books actively referred to women's language use in their descriptions of "standard language" as "women's language"" (Nakamura 2004:27).

Furthermore, women's language had become a symbol that characterized the superiority of the Japanese culture, so women were spurred by the government and by the scholars to protect and preserve the "national language".

It is in this historical period that among the Japanese citizens spread the idea that the women's language was an ancient tradition that had to be preserved at all costs. This is

one of the ideologies on women's language that had the most impact on the society, so much that it lasted until the end of the century, and it can still be found in some contemporary Japanese social contexts, although much weakened than in the past (Inoue 2006).

In the essay "Construction of Japanese women's language" Nakamura Momoko states: "For Japan [...] declaring the superiority of its language legitimated its invasions", and continues with this significant passage:

By making "women's language" a Japanese tradition rooted in the imperial state and a characteristic unique to the Japanese language, the superiority of the Japanese language appeared unequivocal. The praise for "women's language" functioned to maintain the Japanese military regime and legitimized its invasion. That is why women's language use was categorized into "women's language" as a tradition of the imperial state and the symbol of Japanese pride.<sup>16</sup>

### **1.6 From post-war women's language to the modern "ryūkōgo"**

After the end of World War II the American occupation pushed Japan toward a process of "democratization of the country" through the writing of a new Constitution and through the reorganization of the government and the governmental structure of the country.

There also emerged issues such related to gender equality and linguistic gender differentiation. There were several discursive battles regarding the women's language as some intellectual considered it an overwhelming that was denying to women the freedom to express themselves as they wished because women's language was binding them to a limited number of words and expressions.

In his *Machi no gengo gaku* (Linguistics on the street) Okubo Tadatashi writes:

"Those who claim 'It's nothing if you are used to it' or 'Polite language is beautiful' ignore the troublesome burden they impose on minds, especially those of women [...] More complicated, logical discussion requires greater care and women won't

---

<sup>16</sup> Momoko, NAKAMURA, "Discursive Construction of the Ideology of "Women's Language": The Impact of War (1914-45)", *Nature-People-Society* 37, 2004, p.24.

be able to talk [...] The troublesome language of women does not allow them to speak casually and restrains them”<sup>17</sup>

However, the government and the majority of the scholars did not consider the women’s language an element of the standard language that required to be changed (Inoue 2006). Despite the issue of gender differences was debated, women gained more rights at work and the right to obtain prestigious jobs like men did, the schoolbooks continued to report and teach different models of speech for girls and boys. There were a big amount of dialogues where boys used the utterance-final particles *-da* and *-desu*, while girls kept using *-dawa*, *-none* and *-dakoto* (Nakamura 2005:19). This choice was made because “teaching linguistic sex differences was not considered to be a problem in terms of sex-equal education” (Nakamura 2005:19).

The women’s language was still idealized as the representative language of an innate femininity of the Japanese women.

Starting from the 1970s, the beliefs of the feminist movements that were spreading through the Western countries spread in Japan as well. Various feminist movements were founded and their influence brought a lot of women to reduce their use of women’s language (Endō 2006:99). The result was that some women did not use the *teyodawa kotoba*, and their expressions became closer to the way of speaking of men. Furthermore, young girls started to use the *ryūkōgo* (catch-words) which consisted in student slang, newly coined words and abbreviations. “*Ryūkōgo* was formally known as *hayari-kotoba*, “fashionable language,” and not recommended for use by women [...] *Shinsen onna yamato daigaku* severely admonishes women that they “should on no account use *hayari-kotoba* or vulgar expressions” (Endō 2006:100)

The major changes brought by the *hayari-kotoba* consisted on:

- the use of newly coined words for men like *Paseri-kun* (a man without girlfriend) and *Batsu-ichi* (a man who already went through one divorce);
- the addition of *chan* after the name of children and intimate friends:

---

<sup>17</sup> Tadatoshi, OKUBO *Machi no gengo gaku* [Linguistics on the street], Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 1956, p.109.

- the addition of the suffix *-mono*, ex. *kuro-mono* (black thing); *namake-mono* (lazy person);
- the addition of the prefix *chō-* before adjectives, like *chō-nemui* (super sleepy) or *chō-samui* (super cold);
- the creation of onomatopoeia through the double repetition of a word, like *boke-boke* (exhausted) or *saku saku* (promptly).

Through the analysis of Yonekawa Akihiko works, the linguist Endō has identified the four social elements that favored the remarkable diffusion of the *ryūkōgo*:

- (1) The breakdown of the value system, [...] when the so-called “bubble economy” collapsed, leading to open rejection of adult and male-centered societal values.
- (2) Social advances in the 1980s that led to greater awareness of gender equality.
- (3) Separating sex from love marriage; this can be seen in the popularity of “love games” as one emblem of stylish city life promoted by women’s magazines and other popular media; in these media, men are viewed as “fashion accessories” for women.
- (4) Aggressive marketing campaigns that targeted women through the height of the bubble economy. Women are now pivotal to the present consumption-oriented economy.<sup>18</sup>

Women used *ryūkōgo* as a tool that made them feel free from the grasp of the language restrictions that were “imposed” on them by women’s language. The *ryūkōgo* are still largely used by young girls and sometimes by women as well. Depending on the social status and on the conversational situation, many Japanese women often dismiss the “pure” women’s language in favor of a less restrictive “rude language” that includes slang expressions and *ryūkōgo*.

---

<sup>18</sup> Orié ENDŌ, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women’s Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006, p.110.

## **CHAPTER 2 - Dominant ideas behind women's language**

Women's language is often simplified by the linguistic ideology as the natural language that belongs to the female gender. It is usually associated with the feminine attitudes that girls and women should show along with feminine speech.

In this chapter we will get familiar with the social pressure undergone by the female gender in order to meet the social expectations given by of the common sense. We will also identify the linguistic strategies adopted by girls and women to avoid the linguistic restrictions of women's language. Moreover, we will analyze the techniques used by the mass media and certain government agencies to spread their preferred language ideology among the Japanese population.

### **2.0 Introduction**

The need to feel part of a group or a community pushes humans to follow the "rules" of the group. This means that for many women it is necessary to use a specific women's language to help them not feel excluded from their community.

This section is focused on the mentalities that take shape due to language ideologies, which cause socio-cultural expectations within many communities.

### **2.1 Idealization of the female gender**

In many civilizations, past and present, the economy has been decisive for the definition of gender roles and it often pushed the society to idealize the female gender. In order to facilitate the idealization of the female gender, societies created an ideology around the woman figure. The ideology of women's language is a very important part of the women's ideology. When the speech is polite and indirect it is considered to mirror the gentle and submissive nature of an idealized woman. To ensure that the female gender reflected the feminine characteristics embodied in the ideology of women's language, throughout history there have been written etiquettes books and texts that explain what behaviors and expressions were thought to be appropriate for a woman, and which ones ought to be avoided.

Within several socio-cultural environment the image of the talkative woman is considered negative because is opposed to the image of the quiet woman proposed by the language ideology. Often it has been easy to associate the image of a verbose woman to the image of a person with negative connotations.

The need to avoid what dominant ideology considered a negative image of the female gender, brought many women to follow very carefully the “rules” written in the disciplinary books, effectively censoring themselves as an effect.

### **2.1.1 Ideologies behind the etiquette books**

The etiquette books, as we saw in the previous chapter, are texts that explain the behavioral and linguistic norms that Japanese women ought to follow. The thought that the women’s language should be more polite and indirect than the men’s language is widely spread across many places of the world. Robin Lakoff, in her work *Language and Woman’s Place* writes:

We were all taught as children: women’s speech differs from men’s in that women are more polite, which is precisely as it should be, since women are the preservers of morality and civility; and we speak around women in an especially “polite” way in return, eschewing the coarseness of ruffianly men’s language: no slang no swear words, no off color remarks.<sup>19</sup>

In the case of Japan, the ideology of the meek woman that talks in a feminine way arrived during the Japanese feudal age, when the Confucian precepts and the birth of a sex segregated society defined the roles of the two genders (Reynolds 1990).

Starting from the Kamakura period, texts have been constantly written which indicated the appropriate behaviors and expressions for a woman and this continued until the Edo period, when real etiquette books, the *jokun sho*, appeared. In her essay *Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender* Nakamura explains that this happened because

---

<sup>19</sup> Robin, LAKOFF, *Language and Woman’s Place*, Harper & Row, 1975, p.51

The court-women speech created by women working in the imperial court in the fourteenth century was exploited to reinforce the norms of feminine speech by disciplinary books discourses from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.<sup>20</sup>

This genre of books survived through the centuries and are still being published nowadays. In fact, they are among the bestselling genres in Japan.

In her work *Discursive Construction of the Ideology of "Women's Language"* Nakamura Momoko adequately summarizes the women's language ideology that is behind the moral textbooks published in the Meiji period and in the Taisho period.

The fundamental rules that characterize the disciplinary books published in the Meiji period can be explained, in a nutshell, with the following statements: "Being unsociable and inhospitable is not suitable for women's innate nature"; "Watch your language and do not speak too much"; "Verbosity deprives one of grace" (Nakamura 2003)

In the Meiji period women were preferred to be as less talkative as possible and to be hospitable. The fact that women should not talk too much, and should refrain from saying superfluous comments, was one of the most important "rules". Nakamura mentions some key phrases from the disciplinary book *Onna daigaku hyōron* written by Kaibara Ekiken: "women's talk is useless" and "a talkative woman should leave (a man should divorce a talkative wife)" (Nakamura 2003:9)

Basing on what was written in the moral textbooks, talking too much was not only seen to be a legitimate reason for divorce, but it could bring a number of other problems. In *Kinsei onna daigaku* is written: "A mother should not joke nor use language carelessly. She must be the model for children" (Nakamura 2003:10). On the other hand, talking too little was seen as a bad sign too, because it could be interpreted as lack of intelligence. According to Nakamura, the intellectual Yokoi Tokio "continues to argue that the reason why husbands, fathers, and brothers are attracted to women at bars and brothels is because their women at home are lacking in communication technique" (Nakamura 2003:13).

---

<sup>20</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, "Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications", *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.41.

The concept of the good wife-wise mother continued to be the widely approved and spread. The Phd Nakamura states that in the disciplinary books of the Meiji period the idea of the good wife-wise mother became one of the guiding rules for women's language:

It has become clear that the Meiji disciplinary books succeeded in preserving the category of "women's language use" constructed in the Edo disciplinary books by flexibly re-defining it within the modern ideologies of state-as-family and good-wife-wise-mother.<sup>21</sup>

The etiquette books mentioned several Confucian and Buddhist precepts, and most of these required a certain behavior from the Japanese women.

During the period of the establishment of the modern education system in 1872 as well, in the end of the nineteenth century, the division boys-girls continued to be applied. As we saw in the first chapter, in the girl's schools different subjects were taught than in the boy's schools. There was no homogeneity in the subject taught, and neither was there in the textbooks used.

Nakamura quotes a part from the *Sōga shoogaku onna reishiki* (Illustrated Elementary School for Women's Manners), which was one of the most popular moral textbooks released from the Ministry of Education in 1882:

When you speak, do not speak in too high a voice or too low a voice, do not speak too slowly or too rapidly. What you should always watch is the use of immoderate words and popular words in front of others. Even if you hear those words used, try not to use them yourself.<sup>22</sup>

In the last two sentences, it is noticeable that the text is suggesting to avoid schoolgirl speech, the type of speech constituted by "popular words".

It is also interesting to see how schoolgirl speech, once far removed from the proscriptions of dominant linguistic ideology, started to appear in the etiquette books of the twentieth

---

<sup>21</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, "Discursive Construction of the Ideology of "Women's Language": Women's Disciplinary Books/Moral Textbooks and the Unification of Written and Spoken Languages in the Meiji/Taisho Periods (1868-1926)", *Nature-People-Society: Science and the Humanities* 35, 2003, p.14.

<sup>22</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, "Discursive Construction of the Ideology of "Women's Language": Women's Disciplinary Books/Moral Textbooks and the Unification of Written and Spoken Languages in the Meiji/Taisho Periods (1868-1926)", *Nature-People-Society: Science and the Humanities* 35, 2003, p.17.

century, right after it became part of women's language. In the work *Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender*, Nakamura explains briefly why schoolgirl speech went from being the language of some Japanese schoolgirls to women's language and the language of the average female consumer:

It was urgent to distinguish students into schoolgirls and schoolboys, into sex objects, and prosperous future citizens. The construction of schoolgirls transformed female students from dangerous women, who might attempt to become citizens equal to men, into sexual objects for men. Sexualization is always an effective means of genderization. That is why intellectuals' metalinguistic discourses that paid critical attention to *teyo-dawa* speech of female students and the use of speech in novels became possible, meaningful, and acceptable.<sup>23</sup>

It can therefore be deducted that the process of sexualization of a group accentuates the genderization of the group. Genderization happens also through linguistic rules and stylistic choices. When the women of a group or a community are pushed to use a specific language register that limits their freedom of expression, then there is an implementation of the sexualization of the female group through the imposition of limits to language use and structures.

In the case of the schoolgirl speech, turning women into men's objects of desire lowered their position in the social hierarchy. In this way Confucian ideas about women's lower position in society kept being perpetrated (Nakamura 2012).

The sexualization of the female gender is a common practice in many western and eastern countries. The American scholar Mary Talbot explains that "asymmetries in the language use of women and men are enactments of male privilege" (Talbot 2005:474).

The sexualization of the female gender through dominant language ideology is usually seen to constitute "common sense". In many cultures an ideology according to which "women's speech is claimed to reflect their feminine nature" can be found (Nakamura-2012:23), given this idea a quasi universal meaning as well.

---

<sup>23</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, "Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications", *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.39.

The stereotyped image of women's feminine nature requires females to be gentle, discreet and polite; this is why men tend to avoid the use of slang or rude expressions when there are women nearby. After all, "there are ladies present" (Lakoff 1975:76). Also the famous Danish linguist Otto Jespersen "thought women [spoke] more 'refined' than men, and claimed that this was reflected in women's instinctive avoidance of coarse, vulgar, and abusive language" (Cameron 2005:450).

The idea that women's language is not imposed by anybody, but is instead an innate and natural language that belongs to women's nature, is an idea that justifies the existence of and linguistic proscriptions in disciplinary books: the aim of these books is to help women to discover and fortify their innate feminine nature.

By evaluating this concepts, it is easily understandable why "the long history of etiquette books has made women's speech the object of control and regulation" (Nakamura 2012:25).

In contemporary Japan the etiquette books are still widely bought and their influence does not seem to be declining. In June 2008, Nakamura made a quick search on amazon.com, writing the words *josei* (woman) and *hanashikata* (way of speaking) and wrote down the first seven titles that appeared:

- (1) *Josei wa hanashikata de kyū wari kawaru.*  
[Women Can Change 90% by Changing Their Way of Speaking.]
- (2) *Zettai shiawase ni nareru hanashi kata no himitsu: Anata o kaeru "kotoba no purezento."*  
[The Secrets of Speech That Bring Absolute Happiness: "Gifts of Language" That Change You].
- (3) *Josei no ustukushii hanashikata to kaiwa jutsu: Kōkan o motareru kotoba no manā.*  
[Woman's Beautiful Way of Speaking and Conversation Techniques: Language Manners That Make a Favorable Impression.]
- (4) *Sō omei na josei no hanashikata.*  
[How a Wise Woman Should Speak.]
- (5) *"Hinkaku aru otona" ni naru tame no aisareru nihongo.*  
[Japanese Language To be Loved: How to Become "an Elegant Adult".]
- (6) *Ereganto na manā to hanashikata: Miryokuteki na josei ni naru 77 no ressun.*

[Elegant Manner and Way of Speaking: Seventy-seven Lessons To Become a Charming Woman.]

(7) *Bijin no hanashikata: Sono hitokoto de anata wa aisareru.*

[How a Beauty Speaks: Just One Word, Then You Will Be Loved.]<sup>24</sup>

Already by only reading the titles of these books, it is noticeable how a linguistic ideology of the Meiji period is still very influent in the present etiquette books. They suggest to be read because speaking in the proscribed way promises that “you will be loved”, or “bring absolute happiness”, or that they will altogether transform any woman into a respectable and charming person.

### **2.1.2 Ideology of the women as “chatterboxes” and the “humorless” gender**

The ideology that a quiet woman behaves properly compared to a verbose one is given by the fact that female speeches are often linked to gossip or to exchange of frivolous information. Moreover, the idea is widely spread that women talk a lot, compared to men, and that such verbosity is unnerving. Due to this stereotype, the ideological proscription that women speak only when necessary allows men to enforce the power asymmetry between the male and the female gender, and it also gives the impression that talkative women are not smart.

Deborah Tannen in her book *You Just Don't Understand* quotes a joke that finds its humor based on this stereotype, and which is representative of the ideology behind the image of the verbose woman:

A woman sues her husband for divorce. When the judge asks her why she wants a divorce, she explains that her husband has not spoken to her in two years. The judge asks the husband, “Why haven't you spoken to your wife in two years?” He replies, “I didn't want to interrupt her”.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Momoko NAKAMURA, “Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications”, *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.24.

<sup>25</sup> Deborah, TANNEN, *You just don't understand: women and men in conversation*, New York : William Morrow, 1990, p.188.

This joke draws on the widely spread the stereotype that women tend to be chatterboxes who tend to interrupt men. Such a belief has actually been proved wrong already many decades ago, nevertheless this stereotype continues to have a strong influence in the sociocultural contexts of many countries.

Tannen writes of this stereotype:

Studies have shown that if women and men talk equally in a group, people think the women talked more [...] men think that women talk a lot because they hear women talking in situations where men would not: on the telephone; or in social status with friends; [...] in private speaking.<sup>26</sup>

The scholar Mary Talbot in her article *Gender Stereotypes* writes about the studies on gender stereotypes conducted by Graddol and Swann where they state that women are “consistently portrayed as chatterboxes, endless gossips or strident nags patiently endured or kept in check by strong and silent men” (Talbot 2005:469).

A large number of women are afraid that they could reflect this stereotype; therefore they speak freely only when they are in the company of close friends. On the other hand, when they are in a big group, especially in a gender mixed group, they speak the least possible because they do not feel comfortable. “When men are present women are ‘onstage’, insofar as they feel they must watch their behaviour more” (Tannen 1990:93).

The social pressure that induce women to censor themselves explains another stereotype, the one that women do not tell jokes. In reality, women make jokes too, but a lot of them prefer to tell them when they are in a comfortable environment together with intimate friends. “Women are most comfortable talking when they feel safe and close, among friends and equals, whereas men feel comfortable talking when there is a need to establish and maintain their status in a group” (Tannen 1990:94).

The fear of being considered frivolous and empty-headed pushes many women to place themselves in the background when they are in public. Due to this general attitude, it has been demonstrated that women both talk less than men in the public sphere and that they are also interrupted more often when compared to the male gender. As an effect, public

---

<sup>26</sup> Deborah, TANNEN, *You just don't understand: women and men in conversation*, New York : William Morrow, 1990, p.77.

talk is mostly dominated by men, and this caused the birth of a further stereotype: the one where “women are deficient language users” (Talbot 2005:481).

The PhD Talbot states:

Research have shown schoolboys dominating classrooms, with the encouragement of their teachers, men doing most of the talking in university seminars and academic conferences, men dominating management meetings, and so on. However, mere empirical evidence such as this is unlikely to undermine the deeply held belief that women talk more than men, a belief entrenched in the gossip stereotype. It is unlikely that such research has reduced the number of newspaper cartoons using women’s verbal incontinence as the butt of their humor.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the polemical tone in the last sentence that underlines Professor Talbot’s position on that matter, it is objectively true that most of the time the various faces of reality are grouped and categorized in a single stereotype.

The image of the female chatterbox and the humorless gender is an influential stereotype that is often linked to all women or to “specific categories” of women, such as the mother in law or the spinster. These are in fact categories of women stereotyped as verbose, hateful and intrusive. An efficient way that several women adopt in order to avoid stereotypical labels is to laugh about jokes on women. However, by doing so they indirectly show that they, too, are aware of their feminine deficiencies, and therefore help to strengthen the stereotype (Tannen 1990).

Due to psychological and social pressures, the female gender contributes to affirm the superiority of the male gender. Women’s language is therefore a tool with which the female gender helps to affirm the power of the male gender.

Moreover, women who show interest in jokes about the stereotypes of the female gender avoid to be labeled as humorless, but by doing so they indirectly enforce the andro-centric message of those jokes at the same time.

---

<sup>27</sup> Mary, TALBOT, “Gender Stereotypes: Reproduction and Challenge”, *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p.480.

In her work *Language and Woman's Place* Robin Lakoff writes about sexist jokes:

A comedian may be very sensitive to ethnic slurs, never be caught dead telling Polish jokes, anti-Semitic jokes, or any of the other no-no's, but he will include lots of antiwomen jokes in his repertoire. No one (with the exception of a few of those chronic female malcontents who obviously have no sense of humor) will be offended, and generally the women in the audience will laugh as loud as the men. (They'd better, or they'll be accused of typical female humorlessness or stupidity because they "don't get it.")<sup>28</sup>

## **2.2 Girls' social interactions at school**

Generally, linguistic ideology is internalized during childhood, and crucially so when the child starts going to school. The school environment reflects in part the socio-cultural and the socio-linguistic diversity of the country where a person lives: there are hierarchies to be respected, not only between teachers and students, but also among students.

Girls at school seems to be disadvantaged in terms of language, because in such context they have a limited range of expressions compared to boy's language. They have to choose carefully the topics they want to talk about, and they have to use a proper tone of voice.

As a results of these restrictions, many girls decide to adopt different interactional strategies from those used by boys. Moreover, some girls follow the language rules imposed by existing linguistic norms, but some girls prefer to express themselves through a language different from women's language.

The linguistic ideology of women's language is not followed by every schoolgirl, and there is considerable linguistic variation in their speech (see below).

---

<sup>28</sup> Robin, LAKOFF, *Language and Woman's Place*, Harper & Row, 1975, p.82.

### **2.2.1 Examples of interpersonal interactions adopted by girls in the school environment**

At school, boys are often the pupils more exuberant and noisy. This condition may be due to the fact that girls are usually more often or more severely scolded than boys.

According to Robin Lakoff in *Language and Woman's Place*, there are differences in the education imparted to girls and boys during growth:

As children, women are encouraged to be “little ladies.” Little ladies don't scream as vociferously as little boys, and they are chastised more severely for throwing tantrums or showing temper: “high spirits” are expected and therefore tolerated in little boys; docility and resignation are the corresponding traits expected of little girls.<sup>29</sup>

When these different educational strategies are applied, one of the results is the tendency that some schoolboys show a more enterprising and lively attitude at school.

The scholar Joan Swann in her article *Schooled Language* states that usually in an average elementary school class there is a “male dominance in classroom settings, with female students having less opportunity to participate in class discussion” (Swann 2005:626).

The PhD Joan Swann refers to the studies conducted by Roger Hewitt and Amy Sheldon, who analyzed the attitudes of pupils of several elementary school classes. Both the scholars agreed that the two genders had different interactional strategies with their classmates: the girls tended to be cooperative, while the boys were inclined to be competitive. Swann pays attention in the part of the study where it has been noticed that among the boys there was cooperation, but above all there were “ferocious levels of competitive individualism” (Swann 2005:628).

It has been found that the students' interactional strategies differs depending on the gender “female groups and female conversations are characterized as cooperative and egalitarian, and male groups/conversations as competitive and hierarchical” (Swann 2005:629). The girls often try to negotiate, while the boys tend to dominate.

---

<sup>29</sup> Robin, LAKOFF, *Language and Woman's Place*, Harper & Row, 1975, p.11.

About the different way of how boys and girls are raised, girls are scolded more often than boys if they try to impose their thoughts on others, or if they show a highly competitive attitude, because (in many socio-cultural contexts) those are not the appropriate behaviors a young woman should show. Therefore, many girls learn more easily to mediate and seek compromises. Boys, on the contrary, are less inclined to such behaviour because it is more tolerated since they are destined to become men with “high spirits”.

In support of this thesis The PhD Joan Swann shows the analysis of a group project conducted by the ESRC-funded project “Spoken Language and New Technology” (SLANT) carried on in the University of East Anglia in 1991.

The project consisted in giving a group task to a girl and a boy. The group work was video-recorded. Swann is impressed by the findings made by a couple of members of the work team while they were watching the video. She writes about this:

Two female members of the SLANT team, on seeing this video, [...] arguing that the boy took a dominant role in the interaction, exercising more control over the process of writing, whereas the girl was more cooperative and supportive, seeking agreement from the boy for any suggestions she made. These team members also related their interpretation to gender, seeing the interaction as a classic example of “male dominance”.<sup>30</sup>

Swann writes that the girl sought support and approval from her mate every time she made a suggestion. The boy instead, was less incline to seek advises from the girl, and he preferred to write down his ideas without necessarily expecting her approval.

This might be consistent with a reading of the interaction that saw the girl as having a more cooperative speaking style that also led to her “giving away power,” and that saw they boy as “dominant”. However, the two students also expressed different views on how they should be working, or perhaps how they wished to work. The girl

---

<sup>30</sup> Joan SWANN, “Schooled Language: Language and Gender Educational Settings”, *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p.628.

was insistent that they had to agree, whereas the boy never mentioned this, and occasionally seemed slightly exasperated by the girl's insistence.<sup>31</sup>

The natural attitude of the boy was to highlight his ideas without looking for a compromise with her mate. The girl on the other hand, was irremovable about the fact that any decision should be taken together and that complicity between them was essential in the course of the task.

Swann writes about the cooperative attitude of the girl:

In this context there seemed to be an ambiguity in the girl's use of question forms or intonation to solicit agreement: these could be read as supportive/cooperative, but also as part of an overall strategy to impose her own definition on the working relationship, with which she expected the boy to comply – that this would be a relationship based on mutual agreement.<sup>32</sup>

It is interesting to notice how the girl managed to obtain the cooperation of the boy and to convince him to write her ideas too without directly imposing them. In order to achieve these results, the girl spoke and asked questions using a certain tone of voice. This is a fact that demonstrates that a right intonation and a gentle way of speaking are still very effective elements that affect a woman's implementation in her communicative purposes starting from an early age.

This phenomenon can be seen in several socio-linguistic backgrounds, including the Japanese one, where the social system is explicitly or implicitly andro-centric.

### **2.2.2 Redefinition of speech identities in a Japanese high school**

Different interactional strategies between genders are also found in Japanese schools. One of the most significant grammatical elements that reflects the genderization of the Japanese language are the first person pronouns.

---

<sup>31</sup> Joan SWANN, "Schooled Language: Language and Gender Educational Settings", *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p.628.

<sup>32</sup> Joan SWANN, "Schooled Language: Language and Gender Educational Settings", *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p.628.

In Japan, the genderization of the first person pronouns starts when a child goes to elementary school. Until the last year of kindergarten “both girls and boys, often call themselves by their first names, as that is how their family members call them” (Nakamura 2012:36).

In elementary school, both teachers and parents urge children to refer to themselves by using the appropriate pronouns: “*watashi* for girls and *boku* for boys, because the use of pronoun rather than the first name is considered to be a common sensual, standard way of a Japanese grown-up speaker” (Nakamura 2012:36).

*Boku* and *watashi* are the most used pronouns as well as the ones considered the standard pronouns. However, since schools are small universes that reflect the dynamics of the society, there is a wider range of pronouns used at school in addition of *boku* and *watashi*. This happens especially when children become teenagers (so in middle school and in high school) and they try to define their identity.

The most common variants of *boku* for boys are the more masculine *ore* and the “old fashioned” *washi*, while the variants of *watashi* for girl are the more formal *watakushi* and *atakushi*, and the less formal *atashi* and *uchi*.

Despite there are variants to use instead of *boku* and *watashi*, sometimes Japanese schoolboys and schoolgirls (especially schoolgirls) feel imprisoned within these “schemes” and try to escape from them by using the first personal pronouns of the opposite gender.

For several girls the use of the female first person pronouns places limits on their communications skills, especially when they have to compete with boys.

The Japanese female first person pronouns belong to a language that reflects an androcentric social system, ergo a female speaker faces more difficulties in expressing her thoughts directly openly with a sharp tone of voice; she risks to sound vulgar.

Young Japanese girls are conscious of these constraints caused by the rules of women’s language. Many teenage girls rebel against these “linguistic imposition” by using male pronouns. This is their way to feel free and to affirm their “strong” personality.

Reynolds writes:

What we see here is a case of conflict behavior consciously initiated by a large group of female speakers who are fully aware of the disadvantage of female speech in school situations where they are expected to compete with boys for good grades and choose to ignore traditions openly.<sup>33</sup>

An interesting example that shows how the first person pronouns are exchanged in order to find and express one's own identity is the study conducted from the scholar Ayumi Miyazaki. In her work *Japanese Junior High School Girls and Boys* she went to a Japanese public junior high school sited near the city of Tokyo. She analyzed the attitudes of five groups of boys and sex group of girls and studied the different ways they used the personal pronouns.

In the five groups of boys studied by Miyazaki everyone was using *ore*, but not everyone was using it in the same way.

The first three groups were formed from boys who belonged to at least one sport club. In Japanese schools, the boys who belong to a sport club are considered the coolest guys; therefore they are placed in the highest step of the school "social ladder".

Since the boys of these three groups were very cool, they did not show any difficulties in using the first person pronoun *ore* instead of *boku* more frequently than the other boys of the school, because they gained the right to use it.

A boy explained to Miyazaki that "only very cool men say *ore*", therefore the members of these three groups find themselves in the figure of the "popular and cool guy", and they shape their linguistic habits around the identities they have built.

In the analysis of the groups of girls it is particularly interesting to see how many girls use several pronouns other than *watashi*, preferring the male variants in order to affirm their personality.

Group 1 was formed exclusively by girls. About this group Miyazaki writes:

The two core members of this group used *ore*, and three other members used both *ore* and *boku* or *boku* alone. There was also one girl who used *atashi* and *uchi*. This

---

<sup>33</sup> Katsue A, REYNOLDS, "Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition", *Aspects of Japanese women's language*, Edited by Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin, Tokyo: Kuroshio, 1990, p.140.

group had a distinctive subculture and language that both its members and other students considered *gehin* ‘vulgar’.<sup>34</sup>

Miyazaki explains that this group of girls was considered rude not only because of their linguistic choices, but also because of the topics they used to pick. As a matter of fact, those girls used to talk about various topics, included the ones that are considered inappropriate or even taboo for girls, like menstruation. Miyazaki quotes a couple of exclamations uttered by one of the two core members:

*Kinō no yoru ore no shikyū wa itteki mo dasanakatta...! Ore no shikyū shiboridashitai...!*

‘My [ore no] womb didn’t produce a single drop of blood last night! I want to squeeze my (ore no) womb’ ...!<sup>35</sup>

Speaking of menstrual blood and course of menstruation so explicitly is considered in “bad taste”. Moreover, the girl used the personal pronoun *ore* which is not only a male personal pronoun, but even more masculine than *boku*.

From these two simple sentences, it becomes clear that girls of group 1 did not show a use of personal pronouns considered appropriate and that they talked about inappropriate topics, too. These girls did not reflect the image of the ideal Japanese teenager, because they did not respect the linguistic norms as proscribed by the dominant ideology of women’s language. They were aware of how they looked in the eyes of the other students and the teachers, but they were not concerned about the fact that their linguistic strategies were far away from being accepted as part of the linguistic common sense.

About the other female groups Miyazaki writes:

Group 2 comprised four studious, pro-school girls who used *atashi*. All but one of this girls also used *uchi*. [...]

---

<sup>34</sup> Ayumi, MIYAZAKI, “Japanese Junior High School Girls’ and Boys’ First-Person Pronoun Use and Their Social World”, *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Edited by Okamoto Shigeko and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith, New York : Oxford University Press, 2004, p.262.

<sup>35</sup> Ayumi, MIYAZAKI, “Japanese Junior High School Girls’ and Boys’ First-Person Pronoun Use and Their Social World”, *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Edited by Okamoto Shigeko and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith, New York : Oxford University Press, 2004, p.262.

Group 3 was created when one girl who constantly used *boku* left Group 1 and formed a group with a girl who used mainly *atashi* and occasionally *uchi*. [...]

Group 4 consisted of two girls who used *atashi* and *uchi*. [...]

Group 5 had two members. One was a girl who constantly used *uchi*. [...] Another girl who used *atashi* and *uchi* [...]

Group 6 had only one member: a girl who was a loner and did not like belonging to a peer group. She used *atashi* and *ore*.<sup>36</sup>

The main difference between the girls of group 1 and the girls of the other groups is that the formers did not have any interest in studying and did not cooperate willingly neither with their classmates nor with the school staff. The girls of the other five groups, on the other hand, had a more positive attitude toward school and more sense of belonging in school clubs.

Every pupil interviewed by Miyazaki tended to use always the same first person pronoun that he/she choose to adopt, the one that suited more his/her personality.

From this information, it can be deduced that there were people in that school who used *ore* very often. There is a difference among the pupils who used it: the boys used it to affirm their high “status”, the girls instead used it to show they had a peculiar personality. Both gender used the pronoun *ore* as a tool that helped them to shape their identities; girls in particular needed it in order to confront existing traditions, morals, and language ideology (Miyazaki 2004).

### **2.3 The role of the woman in the working place**

After World War II the Confucian concept of the good wife – wise mother started to fade in Japan. In the same period started a process of women empowerment, which became *ore* prominent year by year.

Due to the struggle for women’s rights “the barriers between women and men were removed in most social and educational institutions” (Reynolds 1990:135). Many women

---

<sup>36</sup> Ayumi, MIYAZAKI, “Japanese Junior High School Girls’ and Boys’ First-Person Pronoun Use and Their Social World”, *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Edited by Okamoto Shigeko and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith, New York : Oxford University Press, 2004, p.263.

started to obtain prestigious jobs as company managers or politicians, jobs that used to belong to the male sphere.

There is however a major problem linked to women's workplaces: in many working environments the authority of some women is not fully recognized and respected.

Moreover, an aggravating element was constituted by the limited range of expressions and grammatical forms Japanese women had.

In the work *Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition* the PhD Reynolds states:

In order to be accepted as a "good" woman, a female speaker of Japanese must choose to talk nonassertively, indirectly, politely, deferentially: but in order to function as a supervisor, administrator, teacher, lawyer, doctor, etc. or as a colleague or associate, she must be able to talk with assurance.<sup>37</sup>

The problem lies in the part where a woman should talk with assurance but cannot due to the strong influence of the language ideology that does not allow women to get "straight to the point" without making them rude and/or impolite.

The sexualized and submissive image of the woman is still unconsciously rooted in the popular mind. For many people it is hard to accept that a woman can also speak with an authoritative tone instead of using a more indirect style.

The same applies also for the grammatical expressions that women chooses to use.

Reynolds writes:

The features of female speech can still be extensively observed among the majority of Japanese women, and some rules are even obligatory if the speaker is female. For example, as a woman I am not allowed to say to anybody, even to my younger siblings, *Tot-te-kure* 'Get (it) for me' using Informal-Benefactive-Imperative. [...] Some rules for gender-marking in Japanese are categorical, while in English rules are variable.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Katsue A., REYNOLDS, "Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition", *Aspects of Japanese women's language*, Edited by Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin, Tokyo: Kuroshio, 1990, p.135.

<sup>38</sup> Katsue A., REYNOLDS, "Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition", *Aspects of Japanese women's language*, Edited by Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin, Tokyo: Kuroshio, 1990, p.133.

The scholars Caja Thimm, Sabine C. Koch and Sabine Schey in their work *Communicating Gendered Professional Identity* explain how difficult it is for a woman who plays a leading role to speak with an authoritative tone.

Most of the women who hold an important position in the workplace prefer “cooperation strategy”: instead of imposing their authority by giving directives, they seek the cooperation of their subordinates.

In order to realize this interactional strategy they have to show certain attitudes, for instance “they thank their secretary much more often they finish a task”, while usually the average men supervisor “tend to comment more generally on the secretary’s skills or qualifications” (Caja Thimm, Sabine Koch, Sabine Schey 2005:543).

The three scholars also identified another interesting power strategy that has already been mentioned in this thesis: the indirect request. They state:

In a potential face-threatening situation, women use significantly more indirect requests than any other strategy, and they completely avoid orders or commands. [...] Men, on the other hand, show a greater preference than women for direct requests [...] women are typically more polite and less direct.<sup>39</sup>

They explained that the demand for a coffee made by a woman manager is usually expressed in this way: “*Coffee would be nice now, wouldn’t it?*”. On the other hand, the same request made by a manager man is more likely to be like this: “*And then make some coffee for me*”, or “*All right, and now you could make some coffee for me, please*” (Caja Thimm, Sabine Koch, Sabine Schey 2005:544).

The studies of Caja Thimm, Sabine Koch and Sabine Schey help us to comprehend what are the average attitudes and speech strategies of women in the most developed western countries. However, their work is very useful to also understand the linguistic strategies are adopted also by Japanese women in career, since they are very similar to the ones adopted by western female supervisors, especially because the Japanese women’s language is more limiting than the women’s language of many other countries. Therefore

---

<sup>39</sup> Sabine C., KOCH, Sabine, SCHEY, Caja, THIMM, “Communicating Gendered Professional Identity: Competence, Cooperation, and Conflict in the Workplace”, *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p.544.

Japanese women's too give their directives indirectly so that they can reflect the humility typical of women's language.

Unfortunately a similar attitude does not contribute to affirm a woman's superior position in a firm. On the contrary, it most likely jeopardizes her authority. In Japan the most important jobs are given to men, therefore "a woman in a superior position – a position defined as such by the male-established hierarchy – is expected to signify her authoritative power in her language, but female speech does not provide a means to this end" (Reynolds-1990:135).

In *Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition* Reynolds writes:

Interviews with women - [...] women critics, women in the media, women teachers, women politicians – suggest that they have never experienced any difficulties due to their language use. Yet later in the same interviews these women admit that their language does not have the same authoritative force as that of their male counterparts, that they must be aware of their language so they will not offend others, or be considered improper as women.<sup>40</sup>

### **2.3.1 Being a female teacher in a Japanese school**

Being a teacher in Japan appears to be a job slightly more stressing for women than for men. Despite the fact that the figure of the teacher is very important in Japanese culture, women's language does not allow to women teachers to interact with their students as they wish.

Many men teachers, depending on the circumstance, use both formal and informal language with their students. This helps them to establish a relationship of respect and trust with the students.

In the aforementioned *Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition* Reynolds talks about a professor who teaches translation of Tolstoj in junior high school, "this male teacher teaching Tolstoy in Japanese translation to seventh graders regularly switches the code from formal to informal at the point where he attempts to elicit responses from students" (Reynolds 1990:138).

---

<sup>40</sup> Katsue A., REYNOLDS, "Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition", *Aspects of Japanese women's language*, Edited by Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin, Tokyo: Kuroshio, 1990, p.136.

A woman teacher could not adopt this linguistic strategy without resulting unfeminine. There are female teachers that renounce to women's language in favor of an informal linguistic register, used to help them to establish a good relationship with their pupils. Moreover, many of them explained that they choose to use an informal register because "when they were students they always favored female teachers who talked a little bit like male teachers over those who talked too formally" (Reynolds 1990:139). But avoiding women's language in favor of a more informal and indirect speech does not help the image of these teachers, because they do not speak as expected from the language ideology.

These teachers are often blamed from schoolgirls parents for their linguistic choices. When a girl talks in a rude way, her parents tend to blame the school environment she is exposed to, especially her female teachers because teachers are usually one of the most very influencing life guide for a child. Usually the most plausible answer to the fact a girl does not use an appropriate language is: "perhaps, because of her (female) teacher's influence" (Reynolds 1990:139).

Reynolds quotes the words of a young Japanese female teacher extrapolated from an interview published in the *Asahi Shimbun* during the summer of 1984. The woman says "I tend to speak rough language with an imperative tone in spite of my efforts not to, perhaps, because I am a teacher. I always think regretfully that this is not good for me". In addition to the words of this woman, another interesting aspects of this interview is how is described the posture of the interviewee:

The reporter admiringly describes the teacher as sitting *onna-rashiku* on the floor with her hands arranged in front of the folded knees in a poised manner. [...] Sensing society's disapproval of her language, this female teacher is punishing herself while the same society (represented by the reporter) lauds her for her femininity.<sup>41</sup>

This suggests that female teachers are often undecided on how they should deal with their pupils and which language they should adopt with them. Whatever is the linguistic choice

---

<sup>41</sup> Katsue A., REYNOLDS, "Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition", *Aspects of Japanese women's language*, Edited by Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin, Tokyo: Kuroshio, 1990, p.139.

they decide adopting, there would be negative consequences either on the judgment of their teaching skills or on their image as “Japanese women”.

### **2.3.2 Being a female manager in a Japanese firm, the case of Mrs. Yoshida**

During the ‘70s the feminist movements of Western countries reached Japan as well. Due to the influence that those movements had on the Japanese society the number of women who covered management positions increased.

However, as we saw before, female manager faced a range of limited linguistic options caused by the structure of women’s language.

The case that is used as example in this paragraph is that of a woman manager analyzed by the scholar Miyako Inoue. In her book *Vicarious Language* Professor Inoue reports the linguistic strategy adopted by a Japanese woman manager who worked in a firm in the ‘90s. This manager is a woman called by the pseudonym Kiwako Yoshida, hired in 1976 in a Japanese firm when she was in her middle-twenties. By working in the same company for many years, Mrs. Yoshida received several promotions until she became the section chief of the General Affairs and Facility Management Office in 1990. Since Mrs. Yoshida became chief she ceased to speak according to the norm of women’s language, characterized by frequent use of *keigo*, and started to interact with a different linguistic style.

The language that characterized Mrs. Yoshida since she became a manager was a style polite but “flat”: she no longer used any type of utterance-endings except for *desu* and *masu*.

In this way she was not being impolite with anybody because *desu* and *masu* are two “polite auxiliary verbs used at the most normative – and therefore almost unmarked – speaking style in public institutional settings, including the white-collar workplace” (Inoue 2006:233).

Due to the avoidance of *keigo* and specific sentence final particles, Mrs. Yoshida made a linguistic choice that let her to give up her “femininity” in speech. On the other hand, her choice gave her the opportunity to interact with her co-workers through a neutral language

that did not indicate her gender, her age, her region of origin, and her hierarchical position within the company.

Mrs. Yoshida explained that neutral language revealed little information about her social and personal life, and helped her in “staying in the middle”. Inoue reports a statement made by Mrs. Yoshida:

I make it a rule to speak in *desu/masu* [*desu masu de hanasu*], whoever the person is, whether this person is a vendor or top management. You know, men really do not like a woman to stand out. If you stand out, if you are in a certain kind of position, such as being a woman and a manager at the same time, you are all the more resisted and pressured. You need to learn how to evade it. The best way is to become neither plus [*purasu*] nor minus [*mainasu*], neither the head nor the tail, just to stay in the middle, not too polite, not too rude, not to go too far ahead or too far behind, not to stand out, but not to be ignored either. This is my stance [*kore ga watashi no sutansu nandesu yo*]. So I stay in the middle in the manner of speaking, too.<sup>42</sup>

Mrs. Yoshida’s words help us to understand that women managers face more problems in expressing themselves and in interacting properly with their superiors and their subordinates because they occupy a place that was initially intended for men only.

The women’s language according to domain language ideology was conceived as a language for women who had to spend most of their time at home, speaking with reverence. Seeing a woman who has a prestigious social position that does not speak in women’s language with men is an image that still clashes with the female submission invoked by this language ideology.

Mrs. Yoshida choose to avoid the problem through the use of a language that did not reflect an andro-centric socio-cultural background. To show such language, she eliminated the linguistic elements linked to a patriarchal language system (*teyo-dawa kotoba* and *keigo*) in favor of a speech characterized by universally polite auxiliaries that allow to interact verbally in every social context that requires an informal register.

---

<sup>42</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.232.

Professor Inoue quotes two conversations that Mrs. Yoshida has with her coworkers. The first one is an exchange of information about the parking fee between Mrs. Yoshida and a younger male co-worker named Sasaki:

S: *de chūsharyō wa mata betsu ni... haratten-no kana?*

Y: *kore betsu ni ( ) ee ( ) kara desu*

S: *shanai de kariru toki wa dō suru-no kana, chūsharyō*

Y: *anone itadaite-masu ano ēkan no chika no ( ) ano nakaniwa ni natteru tokoro desu ne [...]*

S: *ha::un*

Y: *soko wa muryō desu*

S: *a sō desu ka*

Y: *anō senyō suru baai wa yūryō desu*

S: *un... yūryō donokurai desu ka?*

Y: *sanman hassen en [...]*

S: So have we been paying a parking fee separately?

Y: We (charge) this, yes, from ( )

S: How does this work within the company?

Y: Well, we charge a fee. You know, that place in the basement of “A”- Building ( ) in the courtyard. [...]

S: Yes, yes.

Y: Those areas are free of charge.

S: I see.

Y: Well, it is charged if it is for exclusive use.

S: How much is it?

Y: 38,000 yen [...]<sup>43</sup>

The second dialogue was between Mrs. Yoshida and another woman manager, Mrs. Kimura. Mrs. Yoshida gave to Mrs. Kimura a pair of crystal wine glasses for her birthday and they talked of the brand of the glasses:

---

<sup>43</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.236.

K: [while opening the present] WA:: KORE:: (BAKARA)JANA::I  
 Y: *kyonen issho ni mini itta toki sokono ga iitte yutteta-desho*  
 K: HE:: *yoku oboetete kureta-wane:: takai-noyo:: kore::*  
 Y: *kotoshiwa ne Kimura-san mo oodai dakara [laugh]...funpatsu shite to omotte...[laugh]*  
 K: *ma::honto ni::?*  
 Y: *dezain wari to ii-deshoo?*  
 K: *ureshii-wa::? ARA:: wain made tsukete kureta-no::?*  
 K: Oh my goodness, isn't this (Baccarat)?  
 Y: Last year when we were looking together, you were saying that you had wanted the one from that brand, weren't you?  
 K: Oh my goodness! How nice of you to remember that! This really IS expensive.  
 Y: Because you have finally made it to the forties this year... I decided to dish out for you, so...  
 K: Oh dear, you really?  
 Y: The design is not so bad, is it?  
 K: I really like it. Oh, you even got me wine, too? <sup>44</sup>

In the first dialogue with the male subordinate co-worker, Mrs. Yoshida used the copula *desu* at the end of every sentence. Only in her second phrase Mrs. Yoshida said the honorific *itadaite-masu* (receive). Overall, her expressions were polite and flat.

In the second conversation with the other female manager the different linguistic choices of Mrs. Yoshida and Mrs. Kimura are noticeable. The latter's speech presents several elements the women's language such as the sentence final particles *wane*, *noyo* and *wa*. Compared to Mrs. Kimura, Mrs. Yoshida seemed to show less emotions. This could be explained from the fact that her language register was flat, therefore not particularly expressive either.

In the work environment Mrs. Yoshida adopted the same linguistic strategy with everyone. Her linguistic neutrality turned out to be the best strategy for her, because the absence of women's language did not invite any co-worker to trying to discredit her position. This

---

<sup>44</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.242.

way of “staying in the middle” did not only help her to show her authority, but at the same time it helped her to gain respect both from her superiors and her subordinates.

### **2.3.3 Being a female politician in Japan**

In Japan, as in many other countries, women have the opportunity to engage in the world of politics. Despite the fact that this environment is predominantly occupied by male figures, there are several positions filled by women.

Since politicians rely a lot on their persuasive skills, it is very important for them to find a linguistic strategy that allows them to communicate effectively both with their voters and their colleagues. A wrong communication strategy constitutes a risk for their credibility. For a woman politician it is even more difficult to choose the proper communication strategy because her interlocutors and her audience give much importance to “how” she expresses the concepts she intend to communicate.

As we know, according to the dominant ideology of women’s language “form” is very important, sometimes even more important than the content. The influence of this ideology pervades also into the political world, where women engaged in politics have to pay much attention not only to what they say (like every politician) but also to how they say it: they have to choose the right tone of voice, the right amount of enthusiasm and politeness.

Among the audience, there are people that pay attention exclusively on “how” women politician talk, rather than listen to the contents of their speeches.

A very interesting example is given by Professor Nakamura in her work *Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender* where a Japanese rock musician named Yuya Uchida appeared on television to complain about the way of speaking of an “Upper House female member of government committee, Renho” (Nakamura 2012:26).

In 2009 the committee where the politician Renho belonged asked for the examination of the budgets of several ministers. Renho had a series of “face to face” on TV with some bureaucrats, and thanks to her unusual speech technique she received a lot of attention from the media. Only during the last meeting Renho softened her tones, but her outspokenness remained the same.

The day of the committee deliberation, the 70 years old musician Uchida made his appearance in the place where the members of the committee had gathered.

Nakamura extrapolated from the *Asahi Shinbun* published on November the 28<sup>th</sup> of 2009 the statement Mr. Uchida made to the reporters when they asked him why he had come:

“The screening itself really shows democracy in action, but watching Renho on TV, I got angry at her rude way of speaking. That’s why I came here today.” [But, when asked about Renho on that very day, he said,] “Today she was feminine. Her voice got hoarse and I felt pity for her”.<sup>45</sup>

This is a rather unusual reason given by the Japanese rockstar for his appearance. He publicly complained about the politician’s speech style. He did not express his point of view about the divergent opinions during the meeting, but only said that “the screening shows democracy in action”, and then focused on the way Renho was speaking. Mr. Uchida disapproved the form of Renho’s words, rather than the content of her statements. His statement seems contradictory: initially he said he did not like the rudeness of Renho’s language, but then he said she was too feminine and he felt pity for her, probably because her voice sounded weak. “He got angry at her way of speaking, not at what she said. And he felt pity for her on the day, not because she stopped attacking the bureaucrats, but because her way of speaking sounded feminine” (Nakamura 2012:26).

This case shows that language ideologies prevent some people to “take seriously” the figure of female politicians.

This need to pay a lot of attention to the form of women’s speeches pushes the content of those speeches in the background or, as in the case of the singer Uchida, ignores them. In this way the image of an influential woman can be easily discredited in the eyes of the public because she is too rude or too weak.

---

<sup>45</sup> Momoko, NAKAMURA, “Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications”, *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p26.

## **2.4 Fear of the “death of women’s language” and the influence of the mass-media on preserving it**

In Japan the issue of women’s language has always been a controversial topic that has raised astonishment and indignation over the years.

When the schoolgirl speech was spreading in the nineteenth century, many people were complaining about the contamination of women’s language. These protests against the “contamination” and the progressive “death” of women’s language continued to appear cyclically during World War I, after the end of World War II and during the bubble economy of the ‘80s. By looking at these historical periods, it is noticeable that the feeling of women’s language being in decline has always been perceived when the country is going through a period of economic crisis or of economic growth. In short, during a period of social and economic changes the fear of the imminent death of women’s language arises.

Japanese society has always sought an equilibrium between the acceptance of socio-economic changes and the need of maintaining traditions. Therefore, every time Japan has undergone a period characterized by socio-economic and socio-political changes, it also started to fear that all these changes could result in the disappearance of women’s language, considered one of the most traditional elements of Japanese society (Inoue 2006).

Studies on women’s language belie the theory according to which this language has always existed. It is a paradox to believe that the *teyodawa kotoba*, which in the nineteenth century was considered as the major causes of the contamination of Japanese language and women’s language.

As we saw in the previous chapter, women’s language was not a widely used language in the past, it became spread and more uniform only 150 years ago. Furthermore, it is not a static language since it has often been subject to linguistic changes. Yet, due to the influence of the ideology of women’s language, in the last century, “it has been assumed that women’s language has naturally evolved from women’s actual speech” (Nakamura 2012:22).

The widespread idea that women's language is being contaminated or in disarray is an idea that returned regularly in the past 150 years. The elements that were not considered to be part of women's language were :“rough voice”, “vulgar language”, “men's language”, “speaking in a loud voice” and “ungrammatical language” (Inoue 2006:175) In *Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender* Nakamura explains that every year in the ‘readers’ column’ of many newspapers, some readers complain that “recently” women's language is increasingly being contaminated and that it is likely to disappear. Not only newspaper readers, but also influential linguists have, over the years, supported this view of a slow but steady contamination of women's language.

Nakamura shows three very explicit examples about the “catastrophic” thoughts that many people have on women's language.

The first example are the words of the linguist Fumihiko Otsuki, who in his work *Nihon hoogen no bunpu kuiki* (The distribution of Japanese dialects) published in 1905 wrote:

It is disgusting to hear a phrase recently popular among female students, such as *yokutte yo* ‘all right’. Before the Meiji Restoration, the wives of *shogun*, feudal lords, and Tokugawa retainers all used elegant language. As a lady's language shows her dignity, women should watch their language.<sup>46</sup>

The second example reported by Nakamura are the words of the linguist Kooichi Hoshina extrapolated from his work *Kokugo to nihon seishin* (National Language and Japanese Spirit), published in 1936, where he wrote: “Recently in our country, the language of young men and young women has declined dramatically” (Nakamura 2012:28).

The last example is a small part of a letter of a girl that wrote to the *Asahi Newspaper* in 1999: “Recently, it seems noteworthy that speech of young women, including mine, has gotten worse” (Nakamura 2012:28).

The reason why Nakamura stressed the word “recently” in all the three cases is to show that: “Japanese people have complained about the ‘recent’ corruption of women's speech

---

<sup>46</sup> Momoko, NAKAMURA, “Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications”, *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p 28.

for over 150” (Nakamura 2012:28). This shows that the language ideology has deeply influenced a part of the population, including some Japanese linguists. Due to this ideology, all the dialect expressions, sentences without appropriate use of *keigo* and slang expressions are interpreted as the symptom of the decline of women’s language.

The period in which fear about a contamination of women’s language reached its peak was during the years of the bubble economy, that is, between the end of the ‘80s and the beginning of the ‘90s. During the bubble economy, Japan faced an astonishing economic growth during which a lot of women succeeded to obtain a jobs outside their reach before. So women, too, played consistently an important role in the growth of the economy. This change of the woman position within society, however, also led to the fears that the differentiation of women’s language and men’s language was diminishing and that the former was destined to disappear (Inoue 2006). In order to raise awareness on the subject, the National Language Council (*Kokugo Shingikai*) and the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) tried to raise the issue by inviting the citizens to send them their thoughts on women’s language. Moreover, a lot of people were also invited to answer to several public surveys on women’s language. Furthermore, a number of intellectuals and historians tried to reconstruct the history of women’s language in order to show that women’s language was a traditional language that had remained intact for centuries. In *Vicarious Language* Miyako Inoue writes:

Scholars looked for “women’s language” – in both spoken and written texts, in both the present and the past. Disparate and highly localized cases from the records of various historical periods, including the use of terms exclusively by sequestered groups such as court ladies, Buddhist nuns, and women in the pleasure quarters, were set into an imaginary and continuous time line from the ancient past to the present. “Women’s language” thus was brought into being as a self-evident scholarly object.<sup>47</sup>

The scholars, influenced by a strong belief in language ideology, tried to show “concrete evidences” about the presumed ancient history and tradition of women’s language. They

---

<sup>47</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.167.

tried to awake the conscience of citizens so that they would be more aware of the real danger women's language was facing: extinction.

#### **2.4.1 Readers columns of the major newspapers**

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, a large number of Japanese people wrote their opinion about women's language to newspapers. The majority of these letters reported personal testimonies, where readers had witnessed a woman acted rude. Many readers implied that those individual episodes were representative of the whole socio-cultural situation of Japan. Therefore, the letters that were published in the readers' columns helped to exacerbate the thought that women's language was disappearing.

In her book *Vicarious Language* Professor Inoue quotes a series of readers' letters that show some of the most widely spread thoughts about the decline of women's language during the years of the bubble economy. In this paragraph, some of them are quoted in order to comprehend the popular thoughts expressed in these letters.

In May 1991, *Asahi Shimbun* published a letter written by a forty-seven years old housewife from Yokohama. The housewife began her letter with a complaint about a rude expressions she heard from a woman at a wedding: the woman said *anta* (you) and the sentence final particle *da-yo* which is considered rather direct.

After having described that episode, the housewife started to complain about the widely spread impoliteness among the Japanese women:

When I was a child and traveled in Kyoto for the first time, *jochū-san* [a female employee at an inn] gave us a warm welcome by saying "*Oideyasu*" [welcome]. Thought I was a child, I was touched and thought what beautiful language it was. I know that many women have high *san-kō* [three highs] expectations for a husband, but when they use such vulgar language, I wonder if they really deserve such a man?<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.176.

The three highs represent: high income, high social status and height. According to the housewife, a woman that does not use properly women's language is not worthy of a man that has the three heights, and therefore should not have such high ambitions.

A letter similar to the previous one was published the same day on the same newspaper. The person that wrote it was a thirty-one years old salary man from Chiba who was complaining about the vulgar language used by a woman in a train:

A woman who pushed and bumped against a man who was standing near the door. At that moment, she [shouted], "Ouch! How dare you! You, filthy lecherous man! [*Itai-wane. Nani sun-noyo, kono dosukebe!*] The man was taken aback and struck speechless. [...] I just don't understand how such vulgar words could come out of their mouths. I wonder if for young women today, guys [like me] having little in the way of *san-kō* are simply nothing but beings they foul-mouthedly abuse and instinctively dislike.<sup>49</sup>

In this case too the reader mentions women's interest in the *san-kō* status.

A few days later in the *Asahi Shimbun* appeared several letters of response including one written by a seventy-one years old writer who stated:

I just can't help but feel that since the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was enacted, I don't know who women think they are, but they have started acting big and bossy these days, while man have become cowering. [...] Today's women are preoccupied with appearance, and their brains are empty. That's why they blurt out such violent words.

This letter show how great the discomfort was felt by many people in view of the change of social position of Japanese women during the bubble economy.

There were still a lot of housewives whose priorities were household and children, however there were also women that decided to dedicate themselves to their working careers. These female figures, ideologically far removed from the image of the "good

---

<sup>49</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.176.

wife – wise mother”, were often associated with authoritarian figures, women without humility and intelligence. The old literate implicitly blamed the government, more specifically the Equal Employment Opportunity Law for having caused this change of position of women in society, which, according to him, was inevitably followed by the appearance of their snooty attitudes.

#### 2.4.2 Misleading questions in public surveys

The influence on public opinion regarding the contamination of women’s language was also revealed by public opinion surveys (*yoron chōsa*), conducted by various agencies “including the National Language Research Institute, the National Language Council (Kokugo Shingikai), and the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), as well as private research and academic institution” (Inoue 2006).

The major element that could be found in every opinion survey was the misleading technique in which the questions and the answers were written. Both the questions and the answers (the majority of surveys contained multiple-choice questions) were usually long and specific, their structure did not leave readers an opportunity to express their opinions, but rather seemed to push the reader toward a certain kind of answer.

In order to understand the structure of the public surveys of the ‘80s and the ‘90s I will discuss a part of a survey (and its results) distributed by NHK in 1986 entitled “Women and Language”. This survey is quoted from the book *Vicarious Language*:

- (1) Some people say that recently women’s language use has become more masculine (*danseika*). What do you think about such a view?

Agree	30%
More or less agree	46
More or less disagree	6
Disagree	6
Undecided	13

- (2) Some people say that utterance-endings (*gobi*) such as *-shita-wa*, *-dawa*, *-ne*, *-nano*, *-koto* have ceased to be used in women’s language. What do you think about this view?

Agree	23%
More or less agree	41
More or less disagree	11
Disagree	15
Undecided	9

(3) Do you think we should preserve such woman-specific utterance-endings?

Agree	16%
More or less agree	30
More or less disagree	11
Disagree	26
Undecided	17

(4) Do you think women can better capitalize on their position as women if they speak women's language?

Agree	13%
More or less agree	22
More or less disagree	17
Disagree	25
Can't say	23

(5) What do you think about difference in language use between men and women?

Prefer distinctive difference	8%
Prefer some difference	67
Prefer not so much difference	16
Prefer no difference	1
Undecided	8 <sup>50</sup>

The first two questions begin with 'Some people say', the way the question is written drags inadvertently to answer that you say that too. It is not a coincidence the fact that the answers with the bigger percentages are 'Agree' and 'More or less agree'.

The other questions, too, (except n.5) are long and detailed.

---

<sup>50</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.186.

The answers available are not enough and do not give the opportunity to fully express one's personal opinion about such a controversial topic. Despite this, all the results were collected and classified as representative of "the voice of the nation" (Inoue 2006).

The results of these type of surveys cannot be considered reliable because they contained misleading questions and misleading answers, therefore the majority of those public pools do not show an objective point of view.

Another example of misleading survey is a questionnaire which is also reported by Inoue in her book. Professor Inoue extrapolated a survey about the 'linguistic awareness' distributed from the NHK in 1989.

In the first two questions of the survey the multiple answers are long and detailed:

(1) What are the things that concern you regarding people's recent language use?

Choose answers from the following (multiple answers allowed).

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| (a) Use of honorifics has become corrupted.                          | 68% |
| (b) Women's language has become rough.                               | 60  |
| (c) There have been more unintelligible loan words and foreign words | 55  |
| (d) There have been more strange manners in speaking words in vogue  | 53  |

(2) For those who chose the answer (b), what are the particular points about it that give you that impression (multiple answers allowed)?

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| (a) It is particularly young women's language that has become rough.  | 71% |
| (b) There are more women that use rough language, such as "Konoyarō" ("You bastard").   | 45  |
| (c) There are more women who use men's language, such as "Oi omae" (Hey, you) or "Yaruzo!" (Let's do it!)                         | 44  |
| (d) Women have ceased to use honorifics.  | 38  |
| (e) Not only women's language but men's language is becoming gender neutral.  | 37  |
| (f) There are more women who enter (public) society.  |     |
| (g) Women's language, such as "sō-na-noyo" ("that is right-noyo") and "iya-dawa" ("I don't like it-dawa"), has ceased to be used. | 24  |

It is unlikely that such detailed answers explain the opinions of all the participants. Furthermore, it is not possible to choose an answer that affirms that women's language is not changing: all the answers "go to the same direction".

Plus, it is important to notice that in the first question the expression "people's recent language use" is written, where "recent" is used improperly (as we saw at the beginning of the paragraph) which gives rise to the idea that certain forms of women's language had not existed in the past.

Another major problem with these opinion polls was that they assumed that the only women's language acceptable was that actually used by only a small part of the female population, that was the one spoken by the women belonging to the middle class bourgeois who were living in the Yamanote area of Tokyo. There have always existed other variants of women's language as well, but the influence of language ideology spread the thought that the "women's language" had to be uniform and pure, and, furthermore, that all other variants were both recent and corrupt.

## **2.5 Modern translations of foreigner books, movies and interviews.**

As we have seen above, the media proved a very powerful tool for the spread of linguistic ideology. TV, newspapers and recently also the Internet reproduces dialogues where the female characters express themselves through the use of a women's language considered to be very feminine.

The peculiarity of the dialogues showed by the media is that every woman speaks women's language, including also foreigner women. In Japanese written translations, subtitles and dubbing, the Japanese female characters often use the sentence final particles *wa*; *no-yo*; *na-no*, even when in the original version the woman talks in a neutral way, i.e. without marking femininity linguistically (Furukawa 2009).

---

<sup>51</sup> Miyako INOUE, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006, p.190.

Professor Nakamura listed many examples of fictional and real conversations of foreign women translated with a very feminine variety of Japanese language.

One of this examples is the translation of a sentence pronounced by Scarlett O'Hara, protagonist character of the book *Gone with the Wind*, published in the US in 1936 and in Japan in 1957. The sentence she says is: "It's no use. I won't eat it" (Nakamura 2012), the phrase is neither particularly feminine nor is it rude, it is neutral. The Japanese translation however is "*Iranai wa. Hoshikunai noyo*". As we can see the translation presents two sentence final particles typical of the Japanese women's language and the translation therefore sounds more feminine compared to the original one. So, this is one of the many phrases that tries to present the character of Scarlett O'Hara as a very feminine person, even when she does not speak in such a way in the original version. This type of "distorted translation" or "culturally appropriated translation" is not a peculiarity of the post War period (when the concept of the "good wife-wife mother" reached its peak), but is quite spread nowadays too.

Another representative example given by Nakamura is the translation of one of the first sentences Hermine Granger says when she appears in the book *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*:

"Well, it's not very good, is it? I've tried a few simple spells just for practice and it's all worked for me. Nobody in my family's magic at all, it was ever such a surprise when I got my letter..."<sup>52</sup>

The Japanese translation present in the first publication is:

*Maa, anmari umaku ikanakattawane. Watashi no renshu no tsumori de kantan na jumon o tameshite mita koto ga arukedo, minna umaku ittawa. Watashi no kazoku ni mahozoku wa daremo inaino. Dakara, tegami o moratta toki, odoroitawa.*<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Momoko, NAKAMURA, "Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications", *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.30.

<sup>53</sup> Momoko, NAKAMURA, "Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications", *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.30.

It is very unlikely that an eleven years old girl uses all these sentence final particles. A child that says such a sentence sounds actually unnatural. Yet, this type of phrases are made to be pronounced by this young girl in order to stress the femininity of the Japanese women's language.

A famous translator named Kaori Oshima explained in one of her books:

I sometimes translate even the same words differently depending on whether they are spoken by a man or a woman. Although I do not think that my translation is controlled by the so-called women's language, I realize that I restrict my own choice of words since I am unconsciously influenced by the norms of women's language internalized in myself.<sup>54</sup>

Nakamura offers another significant example by quoting the Japanese translation of an answer that the American actress Angelina Jolie gave during an interview that in Japan, which was translated and published by *Asahi Shimbun*. Therein she said:

I was happy when Brad [Pitt], on seeing the film, said, "You look like your mother".  
I'm switching to motherhood'<sup>55</sup>

The Japanese translation was:

*Eiga o mita Braddo ga, "okā-san ni niteiru ne," to itte kureta nowa ureshikattawa.  
Mama-gyō ni tenshoku yo.*<sup>56</sup>

Since the original article was trying to focus the attention on the independence and strength of the actress, this kind of feminine phrases does not reflect her attitude. Therefore such *onnarashii* (feminine) translation cannot be considered as being appropriate.

---

<sup>54</sup>Momoko, NAKAMURA, "Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications", *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.31.

<sup>55</sup> Momoko, NAKAMURA, "Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications", *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.31.

<sup>56</sup> Momoko, NAKAMURA, "Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications", *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, p.31.

Other interesting example of inappropriate translation can be found in the two books of *Bridget Jones Diary*. The protagonist is a thirty years old single woman who lives and works in London, her characteristic speech is direct, eccentric and also not devoid of swear words.

In the Japanese version of the books, this attitude of Bridget is been distorted in favor of a more feminine and educated one.

The scholar Hiroko Furukawa in her essay *Bridget Jones's Femininity Constructed by Language* analyzed the translation of Bridget Jones' books and the subtitles of the movies. The result is that many swear words have not been translated properly or have been omitted, so that Bridget's character could result more feminine. Furukawa explains which are these swear words and how they have been changed:

In the original novel Bridget uses swear words such as 'Bastard!', 'Bastards', 'The bloody bastard', and 'Bloody bastard'. However, most of them were modified in the Japanese translation: '*Rokudenashi*' [A good-for-nothing], '*Rokudenashidomo*' [Good-for-nothings], or '*Usuratonkachi no rokudenashi*' [A foolish good-for nothing]. [...] Bridget also shows a liberal use of swear words such as 'Oh, shit!', 'Bollocks!', 'Oh, bugger bugger!'...However most of them were deleted in the Japanese subtitles. For example, 'Oh, bugger bugger!' is not translated at all and there is no subtitle for the line.<sup>57</sup>

The Japanese versions of the books include also many dialogues containing the sentence final particles which function as markers of women's language.

Professor Furukawa calculated that the first book contains 45.22% of women's language, and the second book contains 45% of it (Furukawa 2009). Considering the fact that the protagonist is a not very feminine character, and neither are a large part of her friends, in the Japanese books the amount of dialogues that contains woman's language is far too high. Therefore the translations of both the books cannot be considered appropriate (Furukawa 2009).

---

<sup>57</sup> Hiroko, FURUKAWA, "Bridget Jones's Femininity Constructed by Language: a comparison between the Japanese translation of Bridget Jones's Diary, and the Japanese subtitles of the film", *Online Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Poetics and Linguistics Association (PALA)*, 2009, Retrieved from <http://www.pala.ac.uk/uploads/2/5/1/0/25105678/furukawa2009.pdf> , p.9.

As for the masculine forms on the other hand, in the first book there is 0.87% of them while in the second book there is a percentage of 0.00%. In this case too, the almost complete lack of masculine forms reveals the inaccuracy of the translations because in the original texts there is a significant presence of colorful expressions considered to be typical of male speech.

In addition to the identification of the misuse of language registers Professor Furukawa compares the percentage of women's language used in the books with the amount of women's language used by three women from Tokyo.

The women are three homemakers whose linguistic registers had been studied from Okamoto and Sato in their work *'Less Feminine Speech among Young Japanese Females'* published in 1992. Furukawa quoted the work of Okamoto and Sato in order to compare the data collected from the conversations of the three young women (aged between 27 and 34 years old) with the data collected from the dialogues contained in the two books of *Bridget Jones Diary*.

By reporting the data collected by Okamoto and Sato, Furukawa wrote that the amount of women's language present in the recorded speeches of the three girls is 24%, while the presence of masculine forms is 14%. The amount of neutral forms in the conversations of the homemakers is 62%, while the percentages of neutral forms in the books of *Bridget Jones Diary* are respectively 53.91% and 55.50%.

This data comparison shows that even the type of woman who is expected to use the purest form of women's language (the middle class housewife from the Tokyo area) do not use the amount of women's language that is present in the dialogues spread by the media.

The Japanese translation of books, films, interviews that we have been analyzed in this paragraph are examples that show the strong influence the media still exercise in the spread of language ideology. No matter if a female character is too young or masculine, their Japanese versions would likely be over-feminized regardless their features. In this way the media contribute to maintain a high level of social expectation toward the use of women's language, which however does not reflect the real use of it.

## **CHAPTER 3 - Understanding how the genderization of Japanese language is perceived among Japanese language learners in Italy**

This chapter will mainly discuss about the influence of the ideology behind the Japanese women's language as it manifests in Japanese Studies in Italy. The number of young Italians who have interests towards the Japanese language and culture is increasing year by year, and the opportunities they have to be exposed to sociolinguistic notions about Japan are mainly manga, anime and University classes. The most influential source is obviously the last one, and I will therefore study the relation between the Japanese language classes and the student knowledge of Japanese women's language.

### **3.0 Introduction**

Women's language, like every language variety, is a language with many aspects that change over time and take various forms. As we saw before, the linguistic ideology simplifies complex realities and explains many concepts in a reductive way. Is the influence of the language ideology spread abroad as well? In this chapter I will try to understand how the Japanese linguistic ideology is perceived from the foreigner Japanese language learners who live abroad, more concretely, from the Italian students. In order to do so I distributed a Matched Guise Questionnaire to various Italian University students of Japanese language. The same questionnaire was given to a number of native Japanese teachers who live in Italy. This will help to comprehend if the teachers' perception of Japanese women's language has an influence on the way they teach Japanese.

### **3.1 A working definition of modern Japanese womanhood and female language**

One of the main reasons for this research is to understand if the influence of the linguistic ideology is changing its intensity when it Japanese is taught abroad.

The social position of Japanese women has undergone some change in the past decades (Endō 2006). We cannot say that Japanese women now enjoy equal rights in practice, and neither can we say that the thought of "good wife and wise mother" has lost its influence. Thanks to the Equal Employment Opportunity Law of 1986, "the movement to delete discriminatory terms and references to women grew with their increasing participation in

employment” (Gottlieb 2005:109). Some discriminatory terms towards woman now have disappeared, or are being used very carefully, especially at the workplace. Nanette Gottlieb in her book “Language and Society in Japan” writes:

Actions perceived as being weak were described in terms of women, e.g. *onna no yō ni* (like a woman) and *onna rashī* (like a woman). The word *shujin* (where the characters mean “main person”), for “husband” and *okusan/kanai* (inside the house) for “wife,” not to mention *mibōjin* (not yet dead person), for “widow” were particular targets of feminist complaint [...] The 1980 third edition of the Iwanami Kokugo Jiten (Iwanami Japanese Dictionary), for example, defines the word *umazume* (stone woman, a derogatory word referring to a woman unable to bear children) as “a woman without the ability to conceive; a woman who cannot give birth to children.” There is no corresponding word for a childless man.<sup>58</sup>

During the 1980s, due to the attempts to abolish the explicitly sexist and derogatory terms towards women, a part of Japanese women challenged dominant language ideology. An example of such sociolinguistic change is given (as we saw in the first chapter) by the attitude of the girls and women who started to use the words and expressions known as *rūkōgo* (chapter 1, paragraph 1.6).

In this recent years, Japan is facing many changes in the linguistic sphere. It is still not possible to predict the results of these linguistic changes, but it is noticeable that linguistic ideology in Japan is undergoing a transformation again (Inoue 2006). This is perceivable within the country, but probably less abroad. In fact, usually foreign students are taught dominant notions about women’s language, which were common decades ago and which does not coincide to the actually the various ways that women currently speak in the country. “The argument is that cultural stereotyping in textbooks published for tertiary learners projects a vision of Japan which does not reflect reality” (Nagata, Sullival 2005:16).

---

<sup>58</sup> Nanette GOTTLIEB, *Language and Society in Japan*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 109.

Interesting to mention is the experience of Australian Kristen Sullivan, who in her work “Hegemonic gender in Japanese as a foreign language education”, published in 2005 and written by her and Nagata Yuriko, explains how she studied Japanese:

It was in my senior years of high school. Our Japanese teacher pointed out how certain kanji [Chinese characters] featuring the radical for “woman” can be understood as derogatory. She then mentioned how sentence-final particles tend to be different for men and women. The class being made up entirely of female students, she taught us that Japanese women tend to use the *-wa* final particle instead of the neutral *-yo*.<sup>59</sup>

She also explained how she had been trained to face her study experience in Japan as an exchange student and what kind of impression she gave to Japanese persons with who she had the opportunity to interact:

As an exchange student in Japan, one of our main objectives is to “become as Japanese as possible” – success is measured by the degree we can emulate the “perfect native speaker.” At many times during my exchange I did consider this to be a primary goal. Actually, I was often introduced to people as “more Japanese than Japanese” [*nihonjin yori nihonjin mitai*], and this was meant to be the ultimate compliment – like a statement saying that I had “made it” as an exchange student.<sup>60</sup>

The fact that she was considerate “more Japanese than Japanese” because of her way of speaking is a sign of a speech that most likely contains a big amount of women’s language expressions. A similar way of speaking is actually falling into disuse within some milieus of Japanese society (Matsumoto 2004). Even in the past, the so called “women’s language” was not used by all Japanese women, but only by a certain type, and now the sociocultural backgrounds where it is being used are becoming less. Valid examples are constituted by the language of the three Japanese homemakers analyzed by Okamoto and Sato in the

---

<sup>59</sup> Yuriko NAGATA, Kristen, SULLIVAN, “Hegemonic gender in Japanese as a foreign language education: Australian perspectives”, *Genders, Transgenders and Sexualities in Japan*, Edited by Mark McLelland and Romit Dasgupta, Routledge, 2005, p.17.

<sup>60</sup> Yuriko, NAGATA, Kristen, SULLIVAN, “Hegemonic gender in Japanese as a foreign language education: Australian perspectives”, *Genders, Transgenders and Sexualities in Japan*, Edited by Mark McLelland and Romit Dasgupta, Routledge, 2005, p.17.

previous chapter (paragraph 2.5) or by the language spoken by the women who live in Ibaraki prefecture. Yukako Sunaoshi wrote “Farm women’s professional discourse in Ibaraki”, an essay where she analyzed the linguistic habits of a group of women who were born and raised in Ibaraki Prefecture. Sunaoshi discovered that all the women she studied presented the following speech features: their language was devoid of honorifics, they often used *ore* as first person pronoun, they ended most of their sentences with the copula *da*, they predominantly spoke in their regional dialect.

There is not a single type of femininity or women’s language in Japan, however, several textbooks of Japanese language for foreigners present a single kind of social situation and social interaction. This can cause the formation of stereotypes which can lead to a possible misinterpretation of the Japanese sociocultural and linguistic reality made by foreigner students.

### **3.2 Purpose of the research**

The reason why I decided to conduct this research is to better comprehend how the language ideology behind Japanese women’s language is perceived from Italian students who study Japanese.

I intend to analyze how teachers of Japanese who live in Italy explain and teach Japanese women’s language to their students. Thanks to this first analysis I intend to discover if the Italian students are influenced by the language ideology when they study Japanese.

In order to do so, I created two Matched Guise Questionnaire. I distributed the first questionnaire among 10 Japanese native teachers who lived and taught in Italy for more than fifteen years.

The second questionnaire was assigned to 30 Italian students of Japanese language aged between 20 and 25.

The two questionnaires contain different initial questions, mostly personal questions about age, sex and questions related to Japanese language and pop culture.

After the firsts questions follows the part that contains two Matched Guise Questionnaire, and this part is identical in both the questionnaires.

Despite the fact that the two types of questionnaire are very similar, I decided to target these two different categories (teachers and students). In this way, I am able compare language ideological notions between teachers and students in Italy. Thanks to the results of that questionnaire, I will subsequently be able to comprehend if the Japanese native professors have an effect on the way Japanese women's language is perceived from Italian students.

### **3.3 Expected results**

Whit this research I expect to identify an influence passed from the professors to the students, specifically about Japanese women's language.

I believe that Japanese people who live abroad for several years are very aware of the diverse aspects of women's language, especially if they are Japanese language teachers. However, I also believe that they are likely to idealize some aspects of women's language and therefore to simplify them. The tendency to simplify is a hallmark of language ideology and they could be absorbed from the students, who are not in close contact with the Japanese sociolinguistic environment. Hence, students can be expected to build their knowledge on the cultural and linguistic sources available. I expect, therefore, to discover that this research will confirm the hypothesis that the Italian students of Japanese language have a tendency to idealize the Japanese women's language as well.

### **3.4 First person pronouns and sentence final particles most used among Japanese teenagers and adults**

The most common first personal pronouns that are considered masculine and therefore belonging to male's speech are the old fashioned form わし (*washi*), the very formal わたくし/私 (*watakushi*), the formal わたし/私 (*watashi*), the plain form ぼく/僕 (*boku*) and the informal form おれ/俺 (*ore*). While the most common first person pronouns which are considered to belong to women's speech are the old fashioned form うち (*uchi*), the strictly formal form わたくし/私 (*watakushi*), the formal form あたくし (*atakushi*), the plain form わたし/私 (*watashi*) and the other plain and informal form あたし (*atashi*) (Miyazaki 2004).

The most common sentence final particles which, according to the Japanese common sense, are strongly associated with male's speech are *ぞ* (*zo*) and *ぜ* (*ze*), which are mostly viewed as slang expressions.

The most common sentence final particles associated with women's speech are *よ* (*yo*), *ね* (*ne*), *よね* (*yone*), *わ* (*wa*), *わよ* (*wayo*), *だわ* (*dawa*), *てよ* (*teyo*), *のよ* (*noyo*), *なの* (*nano*), *こと* (*koto*), *だこと* (*da-koto*) (Nakamura-2004).

### 3.5 The questionnaires

The questionnaire for Japanese native teachers included the following questions:

1) 性別

- ・ 男性
- ・ 女性

2) 年齢

---

3) どのぐらい海外に住んでいますか？

- ・ 5年未満
- ・ 5-10年
- ・ 10-15年
- ・ 15-20年
- ・ 20年以上

4) どのぐらい日本語を教えていますか？

- ・ 5年未満
- ・ 5-10年
- ・ 10-15年

- ・ 15-20年
- ・ 20年以上

After these four initial questions followed the part with the Matched Guise Questionnaire. Starting from question number 5 to number 10, the participants read and listened to the same sentence which presented some differences each time:

- 5) 危ないから気をつけてね。
- 6) 危ないよ！気をつけて！
- 7) 危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！
- 8) 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください。
- 9) 危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！
- 10) 危ないですからそれに気をつけてちょうだい。

Each and every time the teachers read the phrase and listened to it through the audio-track they had answered to the following question by selecting one or more options:

話す人はどのような印象を受けますか？

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他\_\_\_\_\_

Right after these five phrases followed another series of five similar sentences (11 to 16):

- 11) 暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう 2 本を飲んだんですよね。
- 12) 暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう 2 本を飲んだぞ。
- 13) 暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう 2 本を飲んだわよ。
- 14) 暑いな。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本を飲んだよ。
- 15) 暑いですね。今日うちは水のボトルもう 2 本を飲んだんですよ。
- 16) 暑いね。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本を飲んだよ。

Every single phrase of this second part of the Matched Guise Questionnaire was followed by the question:

話す人はどのような印象を受けますか？

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

The questionnaire for Italian students started with the following questions:

1) 性別

- ・ 男性
- ・ 女性

2) どのぐらい日本語を勉強して来ましたか?

- ・ 1年間
- ・ 2年間
- ・ 3年間
- ・ 4年間
- ・ 4年以上

3) 日本語吹き替えのアニメを見ますか?

- a)            b)            c)            d)            6)
- しばしば見る    よく見る    ときどき見る    あまり見ない    ぜんぜん見ない

4) 日本語で書かれた漫画を読みますか?

- a)            b)            c)            d)            e)
- しばしば読む    よく読む    ときどき読む    あまり読まない    ぜんぜん読まない

5) 日本に住んだことがありますか?

- ・ はい
- ・ いいえ

6) 日本に住んでいたら、どのぐらい住んでいましたか?

- ・ 1年間未満
- ・ 1年間
- ・ 2年間未満
- ・ 2年間

- ・ 2年間以上

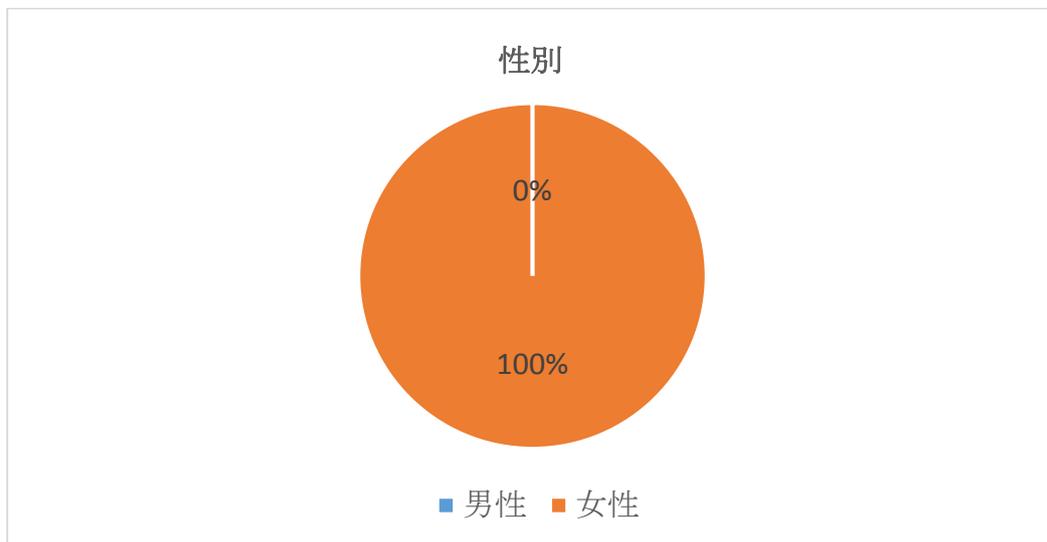
After this point started the Matched Guise Questionnaire, which was supported by two audio-tracks identical to the one distributed among the professors.

### 3.6 Analyzing the questionnaire conducted among native Japanese language teachers

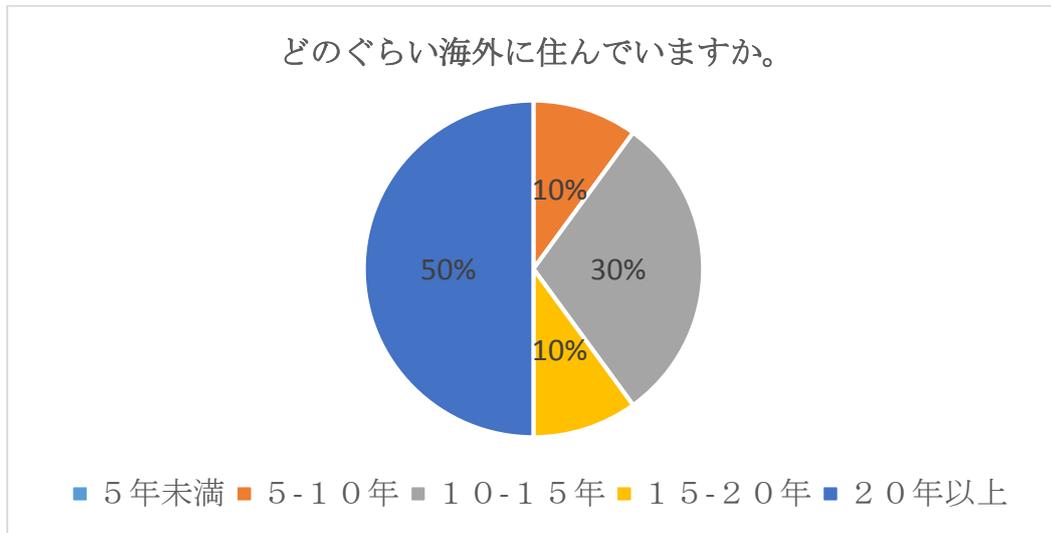
The Japanese teachers who participated in answering to the questionnaire were 10, all of them female and aged between 37 and 53.

The data collected from the answers given in the first part of the questionnaire are summarized in the following figures:

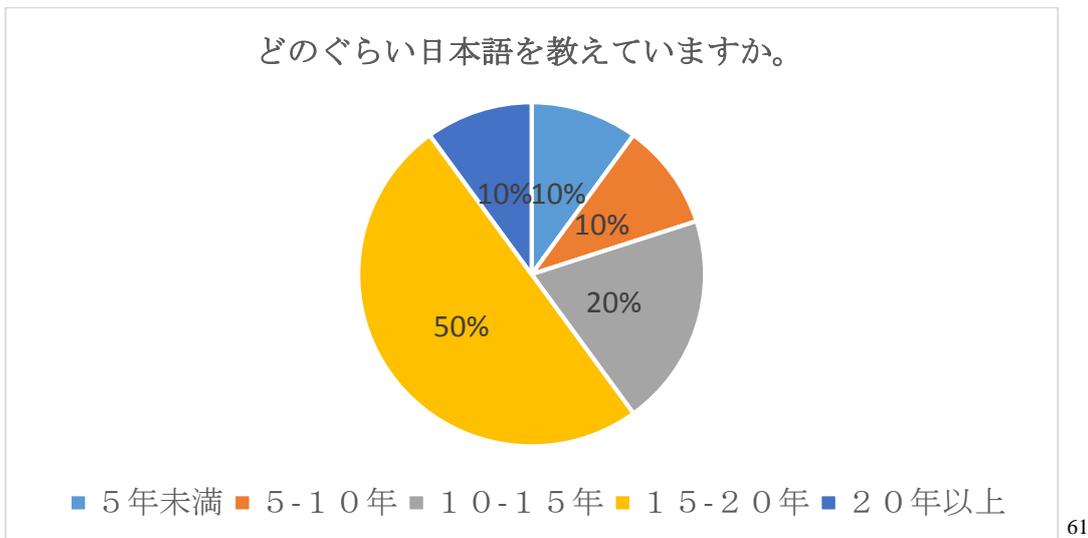
1



## 2



## 3



All the participants are women, and all of them lived outside Japan for more than 5 years.

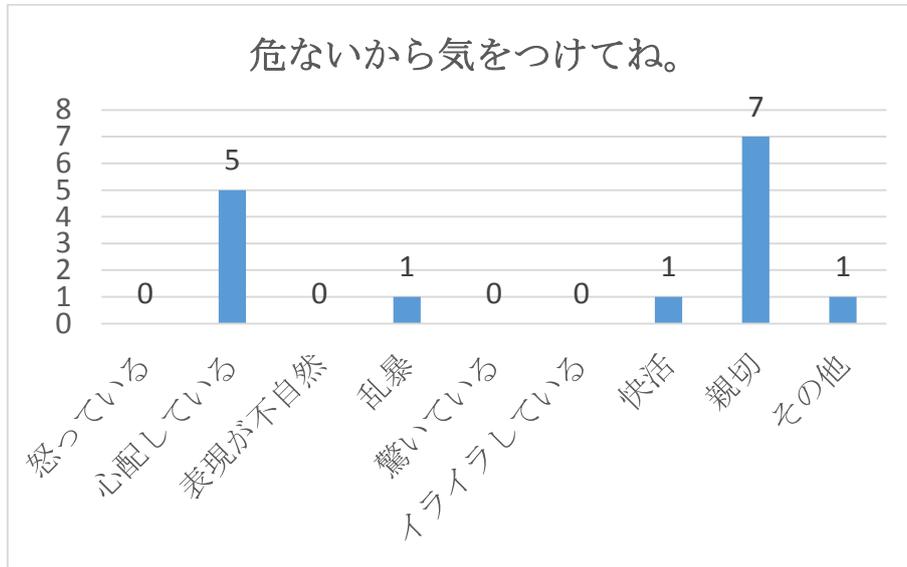
The 50% of them lived abroad for more than 20 years.

The 50% of the participants have been teaching Japanese from 15 to 20 years.

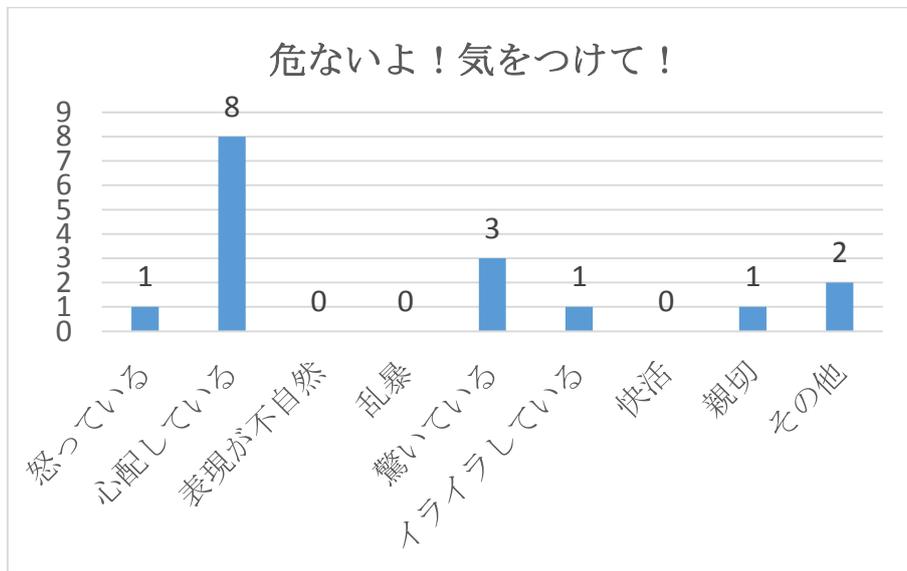
The part that contains the Matched Guise Questionnaire resulted in the following data:

<sup>61</sup> <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kpBJB47CKYj4Ec90XHe1ujlBRDJmbC3hkorTkYsihxY/viewanalytics>

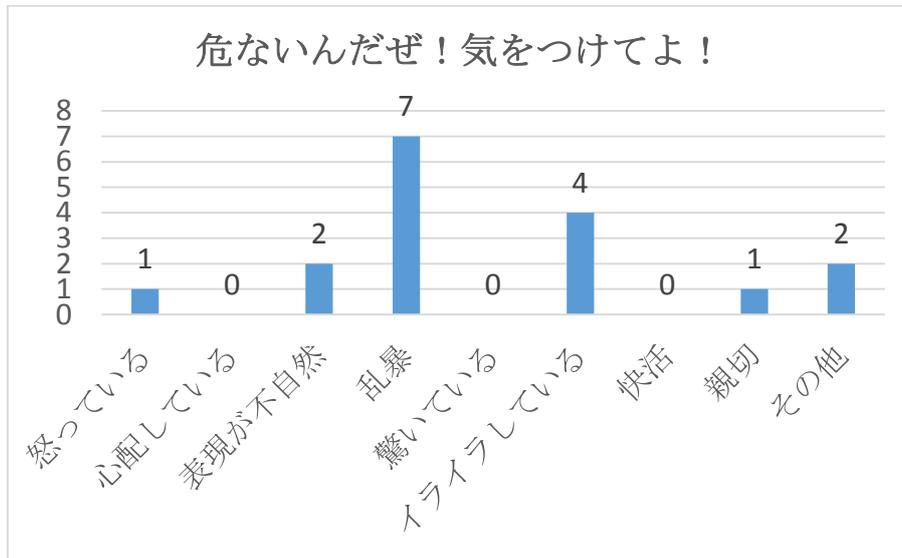
# 4



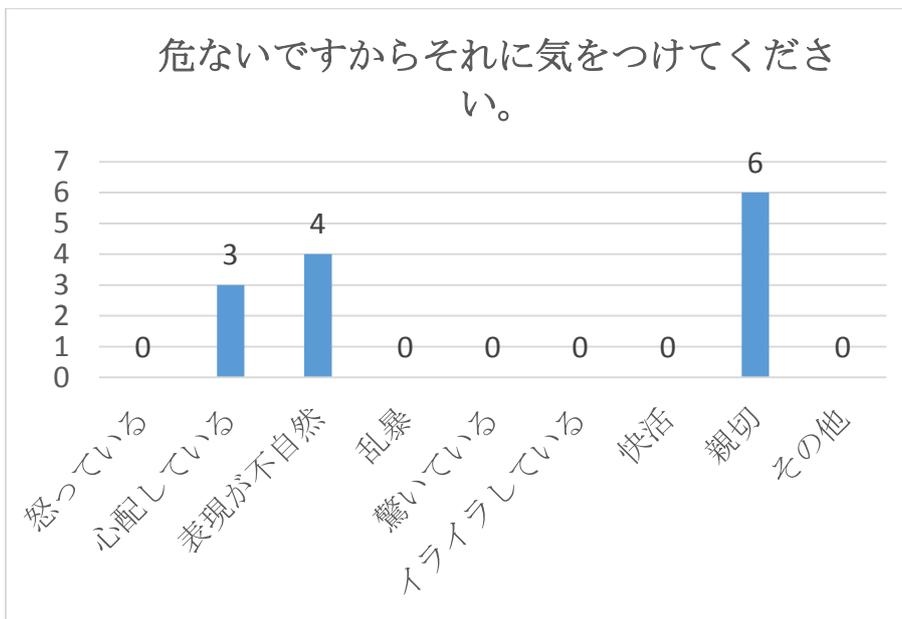
# 5



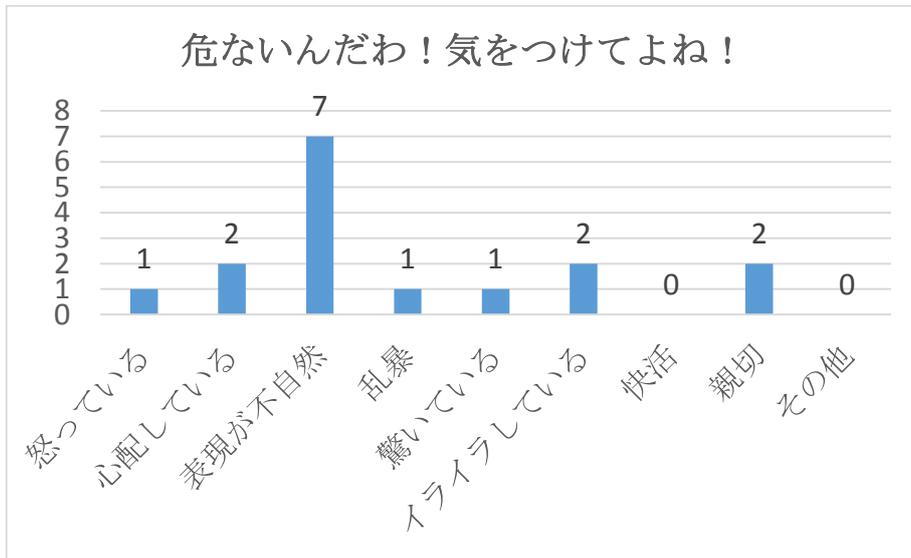
## 6



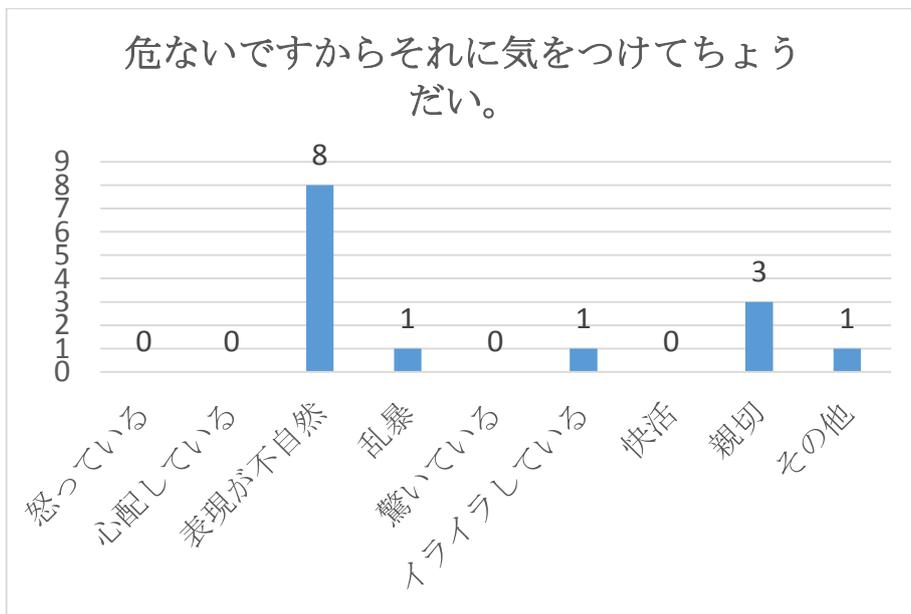
## 7



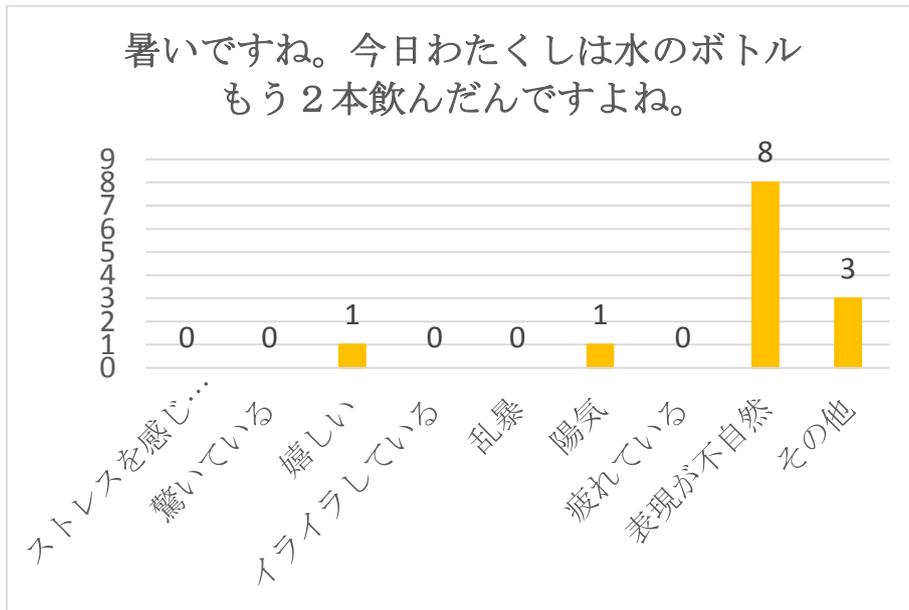
# 8



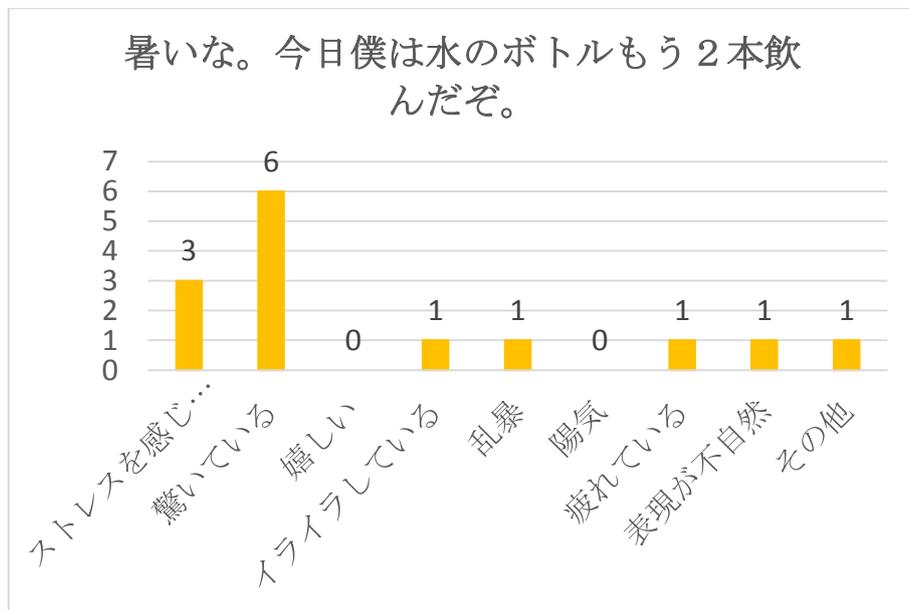
# 9



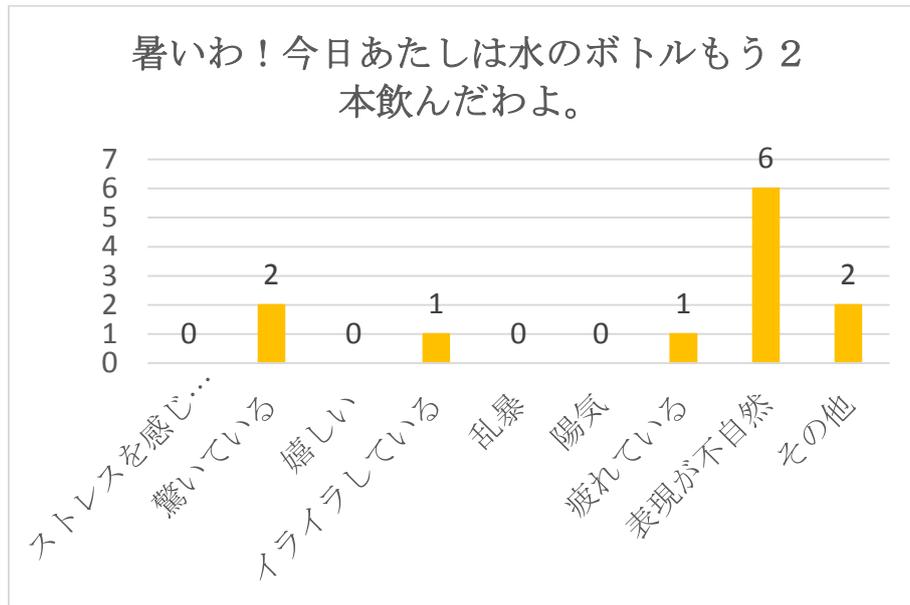
# 10



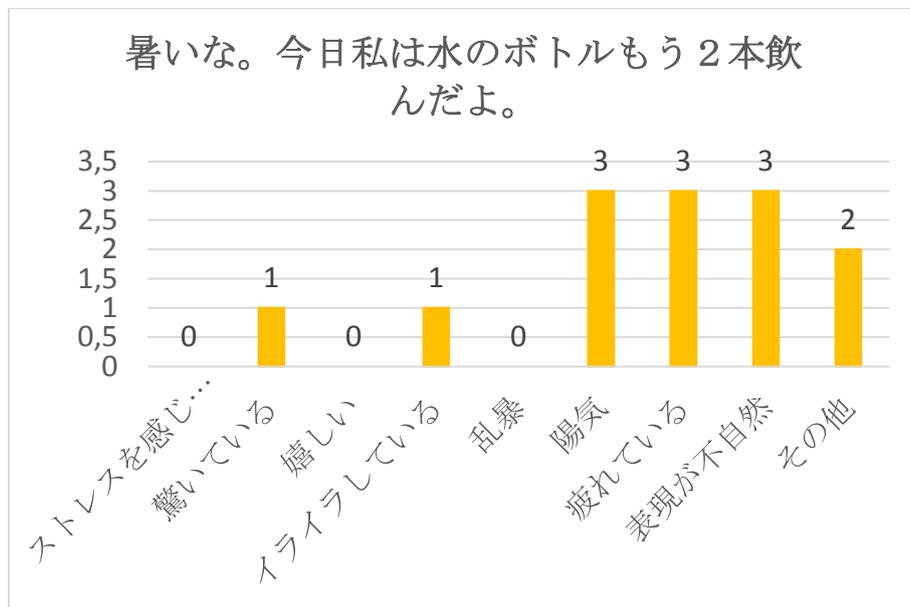
# 11



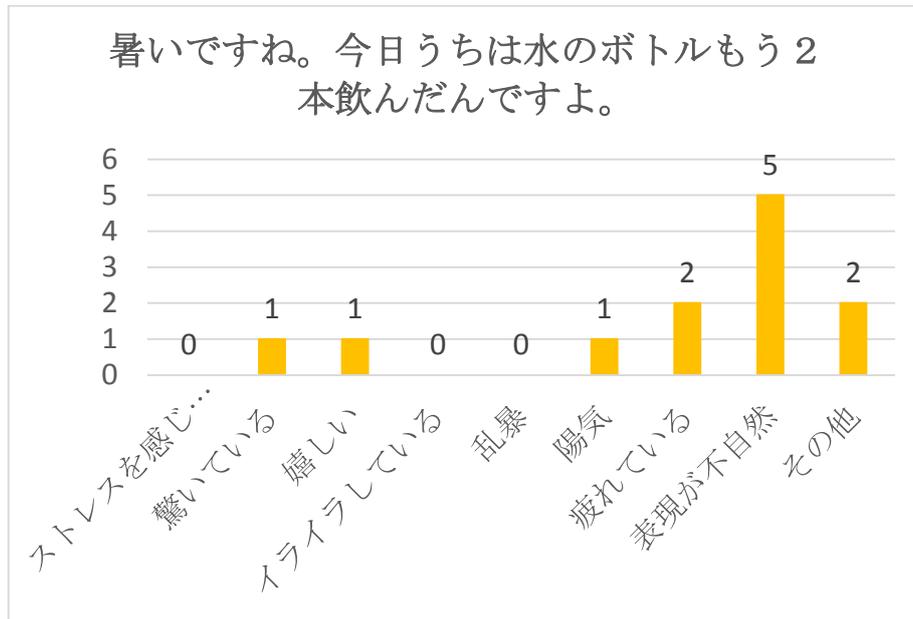
## 1 2



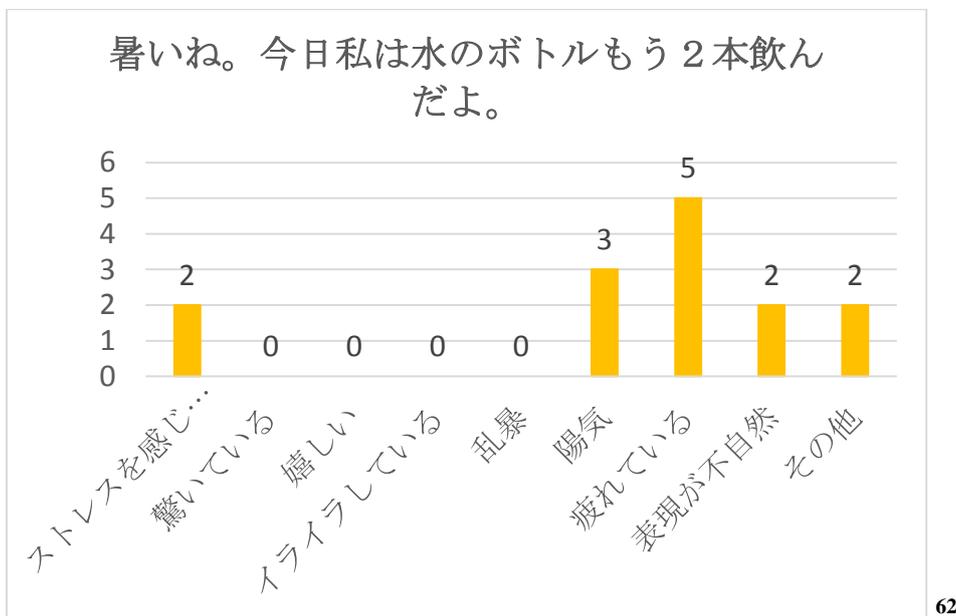
## 1 3



## 14



## 15



62

By analyzing the answers given during the listening (and the reading) of the first audio-track, it is noticeable that the phrases where 親切 (*shinsetsu* = kindness) are elicited as

<sup>62</sup> <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kpBJB47CKYj4Ec90XHe1ujlBRDJmbC3hkorTkYsihxY/viewanalytics>

the most chosen option are 危ないから気をつけてね (figure 4) and 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください (figure 7). According to the majority of the teachers, a woman that pronounce these two sentences expresses kindness and concern, in fact, 心配している (*shinpai shite iru* = concerned) is one of the most chosen option after 親切 for these two phrases. However, it is also important to notice that after the phrase 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください the second most chosen option is 表現が不自然 (*hyōgen ga fushizen* = the expression is unnatural), which is then followed by 心配している. This indicates that when the young woman speaking on the audio recordings pronounced formal sentences, these were both perceived to sound kind, worried but also unnatural.

The professors who participated in the questionnaire considered informal styles the most unnatural. This is clearly noticeable from the answer given after the listening part related to the phrase 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください 80% were of the opinion that this is 表現が不自然 (figure 9).

The sentences who end with -てください are very formal and slightly archaic. For this reason they are likely to be perceived as “unnatural”.

However, the expression that has 表現が不自然 as the most chosen option is not 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください, but is 危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！ (figure 8). This sentence is very feminine because it contains the sentence final particles だわ and よね.

The phrase 危ないよ！気をつけて！ is considered an expression that shows “concern” from the majority of the participants. In fact, the most chosen option is 心配している.

The sentence 危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！ is considered the most “rude”, in fact, in this case the option 乱暴 (*ranbō* = rude) gained the 70% of the answers (figure 6).

The data collected from the answers of the second group of phrases (second audio-track) shows that the sentences containing feminine expressions and/or formal expressions have similar answers in both groups.

The phrases 暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだんですよ、暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだわよ and 暑いですね。今日うちは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだんですよ reported 表現が不自然 as the most chosen option (figures 10, 12, 14). These are very formal sentences that contain feminine expressions, and in this case too (as happened during the listening of the first audio-track) the sentence final particle *だわ* is perceived as unnatural from the majority of the participants.

In the case of the phrase 暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだぞ the option that obtained the majority of answers is 驚いている (*odoroite iru* = being surprised) which gained the 60% of the total answers, followed by ストレスを感じている (*sutoresu wo kanjite iru* = feeling stressed) which gained the 30% (figure 11). The answers given after listening to this phrase are the more peculiar because the expression 危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！ (first group) were mostly seen to be rude (乱暴), while in the case of 暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだぞ the teachers perceived the female voice as “surprised” and “stressed”, despite the presence of the sentence final particle *だぞ*.

The expression 暑いな。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだよ is the one which obtained the most diverse number of answers: the most chosen options were 陽気 (*yōki* = cheerfulness), 疲れている and 表現が不自然. All three answers obtained 33.3% of the total answers (figure 13). This phrase has been perceived in very different ways from the participants.

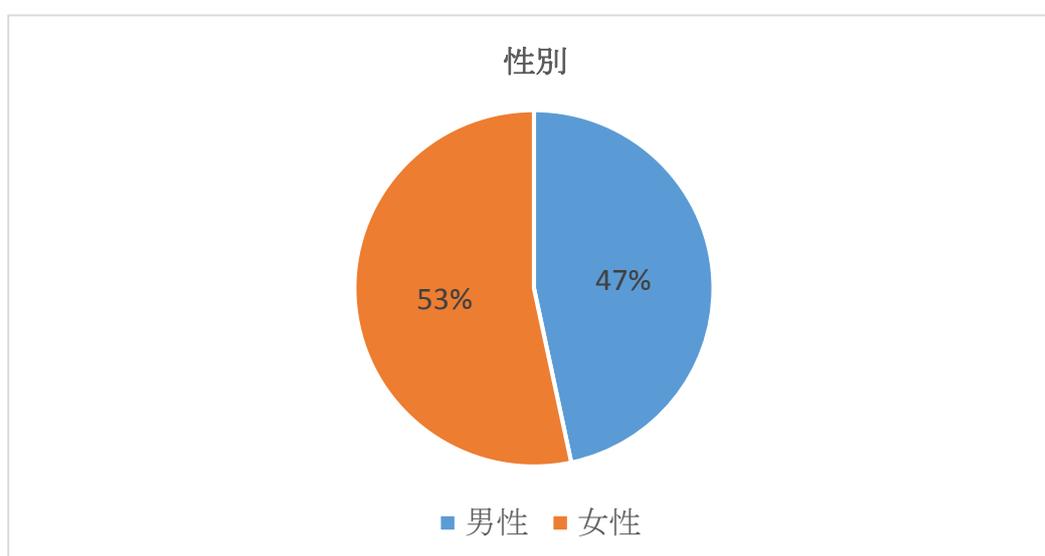
A similar result can be noticed by observing the data related to the sentence phrase 暑いね。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだよ. However, in this case the most often chosen option was 疲れている, followed by 陽気 (figure 15).

### 3.7 Analyzing the questionnaire conducted among Italian students of Japanese language

30 Italian students answered to the questionnaire, 14 males and 16 females.

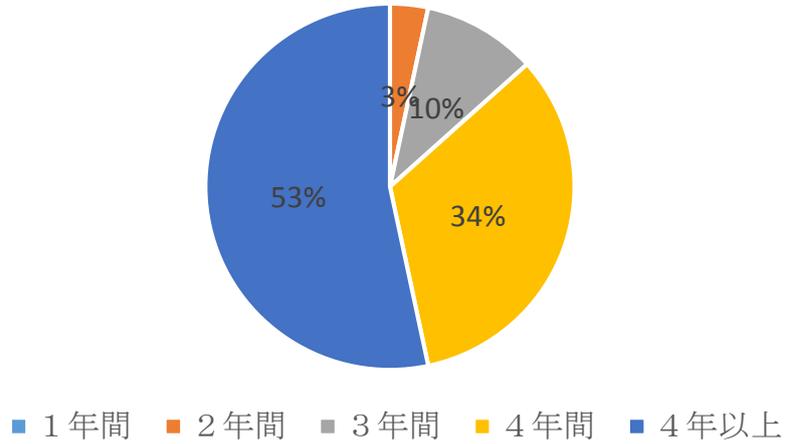
The data collected from the answers given in the first part of the questionnaire are shown through in the following figures:

1 6



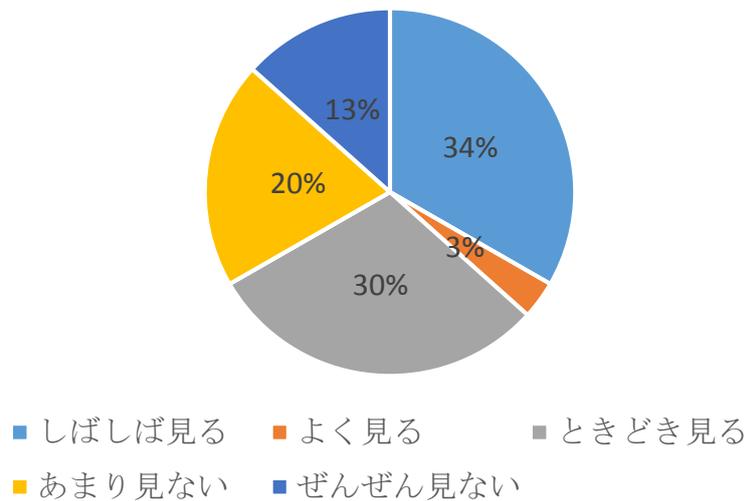
# 17

どのぐらい日本語を勉強して来ましたか。



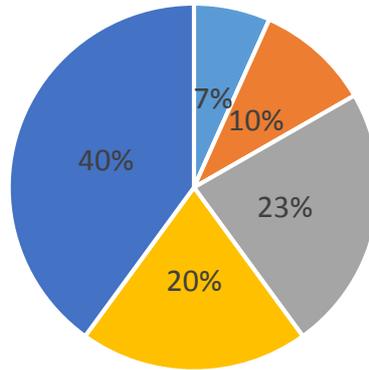
# 18

日本語吹き替えのアニメを見ますか。



## 19

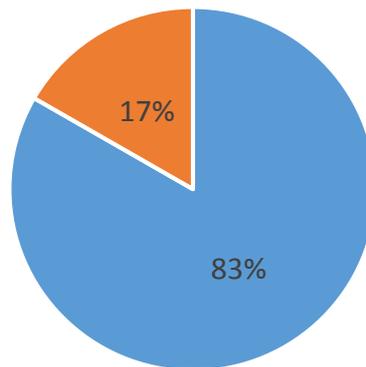
日本語で書かれた漫画を読みますか。



- しばしば読む
- よく読む
- ときどき読む
- あまり読まない
- ぜんぜん読まない

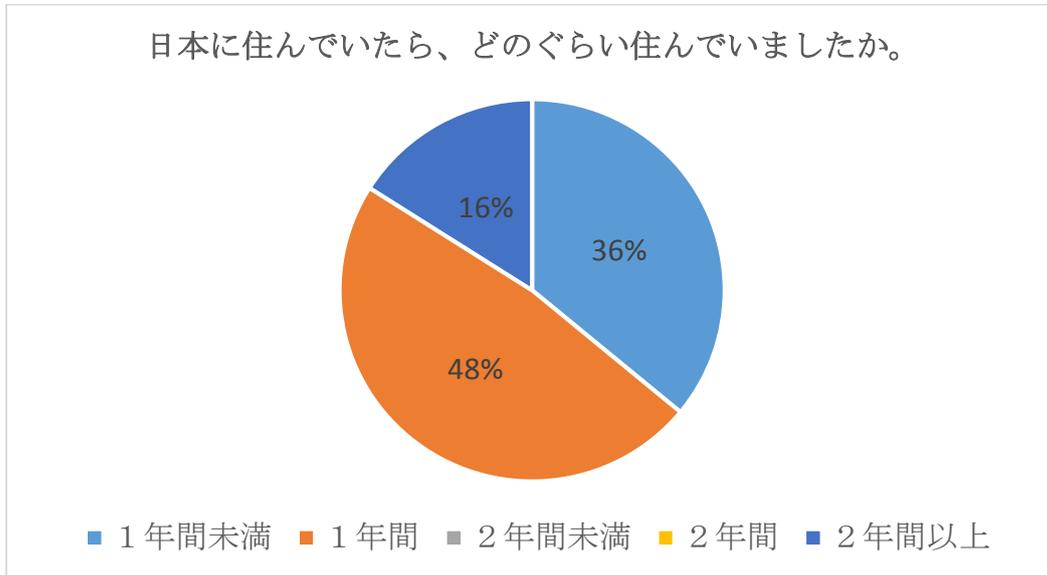
## 20

日本に住んだことがありますか。



- はい
- いいえ

## 21



63

The majority of the participants have been studying Japanese for 4 years or for more than 4 years.

The 67% of the students watch anime dubbed in Japanese with a certain frequency, while the remaining 33% does not do it or only do it occasionally.

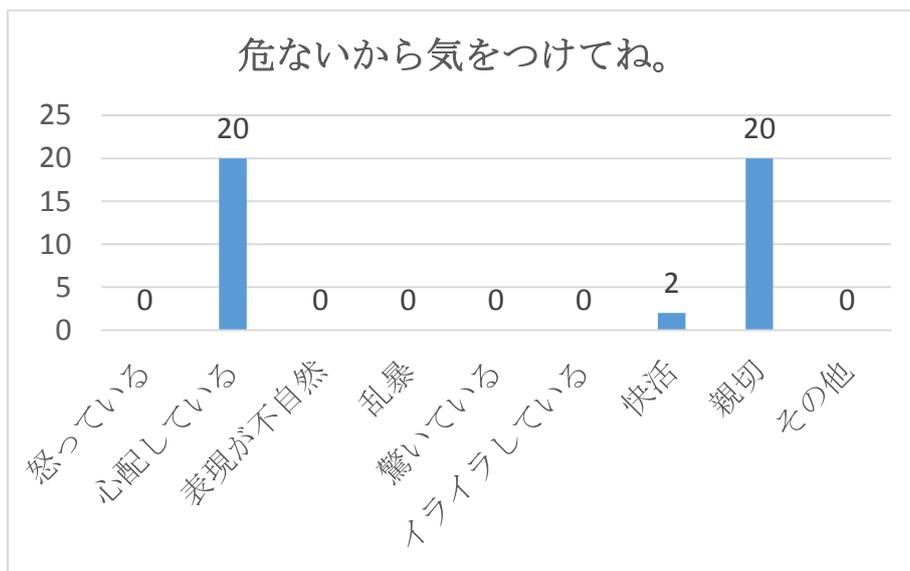
The data about the amount of students who read manga written in Japanese are quite different from the data that concern anime, in fact, only 40% of them read manga in Japanese with a certain frequency. The majority of the participants (60%) do not or do it occasionally.

The 83% of the participants had the opportunity to live in Japan, but only the 16% of them lived there for more than two years, while the 84% lived in Japan only 1 year or less.

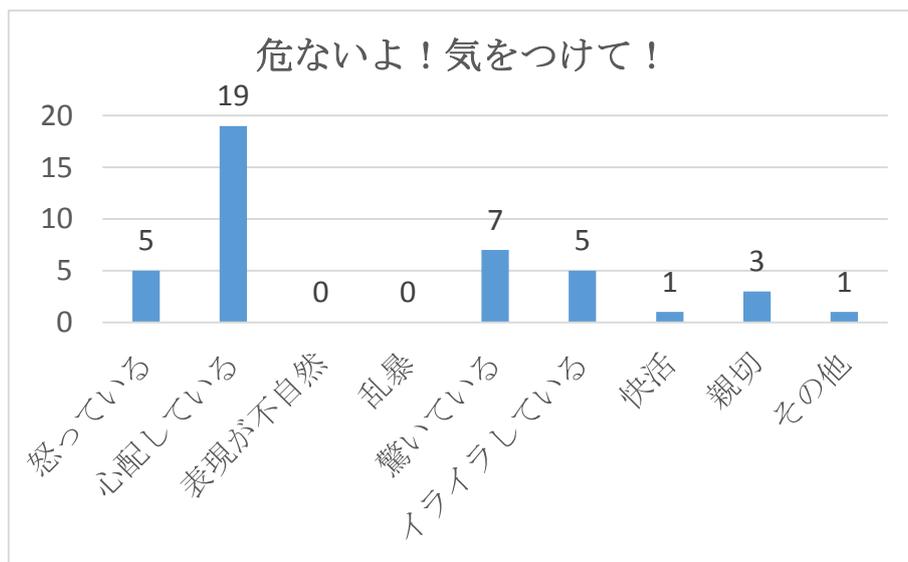
<sup>63</sup>[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1O17fUU9aNf4xQckvMgoSYw6NqBKV2LZUY8WC0iQKLg0/view\\_analytics](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1O17fUU9aNf4xQckvMgoSYw6NqBKV2LZUY8WC0iQKLg0/view_analytics)

The part that contains the Matched Guise Questionnaire reported the following results:

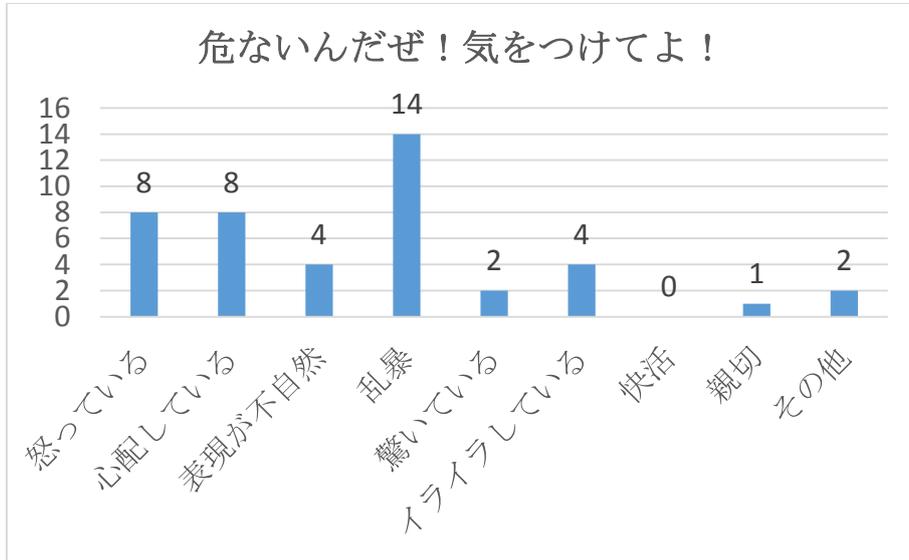
## 22



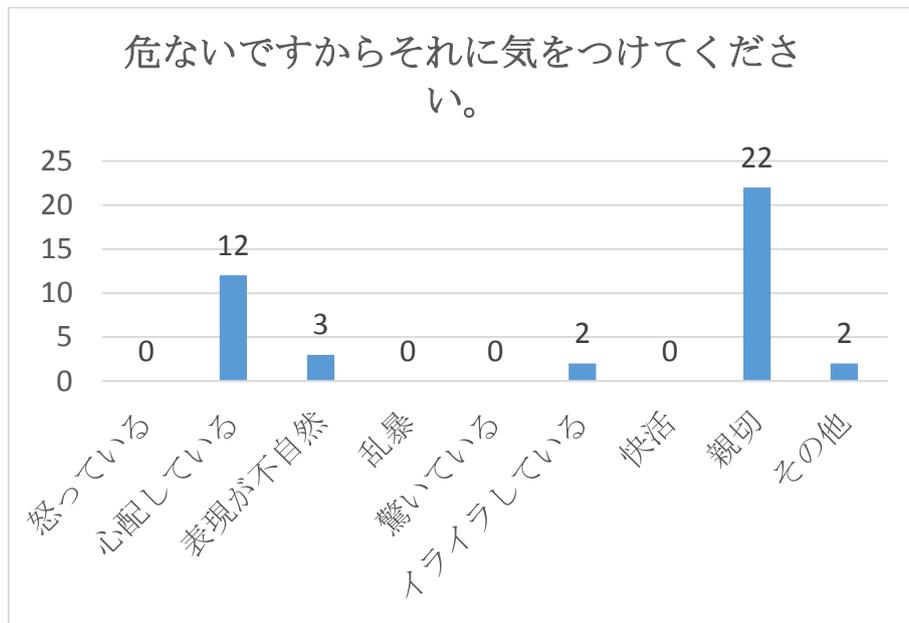
## 23



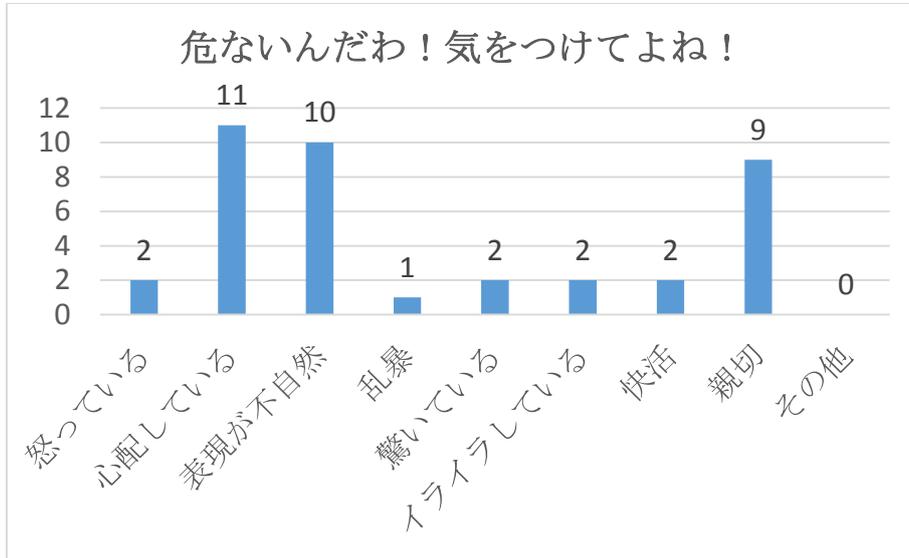
## 24



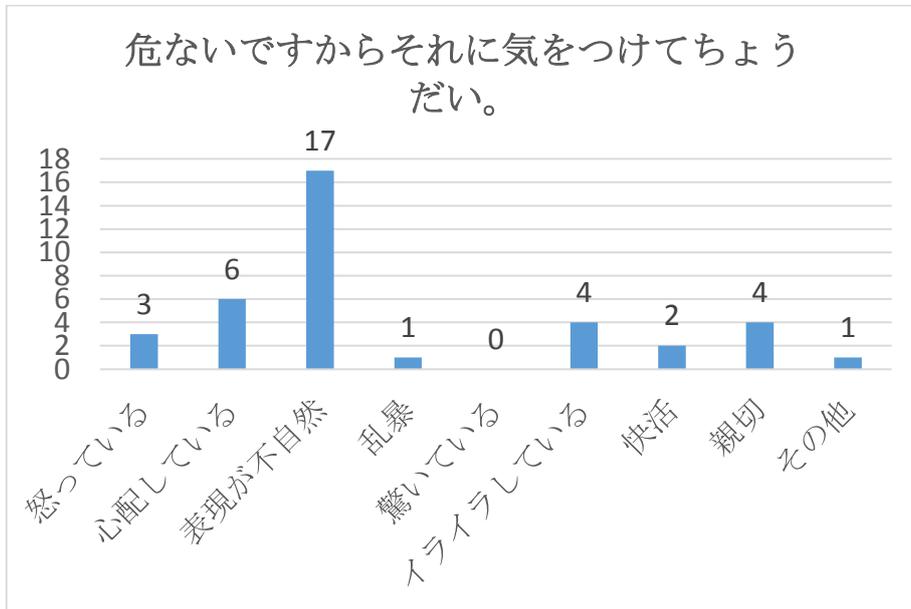
## 25



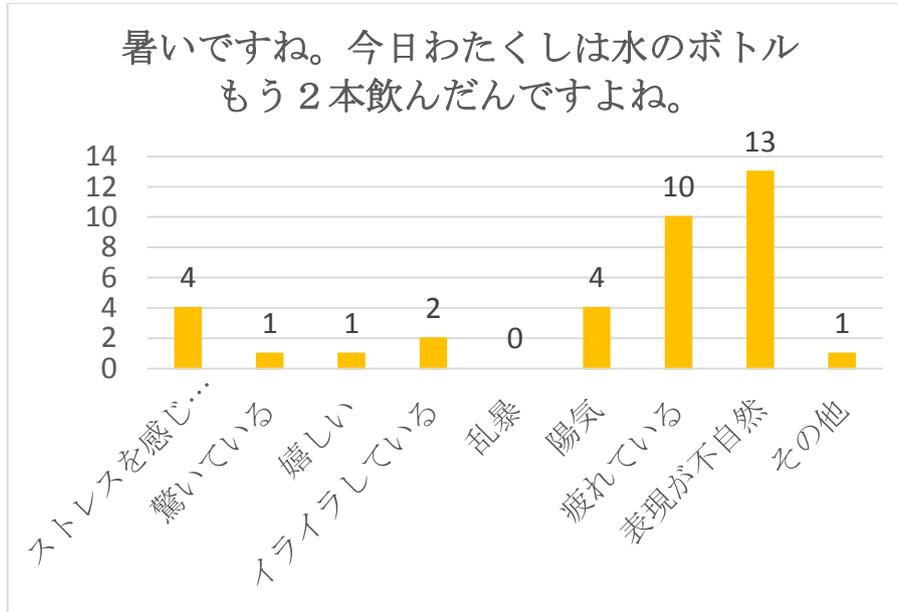
## 26



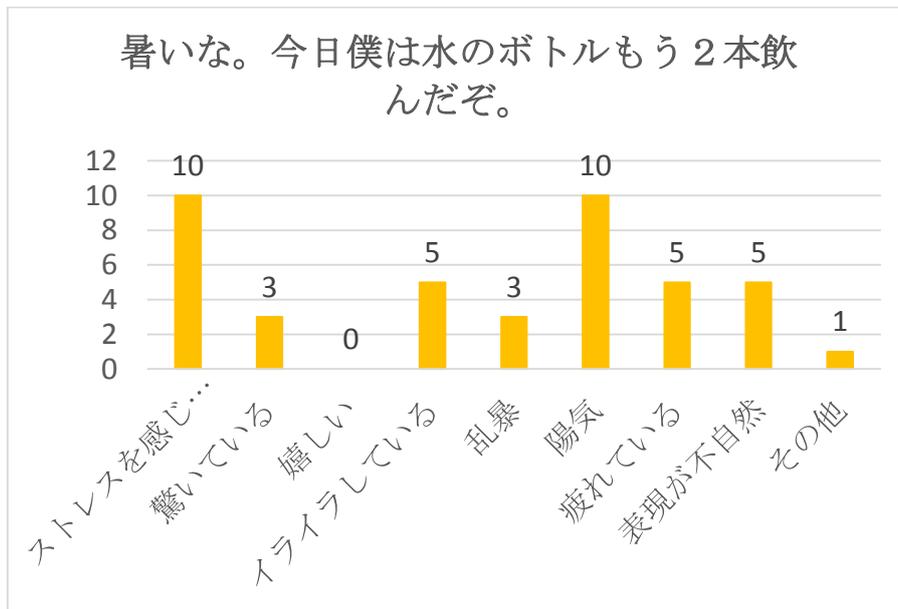
## 27



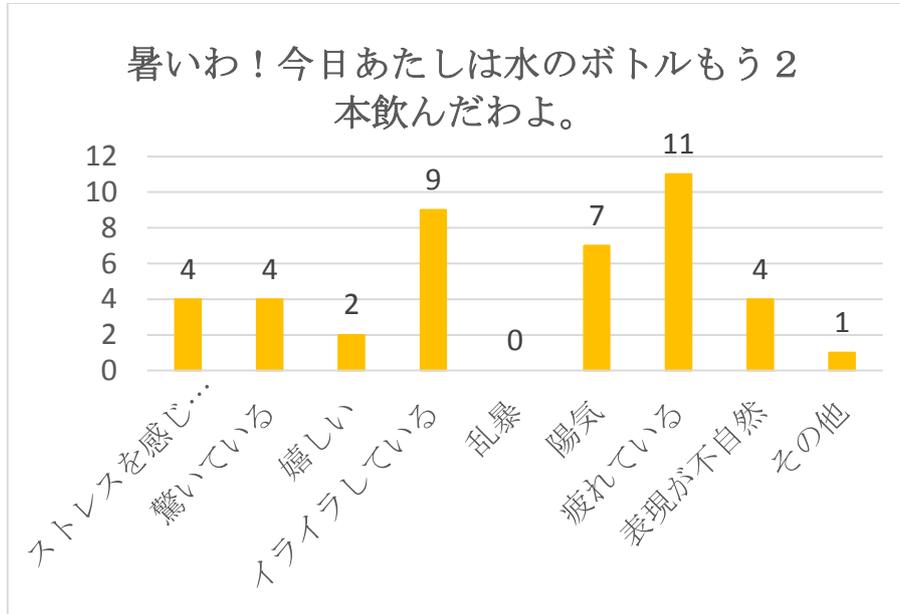
## 28



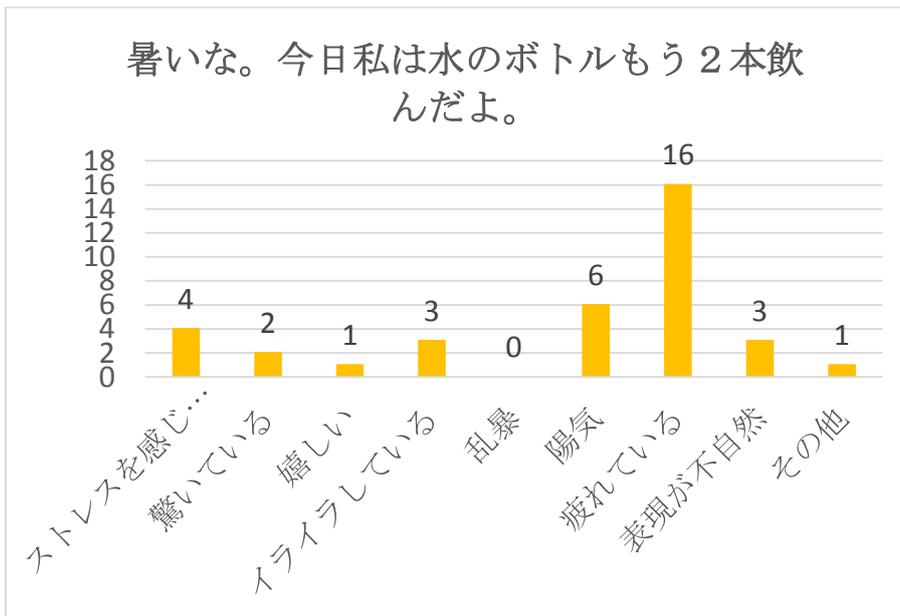
## 29



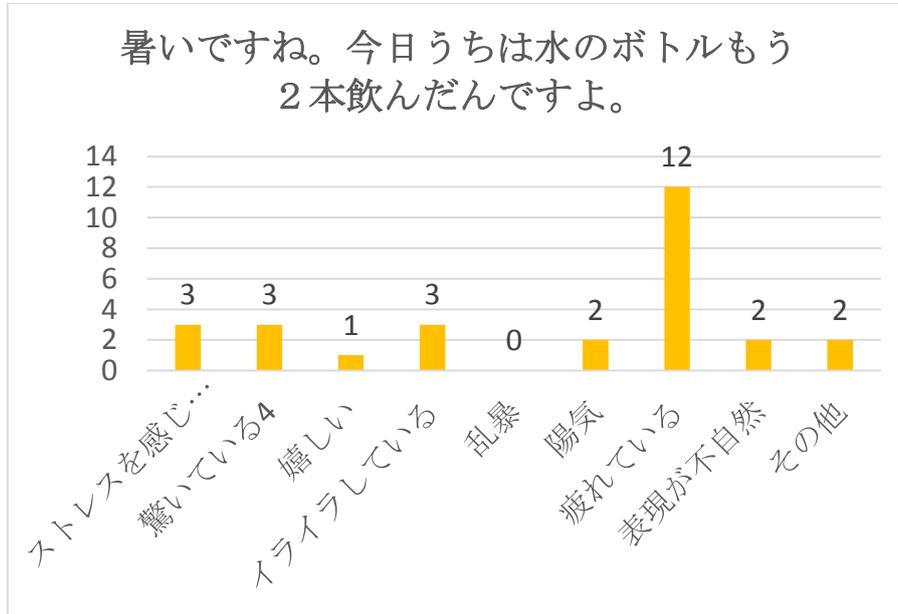
## 30



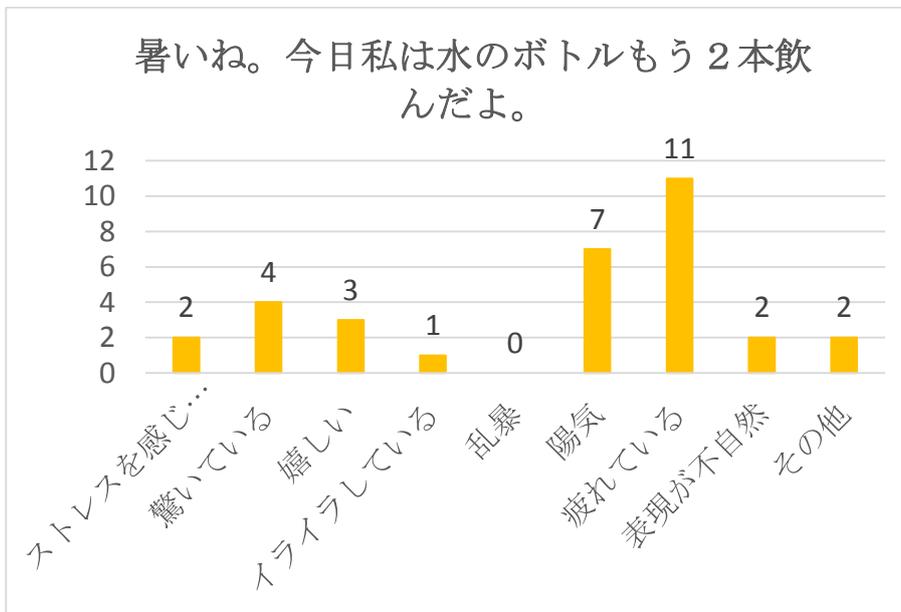
## 31



### 32



### 33



64

<sup>64</sup><https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1O17fUU9aNf4xQckvMgoSYw6NqBKV2LZUY8WC0iQKLg0/viewanalytics>

By analyzing the first six graphics that reveal the answers to the questions of the first group of phrases, it is noticeable that 心配している is the option which gained the highest percentage after listening (and reading) to the following expressions: 危ないから気をつけてね; 危ないよ！気をつけて！; and 危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！ (figures 22, 23, 26).

The students perceived concern in these three expressions despite the fact that, according to dominant language ideology, they are quite different from each other.

According to students' perception, the phrase 危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！ does not express concern only. It has been associated with the options 親切 and 表現が不自然 as well.

The expression 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください has been perceived as sounding the most unnatural, in fact not only the students but also the teachers picked the option 表現が不自然 most often after listening to this phrase (figure 27).

The phrase which is considered to be the most “kind” according to the data is 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください (figure 25).

Another sentence that shows 親切 as one of the most picked options is 危ないから気をつけてね, even though, as we saw, 親切 shares the top spot with 心配している (figure 22).

A further expression where 親切 is among the most chosen options is 危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！ However, in this case 親切 is preceded by 心配している and 表現が不自然 (figure 26).

About the expression 危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！, the majority of the participants choose the option 乱暴, followed by 怒っている and 心配している which all gained the same number of votes (figure 24).

The data collected from the answers given after listening to the second audio-track are slightly different from the ones related to the first audio-track.

In 4 sentences out of 6 the most chosen option has been 疲れている. This answer obtained the majority of click after the listening of the phrases: 暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだわよ; 暑いな。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだよ; 暑いですね。今日うちは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだんですよ and 暑いね。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだよ (figures 30, 31, 33).

In the case of the second audio-track, too, the sentences that the majority of the participants considered “unnatural” is a sentence that sounds very formal and that has a considerable amount of women’s language particles: 暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだんですよね (figure 28). On the other hand, the sentence 暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだわよ, which, according to dominant language ideology, is considered to be very feminine as well, has been perceived as an expression that communicates “tiredness” (疲れている), “annoyance” (イライラしている) and “cheerfulness” (陽気) (figure 30).

In this context it is interesting to notice how the statement 暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだぞ which, according to dominant language ideology, is not only completely devoid from elements of women’s language but should also sound quite rude, was not perceived in this way. The most chosen options are, in fact, ストレスを感じている and 陽気 (figure 29).

### **3.8 Comparing the results of the two surveys**

Through the analysis of the answers given by the two categories of the participants, it is noticeable that the answers related to the first audio-track are quite similar.

In both the categories the majority chose the option 心配している after listening to the sentence 危ないよ！気をつけて！.

In the case of the phrase 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください the majority of both categories picked the answer 表現が不自然 .

About the sentence 危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！, both teachers and students gave the majority of the preferences to the option 乱暴.

In the case of 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください the biggest amount of answers, in both the categories, went to 親切 .

The answers are similar in in the rest of the sentences too, but compared to the ones we just examined there are some differences.

In the case of the phrase 危ないから気をつけてね the majority of the teachers chose the option 親切, while the majority of the students chose two options: 親切 and 心配している.

After hearing the sentence 危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！ the majority of the professors chose 表現が不自然, while the option most often selected by students was 心配している followed by 表現が不自然 and then by 親切.

The data collected from the answers linked to the second audiotrack are not similar like the ones belonging to the first audio-track. The only phrase which obtained similar answers is 暑いね。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだよ where the majority of the two categories of the participants chose the option 疲れている, followed by 陽気 .

The data related to the sentence 暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだんですよ show that the majority of the teachers and the students chose the option 表現が不自然, although in the case of the students questionnaire there is a second most chosen option which is 疲れている.

About all the other expressions of the second audio-track, the answers given by the teachers and the answers given by the students are quite different.

The sentence 暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう２本飲んだわよ sounds “unnatural” to the teachers, the majority of which chose the option 表現が不自然. While the most often chosen option of the students is 疲れている, followed by イライラしている and then by 陽気.

Another expression which sounds “unnatural” to the majority of the teachers is 暑いですね。今日うちは水のボトルもう２本飲んだんですよ。 The majority chose the option 表現が不自然. The majority of the students, however, chose 疲れている, followed by 表現が不自然.

In the case of the phrase 暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう２本飲んだぞ the majority of the teachers chose the option 驚いている, while the majority of the students chose two options, ストレスを感じている and 陽気.

## CHAPTER 4 - Conclusion

The comparison of the questionnaire results shows that most teachers who participated were influenced by the dominant language ideology to some extent, and therefore assessed some Japanese expressions along the ideology about women's language.

A valid example of this attitude has been elicited by the sentences 危ないですからそれに気をつけてください and 危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！ of which, according to the language ideology behind women's language, the first one is considered "kind" because it ends with -てください, and the second one is considered "rude" because it contains the sentence final particle ぜ and because it is very direct.

On the other hand, many results of the teachers' questionnaire are surprising because they do not reflect any specific type of language ideology. For instance, the phrase 暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう2本飲んだぞ, despite the fact that it is direct and contains "masculine" elements such as the first person pronoun 僕 and the sentence final particle ぞ is considered a sentence that expresses surprise according to the majority of the teachers. In other words, they do not perceive this as a rude sentence even though it is uttered by a female speaker.

Other rather unexpected results can be seen in the sentences containing the particle わ, which have both been considered "unnatural" by the majority of the teachers. This implies that the participants do not simply consider such particle as an element that adds femininity to women's speech.

There are several sentences that have been judged as "unnatural", among them 危ないですからそれに気をつけてちょうだい in which, according to the teachers, the -てちょうだい does not express femininity, but simply turns a normal sounding sentence into an unnatural one.

Other phrases that are not considered feminine but unnatural are those that contain the personal pronouns わたくし and うち, and the grammatical form のです. The phrases are 暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう2本飲んだんですね and 暑いですね。今日うちは水のボトルもう2本飲んだんですよ. Both of them contain several elements of women's language, which, according to the majority of the teachers, do not make the sentence plausible.

There are some direct sentences which do not appear to have been filtered by linguistic ideology, like 危ないよ！気をつけて！ which according to the participants express “concern” but not “rudeness”, despite the final よ and て.

Another phrase that is neither positively or negatively evaluated is 暑いね。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだよ。 The majority of the teachers think that this sentence shows “tiredness” from the side of the speaker.

The reactions to the sentence 暑いな。今日私は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだよ are peculiar because this sentence, too, is not considered “rude”, but is perceived as “cheerful”, “tired” and “unnatural”. There is also a high portion of the participants who consider this sentence “unnatural” when is said by a girl.

In brief, according to the results of the teachers questionnaire, a considerable amount of professors, who teach Japanese language in Italian Universities, show – as expected - influence by language ideological notions about women’s language.

Considering the fact that the majority of the professors participating in the questionnaire has been living in Italy for more than 20 years and has been teaching Japanese in Italy for more than 15 years, they are nevertheless also all aware of changes in the use and perception of Japanese women’s language.

As for the results of the students’ questionnaire, the collected data show that the teaching methods of the professors have an influence on the students’ perception of Japanese language. This, too, confirms the hypotheses underlying the survey. In diverse cases, the majority of the students chose the same options chosen by the majority of the teachers. Learning to speak a language thus coincides with learning dominant ideological notions about this language.

There are also cases where, due to the reduced presence of linguistic ideology in the professors teaching methods, polite and kind expressions are not considered to belong to the current women’s language. A good example is given by the final expression -てちようだい which is not considered a natural expression from the majority of the teachers and from the majority of the students either.

Another example is given from the phrases where there are several feminine formal elements, like the sentence 暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだんですね。In this sentence the personal pronoun わたくし and the particles のです and ですね are not considered as a set of elements which constitute a natural and feminine sentence. This view is likely to have been passed on from the professors to the students. The sentence 危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！ is considered “rude” from the majority of the professors and from the majority of the students.

The sentences that end with -てください are considered by both, teachers and students alike, as “kind”.

In the case of the phrase 暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだぞ, one of the most chosen options of the professors is also one of the most chosen options of the students, that is “emphasized”.

There are some expressions that are perceived by the students in a different way from how are perceived by the professors. This is the case in sentences with the particles だわ, よね and わよ, which are considered “unnatural” by the teachers but not by the students. The sentence 危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！ is considered by the majority of the students as a phrase that shows “concern”, while in the case of the sentence 暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう 2 本飲んだわよ the majority of the students chose the options “tired”, “annoyed” and “cheerful”, while only the 14% of them chose “unnatural”. The sentences that contain the particles わ or だわ do not sound unnatural to the students, but rather perceive it to have a well-defined sense.

Considering the fact that almost the 70% of the students watch frequently anime dubbed in Japanese and the 84% of them lived in Japan for a year or a few months, the linguistic influences that pushes students to considering the particle だわ as part of the current women’s language can be linked to the anime and the Japanese mass-media.

The phrases which contain a fair level of formality and/or elements of women’s language tend to be considered feminine and polite, as long as they are not redundant.

Based on the collected data it can thus be stated that the majority of the Japanese professors who teach in Italy have adopted a teaching method that leads to two diametrically opposed results. In other words, does it mean that the perception that the Italian students have of the Japanese language and Japanese women's language in partially has evoked a milder language ideological view on the part of the native teachers, who intentionally or unintentionally pass to the students more liberal notions about the language. Paradoxically, however, the level of language ideology that can be found on the side of most professors is not very prominent which might result in them being restrained to teach their students stereotyped notions about women's language.

In cases where the professors do not stereotype the language, but the students do, this could be due to students exposure to Japanese pop culture, mainly constituted by anime and manga, where a lot of expressions are very much stereotyped.

## References

- BARNARD, Christopher, *Language, Ideology, and Japanese History Textbooks*, Taylor & Francis, 2014.
- CAMERON, Deborah, DON, Kulick., *Language and Sexuality*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- CAMERON, Deborah, “Gender and Language Ideologies”, *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, pp.447-467.
- CHINO, Naoko, *All About Particles: a Handbook of Japanese Function Words*, Kodansha America, 2001.
- ENDŌ, Oriie, *A Cultural History of Japanese Women’s Language*, Edited by Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2006.
- FUJIMURA-FANSELOW, Kumiko, KAMEDA, Atsuko, *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present and Future*, New York : Feminist Press, 1995.
- GOTTLIEB, Nanette, *Language and Society in Japan*, Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- GUIDICINI, Paolo, “Questionari. Interviste. Storie di vita. Come costruire gli strumenti, raccogliere le informazioni ed elaborare i dati”, *Collana di Sociologia*, Franco Angeli, 1995.
- INOUE, Miyako, *Vicarious Language: gender and linguistic modernity in Japan*, University of California Press, 2006.
- INOUE, Teruko, “Masukomi to zyosei no gendai. [Today’s women and mass media]”, *Onna no Imēzi [Image of Woman]*, ed. Zyoseigaku Kenkyuukai 316-29, Tokyo: Keisō-syobō, 1984.
- HANAOKA MCGLOIN, Naomi, “Feminine wa and no: why do we use them?”, *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese*, American Association of Teachers of Japanese, vol. 20, n.1, April 1986.
- HEINRICH, Patrick, *The Making of Monolingual Japan. Language Ideology and Japanese Modernity*, Bristol, Multilingual Matters, 2012.

HEINRICH, Patrick, *The study of Politeness and Women's Language in Japan*, Globalising Sociolinguistics – Challenging and Expanding Theory, London, Routledge, 2015, pp. 178-193

KOCH, Sabine C., SCHEY, Sabine, THIMM, Caja, “Communicating Gendered Professional Identity: Competence, Cooperation, and Conflict in the Workplace”, *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, pp. 528-549.

LAKOFF, Robin, *Language and Woman's Place*, Harper & Row, 1975.

MATSUMOTO, Yoshiko, “Alternative Femininity: Personae of Middle-aged Mothers”, *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Edited by Okamoto Shigeko and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith, New York : Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 240-255.

MITCHELL, Margaret, *Gone with the wind*, Pan Books, 1936.

MITCHELL, Margaret, Trans. Yasuo Okubo and Michinosuke Takeuchi, *Kaze to Tomoni Sarinu [Gone with the wind]*, Tokyo: Shichō Sha, 1957.

MIYAZAKI, Ayumi, “Japanese Junior High School Girls' and Boys' First-Person Pronoun Use and Their Social World”, *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Edited by Okamoto Shigeko and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith, New York : Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 256-274.

MORRIS, Ivan, *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon*, New York: Columbia University Press, trans.1967.

NAGATA, Yuriko, SULLIVAN, Kristen, “Hegemonic gender in Japanese as a foreign language education: Australian perspectives”, *Genders, Transgenders and Sexualities in Japan*, Edited by Mark McLelland and Romit Dasgupta, Routledge, 2005, pp.15-32.

NAKAMURA, Momoko, “Creating Indexicality: Schoolgirl Speech in Meiji Japan”, In Deborah Cameron and Don Kulick (eds.) *The Language and Sexuality Reader*, London & New York : Routledge, 2006, pp. 270-284.

NAKAMURA, Momoko, *Construction of “Japanese Women's Language” as a Symbol of Femininity: After the Second World War (1945-1965)*, *Nature-People-Society: Science and the Humanities* 39, 2005, pp. 1-28.

NAKAMURA, Momoko, “Discursive Construction of the Ideology of “Women's Language”: From Kamakura, Muromachi, to Edo periods (1180-1867)”, *Nature-People-Society* 34, 2003, pp.21-64.

NAKAMURA, Momoko, “Discursive Construction of the Ideology of “Women’s Language”: Women’s Disciplinary Books/Moral Textbooks and the Unification of Written and Spoken Languages in the Meiji/Taisho Periods (1868-1926)”, *Nature-People-Society: Science and the Humanities* 35, 2003, pp.1-39.

NAKAMURA, Momoko, “Discursive Construction of the Ideology of “Women’s Language”: The Impact of War (1914-45)”, *Nature-People-Society* 37, 2004, 1-39.

NAKAMURA, Momoko, “Historical Discourse Approach to Language and Gender: Framework and Theoretical Implications”, *Shizen, ningen, shakai* [Nature, Human Beings, Society] 52, 2011, pp.21-47.

OKAMOTO, Shigeko, “Tasteless Japanese: Less feminine speech among young Japanese women”, *Gender articulated: language and the socially constructed self*, Edited by Kira Hall and Mary Bucholtz, New York : Routledge, 1995, pp.297-325.

OKUBO, Tadatoshi, *Machi no gengo gaku* [Linguistics on the street], Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 1956.

PHARR, Susan J., “Status conflict: The rebellion of the tea pourers”, *Conflict in Japan*, eds. Krauss, Rholen and Steinhoff, Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press, 1984, pp.214-240.

REYNOLDS, Katsue A, “Female Speakers of Japanese”, *Feminist Issues* vol.5, Issue 2, Fall 1985, pp.13-45.

REYNOLDS, Katsue A, “Female Speakers of Japanese in Transition”, *Aspects of Japanese women’s language*, Edited by Sachiko Ide and Naomi Hanaoka McGloin, Tokyo: Kuroshio, 1990, pp.129-146.

ROWLING, J.K, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*, London: Bloomsbury, 1997.

ROWLING, J.K., Trans. Yuko Matsuoka, *Harii Pottaa to Kenja no Ishi* [*Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*], Tokyo: Seizan Sha., 1999.

SHIKIBU Murasaki, SEIDENSTICKER, Edward, *The Tale of Genji*, New York : Knopf, 1978.

SIEVERS, Sharon, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan*, Standford University Press, 1983.

SUNAOSHI, Yukako, “Farm Women’s Professional Discourse in Ibaraki”, *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Edited by

Okamoto Shigeko and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith, New York : Oxford University Press, 2004, pp.187-204.

SWANN, Joan, "Schooled Language: Language and Gender Educational Settings", *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, pp.624-644.

TALBOT, Mary, "Gender Stereotypes: Reproduction and Challenge", *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, pp.468-486.

TAKASAKI Midori, "Terebi to joseigo", *Nihongogaku*, vol.15, no.10, 1996, pp. 46-56.

TANNEN, Deborah, *You just don't understand: women and men in conversation*, New York : William Morrow, 1990.

WASHI, Rumi, "Japanese Female Speech' and Language Policy in the World War II Era", *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology: Cultural Models and Real People*, Edited by Okamoto Shigeko and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith, New York : Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 76-91.

WEATHERALL, Ann, GALLOIS, Cindy, "Gender and Identity: Representation and Social Action", *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, Edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, pp.487-508.

YAMAKAWA, Kikue, *Onna nidai no ki*, (Records of two generations of women), Nihon hyōron shinsha, 1956.

YANAGIHARA, Yoshimitsu, *Teyodawa kotoba no kairyō: mazu hyōjungo wo tsukure* [The reform of teyo-dawa speech: First, establish the standard Japanese language], Jōkan, 1908, 18(I): pp.13-15.

ZIMMERMAN, Don H. WEST, Candace, "Sex Roles, interruptions and silence in conversations", *Language and Sex: difference and dominance*, Massachusetts: Newbury House, 1975, pp.105-129.

## Online References

FURUKAWA, Hiroko, "Bridget Jones's Femininity Constructed by Language: a comparison between the Japanese translation of Bridget Jones's Diary, and the Japanese subtitles of the film", *Online Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Poetics and Linguistics Association (PALA)*, 2009, Retrieved from: <http://www.pala.ac.uk/uploads/2/5/1/0/25105678/furukawa2009.pdf>, 18/04/2015.

"Gender Difference in History Women in China and Japan", *Women in World History Curriculum*, 1996-2013, Retrieved from: <http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/lesson3.html>, 12/03/2015.

"Ingrained ideas on gender roles", *The Japan times*, 19/07/2014, Retrieved from: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/07/19/editorials/ingrained-ideas-gender-roles/#.VgVGD9Ltmkr>, 05/05/2015.

KINCAID, Chris, "A Look at Gender Expectations in Japanese Society", *Japan Powered*, 07/07/2013, Retrieved from: <http://www.japanpowered.com/japan-culture/a-look-at-gender-expectations-in-japanese-society>, 15/02/2015.

MALLARY A., Silvia-Grondin, "Women in Ancient Japan: From Matriarchal Antiquity to Acquiescent Confinement", *Student Pulse*, 2010, vol. 2 NO.09, Retrieved from: [http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/286/women-in-ancient-japan-from-matriarchal-antiquity-to-acquiescent-confinement?utm\\_expid=22625156-1\\_HyAAxXdT4Cb3b9ocWvJYA.0&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.it%2F](http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/286/women-in-ancient-japan-from-matriarchal-antiquity-to-acquiescent-confinement?utm_expid=22625156-1_HyAAxXdT4Cb3b9ocWvJYA.0&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.it%2F), 22/03/2015.

Online results for the teachers questionnaire, Retrieved from: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kpBJB47CKYj4Ec90XHe1ujlBRDJmbC3hkorTkYsihxY/viewanalytics>, 01/06/2015.

Online results for the students questionnaire, Retrieved from: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1O17fUU9aNf4xQckvMgoSYw6NqBKV2LZUY8WC0iQKLg0/viewanalytics>, 02/06/2015.

SANGHANI, Radhika, "Female teachers are 'bossy'. Male teachers are 'awesome'", *The Telegraph*, 10/02/2015, Retrieved from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/11402552/Female-teachers-are-bossy.-Male-teachers-are-awesome.html>, 26/04/2015.

THOMASON, Sally, "Sex & Language Stereotypes Through the Ages", *Language Log*, 10/09/2006, Retrieved from: <http://itre.cis.upenn.edu/~myl/languagelog/archives/003566.html>, 07/05/2015.

## Appendix 1

### 先生のオンラインのアンケート質問リスト

#### 1) 性別

- ・ 男性
- ・ 女性

#### 2) 年齢

——

#### 3) どのぐらい海外に住んでいますか。

- ・ 5年未満
- ・ 5-10年
- ・ 10-15年
- ・ 15-20年
- ・ 20年以上

#### 4) どのぐらい日本語を教えていますか。

- ・ 5年未満
- ・ 5-10年
- ・ 10-15年
- ・ 15-20年
- ・ 20年以上

これより、いくつか文書を読んで聞いていただきます。それぞれの文書の下にある質問に答えてください。

危ないから気をつけてね。

5) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないよ！気をつけて！

6) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！

7) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないですからそれに気をつけてください。

8) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！

9) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないですからそれに気をつけてください。

10) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう2本飲んだんですよね。

11) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう2本飲んだぞ。

12) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう2本飲んだわよ。

13) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いな。今日私は水のボトルもう2本飲んだよ。

14) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いですね。今日うちは水のボトルもう2本飲んだんですよ。

15) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いね。今日私は水のボトルもう2本飲んだよ。

16) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### 大学生のオンラインのアンケート質問リスト

1) 性別

- ・ 男性
- ・ 女性

2) どのぐらい日本語を勉強していますか。

- ・ 1年間
- ・ 2年間
- ・ 3年間
- ・ 4年間
- ・ 4年以上

3) 日本語の吹き替えのアニメを見ますか。

- a) しばしば見る
- b) よく見る
- c) ときどき見る
- d) あまり見ない
- e) ぜんぜん見ない

4) 日本語で書かれた漫画を読みますか。

- a) しばしば読む
- b) よく読む
- c) ときどき読む

- d) あまり読まない
- e) ぜんぜん読まない

5) 日本に住んだことがありますか。

- ・はい
- ・いいえ

6) 日本に住んでいたら、どのぐらい住んでいましたか。

- ・1年間未満
- ・1年間
- ・2年間未満
- ・2年間
- ・2年間以上

これより、いくつか文書を読んで聞いていただきます。それぞれの文書の下にある質問に答えてください。

危ないから気をつけてね。

7) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

- 怒っている
- 心配している
- 表現が不自然
- 乱暴
- 驚いている
- イライラしている
- 快活
- 親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

**危ないよ！気をつけて！**

8) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

**危ないんだぜ！気をつけてよ！**

9) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないですからそれに気をつけてください。

10) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないんだわ！気をつけてよね！

11) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

危ないですからそれに気をつけてください。

12) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

怒っている

心配している

表現が不自然

乱暴

驚いている

イライラしている

快活

親切

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いですね。今日わたくしは水のボトルもう2本飲んだんですよね。

13) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いな。今日僕は水のボトルもう2本飲んだぞ。

14) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いわ！今日あたしは水のボトルもう2本飲んだわよ。

15) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いな。今日私は水のボトルもう2本飲んだよ。

16) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いですね。今日うちは水のボトルもう2本飲んだんですよ。

17) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

暑いね。今日私は水のボトルもう2本飲んだよ。

18) 話す人はどのような印象を受けますか。

ストレスを感じている

驚いている

嬉しい

イライラしている

乱暴

陽気

疲れている

表現が不自然

その他 \_\_\_\_\_

*Desidero ringraziare innanzitutto il Professor Heinrich e la Professoressa Mariotti per la loro disponibilità e i loro suggerimenti fornitimi durante la stesura della tesi.*

*I miei amici Jasper, Ryota, Matteo, Rita, Akemi, Makiko e Nathaniel, per il loro aiuto tecnico.*

*I miei amici Daniela, Valeria, Michele, Cristian, Chiara, Carolina, Idra, Beatrice e Astrid che ho avuto l'immensa fortuna di conoscere.*

*Infine, un ringraziamento particolare va ai miei genitori e ai miei nonni, che hanno sempre appoggiato ogni mia scelta e mi hanno donato un amore profondo e incondizionato di cui non smetterò mai di essere grata.*