UH, EALL, 2014 Fall

JPN 633 JAPANESE SOCIOLINGUISTICS (3 CR. HOURS)

Time & Day: 3:00-5:30, W
Room: Moore 394
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Office hours: TBA

OBJECTIVES:

Language and culture are so inextricably related to each other that one cannot learn to use a language without learning the culture of the society in which the language is spoken. (Remember the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis.) This is particularly true with Japanese. Japanese is recognized as one of the most highly context-dependent languages and as a typical "pragmatically-prominent" language. Japanese language and culture provides an abundance of intriguing research questions, relating to politeness (keigo), direct and indirect communication, gender (onna kotoba and otoko kotoba), power (meue and meshita), ingroup and outgroup distinction (uchi and soto), etc. In addition, it has forms which don't fit well in the grammar based on English and other European languages. Particles (ne, sa, yo, wa, and na). and their combinations (yone, wayo, wayone, and yona) play very important roles in conversation, expressing the speaker's attitudes towards the hearer and/or the conversational context and content. In order to be successful in learning Japanese, in working with Japanese people, or in pursuing research concerning Japan and Japanese in various academic fields, such as sociology, political science, business, literature, etc., understanding of the Japanese language and its speakers is absolutely indispensable.

The course consists of the following types of activities:

i. Discussion of sociolinguistic concepts and Japanese examples:
varieties of Japanese (Daily conversation, Diet debate talk, teacher talk, baby talk, standard Japanese vs. dialects, speech levels and honorifics, women's and men's
language), Vertical relationships (= power semantic) and horizontal
relationships (=solidarity semantic), politeness, (negative politeness and positive politeness) direct and indirect communication, phatic communication and harmony, qualitative and quantitative studies, discourse-pragmatic markers (interactional particles, pause fillers, discourse adverbs, self and personal (pro)nouns, translation and interpretation, intercultural misunderstanding, ...).

ii. When you know your interesting topic, select three papers related to the topic and share what you have read with the class, providing one page handout outlining the main points of the article.

iii. Data collection: Each student will start to collect data, spoken or written (recording and transcribing conversations, text messages, email messages, character speech of manga, anime, and novels); Focusing on a particular form; summarizes the patterns and try to explain why such patterns are used.

iv. Term paper writing.

**BOOKS AND ARTICLES FOR READING:**

Textbook:

Other readings:
A: On-line material. (References to be given through laulima.)
B: Packet of paper copies.
C: Other. (To be distributed in class.)

**GRADING CRITERIA** (to be discussed)

- reaction papers: 30%
- reading presentations: 20%
- class participation: 20%
- term paper: 30%