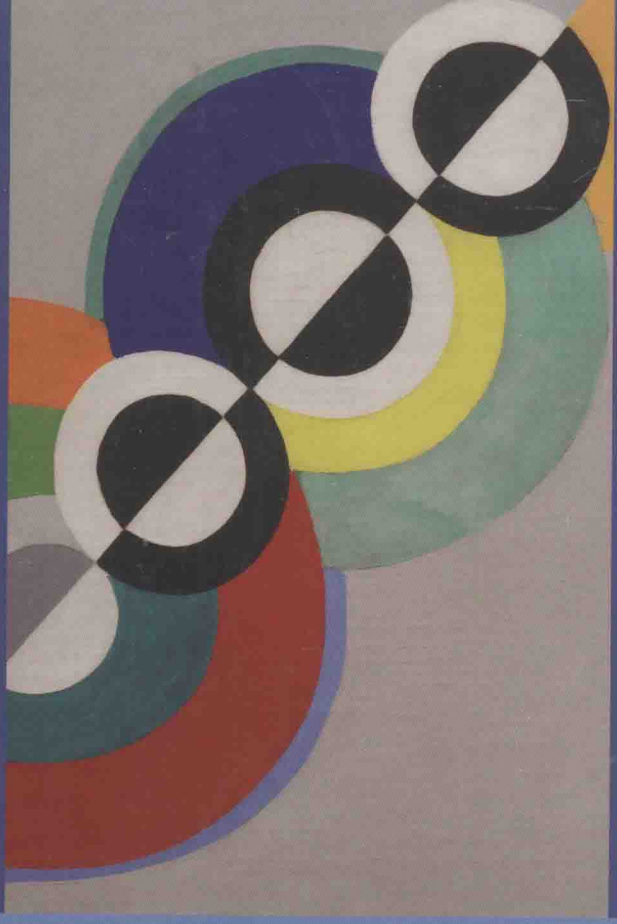

AN INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE LINGUISTICS

NATSUKO TSUJIMURA

THIRD EDITION

WILEY Blackwell

An Introduction to Japanese Linguistics

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To my mother and my sister

Preface to the Third Edition

Throughout my education I have been blessed with a number of great teachers from whom I received unfathomable influence. Adrian Akmajian is high on that list. Adrian used to say that writing a textbook is more challenging than one might imagine because you get criticized no matter what. Of course I did not realize what exactly he meant until I wrote one. While I may not agree with some of the criticisms on the earlier editions, I am fortunate that many of the criticisms were constructive and informative so as to help me produce yet another edition which I hope can be considered an improvement. I think I have achieved that goal – at least to some degree – in this third edition.

The second edition included significant revisions in the chapters on morphology and semantics with an additional chapter on first language acquisition. For this current edition, I have made extensive revisions in the chapters on phonetics (Chapter 2) and syntax (Chapter 5), some in the chapter on phonology (Chapter 3), and minor modifications in the rest of the chapters. The chapter on first language acquisition in the second edition has been revised and incorporated as sections in each of the chapters in the third edition with additional discussion of second language acquisition. For the phonetics chapter, unlike in the previous editions, which separated the discussion of the Japanese and English sound inventories, the presentation of various phonetic issues in this third edition keeps its primary focus on the Japanese sound system and pertinent phenomena with occasional comparative reference to English. Responding to the frequent criticism that the syntax chapter in the previous editions is too technical, I have decided to eliminate most of the tree representations as well as the theoretical discussion, but instead to keep the chapter as descriptive as possible and to include some typological comparisons. Putting together all the revisions made in the second and third editions, the current edition is quite a departure from the original book that was published in 1996. The theoretical approach underlying the book is still primarily that of generative grammar, but where possible and appropriate, I have tried to shy away from theoretical matters and to include occasional crosslinguistic comparison regardless of theoretical orientation so that the Japanese-internal as well as typological descriptions are more enriched than in earlier editions.

As I stated in the preface to the second edition, the primary goal of this book is to examine spoken Japanese, presenting linguistic description and analyses of

a wide range of phenomena. It is intended to serve as a descriptive source and a theoretical foundation for an audience that includes students and scholars in linguistics as well as in Japanese language pedagogy and education, and more generally for those interested in the Japanese language. It is hoped that students will find the book a useful pedagogical tool to learn basic notions and terminology in linguistics and to develop their skills in linguistic analysis and argumentation. Depending on the chapter and on the reader's background, the user may feel that the extent of the details and the level of complexity are either too advanced or not adequate. Especially in a classroom setting, the instructor is advised to make pedagogical judgments appropriate for the students' background and needs, and additional materials may be used as supplements; or this book can be used as a supplement to other pedagogical tools. For the novice student, this book is more effectively used as a textbook in a classroom, rather than as a self-guide to a general introduction to Japanese linguistics. Professional linguists who are not proficient in Japanese have found this book useful as a reference in providing examples and descriptive analyses of linguistic phenomena in Japanese. A suggestion was made to include examples written in the Japanese script, but I have kept the same representation in Romanization with such an audience in mind.

The publication of the third edition is somewhat of an irony since I was originally not interested in writing it, still feeling a residual sense of burnout. I am grateful to Wiley Blackwell's linguistics acquisition editor, Danielle Descoteaux, for encouraging me to work on a new edition and for once again planting the seed of excitement in me back in 2009. Danielle quickly solicited four reviews for the second edition, which served as a springboard for the current edition. Without these reviews I would have been close to clueless as to how I might improve upon the previous edition. Two additional reviewers examined the pre-final version of this edition, and thanks to their careful reading, I was fortunate to make the last round of significant revisions. I thank Danielle and the six reviewers for leading me to the path I needed to take. In the process of revising the third edition, I further benefited from comments on previous editions. Atsushi Fukada at Purdue University, who adopted the book for his linguistics course, sent me e-mail messages to inform me of a number of counterexamples to the generalizations pertinent to accentuation. His comments gave me a chance to revisit the topic in the phonology chapter. The revisions of the phonetics chapter would not have been possible without the technical assistance on spectrograms and wave forms that Kyoko Okamura kindly and patiently offered to me. I particularly appreciate her generosity in having spent hours of recording (and re-recording) with me during the hot and humid summer of 2010 in Bloomington. Shigeru Miyagawa and Peter Sells, my long-time colleagues, gave me very useful suggestions as to how I might re-work the syntax chapter. Although the chapter ended up being one that is not consistent with their recommendations, I would not have been able to make my decision without their initial input. Sara Sowers did an incredibly thorough job in going over the references and the text, which

saved me countless hours. The frequent appearance of Stuart Davis in my acknowledgments faces the risk of obscuring their sincerity, but I do not know any other way than simply thanking him profusely for the professional and personal guidance he has endlessly offered me during this project and far beyond. Julia Kirk of Wiley Blackwell patiently responded to my numerous questions on copyright permissions. It was to my pleasure and relief that Fiona Sewell once again took care of fine-tuning of the book, for the third time. The finesse and professionalism she provided in editing this edition have made the very last stage of the production much less stressful than it would have been otherwise. I am greatly indebted to her. Thank you all for helping me survive another round of revising the book through your professional expertise. Finally, I am indebted to my mother and my sister for my professional career, of which this book forms a significant part, as well as for my personal life; their sacrifice is something for which I can never repay them. This last edition is dedicated to them.

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Contents

1 Introduction

We use language every day to communicate with each other. Even young children use language. Children naturally acquire the language (or languages) spoken in the community around them: it could be English, Japanese, Russian, Tagalog, Zulu, or, in the case of the hearing impaired, American Sign Language (ASL), for example. While language consists of sounds (or signs as in ASL), words, and sentences, it is not simply a random sequence of sounds, words, or signs. For instance, a native speaker of English knows that a sequence of sounds like "abpmeshnsch" or the string of words "the walked yellow a yesterday pet three where quickly" do not represent utterances of English. Language is a more systematic, rule-governed mechanism. Sounds pattern in certain regular ways in forming words, and words combine to form sentences in a consistent manner as well.

The field of study where language is investigated in a systematic way is called linguistics. A primary goal of much linguistic research then is to discover the patterns that underlie languages. When linguists find such patterns in a particular language, they posit that there are rules or constraints in the language, which produce these patterns. Linguists hypothesize that when children acquire their native language during early childhood, they subconsciously learn the rules and constraints of their language that enable them to speak and understand the language in a fluent manner without hesitation. Thus, linguists are particularly interested in uncovering rules or constraints that speakers must subconsciously know when they speak a language – rules that speakers themselves are completely unaware of.

Some people have thought that children learn their first language by imitating what their parents say. That is, children were thought to learn their first language gradually, by listening to what their parents say to them and by imitating it. However, this assumption has been questioned for various reasons. For example, children have the ability to create sentences they have never heard before. If they

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learned their first language simply by imitating their parents, it would be impossible for them to create sentences that are completely novel to them. The fact that children are capable of constantly creating new sentences immediately casts doubt on the assumption that children learn their first language by imitation.

Another piece of evidence in conflict with the assumption that children learn their first language by imitating their parents comes from the nature of the mistakes they make. In learning their native language, children make mistakes, but the mistakes often reflect their ability to make sophisticated generalizations concerning their first language on the basis of their observations. There are plenty of examples of this sort. One instance can be seen in English-speaking children's mistakes in the irregular past tense verb forms. In English, regular past tense verbs are formed simply by adding *-ed* to the present tense verb. So, we get *laughed* from *laugh* and *smiled* from *smile*. English also has a large class of irregular verbs including *go–went*, *bring–brought*, and *break–broke*. For the irregular verbs, many children go through a stage where they use *goed* instead of *went* and *bringed* instead of *brought*. Adult speakers of English know irregular past tense verb forms, and they would not utter *goed*, *bringed*, and *breaked*; instead, they would say the correct forms, *went*, *brought*, and *broke*. If children learn their first language simply by imitating what their parents say, they should never produce incorrect past tense verb forms such as *goed*, *bringed*, and *breaked* because their parents do not say them. Rather than imitating their parents' speech, children subconsciously make an observation concerning the formation of past tense verb forms on the basis of regular forms such as *laughed* and *smiled*, and then make a generalization that past tense verbs are formed by adding *-ed* to present tense verbs. The incorrect outputs like *goed*, *bringed*, and *breaked* result from an overgeneralization of such a "rule" to irregular verbs. This suggests that children do have the ability to generalize on the basis of their observations.

Children also make mistakes in their use of verbs. Some English verbs have causative counterparts. Consider the pairs in (1)–(2), which are taken from Pinker (1989).

(1) a. The horse walked/galloped/trotted/raced/ran/jumped past the barn.
b. I walked/galloped/trotted/raced/ran/jumped the horse past the barn.
(Pinker 1989: 131)

(2) a. The log slid/skidded/floated/rolled/bounced.
b. Brian slid/skidded/floated/rolled/bounced the log.
(Pinker 1989: 130)

The verbs of the (b) sentences in (1)–(2) display causative use. For example, in (1a) the horse voluntarily performed the action of walking, galloping, trotting, etc. In (1b), on the other hand, I instigated some action that led to the horse's walking, galloping, trotting, etc. That is, I caused the horse to walk, gallop, trot,

etc. Similarly, in (2b), Brian caused the log to slide, skid, float, etc., while such a causative interpretation is not available in the (a) sentence. So, the same verb can be used to induce the causative interpretation. Children observe this phenomenon, but their output is not necessarily grammatical; (3)–(6), taken from Pinker (1989: 305–306), are actual utterances by children (cf. Bowerman 1982; Pinker 1989).

(3) You can drink me the milk.

(4) Will you have me a lesson? [Request to adult friend in swimming pool]

(5) Andrea, I want to watch you this book.

(6) Remember me what I came in for.

The verb *drink* in (3) is used with a causative interpretation, although such a reading is not allowed with this verb in adult English. So, the child used the verb to mean "to feed" or "to help to drink". Similarly, *have* in (4) is used as "give", the causative counterpart of *have* ("let me have"); in (5) *watch you* is used to mean "have you watch"; and in (6) *remember* is meant to be "remind" ("let me remember"). Another example that is often observed in children's speech is a sentence like "He learned me real good", in which *learn* is intended to be "make me learn". In these errors which actually occur in children's speech, we can see that they are analyzing *drink/have/watch/remember/learn* as causative verbs just like *walk*, *run*, and *roll* in (1)–(2), for instance. Notice that children would not make these sorts of mistakes if they spoke the language just by imitating their parents, because adult speakers would not make such mistakes. Instead, children are making a generalization and applying it to new words and sentences based on what they hear. What is important here is that children are actively making generalizations, trying to figure out the language, although this task is largely subconscious.

Noam Chomsky, the most influential American linguist in the second half of the twentieth century, is a strong proponent of the hypothesis that there must be something innate in the human cognitive system which enables children to create sentences they have never heard before, and enables them to figure out and learn their language. Under this view, one of the main tasks of a linguist is to figure out the exact nature of the innateness. In undertaking this sort of task, linguists first observe some language-related phenomenon and describe it. Second, they try to figure out whether the phenomenon is of an arbitrary nature, or whether there is some systematic pattern associated with it. When the latter is found to be the case, they formulate a hypothesis on the basis of this pattern. Often the hypothesis makes further predictions about patterns in the language. Third, the hypothesis is tested against a new set of data. If the new data are inconsistent with the predictions, the hypothesis is falsified, and hence needs to be discarded or modified in order to account for the patterns found in the language.