

# 31020 JAPANESE CULTURE

## LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY IN JAPAN

**INSTRUCTOR:** Nanako Machida

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of the course is to heighten students' awareness and understanding of the relationship between the Japanese language and Japanese society (or culture) by exploring topics that facilitate the learning of Japanese. The main issues covered include (1) Japanese women's language and the roles and status of women in Japan, (2) *keigo* and Japanese society, (3) the concept of *uchi/soto*, (4) empathy and the Japanese language, and (5) non-verbal communication.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

- Introduction to sociolinguistics
- Some characteristics of the Japanese language (vocabulary, grammar, sound system, writing system, regional dialects, etc.)
- Japanese women's language
- Sexism in Japanese
- Japanese women's language and politeness
- *Keigo* in Japanese
- Universality of politeness
- *Keigo* and vertical social structure
- Humbleness in Japanese
- Group consciousness and the Japanese language (*uchi/soto* and *keigo*, giving and receiving verbs, address system, kinship terms, etc.)
- Yes/no system
- *Aizuchi*
- Non-verbal communication in Japanese

### TEXTS

*Textbook:* Reading Package for "Language and Society in Japan" prepared by the instructor.

#### *Supplementary Reading*

- Nanette Gottlieb, *Language and Society in Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Leger Brosnahan, *Japanese and English Gesture: Contrastive Nonverbal Communication*. Tokyo: Taishukan, 1990 (リージャー・ブローズナハン『しぐさの比較文化: ジェスチャーの日英比較』大修館, 1988).
- Kittredge Cherry, *Womansword: What Japanese Words Say About Women*. New York: Kodansha International, 1988.
- Takeo Doi, *The Anatomy of Dependence*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1973.
- Sachiko Ide and Naomi H. McGloin (eds.), *Aspects of Japanese Women's Language*. Tokyo: Kurosio, 1990.
- Susumu Kuno, *The Structure of the Japanese Language*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1973.
- Senko K. Maynard, *Japanese Communication: Language and Thought in Context*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997.
- Rajend Mesthrie et al., *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.
- Roy A. Miller, *Japan's Modern Myth: The Language and Beyond*. New York: Weatherhill, 1982.
- Osamu Mizutani, *Japanese: The Spoken Language in Japanese Life*. Tokyo: Japan Times, 1981.
- Chie Nakane, *Japanese Society*, rev. ed. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1973.
- Shigeko Okamoto and Janet S. Shibamoto Smith (eds.), *Japanese Language, Gender, and Ideology – Cultural models and real people*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Janet S. Shibamoto, *Japanese Women's Language*. Orlando: Academic Press, 1985.
- Takao Suzuki, *Words in Context: A Japanese Perspective on Language and Culture*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1978.
- Patricia L. Wetzell, "Uti and soto (in-group and out-group): Social deixis in Japanese" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell

University, 1984). Ann Arbor: UMI, 1987.

Patricia L. Wetzel, *Keigo in Modern Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004.

#### **ASSESSMENT**

Attendance, class participation and assignments 20%; Group project 10%; Term paper 30%; Final examination 40%

**Note: Enrolment for this course is limited and priority may be given to students who need these credits for their majors at their home institution.**