

## BOOK NOTES

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JUNKO MORI AND AMY SNYDER OHTA, *Japanese applied linguistics: Discourse and social perspectives*. London: Continuum, 2008. Pp. xiii, 364. Hb. \$150.

Reviewed by JILL JEGERSKI  
Spanish, French, Italian, and Portuguese  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
Chicago, IL, 60607  
jjeger1@uic.edu

The twelve chapters in this edited volume present primarily discourse and conversation analyses of sociolinguistic issues such as gender, aging, regional variation, and identity in both native and nonnative Japanese, and include complementary studies of language ideology and policy. The fourteen authors are almost exclusively affiliated with North American universities, yet their research was largely conducted in Japan. Novel descriptions of linguistic forms are proposed in the first of four sections, which challenges some traditional accounts of Japanese. Ch. 1, for instance, reports a corpus analysis of *conditionals* and demonstrates that these forms occur most often in fixed expressions rather than on the basis of rules, as in the accepted description. The second chapter is an interactional linguistic analysis of how forms with multiple syntactic roles are exploited to create ambiguous *turn completion points* in polemic dialogue. Finally, Ch. 3 explores the use of *naked plain forms*, verbs without honorific or affect key markers, in the construction of two distinct speech styles in a fourth-grade classroom.

Part 2 deals with language identity and ideology, such as the policy and discourse surrounding *keigo* or “polite language” discussed in Ch. 4. Ch. 5 proposes that purported regional dialects can actually be formality-based variants, after documenting how both standard and Osaka “dialects” consistently co-occur in the telephone conversations of a female department-store employee. Next, a case study of the use of directives by a Japanese woman coaching male boxers is reported in Ch. 6. The coach’s use of both male and female forms depends on the interactional context, which appears to trump conventions of gender and politeness. The stereotypical association between aging and physical disability is also re-examined in Ch. 7, which follows the phenomenon of *painful self disclosure* by two elderly Japanese women. Among peers this speech genre seems to emphasize a cognitive ability to adjust to the evolving reality and identity that occurs with aging.

Part 3 focuses on Japanese as an additional language. Ch. 8 is a qualitative analysis of laughter, an important communicative tool for learners that can reflect

attention and comprehension in the Japanese foreign language classroom. The ninth chapter describes how the *toiwase* or “general inquiries” made by L2 users lack some of the formulaic sequences most often employed by native speakers, and suggests that such phrases be explicitly taught. Lastly, Ch. 10 is an ethnographic study of language minority education in Japan, which concludes that the traditional notions of “insiders” and “outsiders” are compromising the schooling of contemporary transnationals, such as Brazilian-Japanese, who are not easily characterized by either classification.

The last part examines language pedagogy. Ch. 11 reports an instructional study that encouraged learners to draw on their existing competences as language users; as a result they were able to perform a wider range of discourse functions during role-play assessments. In Ch. 12 the discussion turns to recently emerging CRITICAL approaches to teaching Japanese language and culture, wherein teaching is inevitably political in that it either supports or challenges relevant discourses. Thus, this research compendium is of particular interest to Japanese language educators, as well as sociolinguists and discourse analysts.

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VERA REGAN, MARTIN HOWARD, AND ISABELLE LEMÉE, *The acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a study abroad context*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2009. Pp. x, 169. Pb. \$44.95.

Reviewed by J. A. G. ARDILA  
*European Languages and Cultures*  
University of Edinburgh  
Edinburgh, EH8 9JX, UK  
jardila@ed.ac.uk

Study abroad has traditionally been regarded as a significant complement in second language acquisition (SLA). In the past decades, much research has been conducted into linguistic development during a period of residence in the L2 culture. The conclusions of previous research have sometimes been contradictory, perhaps because the empirical data was obtained from small groups of informants. Regan, Howard, and Lemée have revisited this topic with ambitious and well-defined aims—to assess the development of sociolinguistic competence in a large group of Irish university students placed in francophone countries. This book complements former research and, through a very meticulous empirical analysis, it sheds light on the issue of L2 sociolinguistic acquisition.

The book consists of ten chapters. In Chs. 1 and 2, the authors critique the previous research on study abroad and SLA. Their complete and readable synthesis