

The Modernization of the Japanese System of Communication

Author(s): J. V. Neustupný

Source: *Language in Society*, Apr., 1974, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Apr., 1974), pp. 33-50

Published by: Cambridge University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4166742>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Cambridge University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Language in Society*

JSTOR

The modernization of the Japanese system of communication¹

J. V. NEUSTUPNÝ

Department of Japanese, Monash University

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is twofold. First, the author wishes to suggest an evolutionary typology of languages (early modern, modern, contemporary, etc.) and to specify the position of present day Japanese on this evolutionary scale. Secondly, it suggests a way to integrate the concept of linguistic modernization with a theory of language problems, and shows that for modernization at least two types of processes, macro-modernization and micro-modernization, must be distinguished. The former concerns such tasks as the establishment of a modern national language and as far as Japan is concerned this process has been completed. The latter process concerns problems such as the individual's use of language. It still awaits its completion. (Sociolinguistic typology, language evolution, linguistic modernization, Japan.)

While a decade ago modernization was a favorite topic of social sciences, in 1974 it seems to have lost much of its initial appeal. My attempt to revive interest in this subject has been motivated at least by two types of facts. First, if the approaches to modernization of the 1960s were characterized by a lack of theoretical concern and lack of a broader evolutionary perspective, this should not be accepted as a proof that a more theoretical approach would be out of question. Also, if the past discussions now leave the impression of having unjustifiably equated traditional and bad, modern and good, this impression should be viewed as a finger-print of the time rather than as a necessary corollary of the traditional-modern dichotomy.

The second reason for reintroducing the topic follows from sharing the feeling that within linguistics 'the tabu against an evolutionary perspective on languages seems about to be effectively broken' (Hymes 1972b: v). This fact is connected with the still growing interest in language typologies. It has become more and

[1] Revised version of a paper prepared for the International Conference on Japanese Studies held under the auspices of the Japan PEN Club in Tokyo and Kyoto, 18–25 November, 1972. The original version has appeared in *Linguistic communications, working papers of the Linguistic Society of Australia* 9. The author is indebted to T. Takahashi for useful discussions on the topic. B. Jernudd and H. Bolitho have kindly read the manuscript and made valuable suggestions for its improvement.

LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY

more obvious that without considering in detail the typological characteristics of a language, no natural account of the language can be given. Apart from Hymes's consistent appeal for the evolutionary perspective in linguistics there have been attempts at establishing actual evolutionary types of language (Gumperz 1962; Neustupný 1965, 1968*a*, 1971; Swadesh 1972). It seems to me that the time has now come to develop such studies further.

THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC TYPE OF JAPANESE

Survey articles about the Japanese language usually restrict their interest to a limited number of topics from descriptive or historical linguistics, occasionally accompanied by a chapter on Japanese dialects or on the problem of language and thought. This pattern is by no means characteristic for the study of the Japanese language alone: to my knowledge neither has any language so far been accounted for in its entirety as the universe of communicative competence of members of a community (cf. Hymes 1972*a*), nor have attempts been made to discuss this communicative competence as a coherent communicative style (Hymes 1961; Neustupný 1971).

In the present paper I shall depart from this tradition and base my consideration on the following premises.

(1) That language means the totality of rules necessary for human communication; in other words, that language means not simply grammatical but *communicative competence*, i.e. a system which contains not only rules for derivation of abstract syntactic strings but also rules specifying to whom, what, when, where and how we communicate.

(2) That many rules of language conceived in this way can be adduced to one or several of a small number of basic common denominators or types, which in their turn constitute the *communicative style* of the system.

The notion of a type implies on the one hand that there is a set of features which are mutually related and supporting, and, on the other hand, that the number of types is smaller than the number of known systems: obviously unless these two conditions are fulfilled it has little sense to speak about types and communicative styles. Any language can be said to possess a genetic, interferential, areal, grammatical and sociolinguistic type (Neustupný 1971). However, it is only the sociolinguistic type which will concern us here.

The concept of the sociolinguistic type relies obviously on two additional assumptions, namely (*a*) that some linguistic features are to a high degree *determined* (motivated) by features of the respective social systems, and (*b*) that among these determined linguistic features there are some which constitute a *type* as defined above.

I wish to claim that sociolinguistic types in this sense exist and that they can

be labelled as tribal, early modern (developing), modern (developed), contemporary, etc. (cf. Gumperz 1962; Neustupný 1965, 1968*a*, 1971).

It should be noted that this claim, not lacking parallels in the approach of social science to Japan, has long since been denied its validity in linguistics. Modern structural linguistics developed on the assumption of independence of language from what it called 'extra-linguistic' phenomena, and if any connection between language and extra-linguistic factors was admitted, it was relegated to the sphere of lexicon, occasionally to limited parts of grammar such as the honorific systems. Moreover, the idea that a language could in any sense be labelled as 'primitive', 'underdeveloped', 'developing', or 'modern' was also categorically denied. To be fair, it should be conceded that this critical attitude was well-founded when applied to studies which claimed to have related various, mostly dubious, properties of cognition and certain ill-analyzed properties of grammatical structures: lack of subject, lack of plural, categories of tense, or the grammatical type (analyticity, etc.) as a whole.

The notion of the sociolinguistic type provides for the first time a firm background for the understanding of linguistic modernization. First, by emphasizing the importance of non-grammatical components of the communicative competence and their close connection with grammar, the concept enables us to combine within the same framework our knowledge of grammatical (lexical, syntactic, etc.) modernization with modernization in the use of language. Secondly, the concept suggests that a large number of idiosyncratic features are not simply 'Japanese' (although some of them certainly are) but possibly 'traditional' or 'modern', i.e. determined by traditional or modern features of the social structure. The concept of the sociolinguistic type also implies that what we are dealing with may be not a small number of scattered features but a whole set of related phenomena which affect a large area of the relevant system.

What is the sense of the development through which one evolutionary type changes into another? To understand this process we must realize that features which constitute the type are, at a certain stage, marked by speakers as [+inadequate] and represent a large set of related language problems. From this it will be clear that modernization is a process the sense of which is to remove the inadequate premodern features from language.

In this paper I shall investigate some aspects of modernization of the Japanese system of communicative competence conceived within the described framework as a change in the sociolinguistic type. My conclusion will be that the present day Japanese communicative competence as a whole can be placed on the axis early modern/modern but I wish to emphasize that the current state of research makes it impossible to characterize the distance from each of the extremes. We must be satisfied by finding that elements marked as [-modern] and [+modern] are both present, and hope that future research will enable us to quantify with greater precision.

MACRO- AND MICRO-MODERNIZATION

The macro-sociolinguistic perspective

Observed from the point of view of macro-sociolinguistics (Fishman 1965, 1970), i.e. of the communicative competence of the society as a whole, the Meiji (1868–1912), Taishō (1912–26), and Shōwa (1926–) processes of modernization of Japanese cannot but appear as extremely successful (cf. Yamagiwa 1965: 220).

Homogeneity. First, the extensive stratification of the premodern period has been overcome and it can be said that Japan has achieved a high degree of linguistic homogeneity. The phenomenon of diglossia, the concurrent use of the Classical and Modern standard (Ferguson 1959), was removed gradually and with final validity by the end of World War II. The only remnants of the former situation are a limited use of Classical Japanese in religion, art, and historical studies, and a limited number of legal codes written in it. The spread of the Modern Japanese standard as a means of both written and spoken national language has been remarkably successful. It is true that the dialects survive as native varieties of a large number of speakers, but for all speakers the school-acquired standard is superposed. The survival of dialects can hardly be seen as substantially different from the situation in most other developed nations of the world.

Development. The second feature in linguistic modernization of Japan can be seen in the fact that the limited range of information transferred within networks of a premodern society has been considerably widened. The linguistic development of Japanese is a fact which cannot be denied. In Japanese, all types of information can and are easily transferred: scientific, literary, administrative and any other. Lexicon, syntax and writing systems are fully available for this purpose. If Japanese doctors write the diagnosis on patient's cards in German, this is not because the same content could not be adequately expressed in Japanese – a claim confirmed by the fact that Latin words serve the same purpose for German doctors (Takahashi 1965: 254).

Equality. Thirdly, the hierarchical restrictions in premodern communication, with division into classes and strata, is alien to the contemporary system. Linguistic equality is a remarkable feature of contemporary Japanese communicative competence. It is a well-known fact that both the spoken and the written standard are accessible to the vast majority of the community. Literacy, although perhaps not as high as the official numbers might indicate, can nevertheless be supposed to have reached the same, if not higher, standards as any developed Western

community (cf. the summary of several literacy surveys in Ishiguro 1963: 315).

Alliance. Finally, as far as its linguistic alliance is concerned, during the process of modernization the Japanese system of communicative competence has acquired two undisputably modern characteristics. First, a high degree of linguistic independence, uniqueness, or in Fishman's words 'authentification' (Fishman 1971: 4) has resulted. The Japanese system of communication is not dependent on any other system. Secondly, the old connections with the less developed world have been cut off while the distance between Japan and the West has been radically reduced. English is Japan's first foreign language. Semantic mapping in contemporary Japanese is almost entirely European-Continental or Anglo-American, and, although Chinese elements are often used for surface manifestation, in a large number of cases even the phonological shapes of morphemes are borrowed from the West. It is interesting to note that at the same time the grammatical type of Japanese has moved significantly towards analyticity (cf. Tanaka 1965). Although it is not likely that a direct social influence could be proved, this development, as Tanaka argues, can be connected with modernization indirectly, through the process of standardization. It may be added here that the fact that both Japanization and Westernization in general are only two different but indispensable contributions toward modernization of the 'alliance' relationship seems to have escaped the attention of some students of Japanese modernization. However, Shively has recently argued that Japanization is not a simple 'reaction' to Westernization and claimed its independent role in Japan's modernization (1971: 117).

From the macro-sociolinguistic perspective, modernization of the sociolinguistic type of the contemporary Japanese system of communicative competence appears then as a completed task, one which may need to be perfected in minor details but which cannot be questioned as a whole. The possible contribution of the linguist seems to consist in tracing the history of the success and accounting for its course. Notice also that this macro-modernization of Japanese took place quite early in Japan's modern history. As Passin says, Japan had the good fortune to be able to carry on her modern development in her own language (Passin 1963).

The reflection of macro-modernization in systems of language treatment. We should not overlook the fact that the indices of the macro-sociolinguistic modernization quoted in the preceding paragraphs mostly represent language problems that are likely to cross the boundary of consciousness and within the given social situation give rise to theories and acts of 'language treatment' (Neustupný 1970). Indeed this is what happened in Japan during the post-Meiji period. The problem of linguistic *homogeneity* became the object of such language treatment pro-

cesses as *genbun itchi* (unification of the spoken and written language) and *hyōjungoka* (standardization). *Equality* has been achieved through a conscious emphasis on education, and completed through a series of successful post-war language (writing) reforms. *Alliance* with the developed West proceeded via Westernization and although the corresponding policies were sometimes directed against, not toward, Westernization (cf. Hirai 1948: 376; Shibata 1965), this is not difficult to understand if we realize that independence was another objective. Strangely enough, it seems to be only the problem of *development* of lexicon and of the modern scientific and other functional styles which did not attract much conscious attention. While the most importance changes in the Japanese vocabulary occurred in the Meiji period (cf. an excellent analysis in Miyajima 1967), it was not until the 1930s that planning processes were initiated (Amano-Ukita 1961: 146) and to my knowledge the planner's intervention has never been very intensive.

The micro-sociolinguistic perspective

To what extent does this picture of completed modernization change if we switch from macro- to what J. A. Fishman on the analogy of sociology and economics describes as micro-sociolinguistics. Of course, the distinction between macro- and micro-phenomena is a matter of degree (Fishman 1973: 30) and this fact should be always fully realized unless we wish to arrive at a valueless arbitrary typology.

Once the observer's criteria became finer, networks of lesser extension than the whole society are considered, and the individual is in focus, the picture of the sociolinguistic type of Japanese moves backwards on the developmental scale. Homogeneity, development, equality and Western alliance become less convincing; problems of modernization that had not been expected emerge and new solutions are required.

It is interesting to notice again that it is not only the type of actual language problems that change, but also their perception and treatment by the community. I have tried to argue elsewhere (Neustupný 1970) that in their approach to language problems – of which modernization certainly is a typical example – communities develop differing idioms of treatment. The early modern approach, characterizing communities in which it is the societal level at which linguistic heterogeneity, underdevelopment, inequality, and type of alliance present most distinctive problems, can be called the *policy approach*. On the other hand, within a more or less modern community where the society-wide problems have been actually or seemingly solved, the vision of the community and its behavior toward language (Fishman 1971) necessarily change and the idiom of language treatment develops into a more microscopic *cultivation approach*.

In Japan this change in perception seems to have occurred around the time of World War II. While the late 1940s with their major language reforms still fall

MODERNIZATION OF THE JAPANESE SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATION

into the former category, it is in the 1950s and early 1960s that attention is being paid to problems such as the necessity of development of dialogue (Nishio 1957), further unification of the spoken and written language (Nishio 1955: second *genbun itchi*), regulation of the honorific usage (*Korekara no keigo*), and even to non-verbal polite expressions (*Kindaichi* 1964). The level of consciousness about micro-modernization, however, is relatively weak. While little has been thought, said, or done, the type of Japanese communicative competence itself is changing: we have been witnesses to profound micro-modernization processes, the birth of a true spoken-language-based literature, the rise of a truly individualistic scholar, the beginning of a new type of humour, etc. How much of the pre-modern type has been preserved? An answer will be suggested in the following paragraphs.

SOME PROBLEMS OF THE MICRO-MODERNIZATION OF JAPANESE

Heterogeneity

The amount and structure of linguistic variation seems to be highly indicative of the sociolinguistic type: a premodern or early modern community which is socially highly stratified may be expected to show analogous features also in its communication system, and this expectation is indeed fully confirmed by our knowledge about traditional systems of communication. The extreme, in which each social group and each situation is assigned a separate variety may never be realized, but traditional systems are much closer to this extreme than the modern ones. It is true of course, as Fishman finds, that urbanization and industrialization neither in the United States nor in Europe have necessarily resulted in complete interregional homogeneity, and the uniformation pressures in language seem to be strong in conjunction with only certain varieties and networks (Fishman 1970: 285). However, this finding can further be specified if we divide variation into *functional* and *non-functional* (Neustupný 1965: 89). This is a distinction which I find of great importance for the study of modernization in general. The terms should not be interpreted as evaluative. There is nothing intrinsically positive about functional and nothing necessarily negative about non-functional in this sense. Functional is used to designate variation if the existence of the variable features is in some way connected with (determined by) their function. The fact that Written French marks off sentences by graphical means, while Spoken French does so by intonation represents a case of functional variation. So does the difference in the lexicon of the language of computation 20 years ago and in 1974. These cases of variation reflect important differences in the pre-communicational input to messages. On the other hand, the variation between Written French *il lit* and Spoken French /illi/ (without the final *t*) is non-functional in the sense that it cannot be in any meaningful way connected with the written-ness of the former, and the spoken-ness of the latter.

If we now compare premodern with modern systems of communication, we find that it is the non-functional variation that is characteristic though not exclusive in the premodern, and the functional variation that is typical though not exclusive in the modern systems. The compartmentalization of premodern societies, and the trend to mark different situations by a difference in cultural rules, are responsible for the situation. For instance, most of the variation between a Classical and a Modern standard in the case of a premodern diglossia is non-functional in the described sense. It is then not a matter of chance that the diglossia, a typical case of non-functional variation, is most often removed at an early stage of modernization (cf. Konrad 1952). On the other hand, the appearance of various scientific and technical languages can be classified as functional variation. The number of functional varieties sharply increases with modern development of a language, while the amount of non-functional variation, which may occasionally accompany the functional varieties, gradually decreases (disappearance of technical jargon, reduction of the differences between spoken and written language, etc. – cf. also below on *Development*).

In the preceding section I suggested that some of the extensive and largely non-functional stratification in Japanese speech on the societal or macro-sociolinguistic level has already been substantially reduced or removed. There are also numerous instances of more recent movement toward the homogenization of the Japanese system of communicative competence: the phonological shapes of Western loan-words have been simplified and standardized (some phonemes and clusters such as *v*, *si* have been removed), the weather forecast 'dialect' (*niwaka-ame go furimashō*) has been restricted, the modern written language is moving closer to the spoken standard, and individual differences in the repertoire of place names are disappearing (Shibata, forthcoming).

Micro-sociolinguistic variation. On the other hand a considerable amount of the early modern non-functional variation in the sphere of micro-sociolinguistics has undoubtedly survived. The variation is sometimes visible on the *grammatical* (i.e. grammar, lexicon, phonology) level as for instance in the case of *ii yo*, *ii ka*, *boku*: *ii wa*, *ii no*, *atashi* (masculine vs. feminine language), *taberu*, *takai*, *takusan da*: *tabemasu*, *takai desu*, *takusan desu* (ingroup vs. outgroup language), *washi*, *oru ikoo*: *watashi*, *iru*, *iku daroo* (generational variation). A well-known example of non-functional variation which depends on situation is the word 'constant': as early as 1950 the White Paper of the National Language (Kokugo shingikai 1950) turned attention to the fact that it was rendered as *jōsū* in mathematics and physics, *kansū* in chemistry, *teisū* in engineering, and *fuhensū* in economics. Similarly, the terminology of ikebana varies considerably according to the school, etc.

The situation acquires, however, greater clarity if our attention is *not restricted to grammar* and if the whole of communicative competence is considered.

Undoubtedly the differences between the masculine and feminine language extend far beyond the grammatical features. There are differences in communicational settings (when and where speech occurs, cf. Hayashi 1966), differences in networks (who, how much, and to whom communicates), in topics, in channels (e.g. handwriting), etc. It can be mentioned in this connection that much of the so-called underprivileged position of the Japanese woman, as it appears to a Western observer, may actually be rather a matter of communication rules than of social structure.

The example of the masculine and feminine variation is not isolated. The principle that speakers use and receive different language in accordance with the difference in roles they occupy seems to be valid also in a number of other circumstances. An infant for instance uses and receives a grammatically different variety from the adult, the baby talk (cf. Fisher 1970), and this privilege is connected with his 'superior' position in networks: his mother is always ready to attend to his protest (Caudill & Weinstein 1970), he is allowed verbal as well as other aggression, the use of kinship terms is adjusted to his level (Fisher 1964), in entertainment situations he functions as the pivot, etc. Similarly, in Japanese a speaker talks in a different way to his parents, siblings, wife, to his superior, to his inferior, to a taxi driver, to a shop attendant, to the doctor, at school, in a governmental office, etc. On the other hand, in modern Western communities far less cultural difference correlates with different roles and situations and, as far as communication is concerned, there is a clear tendency to use the same language to all interlocutors and in all situations.

The extent of variation is highlighted in situations of contact with a different system of communication: foreign speakers of Japanese underdifferentiate (e.g. by using honorifics to a taxi driver), while native speakers of Japanese when speaking in English very often, for instance, when speaking to women, shop attendants, etc., overdifferentiate the usage.

It should also be said that sometimes the variation seems to affect only the non-grammatical components of communicative competence. For instance, during the individual's life cycle several relatively distant phases of his 'life communication cycle' can be distinguished: infancy, childhood, adolescence, establishment phase, stability phase, etc. As Sh. Hayashi's research suggests (1966) there is enormous variation in setting, channel and other rules, and one of the basic determinants of this pattern seems to be the different position an individual occupies in communicative networks.

Development

The index of linguistic development can be found in the type of information which can be and habitually is transferred within the system.

We have already said that with regard to the overall potential of transmitting modern messages in administration, industry, education, science, etc., Japanese

undoubtedly belongs to the family of highly developed languages of the world. To what extent, however, does this characteristic hold true also in other spheres of the social life?

Conversational variety and oralization. It was after World War II that Minoru Nishio and E. Iwabuchi, the first and second directors of Japan's National Language Research Institute, launched the slogan of the necessity of the 'second genbun itchi (unification of the spoken and written language) movement'. What is the implication of this requirement? If we watch the analogical developments in contemporary European languages, it becomes obvious that after the establishment of the modern standard there came a moment – mostly the first two decades of the twentieth century – when through a new wave of changes the non-functional differences between the modern written standard and the spoken language of the period were removed. It was suddenly felt that the poet and writer could express themselves in a variety which abandoned all the finesses of the old literary language and used basically the language which they spoke. The same situation emerged in drama where the cothurnus style inevitably left the stage. Notice that these developments are different from a simple romantic inclination toward the popular language: we have to do with an utterly modern idiom which carries modern ideas. It is also important to realize that along with tying up with modern topics, this new style required as its prerequisite modern syntagmatic frames, such as the development of the dialogue (Neustupný 1968a: 290). In other words, the oralization of the modern standard presupposes the development of the so-called conversational functional variety of the standard language (Havránek 1963: 71) within all spheres of communicative rules.

Nishio's and Iwabuchi's problem seems to be identical with the Western problem of oralization of the modern standard. In 1955 in a paper entitled 'Language life hereafter' Nishio clearly indicated what he had in mind: the problems of writing poems in the spoken language, the problem of modern drama, and the problem of the dialogue. In all three spheres considerable advances could be observed during the subsequent period, but as a whole the establishment of the orally based literary language is still awaiting its completion.

The establishment of the conversational variety of the standard and oralization of the whole of the standard language, including the language of literature, constitute an important modernization task, a problem of development. Unlike in the case of the administrative, scientific, technical, etc., varieties, this is not a problem which would figure prominently on the societal level. The lack of the conversational language is most strongly felt in the individual's communication. It appears sometimes with exceptional magnitude in contact situations where a language – such as English – with a well-developed conversational variety has to be used and the lack of appropriate topical, network, message form and other rules is strongly felt. Likewise, in poetry and drama the poet and the playwright

as well as the addressee of the literary act may feel that their modern individual feelings are not adequately expressed in the old language.

Modernization or rationalization? In connection with the problem of oralization of standard Japanese an objection, potentially valid also for other cases of micro-modernization, could be raised. Namely, if language does not cease to change, where should the boundary between modernization and post-modernization processes be placed? Is the process of oralization not simply another example of rationalization of a basically modern system? One important premise for answering this query consists in the acceptance of the fact that no hard and fast boundaries should be imposed and that the characterization of certain processes as modernization should not turn into an exercise of arbitrary categorization. Nevertheless two arguments seem to support placing oralization rather before than after the modernization landmarks. First, there is the fact that in Western languages the date of these changes is rather old. Secondly, the development seems to be quite intimately connected with other developments which seem to fall clearly within the range of modernization: the development of modern dialogue, modern conversational networks, etc. (cf. below, *Equality*). It is this interconnectedness that constitutes the sociolinguistic type as opposed to a simple coincidence of features.

Communication of distance. Another problem of development of the contemporary Japanese language understood in the sense described above consists in the habitual communication of certain premodern meanings. The best example is provided by the sector of 'distance' meanings (Goffman 1956; Neustupný, forthcoming), i.e. those meanings which derive from distance between sections of the communities and from distance (hierarchy) between members of the same sub-community. Honorifics are an obvious example, the same problem being involved of course also in the etiquette and other components of the 'politeness system' (cf. Kindaichi 1964; Neustupný 1968b). I should add here that within the sphere of honorifics the addressee honorifics (*teineigo*) seem to be on the increase since the Meiji period. It seems to me that they are quite compatible with a modern situation, if structured in a way similar to the ingroup-outgroup distribution of the TU-VOUS of the modern European languages (Brown and Gilman 1960). On the other hand usage differentiated in dependence on addressee or situation, and the irreciprocity which originates in such usage, seems to reflect both the social heterogeneity and the hierarchical arrangement of the sub-communities and appears to me as a traditional feature *par excellence*.

Communication of appeal. On the other hand, the sector of appeal meanings seems to be strengthened in connection with individuation. Little direct appeal is necessary in a community in which roles are fixed and speech is not addressed

to an individual. Direct appeal is naturally unacceptable when maximum distance is implied; it is to superiors. Lack of polite imperatives is a fact which should be classified here. Words such as *oi!* 'Hello!' which have no polite counterpart point to the same. Interesting is the case of expressions like *Okāsan wa dō?* 'How about you, mother?' in which the usual Japanese form for the addressee is 'non-vocative' while in the Western languages the usual corresponding expression is 'vocative'. Notice also that greetings in Japanese are not accompanied by reference to the addressee; against 'Good morning, Mr Smith' we have the simple *Ohayō gozaimasu*.

Contact meanings. Various contact topics reflect the stratification of the society and the necessity to establish and maintain contact between social groups. The outgroup *aisatsu* (greeting) is a case in point. On the other hand, Ogasawara (1970) has correctly pointed out that in ingroup situations greetings are rare, and that very few parents or teachers would say 'thank you' to their child. Another example of bridging the social distance is in declaring one's social group and position within the group. It has already been suggested that visiting cards fulfil this function. Further, looking for mutual friends is a good topic, in the same way as supplying new information about their contemporary alliance.

All these micro-problems of modern development, and many others – such as the problem of the promise – may occasionally attract attention, but in general their solution does not take recourse to the methods of language treatment. The appropriate correction processes pass without the awareness of the community and it may be before we realize their existence that these problems finally disappear.

Equality

While equality in access to the standard language does not reveal much difference compared with the West, the Japanese system of communicative competence presents other interesting problems of equality of participants in communication networks.

It will be necessary to mention here that two types of networks must be distinguished: *group* networks which include individuals who usually intercommunicate (a participant and his family, friends, colleagues, etc.) and *encounter* networks, i.e. networks within a situation, irrespective of whether the participants belong to the same group network or not (cf. Goffman 1961). *En passant*, although this will necessarily show as a difference of degree, we can expect that within a traditional setting the two types of networks will be closer one to the other than in a modern society.

Hierarchy in networks. Access to speech within a traditional network is limited due to the fact that the network is hierarchically organized with a rather clear

pivot (centre) and peripheral positions. In a modern society the hierarchical networks survive for some time in social situations which are characterized by a large amount of asymmetrical power, such as the army and school. This is where the pivot initiates communication and where response from the peripheral positions is directed toward the pivot. Even these situations, at least at school, are, however, denied their rationality in the West with the new developments in education. In entertainment networks, where few limitations are imposed by their function, the equalization of access to communication has been achieved long since. A modern Western entertainment network such as a party easily splits into dyads in which dialogue, a framework in which all participants have the same rights, is the basic mode of speech.

Although a detailed study of the Japanese networks is still missing, work on the topic has already been commenced (cf. Hinata, ms.), and certain hypotheses can be formulated. Along with modern open structures the traditional separated and closed networks continue to exist; and at least some of them have a hierarchical structure. Entertainment networks such as *konshinkai*, *kondankai*, *sōbetsukai*, *bōnenkai*, etc., unless very informal, do not easily split into dyads and show dominance of monologue (*aisatsu*, *supiichi*, etc.) over dialogues (cf. Nishio's criticism 1957: 32, and also Ogasawara 1970: 61). The social determinants of this communicative behavior are not difficult to identify. Basically they can be related to the position of an individual in his social group and to the relationship between the social groups.

Networks and honorifics. It may be of interest to realize that the character of networks in contemporary Japanese is connected with a large number of other characteristics, including the grammatical rules of the language. For instance, the rule that there is only one pivot within a network seems to be related to the impossibility of paying respect to two superiors within a situation in which one is the subject and one is the object of the same predicate. For instance 'Professor A, did you tell Professor B?' can only be rendered as either *A-sensei, B-sensei ni o-hanashi ni narimashita ka?* in which case A is treated as the superior, or *A-sensei, B-sensei ni o-hanashi shimashita ka?*, where it is B who receives the respect form. There are some exceptions (Neustupný 1972: 106) but the general trend is clear.

Speech particularism. Another example of the same kind is differential access to acceptance of the speaker's message. I have called this phenomenon, signalized for a completely different cultural *milieu* by Adams (1957), speech particularism (Neustupný 1968a: 291). The point is that information supplied by the speaker is sometimes judged differently according to whether he is a member of the same social group or not. A criticism is not a criticism if it emanates from one's group but it is interpreted as an attack if it comes from an outgroup position.

Similar trends can of course be observed also in modern developed systems but it seems to me that the social determinants are different.

Alliance

Earlier we suggested that with regard to other contemporary systems a modern system of communication is usually characterized by two features: independence, and alliance with the modern world. It is not clear to me to what extent these two features are concomitants and to what degree they are necessary components of modernization. While in the above discussion it was emphasized that the initial dependence and the amount of distance at the point of Japan's entrance into the modern world has been enormously reduced, here I wish to introduce counter-examples from several spheres.

Problems of borrowing. It is true that as far as the selection of whole varieties is concerned Japanese is not dependent on any other linguistic system in the world. However, in terms of components of the Japanese language it must be said that the amount of foreign elements that enter into the Japanese system almost daily seems to be considerable. Most of these elements – names of new technical and intellectual products – remain strongly marked as [+foreign] and are not fully incorporated into the language. Some of them are replaced by native words, still others remain on the periphery of the language as long as they are needed and then disappear. It is certainly not the case that such denominations could not be produced on the basis of existing Japanese lexical resources. Whether this phenomenon of over-borrowing is connected with the premodern features of the society or whether it simply reflects the power of English in the contemporary international society – a power which affects most Western languages as well – is not easy to assess.

Micro-linguistic distance. The Western alliance of the Japanese communication system manifests itself principally in large-scale (international) networks, in mass communication, and in the lexicon. On the level of the individual, in individual communication of native speakers of Japanese, the distance, however, remains enormous. The fact that so much energy is spent in Japan on learning English does not mean that Japan is practically bilingual. I have suggested elsewhere that in the case of Japanese speakers abroad it is not the lack of knowledge of English that causes their isolation, but the inability to communicate which blocks the way to the acquisition of English. If we want to practise, the first prerequisite is the establishment of networks; however, in order to establish networks it is necessary to know the appropriate system of network formation, topics, routines, etc. – and these are so different. It is also important to assume a universalistic attitude to the content of communication – otherwise the feeling prevails that the content is alien and irrelevant, and no speech acts are likely to be

MODERNIZATION OF THE JAPANESE SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATION

initiated. As mentioned earlier, a conversational variety, which is neither formal nor informal, is necessary. This seems to be another stumbling block (cf. Hoffer 1970: 18). It might also be mentioned in this connection that the mastery of Western languages other than English appears to be on a somewhat higher level than the knowledge of English. Most probably, the sociolinguistic type of Japanese is closer to the continental languages than to English, the foreign language No. 1, and the differential competence of native Japanese speakers in various Western languages (if proved to be a fact) might be accounted for by this circumstance.

CONCLUSIONS

The obvious conclusions from the discussion presented above are that a distinction between a macro- and micro-modernization of Japanese may be necessary. In other words, we can posit the existence of two different processes in the modern development of the Japanese system of communicative competence: the *first or macro-modernization* affected the Japanese society as a whole and resulted in the creation of a single and homogeneous national language, development of vocabulary, syntax and style, facilitated access to the national language for all members of the community, and achieved both the relative independence and the alliance with the Western languages. The *second or micro-modernization* affects primarily the individual. The premodern features which form the object of this second modernization consist in extensive and non-functional compartmentalization of the system, in limited development of communication in some situations and the necessity to communicate unwanted content, in restricted equality of the individual and vigor of the hierarchical principle, and possibly also in somewhat limited independence and enormous distance from the communication systems of other developed nations of the world. This second, micro-sociolinguistic modernization is of course not – as the folk theory of Japanese history has it – a post-war development. Most probably it commenced with the macro-sociolinguistic modernization – its pace is, however, slower and still at present it can hardly be described as concluded. Only further research can reveal to what extent this development is universal and to what extent it is typically Japanese.

The four indices of homogeneity, development, equality, and developed alliance used already in a previous study (Neustupný 1968) have proved useful in our discussion. However, these criteria should not be conceived as completely independent features. Linguistic modernization probably can be summarized into these four, but in their own turn the four features support and supplement each other: for instance homogeneity easily combines with open networks which are likely to be equitarian, do not readily place themselves in hierarchical dependence on others, etc.

LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY

The *systems of language treatment* follow in principle the development of the system of communicative competence. The Japanese language policy (*kokugo mondai*) approach corresponds to the needs of the first modernization while the cultivation (*gengo seikatsu*) approach corresponds to the second wave. The correlation is, however, not strong. Considerations of the (objective) facts of language development and the (subjective) systems of language treatment should be kept apart. Language treatment idioms, as they historically develop, reflect only a limited number of language problems and the way problems are reflected is often biased.

The *sociolinguistic type* of the contemporary Japanese system of communicative competence as a whole can be placed on the line between the early modern and modern: the exact point cannot be ascertained without further data-oriented research.

REFERENCES

- Adams, J. B. (1957). Culture and conflict in an Egyptian village. *AmA* 59. 225-35. (An extract reprinted in D. Hymes (ed.) (1964). *Language in culture and society*. New York: Harper & Row. 272-3.)
- Amano, Yasushi & Ukita, Shōichi. (1961). *Kokugo, kokuji mondai shōshi*. Tokyo: Ritsumeisha.
- Brown, R. W. & Gilman, A. (1960). The pronouns of power and solidarity. In T. Sebeok (ed.), *Style in language*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. 253-76. (Reprinted in J. A. Fishman (ed.) (1968). 252-75.)
- Caudill, W. & Weinstein, H. (1970). Maternal care and infant behavior in Japanese and American urban middle-class families. In R. Hill and R. König (eds), *Families in East and West*. The Hague: Mouton. 39-71.
- Ferguson, C. A. (1959). Diglossia. *Word* 15. 325-40. (Reprinted in D. Hymes (ed.) (1964). *Language in culture and society*. New York: Harper & Row. 429-39.)
- Fisher, J. L. (1964). Words for self and others in some Japanese families. In J. Gumperz and D. Homes (eds), *The ethnography of communication (AmA 66. pt 2)*. 115-26.
- (1970). Linguistic socialization: Japan and the United States. In R. Hill and R. König (eds), *Families in East and West*. The Hague: Mouton. 107-19.
- Fishman, J. A. (ed.) (1968). *Readings in the sociology of language*. The Hague: Mouton.
- (1971). The impact of nationalism on language planning. In J. Rubin and B. H. Jernudd (eds), *Can language be planned?* Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii. 3-20.
- (1973). Language modernization and planning in comparison with other types of national modernization and planning. *LinS* 2. 23-43.
- Goffman, E. (1956). The nature of deference and demeanor. *American Anthropologist* 58. 437-502. (Reprinted in E. Goffman (1967). *Interaction Ritual*. New York: Anchor Books. 47-95.)
- (1961). *Encounters*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Gumperz, J. J. (1962). Types of linguistic communities. *AnL* 4. 28-40. (Reprinted in J. A. Fishman (ed.) (1968). 460-72.)
- Havránek, B. (1963). *Studie o spisovném jazyce*. Prague: Academia.
- Hayashi, Sh. (1966). Gengo kōdō no taipu. In *Buntairon nyūmon*. Tokyo: Sansaidō. 252-76.
- Hinata, Sh. (ms.). Some problems of networks in contemporary Japanese communication. (M.A. thesis, Monash University.)

MODERNIZATION OF THE JAPANESE SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATION

- Hirai, M. (1948). *Kokugo kokuji mondai no rekishi*. Tokyo: Shōshinsha.
- Hoffer, B. (1970). Phonological reduction rules as an evaluation criterion in sociolinguistic analysis. Paper read at Joint Japanese-American Conference on Sociolinguistics, University of Hawaii, 24-28 August, 1970. *Final substantive report*. 14-19.
- Hymes, D. H. (1961). On typology of cognitive styles in language. *AnL* 3 (1). 22-54.
- (1972a). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride and J. Holmes (eds), *Sociolinguistics*. Middlesex: Penguin Books. 269-93.
- (1972b). Foreword. In M. Swadesh, *The origin and diversification of language*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. v-x.
- Ishiguro, Y. (1963). Kokugo seisaku no eikyō. In *Kōza Gendaigo* 1. Tokyo: Meiji shoin. 308-27.
- Jernudd, B. H. & Das Gupta, J. (1971). Towards a theory of language planning. In J. Rubin and B. H. Jernudd (eds), *Can language be planned?* Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii. 195-215.
- Kindaichi, H. (1964). Hanashikotoba no keigoteki hyōgen. *Gengo seikatsu* 149. 16-23.
- Kokugo shingikai. (1950). Kokugo mondai yōryō. *Kogugo nenkan*, Shōwa 29 nen. 388-94.
- Konrad, N. I. (1952). O natsional'nom yazyke v Kitae i Yaponii. In *Uchenye zapiski Instituta vostokovedeniya* 4. 5-29.
- Miyajima, T. (1967). Gendai goi no keisei. In *Kotoba no kenkyū* 3 (Kokuritsu kokugo kenkyūjo ronshū 3). Tokyo: Shūei shuppan. 1-50.
- Neustupný, J. V. (1965). First steps towards the conception of 'Oriental languages'. A contribution to the sociology of language. *Archiv orientální* 33. 83-92.
- (1968a). Some general aspects of 'language' problems and 'language' policy in developing societies. In J. A. Fishman, C. A. Ferguson and J. Das Gupta (eds), *Language problems of developing nations*. New York: Wiley. 285-94.
- (1968b). Politeness patterns in the system of communication. *Proceedings of the VIIIth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences*. Vol. III. 412-19.
- (1970). Basic types of treatment of language problems. In *Linguistic Communications* 1. 77-98.
- (1971). Toward a model of linguistic distance. To appear in *A. A. Hill Festschrift*. (Preprinted in *Linguistic Communications* 5 (1971). 115-32.)
- (1972). Remarks on Japanese honorifics. *Linguistic Communications* 7 (Papers in Japanese Linguistics 1). 78-117.
- (Forthcoming). Keigo wa Nihongo dake no mono dewa nai. In Sh. Hayashi and F. Minami (eds), *Keigo kōza* 8 (Sekai no keigo). Tokyo: Meiji shoin.
- Nishio, M. (1955). Korekara no gengo seikatsu. In *Kotoba to seikatsu*. Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha. (Reprinted in M. Nishio (1961). *Gengo seikatsu no tankyū*. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten. 274-90.)
- (1957). *Nihonjin no kotoba*. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.
- Ogasawara, R. (1970). Features of the language behavior of the Japanese people with particular reference to their cultural patterns. Paper read at Joint Japanese-American Conference on Sociolinguistics, University of Hawaii, 24-28 August, 1970. *Final substantive report*. 58-64.
- Passin, H. (1963). Writer and journalist in the transitional society. In L. W. Pye (ed.), *Communication and political development*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 82-97. (Reprinted in J. A. Fishman, C. A. Ferguson and J. Das Gupta (eds) (1968). *Language problems of developing nations*. New York: Wiley. 443-57.)
- Shibata, T. (1965). Kokuji ronsō no tairitsuten. In T. Shibata, *Kotoba no shakaigaku*. Tokyo: NHK. 195-212.
- (Forthcoming). Place names and individual differences in the lexicon.
- Shively, D. H. (ed) (1971). *Tradition and modernization in Japanese culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Swadesh, M. (1972). *The origin and diversification of language*. Joel Sherzer (ed.). London. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY

- Takahashi, T. (1963). Kotoba no kachi to kachi ishiki. In *Kōza gendaigo* 1. Tokyo: Meiji shoin. 251-72.
- Tanaka, A. (1965). Kindaigo seiritsu katei ni mirareru iwayuru bunsekiteki keikō ni tsuite. In *Kindai gogaku kai hen, Kindaigo kenkyū* 1. Tokyo: Musashino shoin. 15-25.
- Yamagiwa, H. (1965). Language as an expression of Japanese culture. In J. W. Hall and R. K. Beardsley (eds), *Twelve doors to Japan*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 186-221.