PAPERS IN JAPANESE LINGUISTICS 2

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THE MODERNIZATION OF THE JAPANESE SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATION

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1.   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, forthcoming), nor have attempts been made to discuss this communicative competence as a coherent communicative style (Hymes 1961, Neustupný 1971).

In the present paper[1] I shall attempt to 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 and when, where and how we communicate; and

(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.

2.

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

(3) that some linguistic features are to a high degree
DETERMINED (motivated) by extra-communicative factors,
features of the respective social systems, and

(4) 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, 1968a, 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 communic-
ative 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" 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.

In the following 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. An attempt will be

made to demonstrate that a number of features within the
Japanese system can be classed as [+ modern], while others
are [- modern].   My conclusion will be that 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 both elements marked
as [- modern] and [+ modern] are present, and hope that
future research will enable us to quantify with greater
accuracy.

2. MACRO AND MICRO-MODERNIZATION

2.1. 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-Taishō-Shōwa processes
of modernization of Japanese cannot but appear as extremely
successful (cf. Yamagiwa 1965:220).

Homogeneity

First, the overstratification of the pre-modern 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.   A
limited number of legal codes written in Classical Japanese
constitute the only remnant of the situation beyond its
limited use in religion, art, and historical studies.   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 they are superposed for all speakers by the school-acquired standard. 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 of linguistic modernization of Japan can be seen in the fact that the limited range of information transferred within networks of a pre-modern 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 pre-modern communication, with division into classes and strata, is alien to the contemporary system. Linguistic equality is a remarkable trace 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, although partly using
Chinese elements for surface manifestations, is almost
entirely European-Continental or Anglo-American, and
even the phonological shapes of morphemes are in a large
number of cases borrowed from the West. It is interesting
to note that at the same time the grammatical type of
Japanese has moved significantly toward 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 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 post-Meiji
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 processes 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
postwar 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 realise 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
important changes in the Japanese vocabulary occurred in
the Meiji period (cf. an excellent analysis in Miyajima
1967), it was not until the thirties that planning processes
were initiated (Amano-Ukita 1961:146) and to my knowledge
the planner's intervention has never been very intensive.

2.2. 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 (Fishman 1965, 1970). Of course, the
distinction between macro- and micro- phenomena is a matter
of degree 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.

*The reflection of micro-modernization is systems of language
treatment*

It is interesting to notice again that it is not only the
type of actual language problems that changes, 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, characterising
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, and
where it is the individual's rights that matter, the
vision of the community and its behaviour 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 second world war. While the late
40's with their major language reforms still fall into
the former category, it is in the fifties and early
sixties 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). However the level of
consciousness about the micro-modernization is relatively
weak. While little has been thought, said, or done, the type
of the 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.

3.   SOME PROBLEMS OF THE MICRO-MODERNIZATION OF JAPANESE

3.1. 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 prove analogous
features also in its communication system, and this
expectation is indeed fully confirmed by our knowledge
about the 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 homegeneity, and the uniformation
pressures in language seem to be strong in conjunction with
only certain varieties and networks (Fishman 1970:285). This
finding can further be specified if we divide variation into
"arbitrary" and "functional" (Neustupný 1965:89): it then
seems obvious that, other factors being equal, it is the
arbitrary variation which is easily removed by linguistic
modernization.   For example, most of the variation between
the Classical and Modern standards in the case of the
premodern diglossia are arbitrary in the sense that the
way in which varieties differ is not necessarily connected
with differences in their function.

It is then not a matter of chance that the diglossia, a typical case of arbitrary 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 if the means which differentiate such varieties from the conversational and other varieties are inevitable for their functioning. The number of functional varieties sharply increases with modern development of a language, while the amount of arbitrary 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 paragraph 3.2.).

In Section 2 of this paper I suggested that some of the excessive and largely arbitrary 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 homogeneization 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" (niwakaame ga furimashō) has been restricted, the modern written language is moving closer to the spoken standard, etc.

Micro-sociolinguistic variation

On the other hand a considerable amount of the early modern arbitrary 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
arbitrary 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 the 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 Sh. 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 women may actually be rather a
matter of communication rules than of social structure.

The example of the masculine and feminine variation
however 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 and 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.

Removal of micro-sociolinguistic variation

Notice that the micro-sociolinguistic heterogeneity exemplified in the preceding paragraphs is often perceived as a feature with [- modern] determinants.   This is confirmed by the fact that a clear trend to remove the unnecessary stratification is asserting itself and the amount of variation is actually decreasing. However, these correction processes are not necessarily conscious, and they are not accompanied by any major theory or acts of language treatment (language policy, cultivation).   This is what makes the micro-modernization less conspicuous and more difficult to understand than the macro-modernization process. Within a scientifically elaborated system of language planning (cf. Jernudd and Das Gupta 1971) this type of problems should however not escape our attention.

3.2. Development

The index of linguistic development can be found in the type of information which can 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 director 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 arbitrary 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 conversational variety and subsequently 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 monstrous 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 author on the one hand and the addressee of the literary act on the other may feel that their modern individual feelings cannot be 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 the oralization rather before than
after the modernization landmark.   First, there is the
fact that in Western languages the date of these changes
is rather old.   Second, 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, paragraph 3.3.).   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 well 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, seem to reflect both the social heterogeneity and
the hierarchical arrangement of the sub-communities and
appear to me as a traditional feature par excellence.

Communication of appeal

On the other hand, the sector of appeal meanings seems
to strengthen in connection with individuation.   No 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 in-
group 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 speaking about them and
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.

3.3. 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 partic-
ipant 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 dialogues, 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 net-
works 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 behaviour 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 with
the impossibility to pay 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

millieu by Adams (1957), speech particularism (Neustupný 1968a:291).   The matter 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.

3.4. Alliance

In paragraph 2.1. we suggested that with regard to other systems a modern system of communication is usually characterized by two features: independence, and alliance with the modern world. It is not altogether clear to me to what extent these two features are concommitants 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, at this place I wish to introduce counter-examples from several spheres.

Problems of borrowings

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 from Japanese roots.   Whether this phenomenon
of over-borrowing is in connection 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 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.

4. 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 communic-
ative 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 excessive and arbitrary 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 vigour 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
extant 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 equilitarian, do not readily place
themselves in hierarchical dependence on others, etc.

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 the 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.

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