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Methodology of Japanese studies: The stage of data collection¹

Abstract Against the background of Japanese Studies, this paper addresses methodology in linguistics with a special focus on the collection of data. It demonstrates that differing methodologies are characteristic of differing research paradigms, that is, Early Modern, Modern, and Postmodern. The author deals particularly with the methods used in the contemporary Postmodern paradigm, for which an interest in actual linguistic behavior and participants' awareness is typical. In this paper he describes in detail how to conduct follow-up and interaction interviews, two kinds of interview which are particularly useful for the investigation of simple language management.

Keywords follow-up interview, interaction interview, introspection, methodology, Early Modern, Modern, Postmodern, sociolinguistics, Japanese Studies

1 The discipline of Japanese studies

From the beginning of the twentieth century to the mid-twentieth century, it seemed reasonable for scholars to divide Japanese studies into subjects of various disciplines, representing separate areas of activity, and to conduct research from the viewpoint of each discipline. Since each discipline was independently established and not interrelated with other disciplines, the *Japan* that we knew was perceived as multiple cross sections and academics were proud of the autonomy of their own disciplines. We could say that *Twelve Doors to Japan* published by John W. Hall and Richard K. Beardsley in 1965 was not interdisciplinary, but multidisciplinary. Put simply, it was emphasized that the book consisted of various cross-sectional views from different disciplines, which was not interdisciplinary at all.

However, as the theory and methodology of structuralism was fading away, we started to realize that the phenomenon of *Japan* was not a mere collection of sliced layers, but one collective. Undoubtedly, various fields of social behaviour should be regarded as independent to some extent; however, these fields, such as society, the economy, law, culture, and language, must also interact with each other. Moreover, all the behaviour observed in each discipline is conducted by human beings. That is why universal principles, maxims and strategies are formed. Therefore, *Japan* should not only be viewed within each disciplinary scope, but also should be researched as one whole.

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Just to make sure, what I want to say is *not* that conventional disciplinary studies lack validity. Since there are various spheres of social behaviour, naturally there must be research fields that correspond to each of those spheres. However, the traditional disciplines cannot cover everything.

It is not an exaggeration to say that because we neglected to look at *Japan* as one whole, a variety of 'theories on Japan' (*nihonron*) and 'theories of the Japanese' (*nihonjinron*) (Befu 1987; Mouer & Sugimoto 1986) were generated to fill that vacuum.

What I want to question, however, is not *Japanology* itself, but the role of methodology in the process of its formation. This paper starts with my own research discipline, describes several new methodologies created in the field, and explores the possibility of their application to the other disciplines within Japanese studies.

2 Methodology and paradigms

Behaviour within each of the varieties of linguistics (the minimum units of a system) is governed by different kinds of rules, and these rules can be positioned within five components (Neustupný 1978: 4f.):

- (1) Enquiry
- (2) Design
- (3) Implementation
- (4) Social System
- (5) Language Use (idiom)

This structure can be applied to other research areas besides linguistics.

The rules of enquiry play a role in the stipulation of problems, while those of design draw a conclusion based on the data from a particular research area, and the rules of implementation decide the application of the conclusion. Components (4) and (5) intersect with the first three components, and each of these governs the social organization necessary for enquiry, design and implementation, as well as the way of communication in a particular research area. Research methodology (not to mention theory) refers to part of the rules of the first two components. Here I will discuss the designation of data, in other words, the methodology of the enquiry stage.

Before getting into the discussion on methodology, it might be necessary to mention that current Japanese studies as a whole consists of three paradigms. These three paradigms are:

- (1) The Early Modern paradigm
- (2) The Modern paradigm
- (3) The paradigm being generated by the postmodern society.

I once referred to these paradigms of Japanese studies as Japanology, Japanese Studies, and the Contemporary paradigm respectively (Neustupný 1982, 1989). Although there are many characteristics of each paradigm, this paper cannot cover them all

and asks readers to refer to the papers just cited. Here I will show that the different paradigms have very different rules of methodology.

2.1 Early Modern methodology

During the Early Modern period, methodology using philological data was developed. To be more precise, perhaps it should be described as methodology using ‘text and materials’ as data sources. That is, this kind of data includes historical sources, which are used in history and literature, literature sources, which are used in literary history, as well as material sources, which are used in folklore and archaeology. These sources can be divided into primary materials, which a researcher collects on his/her own, and secondary materials, which are, for example, published as a collection of sources (Note: Of course, the category of secondary sources is another separate group).

Some might think that these methodologies themselves are old-fashioned; however, that cannot be said to be completely true because historical sources can be used within different paradigm designs. For instance, historical research studies on postmodernism require the use of historical sources. However, the position criticizing current Japanology-style Japanese studies has been based on the fact that Japanology completely relies on methodology based on philological data, which severely limits the object of such research studies (Neustupný 1993). For example, even though there is the case where there is a social need for information about and an understanding of modern Kabuki, researchers can only describe the history of Kabuki because they have nothing but historical methodology. In another case, although the current situation of the Ainu people is an issue, it is only historical information that is available. Japanology is without a doubt a limited approach.

We might have a vague, general impression that scientists first identify an issue to solve and then decide an appropriate methodology. However, if they only have a literature-based methodology at hand, that will affect their research themes, which will be limited only to topics that can be researched by using historical literature data sources. Moreover, for some researchers, recognition as a scholar might be more important to them than their contribution to society, which could encourage such researchers to choose historical themes based on authoritative literature-based methodology. Of course, the excellent historical Japanese studies within current Japanology that are still conducted in society and at various institutions should be valued. However, if there are no other methodologies available in a research system, researchers cannot gain access to knowledge other than the historical. If there were no need for other knowledge in society, this might not be a problem. But even if the Japanology paradigm created in the Early Modern period overwhelmingly called for historical research studies, there are many cases where the current needs of society require knowledge regarding ‘contemporary’ Japan. That is why Japanology has been criticized.

In Japanology, there are no cases of different domains applying different methodologies. Furthermore, it is criticized for having no particular theory; however, this critique will not be dealt with here.

Nevertheless, besides (historical) literature-based methodology, there is also the approach where a researcher utilizes his or her own experiences and puts them together in a 'summary of experiences'.

2.2 Japanese Studies-style methodology

The Japanese Studies-style paradigm of modern society is structuralism. In this period, of course, literature-based methodology and 'summaries of experiences' were continued and improved (for example, by including studies on contemporary texts). On the other hand, as a unique characteristic of this period, approaches relating to 'synchronicity' appeared and were applied to a broad variety of fields.

New means of data collection to support this approach include statistics (economics and sociology), fieldwork (questionnaires and interviews, sociology), participant observation (anthropology), experiments (social psychology), text analysis (literature), informant surveys (linguistics) and so forth. The methodology of 'current situation surveys' was also developed, which was a little more formal than 'the summary of experiences'. There are some differences as well as similarities among these methodologies. The similarities are, for example:

- (1) separate methodologies established for each research discipline
- (2) the subject of research is the current situation (synchronic)
- (3) only one result is expected for each question (i.e., a disregard for variation)
- (4) methods are category-oriented, not process-oriented.

These characteristics are, needless to say, closely related to the theory of the Japanese Studies-style paradigm itself, and that theory originated from the state of society at the time. In the modern world, each society is relatively independent and stable (in other words, they appear to be unchangeable), hierarchical and ethnic variation is restrained and some universal visions (social modernization, democracy, freedom and so forth) are worshipped.

In Japanese Studies conducted in Japan, the Japanese Studies-style methodology was broadly applied to economics and sociology. Questionnaires and interviews (Minami (1983) calls these both 'questionnaire surveys') also started to be used in sociolinguistics research conducted in Japan. These vigorous works, which required the processing of incredible amounts of data deserve our respect.

However, in the mainstream of Japanese Studies abroad, the researchers of Japanese Studies, except for a minority of economists, sociologists and linguists, still adhered to historical literature-based methodology due to the delay of the paradigm shift and the lack of thoroughness. As explained before, it was not that historical knowledge was strongly sought, rather the methodology was prioritized, because it had been already established and highly valued in the social system. Still now, one could say there is strong image of Japanese Studies whereby a researcher just goes to a library, chooses some books related to his or her topic and starts research.

On the other hand, in fields outside Japanese Studies, social surveys are highly valued. There must still be many college freshmen who want to pursue Japanese

Studies and think that social surveys are *the* 'scientific methodology'. However, there are many problems with the questionnaires and interviews that support social survey research. That is because the relationship between questionnaires and reality is extremely complex, and it needs to be said that it is difficult to draw conclusions about actual human behaviour from them.

First:

- (1) actual behaviour occurs,
- (2) this shifts to human awareness (Here: bias tends to appear due to incomplete processing and various attitudinal factors), moreover,
- (3) when one expresses this awareness in words, new bias appears because of content rules regarding topics (Neustupný 1987) in addition to intentional falsehoods. In fact, a large gap can be seen when the findings of questionnaires are compared with the analysis of actual behaviour (for example, the analysis of audio-recorded data).

Although social surveys and other research methods in the Modern paradigm can be problematic, it does not mean that they cannot be used. I think that the most important point for us to consider is where and how we can utilize these methods more effectively.

2.3 Postmodern methodology

The postmodern social sciences were created to accommodate the new social contexts after the 1960s. In contrast to Modern society, social variation came to be respected, and social issues and the importance of processes, rather than the categories of the new changing society, became the subjects of research. On the domestic stage as well as in international society, practical applications developed, which had not been seen in the social sciences before.

In this context, new methodology was sought and created. The general principles were:

- (1) to present variation,
- (2) to record social issues,
- (3) to highlight processes, not categories,
- (4) to make practical applications possible.

For example, it is more highly valued to investigate specific human behaviour in a specific situation (i.e., a case study) and to elicit individual and situational variation, rather than trying to find a social average. Moreover, methods are needed to show how actual problems can be observed in an ongoing context or how social processes develop. At the same time, methods are needed to present applicable results in order to solve problems regarding domestic social issues or problems resulting from international contact.

In this period, research studies at the macro level of course continue; however, if we want to try to understand human behaviour itself, studies of processes at the

micro level are essential. The focus should be not only on the whole society, but also on individuals. It can be said that this is another characteristic of postmodern social sciences.

In addition, as a commonality of these needs, it can be pointed out that 'natural data' taken from naturally occurring behaviour in a situation should be more valued than attitude surveys and tests, which can reveal social phenomena only indirectly (Schatzman & Strauss 1973).

The following are examples of new research methods, which did not exist in the Modern paradigm:

2.3.1 Studies of recorded data

After the audio- or video-recording of actual behaviour, the recorded data is the subject of thorough investigation. This methodology is particularly applied in sociolinguistics. In fact, in sociolinguistics, studies which are not based on the recording of interactions are generally not positively evaluated nowadays.

In other fields outside sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology is one of the methods used. Although within the field of sociology it makes observations on communication, which sociolinguists also look at, ethnomethodology basically aims at investigating social behaviour proper. For example, it looks at how attitudes toward a certain ethnic group are generated (Hausendorf 1993). In this method, researchers also record conversation and conduct conversational analysis (Heritage 1984).

As an example of the explanation of recording methodology, a study on Japanese corporate management abroad (Morwell, Australia) (R. Neustupný 1991) can be mentioned. In this study, a Japanese and an Australian manager's behaviour were video-recorded for a day, and a list of the situations in which each of them participated as well as their characteristics was created. This study conducted in Morwell has three points of significance. First, although many studies on decision-making in Japanese companies have been conducted, there is only very informal data available regarding how these processes actually develop. As far as the author knows, this Morwell study, which conducted micro-analysis of a meeting situation, might be the first attempt. Second, it was found that the Japanese employee's behaviour was very informal. Conventional methodology, which only used interviews, was often strongly influenced by stereotyping and did not reveal this kind of behaviour. The third significance is related to the hypothesis conferring the differences of networks between communication and power, which might also be difficult to analyze without actual data.

This Morwell study was clearly influenced by methodology in sociolinguistics. Furthermore, recording methodology is also used in the field of social psychology. This is not Japanese Studies; however, as early as 1973, A. Kendon and A. Ferber (1973) analyzed a part of a party scene using film data. This case also clearly shows the connection with sociolinguistics, and it is interesting that sociolinguistics can be said to have been leading the methodologies of other domains. On the other hand, in studies on Japanese grammar, although written texts could be a source of data, there is still very little research based on spoken data.

Data for recording should preferably come from naturally occurring actual interactions. Yet, this naturalness is what is natural from the participants' perspective. From the researcher's point of view, it might not be natural because he or she might need to try out different modifications under various conditions and produce results under different conditions, which of course is not a problem. Thus, the word, 'experiment', is often used (Auwärter 1988). In Japan, it was Ogino (1988) who highlighted the experimental approach. This recording-style methodology can be used in many fields of Japanese Studies. For example, it can be applied to various processes, such as those of economics, society and culture. In this case, naturally the detailed structure of a process can be examined; however, it might not be possible to collect a large number of cases for comparison. If we take a position where we only need macro studies dealing with groups, studies based on recordings might not be satisfactory. However, if we want to understand a process fully based on complex case studies, there is no other way but to use recording data.

2.3.2 The method of introspection is also new

From the traditional structuralist point of view, a researcher should avoid asking about interviewees' awareness during interactions. However, the now predominant way of thinking is that whenever interviewees' awareness exists in interactions, it should actually be included rather than excluded (Ericsson & Simon 1987). This is the idea that awareness that occurs at the precise moment of any human behaviour is a part of that behaviour, and it is impossible to understand such behaviour without also examining awareness.

The most representative introspection method that has been used most frequently in Japanese Studies research is the follow-up interview, which will be explained later. The follow-up interview is a procedure aiming to find out what awareness participants have during their actual behaviour. The method is often used in sociolinguistics; however, its use is not limited to communication research. For example, the follow-up interview can be said to be applicable to studies on management (meetings and so on) as previously mentioned, or micro-level studies on political behaviour (political meetings and so on). Also, in Japanese contexts, religious behaviour often includes awareness, which would need to be explained.

Although it is different from the follow-up interview, literature research on the process of understanding might be included in the same category. Of course, this approach first appeared in postmodern literature research.

The position of generative grammar is interesting. Structuralist linguistics rejected introspective data and argued that researchers' notes based on informants' reports should be used as data instead. On the other hand, in generative grammar, which is one of the linguistic schools to come after structuralism, data should be created based on native-speaker researchers' reflections (Schlieben-Lange 1990). Although this method actually resulted in ignoring the variation in languages, historically, it was one of the conditions for specific generative grammar, and so

it should not be assumed that using the reflection of linguists necessarily leads to the denial of variation.

2.3.3 *Reconsideration of conventional methodologies*

In the postmodern context, methods which were developed in the era of structuralism can often be used by changing them a little.

For instance, interviews in the Modern paradigm usually refer to surveys; however, interviews can similarly be used to investigate what really happened in a given situation. This is called the 'interaction interview', which will be explained later in relation to Japanese Studies.

Interviews also appear in history research in the form of 'oral history'. The aim is not to investigate what participants in the historical process generally think of events, but rather to identify a specific historical process. Historians in the old paradigms rejected oral history because this approach could be considered to go against their principles of structuralism.

Tests can be also used reasonably as long as they are perceived as natural situations for participants. In addition, as long as researchers do not only aim at general statements denying variation, observation can complement the contemporary paradigm of Japanese Studies, such as in the case of seeking a specific process.

Finally, the policy applied by the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, which displays new ethnological artifacts, not old ones, is a very interesting innovation in light of the methodology continuously conducted on 'studies of objects', which refers to old objects of course.

I have emphasized the usefulness of new methodology created in the contemporary paradigm; however, this does not mean that conventional methods cannot be used any more. It may be desirable to use a historical approach, social surveys, and structuralist analysis as well. However, when these methods are applied, the following two conditions need to be fulfilled. First, new methods should not be excluded by using these conventional methods. Second, certain research studies require new methods. For instance, questionnaires cannot be the best way to investigate what terms of address a person writing a letter uses to a reader of a higher social status. A researcher should collect envelopes and letters which were actually written (data) and look for specific examples among them. In this case, such surveys could only tell us how the participants' consciousness is reflected in the process of 'address'.

However, since postmodern research methodology is still new, it is, in fact, not included in *Introduction to Research Methodology* books for sociologists (for example, Cicourel 1981; Mann 1982). It is surprising that this methodology is not mentioned even if authors use recorded data extensively, such as Hatch and Lazaraton (1991).

3 The follow-up interview and the interaction interview

As examples of new methodology, I will present the following two kinds of interview.

3.1 The follow-up interview

In recent linguistics, the concept of databanks has become common. Similarly, in ethnology there is an increase in the number of databanks of processes (rituals, festivals, etc.). There is, however, a serious problem in the databanks of audio- and video-recordings because these recordings do not include a record of participants' awareness.

While we are undertaking any action, we monitor and evaluate our own behaviour. When we evaluate and find something inappropriate, we consider if it would need correction or not and often implement the correction (Neustupný 1985, 1994). However, because these processes are usually not visible in our behaviour, they are not documented in audio- and video-recordings. To supplement recordings, the methodology of the follow-up interview can be used. (Of course, since the processes mentioned above cannot all be conscious, we need further methods to supplement this.)

Some people think that the follow-up interview is conducted after a recording session only to check participants' various opinions and attitudes; however, strictly speaking, that is not all. The follow-up interview is a method to investigate participants' awareness at the time of the recording, not to check their impressions and attitudes that occur during the interview. Although it is fine to check this at the same time, the primary aim of the follow-up interview should not be forgotten.

3.1.1 *The structure of the follow-up interview*

How do we conduct the follow-up interview (Neustupný 1990)? I will first explain its structure, and then I will add some comments.

(1) Warming up

In general, participants do not know the clear aim of the recording session in advance. The researcher explains it to them here in order to get as much cooperation from them as possible. After that, the researcher asks about their general impressions and any problems that occurred in the recording session. For example, were there any mistakes that the participants made? In this case, their general impressions can be sometimes different from the findings drawn from their detailed responses to questions asked later (Neustupný 1994), which is interesting.

Finally, the researcher explains the structure of the main interview.

(2) Awareness before the recording session

Before the recording session, participants generally have some expectations regarding the aim of the recording, other participants in the session and their own roles. The researcher confirms these and asks if there were any changes to their expectations later on.

(3) Awareness during the recording session

Next, the researcher plays a short segment of the recording session (for example, a sentence or a part of a situation) and checks the participant's understanding.

For example, in linguistics research, it might be hard to catch what a speaker was saying; however, the speaker often remembers what he or she said. Or, the researcher asks the speaker what he or she was going to say or what he or she meant to do.

At this stage, the central question is whether the participants noted deviations from norms in their own behaviour. Furthermore, the researcher examines how the participants evaluated those deviations and what adjustment (correction) plans the participants made. After examining their behaviour, the researcher asks the same set of questions about the behaviour of other participants in the event.

(4) Awareness after the recording session

It is usual that even after the event people are aware of how they behaved. The researcher checks if this happened to the participants.

(5) Confirmation

Finally, the researcher explains to the participants the hypothesis or conclusion that he or she has made and asks for their opinions. Needless to say, this is not to avoid the researcher's responsibility. Responsibility for the final conclusions ultimately lies with the researcher; however, this does not mean that participants' interpretations should be completely ignored.

3.1.2 *Comments*

This type of follow-up interview was developed at Monash University in Melbourne in 1972. At that time, the author recorded a conversation between a Japanese and a non-Japanese participant. When the recording session was played back at the request of the non-Japanese participant, the author asked why this participant had suddenly moved his leg at one point. The non-Japanese participant reported on the rather complex processes in his consciousness saying, "I noticed that I might have been going to say something that I didn't want to say, and I thought about saying it in a different way. But then, I gave up and said it anyway." However, the Japanese sentences he uttered in the session were fluent, and I could have never imagined the process he went through. I only saw the movement of his leg. After this, the follow-up interview gradually started being used in research studies on contact situations. For example, Ozaki (1989, research into language correction) and Kaneko (1992, research into the process of requests) obtained excellent results. The author also applied this method to investigate honorific avoidance strategies (Neustupný 1983) and the language policy of Singapore relating to English (Neustupný 1994).

I perhaps need to add some comments regarding the procedure of the follow-up interview. First, in relation to time, it is important to prepare four times as long as the original recording session for each participant. That is why the length of the original recording session should be limited. In addition, it is desirable to conduct the follow-up interview right after the recording session; however, considering time constraints, etc., there might be cases when a follow-up interview cannot be set up

immediately. From our experiences, there are some participants who can remember very well even a week later. As individual evaluation judgements are crucial, the researcher needs to interview each participant separately.

There is a great deal of variation among participants. While there are some who are not aware of their own behaviour, others consider every element of their behaviour in detail. Although Labov did not use the follow-up interview method when he investigated linguistic awareness in New York, he had already reported that there were some people who were dialect deaf (Labov 1966). In addition, once participants experience the follow-up interview, they become more aware of their usual behaviour. Thus, they cannot be appropriate participants for a second time, which is something researchers need to be careful about when they first design their research plans.

The language used as a medium for the interviews does not necessarily have to be the same language used in the recording sessions, rather it should be the language which the participants can use most easily. For instance, for the analysis of a conversation between a Japanese and a non-Japanese participant conducted in English, it is not inappropriate to use Japanese in the follow-up interview with the Japanese participant. Moreover, researchers should use ordinary language in the interviews as much as possible.

The follow-up interview should normally be recorded. Thus, another tape recorder should be available besides the one which plays the original recording.

At the warming-up stage, it is better not to control participants' utterances and to have them talk freely even about subjects which are not related to the aim of the follow-up interview. That is to say, it is important to let the participants feel satisfied. However, it is important not to let this shorten the main part of the follow-up interview.

3.2 The interaction interview

The name of the interaction interview itself represents its goal. In other words, the interview does not measure awareness, knowledge or attitudes, rather it is a tool to investigate what actually occurred in an interaction.

We cannot record and study all the behaviour that we would like to look into. For example, it can be very difficult to record behaviour at a party where about ten people attend. When Asaoka (1987) actually conducted this type of research study, she was able to reconstruct the behaviour at the party in detail by interviewing all the attendees. The method employed for this study was the interaction interview.

The main characteristic of the interaction interview is its attentiveness to capturing behaviour as close to its actual form as possible. In other words, participants are not asked general questions which lead the participants to summarize their behaviour, such as "what do you usually do?" Rather, specific situations that actually occurred are selected, and the participants are asked questions about a particular segment of the situation.

3.2.1 *The structure of the interaction interview*

Just like the follow-up interview, the interaction interview can be organized into five stages.

- (1) Warming up
First, the researcher explains the aim of his or her research study to the participant and asks for his or her cooperation. The researcher asks the participant to talk about a particular event freely and shows empathy. Also, the researcher explains the structure of the interview.
- (2) Investigating before the event
The researcher investigates the participant's knowledge, attitudes, expectations and so forth before the event started.
- (3) Investigating during the event
The researcher divides the time from the beginning of the event into short segments (for example, ten or twenty minutes) and first creates an etic 'map' of behaviour. For example, if the researcher asks, "what did you do from nine till nine fifteen?" the participant could answer, "I greeted A", "I read a letter", or "I started work." Once this etic 'map' of the situation is created, the researcher translates the map into a list of emic situations, checking with the participant. Next, the researcher checks the features of these situations, such as the attendees, purpose, content, form, etc., and looks for what deviations from norms occurred, how they were evaluated, and what adjustment plans were made. The interview starts by asking about the participant's own behaviour and moves on to the other participants' behaviour.
- (4) Investigating after the event
The researcher investigates the participant's behaviour and awareness after the event.
- (5) Confirmation
Finally, the researcher presents his or her hypothesis based on the findings of the interview to the participant and checks his or her reaction.

3.2.2 *Comments*

This method was originally developed based on W. Mackey's paper (1966) and has been broadly applied by researchers, such as Takako Asaoka, to studies of party situations, sightseeing trips where researchers were not able to accompany the participants, and various small-scale research studies. The range of possible applications is very broad. Although this method enables researchers to gain results reflecting actual behaviour, it is not suited to research on linguistic competence because apart from greetings and unusual cases, who used what words does not remain in participants' minds.

The interaction interview should be conducted right after the event, which will be the focus of research. For example, in order to examine an event that happened in the morning, it is desirable to conduct an interview in the afternoon of the same

day. If the interview is conducted much later, there could be many points participants cannot remember, and there is an increased possibility that they might not report specific behaviour, rather just their 'usual behaviour.' In addition, there might be a great deal of variation among the participants. As in the follow-up interview, researchers should keep in mind that reported points are not reflections of reality itself, but simply references. As supplementary documents, it is possible to use journals, diaries, maps and/or group interviews as long as there is no problem with the content.

The language used in the interview should of course be the most preferred language for the participants. Also, it is desirable for the researcher to take notes whilst recording the interview.

As previously mentioned, although having participants talk freely can create a positive atmosphere, the researcher should be careful that the participants do not talk off topic or report their 'usual behaviour.'

4 Conclusion

As the paradigms of Japanese Studies change, methodology also changes, and there can never be only one way to collect data. The Japanese-studies style paradigm has added new methods to the very simple methodology of Japanology. Furthermore, it can be said that more new approaches are being created in the contemporary paradigm.

Methodology precisely reflects the theory of each paradigm. Also, the methodology one acquires not only determines data collection, but also dictates the very nature of the content of research. We might first select an issue and choose a research method to suit it; however, there will be many cases where the researcher chooses a familiar methodology and then decides which topic to deal with.

In current Japanese Studies, the latest methodology of the 'Contemporary paradigm' generated by postmodern society has only permeated some fields of Japanese Studies. Many people would say that the reason for this can be explained by the particular nature of each discipline. This might be true; however, social processes are not limited to the discipline of sociolinguistics. Nor, is it imaginable that both visible and invisible thought and awareness are limited to sociolinguistic behaviour. In the future, it will be desirable that more and more disciplines depart from the paradigm of their current methodologies and conduct research on social processes *as a process*.

When a methodology transfers from one certain field to another field, rather than one-disciplinary research, interdisciplinary Japanese Studies might be more likely to occur. If so, the role of 'Japanese Studies' might be to go beyond the boundaries of conventional Japanese Studies.

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2 The references were edited in accordance with the format used in this volume. Also, missing information was added where necessary.

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