

Variety of Respectful and Ordinary Language in Japanese Hospitality Culture Viewed from Sociopragmatic Studies

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Abstract. Japanese culture classifies language varieties into two, namely *keigo* and *futsuugo*. *Keigo* is respectful language to elevate or respect the speech partner or when speaking to a speech partner who is a *soto no hito*, and is usually used in formal or official situations. Meanwhile, *futsuugo* is an everyday language that is used by younger speech partners, or people within the *uchi no hito* sphere, and usually in informal situations. This study aims to describe the use of respectful and customary varieties of language, focusing on the context of service culture or hospitality. This type of research uses a qualitative approach with contextual methods. Based on the analysis, it is known that *keigo* is used in formal situations and is based on social status and age, while the use of *futsuugo* is more in non-formal situations and familiarity, and age.

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1 Introduction

Japan is one of the countries with a culture of communication-based on speech levels. The types of language varieties in question are respectful and ordinary language varieties. Respectful language or *keigo* is a type of language used to honor or elevate the position of speech partners. In the book *Keigo no Shishin*, *keigo* is an expression of respect and humility based on differences in position and role, age, and experience [2]. *Keigo* itself has three types, namely *sonkeigo*, *kenjougo*, and *teineigo*. *Sonkeigo* is a language that is intended when speakers express respect for the activities or actions of speech partners. *Kenjougo* is a respectful variety intended to demean the speaker's position. Meanwhile, *teineigo* is a respectful language that is used without expressions of exalting or demeaning the speaker's position. The role of *keigo* is inseparable from the community group relationship called *uchi-soto*. This concept divides the interaction patterns of Japanese society into *uchi* 'inside' and *soto* 'outside' circles. Kazuko defines *uchi* as family members and close people around the speaker, while *soto* are people who are not too close but have a relationship with the speaker [1]. The *uchi* scope will use the *futsuugo* form, while the *soto* scope will use the respectful language variety. Ordinary language or *futsuugo* is a variety of everyday language, meaning that it does not contain elements of honor or demean the use of language when communicating. Rahayu explains that *futsuugo* is the level of speech used in informal situations or daily activities involving close people, family, friends, or people who have a lower social status than the speaker [3].

One of the previous studies that focused on discussing respectful language or *keigo* was a study entitled "Analysis of the Use of *Keigo* in Drama in Autumn *Kounodori* Season 1" which focused on the hospital environment with the use of *keigo* dominated by *sonkeigo* and *teineigo* types. Prahesti and Supriatnaningsih revealed the factors of *keigo* usage are caused by age, health profession status, and familiarity [4]. Another previous research with the title "Analysis of *Keigo* Usage in Variety Show *Dai Rokujuu Nana-kai NHK Kouhaku Uta Gassen 2016*" examined *keigo* from the perspective of the Japanese broadcasting environment. According to Saputro and Supriatnaningsih, the determining factor of using *keigo* type is based on one's popularity while

still paying attention to aspects of familiarity, age, and social status [5]. Meanwhile, the author of this study will examine the use of *keigo* and *futsuugo* with a focus on the hospitality industry environment in which participants come from various backgrounds and community environments bound by a culture of hospitality and profession, as well as what are the factors behind the use of language varieties based on Nakao Toshio's theory [6].

This research uses a qualitative approach method through observation of the phenomena experienced by the object of research by not analyzing quantification-based data but in the form of descriptions [7]. The research data sources are the novel *Konbini Ningen* by Sayaka Murata and the Tik-Tok social media platform on the "Topa Top" account which contains speech with a public service situation setting in the culinary and tourism fields. The data collection technique uses the method of listening and noting, while the analysis technique uses the contextual method by determining the identity of the lingual unit through certain tools outside the linguistic elements [8].

2 Result and Discussion

Based on data collection, the author found 47 language varieties classified into 17 forms of *keigo* and 30 forms of *futsuugo*. *Keigo* itself will be described into 4 types, namely *sonkeigo* as much as 3 data, *kenjougo* as much as 5 data, *teineigo* as much as 7 data, and *bikago* as much as 2 data.

2.1 Futsuugo

From the data that has been analyzed, there are thirty ordinary or *futsuugo* forms with a variety of *futsuukei* forms marked by dictionary form verbs, *fukushi* (adverbs), and tenses patterns based on time.

Data 1

Context:

Izumi and Furukara, who are both convenience store employees, are checking food products. Since the store manager had already ordered bread, both of them had to try to sell the remaining bread stock that day.

Izumi : *E, hontou? Tenchou 100-ko hachuu shichatteru yo, yabaina..Toriaezukyoukita bun dake demo uranaito ne*

Izumi : Oh, really? That's bad, even though the manager has already ordered 100 pieces. Then we should try to sell the stock

today,
Furukara : *Hai*'
Furukara : Yes'
(*Konbini Ningen*, 23)

The underlined part in the above utterance is *futsuugo* with verb class. The *futsuugo* marker can be seen in the dictionary form of *hatchuu shichatteru* 'have ordered' and *uranaito* 'must sell'. Based on the context of the situation, participants, and topic of conversation, it can be concluded that *futsuugo* is chosen to be used by the speaker (Izumi) because she considers or positions her speech partner (Furukara) as a close person or within the scope of *uchi*. Likewise, at the beginning of the speech, when talking about the actions taken by *tenchou* 'manager' who had ordered 100 pieces of bread, the speaker chose to use *futsuugo* because not only because of the close or familiar relationship between the speaker and his speech partner but also because the speaker positioned O3 (manager) as *uchi no hito* in the topic of their conversation.

2.2 Keigo

In the data source, there are several forms of speech with four types of *keigo* concerning the theory according to *Keigono Shishin* which divides respectful language into four types, namely *sonkeigo*, *kenjougo*, *teineigo*, and *bikago* [2]. Each type of *keigo* has its characteristics according to its function.

2.2.1 *Sonkeigo*

There are *sonkeigo* speech forms with several variations, including using special verbs, *reru/rareru* passive verbs, special nouns, and prefixes or suffixes attached to verbs or nouns.

Data 2

Context:

Topa Top as a visitor came to Kinugawa Onsen to create interview content and asked one of the employees about the large number of foreigners from abroad. The employee said that there are difficulties in communicating with foreigners.

Topa :*Ima gaijin wa kekko irassharu desukedo, hoken toka, komento*
Top :*toka,doushimasuka?*

Topa : There are quite a lot of foreigners now, any suggestions or
Top comments?

Tenin : *Gaikokujin to no komyunikeeshon*

Tenin : Communicate with foreigners

(Topa Top, 00:05)

The respectful language variety above is characterized by the special verb *irassharu* which is a respectful form of *imasu* 'there is'. Based on the context of the conversation above, the function of using this *sonkeigo* is as an expression of respect for the third party being discussed, namely *kaigai* 'foreigners' when speaking to employees at one of the *onsen* tours. The factor of using this form of *sonkeigo* is social status because the non-specificity of the foreigner in question makes the *sonkeigo* variety considered more polite to mention foreigners from various social backgrounds even though it could be that the third party being discussed has a lower social status than the speaker. In addition, because the speaker (TopaTop) is in the context of recording which later the video will be uploaded, the language used for the interview is a respectful variety.

2.2.2 *Kenjougo*

From the data obtained, there are two variations of *kenjougo*, namely using special verbs and *renyoukei* patterns with the insertion of the 'o..suru' pattern. The form of *kenjougo* itself is divided into a form of speech where the speaker's actions involve speech partners (*Kenjougo* I) and without involving speech partners (*Kenjougo* II/*Teichougo*). In the data found in the context of hospitality this time more use the form of *kenjougo* I.

Data 3

Context:

Topa Top went to the cashier to count the amount of groceries purchased. Then when the clerk tells the amount to be paid and the customer (Topa Top) puts the money in a small tray, the clerk asks permission to take the money.

Tenin : *5000 en to 57 en otsukarishimasu*

Waiter : 5000 yen and 57 yen, I **take it**

Topa : *Hai'*

Top

Topa : Oke

Top

(Topa Top, 00:45)

The *kenjougo* above is shown by the *renryoukei* form with the pattern 'o...suru' on the word *otsukarishimasu* which is a respectful form of *tsukarimasu* 'take'. The use of this speech to lower the speaker's position to honor the customer when permission to take the money paid by the customer. The factors of using the respectful variety of *kenjougo* are social status and familiarity based on the status of the speaker as an employee while the speech partner is a customer. In addition, because it is not familiar and limited to the relationship between seller and buyer, it is necessary to confirm asking permission through the word *otsukarishimasu* to avoid impolite attitudes from employees to customers.

2.2.3 *Teineigo*

Teineigo is a language variety that is mostly found with one type of marker, namely the use of the copula *-masu* and *-desu* at the end of words.

Data 4

Context:

A grandmother entered the store for the first time and walked up to the cashier to ask Furukara about the opening time. Furukara replied that the store was open from 10 am.

Obaasan : *Koko wa asa, nanji kara yatteruno?*

Grandmother : What time does this shop open?

Furukara : *Eeto, kyou wa **juu ji kara desu!** Ano, kore kara wa zutto **yatteimasu!***

Furukara : Ee, today we **open at 10:00!** Eee, and **will continue** to be open.

(*Konbini Ningen, 18*)

The form of *teineigo* in this speech is characterized by the patterns *-masu* and *-desu*. The use of *teineigo* is an expression of formality without lowering or elevating the position of the two speakers. From the conversation above, the use of *teineigo* is based on the state of the speaker (Furukara) when he became a new employee who was not too fluent which can be seen through his stammering speech. Therefore, using the respectful variety in the form of *teineigo* is considered more appropriate for expressing general politeness. Then the age factor of the customer, who is an elderly woman, causes employees to use respectful varieties.

2.2.4 *Bikago*

Bikago is a part of *teineigo*, but its classification is based more on polite noun forms by adding the prefix *-o* or *-go* to the beginning of the noun.

Data 5

Context:

A grandmother was having trouble finding a store that she could visit at any time the store manager. The manager told her that starting today, the store would be open 24 hours and allowed her to come anytime.

Shain : *Hai. Kore kara wa, 24-jikan eigyou de oopun shite orimasu. Douzo itsu demo go-riyou kudasai!*

Manager : Starting today, we are open 24 hours and will be open all year round. Please feel free **to come** by anytime!

Obaasan : *Sugoi wa ne. Tenin-san mo taihen da wa nee*

Grandmother : Very good. Although it's hard for the employees here

(*Konbini Ningen*, 18)

The form of *bikago* above is seen from the use of the word *go-riyou* 'come/visit'. The use of *bikago* in the above speech is a subtle expression and respect for the customer even though the speaker is a manager. The factor of the emergence of *bikago* in the sentence is based on age and social status where the speech partner (customer) is an elderly woman while the speaker (manager) is an ordinary young man. Then the status of the speaker still chooses to use *keigo* because after all the manager is part of the service group so the position of the customer here has a higher social status.

3 Conclusion

Based on the data that has been studied, in Japanese hospitality culture there is a type of *keigo* language variety *teineigo* which is often used with the function of promoting a friendly culture rather than elevating the position of speech partners. The use of *sonkeigo* is used for hospitality to superiors and elders, while *kenjougo* is used to ask for permission or when offering products to customers. While *futsuugo* is intended for fellow employees and customers who are already familiar. The factors behind the use of *keigo* varieties include age, the formality of hospitality work culture, and social status. While the factor of using *futsuugo* is

more due to situational factors, the concept of *uchi-soto*, and familiarity between speakers.

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