

JPNS341

**Language, Culture, Society, and Iwate
Course Description**

Instructor: Akiko Kakutani, Earlham College
Meetings: Thursdays 13:00-16:00 Iwate University

Course Objectives:

Language reflects culture and society in various ways as a major verbal tool to exchange information to whom when and how, and as a social, cultural and economic indicator to connect language to societal conditions and changes. This course aims to help students to develop their understanding of the dynamic relationships between language, culture and society focusing on Japan, and Iwate Prefecture. Discussion topics include characteristics of the Japanese language, and its language variation, which reflects regional and cultural differences, the levels of formality, and speech style, and language in mass media. In addition, the course will discuss societal issues of language that are related to generation, occupation, education and technology. The course intends to utilize and maximize resources provided by Iwate Prefecture, such as local languages in Iwate, linguistic profiles of Iwate residents, perception of language variation, literary works created by Iwate people, and so forth.

Class Format:

The first half of each class will usually start with the introduction of the main topics of the day of class by the instructor. After that, a student leader will present the summaries of assigned readings and comments (10~15 minutes total), and lead discussion based on questions s/he prepares.

OTHER STUDENTS are also required to read assigned materials and submit a report (400 words) of the assigned readings, which should include (1) the description of main topics of each reading, (2) its focal points, (3) responses to the reading, and (4) a couple of questions. This report is evaluated as part of evidence class preparation and participation. The report written by the discussion leader must be sent to the instructor by email on **preferably Wednesday night, but no later than 9:00 on Thursday morning**. Other students may submit it in class. The report must be typed. Hand-written report will not be accepted.

The second half of the class will plan to be used for hands-on/ field study activities and their findings. Some activities will be assigned ahead of time in addition to readings.

Although advanced knowledge and skills of Japanese language and culture are not required in this course, you should be able to tackle with some Japanese oral and written data. Therefore, it is expected and encouraged that they will try to use your Japanese language skills for the projects as much as possible.

Attendance and Participation:

It is expected that all SICE students attend class unless they are sick and report it in advance.

Projects: Written report and presentation:

In addition to various assignments of hands-on activities in class as well as readings, two projects will be conducted, which require written reports and oral presentations (with PowerPoint).

- (1) Language Practice and perception: This is an interview project to find out what languages Japanese people in Morioka use and how they think about their language habits and perceive their language variation.
- (2) Discovering persons who are closely related to Iwate Prefecture in the present and past
The project intends to enhance the SICE program and experience.

A report of each project will be 10 to 12 pages (double spaced) long excluding data. The presentation will be 15 minutes long with questions and answers.

The report must include:

- a) objectives of the project/research
- b) existing studies and data (if available)
- c) method(s) of research
- d) findings
- e) evaluation/conclusion of the research
- f) bibliography

Journal Writing:

You will attentively observe language practice in your immediate environments, host families and schools, events broadcasted on TV, newspapers, and Internet, and write about what you have found, are finding out concerning language/verbal phenomena. Any topics are accepted as far as they interest you and are somehow connected with language or verbal communication. You'll write twice a week, each of which will not exceed 300 words. Your observations will be shared with others in class. They will be turned in after that.

Examinations:

There will be no written examination. Quizzes based on assignments, however, may be occasionally given to check if we are all on the same page.

Texts:

Gottlieb, Nanette. 2005. *Language and Society in Japan*. Cambridge University Press.

Selected articles (packet):

A Moveable Self: The Linguistic Indexing of *Uchi* and *Soto*
Relationality and the Concept of Self
Inside and Outside
Criteria of Group Formation
Formal Appearance and Inner Feeling: *Tatemae* and *Honne*
Front and Rear (*Omote* and *Ura*)
Up and Down
Up and Down Etiquette
Spirit of *Gambaru*
Enryo

Japanese Junior High School Girls' and Boys' First –Person Pronoun Use and Their Social World

'Sorry for your kindness': Japanese interactional ritual in public discourse

English Language Policy and Practice in Japan

Is Japan a Multilingual Society?

The Importance of "place" in Japanese Politeness: Implication for cross-cultural and intercultural analyses

Different Politeness Strategies: Japanese and the U.S. American students

Dialects

English Language Policy and Practice in Japan

Materials and resources related to Morioka and Iwate (to be added later)

Evaluation:

Class participation, and discussion leader	15%
Summaries, comments and questions of assigned readings	10%
Assignments: hands-on activities in class, and field work	15%
Journal writing	20%
Project (1)	20%
Project (2)	20%

Grading Scale:

A+	100 - 98	A	97.9 - 93	A-	92.9 -90	
B+	89.9 - 87	B	86.9 - 83	B-	82.9 80	
C+	79.9 - 77	C	76.9 - 73	C-	72.9 - 70	
D+	69.9 - 67	D	66.9 - 63	D-	62.9 - 60F	59.9 -

Schedule (tentative) SICE, 2012

Date	Topics	Date	Topics
8/30	Introduction	9/6	Uchi/soto, concept of self, group theory Reading: Gottlieb: Ch.1 & (1) (2) (3) (4) Leader:
9/13	Uchi/soto, concept of self, group theory Reading: Gottlieb: Ch.1 & (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) Leader:	9/20	Language diversity in Japan Reading: Gottlieb: Ch.2 & (14) Leader:
10/4	Language and identity Reading: Gottlieb: Ch.3, 4 Leader:	10/11	Presentation: Project 1 Due: written report of Project 1
10/18	Language, gender, and age politeness Reading: (11) (12) (15) Leader:	10/25	Language variation Reading (16) (17) Leader:
11/1	Language education; Japanese and English Reading (18) Leader:	11/8	Japanese reading and writing Reading: Gottlieb: Ch. 5 Leader:
11/15	Language and media; technology Reading: Gottlieb: Ch. 7 Leader:	11/22	field trip
11/29	Presentation: Project 2 Due: Written report of Project 2	12/6	Wrap-up