3. JAPANESE AND ITS RELATION TO THE ENVIRONMENT

3.1. The psychology of dependence

NOTE: (1) pp. 278-279: The example about how assistance is requested/rendered in Japan (i.e. “all-inclusive way”) is exaggerated, though there is some truth to it.

(2) p. 280: The phrase *Doozo yoroshiku onegai shimasu* literally means ‘I humbly request that you be good (to me),’ and not ‘Please do whatever you consider fit for me.’

(3) p. 280: The author’s description of what is expected of a hostess and the houseguest is still generally true, though probably not so much when a young person hosts his/her friend.

1. Would you characterize the behavior in the three situations (i.e., assistance, first meeting, houseguest) as the result of having the ‘psychology of dependence’ as ‘a frame of reference’?

2. In Japan the concept of *sasshi* ‘discernment’ is important, as in the houseguest example. One is supposed to be able to assess, without being told, what the other party is thinking, wants, etc. (expressed as *sasshi ga ii, ki ga kiku/mawaru, ki o tsukau*). What kind of effect do you think this has on the general language use?

3.2. Social stratification and deferential language in Japanese

3.2.1. How address forms work in Japanese

People’s names

Kinship terms

3. In JPN, there is no way of saying ‘I have a sister’ literally. One must say ‘I have an older (or younger) sister. Why do you think age difference is so important in Japan?

Personal (pro)nouns

NOTE: (1) p. 283: What the author refers to as pronouns ‘used only by men’ are actually used by some young women nowadays: e.g. *kimi* ‘you (casual)’ when talking to men of their own age or younger, and *omae* ‘you (rough)’ when angry at someone or in jest to a close friend.

(2) In the old days, *kimi* ‘you (casual)’ and *omae* ‘you (rough)’ were both polite terms literally meaning ‘lord’ and ‘area in your honorable front,’ respectively.

(3) p. 284: *Kare* and *kanojo* are actually very different from ‘he’ and ‘she’ in English. Speakers cannot use them referring to people in higher rank (e.g. one’s boss, parents), babies and children, strangers, historical figures, etc., and users are usually young or middle-aged people.
4. In certain regional dialects, ‘masculine’ pronouns like *ore* ‘I (rough),’ *washi* ‘I (rough),’ and *omae* ‘you (rough)’ are used by old women, as well as by men. Does it suggest anything about the social stratification in those regions?

5. In many situations when English uses pronouns, JPN uses nothing. For example, *John came to see me last night, and he loved my Macarena CD, so I gave it to him.*
   (1) Why are they required in English?
   (2) Why can JPN do without them?

6. What would be the evidence that JPN might not have ‘pronouns’ (like those in European languages)?

3.2.2. How non-deferential expressions are used deferentially
7. What are some examples of non-deferential expressions being used deferentially?

[You can skip section 3.2.3 as it is very confusing, especially for those who don’t know much JPN. Just remember that there are many ways to express similar ideas and that honorifics (*keigo*) is complicated.]

3.2.3. How the system of honorifics works in Japanese

NOTE: (1) p. 287: The translation of (111) should be ‘Mr/Ms. Sakai did Mr/Ms. Suzuki the favor of drawing a map; Mr/Ms. Sakai drew a map for Mr/Ms. Suzuki (and *I* regard it as a favor).’
   (2) p. 290: -*Te age* ‘kindly do... (for others)’ is not an honoring expression.

3.2.4. How the Japanese decide when to use which forms
NOTE (1) You can just skip this section, but remember the following.

Factors that determine how to talk:

- **Situational** (e.g. asking for help/guidance, trying to sell s.t.)
- **Interpersonal**
- **Relational**
  - in-group/out-group
  - seniority (e.g. age, rank)
  - sex
- **Personal** (e.g. the speaker wants to sound polite and educated)

(2) The following is true even now: Japanese people consider the ability to use deferential expressions appropriately (=knowing when to and when not to use *keigo*) to be the mark of good education and good upbringing.

3.3. Some Japanese expressions reflecting love of nature
8. (1) What are some of the indications that JPN people are fond of talking about nature?
   (2) How do you think it happened?