A Preliminary Investigation of Thai and Japanese Formulaic Expressions

*PREYA WONGKHOMTHONG**

Introduction

It is the intent of this dissertation to make a comparative study of Japanese and Thai linguistic expressions of a formulaic nature, concentrating on greetings. In this study I hope to be able to underscore the sociocultural perspective in communicative interaction, leading to an understanding of the socially variable aspects of expression. A primary assumption behind my work is that though certain values, manners, and ways of acting vary among individuals within any given society, there are also shared, culturally transmitted ways of thinking and behaving which will be reflected as commonalities in language.

Without readily available formulaic expressions, people meeting one another for the first time might suffer a "gap of silence"

* Lecturer, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat University.

leading to an uneasy feeling. Therefore, greetings might serve as a bridge of communication. For example, when Japanese first meet others they may greet each other as a sign of friendship and may go on to talk about the weather. In Thai society, after greeting each other, one person will go on to ask the other where he or she is going. It appears that greeting and the expression in everyday life of gratitude, appreciation or apology exists in most societies even though usage, variety and the exact form of these expressions may vary from society to society.

1. Scope

I will treat formulaic expressions of the modern standard languages of Japan and Thailand. The standard language of Japan is based on the Yamanote dialect of Tokyo, and the standard language of Thailand is based on the dialect of Bangkok. I shall concentrate on the formulaic expressions which are used as greeting, apology, and expressions of gratitude in everyday life. An attempt will be made to show how usages differ according to situation, place, and the social relationship between the speaker and the listener. I will also include some non-formulaic expressions which are employed as greeting, apology, and expressions of gratitude. My examples are primarily drawn from interviews with informants.

In his 1968 study Suzuki Takao classifies *aisatsu*, which roughly corresponds to greeting, into three types. The first type includes those which cannot be analyzed into meaningful subparts. His examples of the first type are *yaayaa* (Hi!), in Japanese, and "hello" in English. The second type are those which have identifiable subparts, or to put it another way, those which have literal as well as pragmatic meanings. Suzuki says that in these cases the literal mening is not of primary importance, and that greetings of this type have the characteristics or ritualized convention of formulas. As examples of the second type Suzuki cites *ohayoo* (Good morning; literally, it is early) in Japanese and "good-bye" in English. Greetings of this type function as ritualized conventions and are removed from the literal meaning. Thus an atheist would feel no compunction in saying good-bye though it derives from "God be with you."

Suzuki's third type are utterances at special occasions such as words of congratulation or condolence. Compared to the first two types, those of the third type tend to be longer, more complex, and more varied.

While the three types are grouped toge ther as *aisatsu* in Japanese, the third type is sufficiently different from the other two that the usual practice in English appears to be to refer to those utterances as speeches, or addresses.

What I am going to treat in this dissertation is the second type in Suzuki's classification.

I rely upon a number of published materials on formulaic expressions. My discussion of greeting, apologetic, appreciative, and grateful expression in Japanese is partially based upon *Nihongo wa midareteiru ka* (1969) (Is Japanese Mixed up?), and *Nihonjin*

to keigo (Japanese and Honorific Words) (1972), by Okuyama Masuroo. In addition, there are *Nithongo no seitai* (1979), by Mizutani Osamu, which has been translated into English by Janet Ashby under the title *Japanese: the Spoken Language in Japanese Life (1981);* an article by Mizutani Osamu, "Wakare no kotoba (Expressions of Leave-taking)" (1982); and *Nihongo Notes* 1 through 5 (1977–1983), by Mizutani Osamu and Mizutani Nobuko.

2. Aims of the Present Study

Two main questions stimulate this comparative study of formulaic and non-formulaic expressions in Japanese and Thai:

1. Why do the Japanese, who share many cultural and societal features with the Thai people, have such a variety of words for greeting, apology, appreciation, and gratitude, while the Thai people have only a few such expressions? What is the key to the differences between the formulaic expressions of these two languages?

2. From our knowledge of the various types of formulaic expressions of these two societies, can we draw conclusions regarding certain cultural values, such as politeness, etiquette, and social distancing? Can such features be revealed linguistically?

Earlier Work in the Field of Sociolinguistics in Japan

Shakaigengogaku is the Japanese translation of "sociolinguistics." According to Minami Fujio its usage starts in 1973 (Minami 1982 : 74). However, studies which may be considered as sociolinguistic have a long history in Japan. Sociolinguistic studies in Japan may be divided into two phases: 1) the research on honorific expressions before the term *shakaigengogaku* came into use, and 2) sociolinguistic studies after 1973.

Here, I shall attempt a brief survey of studies in this field largely based on Tsujimura Toshiki's *Keigo no shi teki kenkyuu* (A Historical Research on Honorific Expression) (1968), and Minami's "Nihon no shakaigengogaku (Sociolinguistics in Japan)," in *Gengo* (1982 : 74–84).

1. Studies Honorific Expressions

Although formal research on honorific expressions began in the Edo period (1604–1868), beginning interest in the use of honorific expressions, especially concerning deities, the Buddha and the emperor can be found in the Nara period (710–794). Eighth-century documents containing this work include *Kojiki*, *Nihonshoki*, and *Manyooshuu*. João Rodrigues (1561–1564) in his *Arte da Lingoa de Japam* (1604–1608) touches upon honorific expressions. In the Edo period, Komachi Masazumi (1791–1858) wrote *Jogen Santenrei*, which is a study of the usage of the honorific word *su* of the Nara period. Yasuhara Teishitsu (1610–1673) contributed his views on the nature of honorific expressions in his *Katakoto* (1650).

During the Meiji period (1868–1912), a number of grammars on colloquial Japanese appeared and most of them included descriptions of honorific language. Matsushita Daizaburoo's *Nihon zokugo bunten* (A Grammar of Colloquial Japanese) (1901) is an example. Another important work in this period is *Koogohoo choosa hookokusho* (An Investigational Report on the Usage of Colloquial Japanese) (1906), which described the actual condition of honorific expression in dialects, by the Kokugo Choosa I'inkai (The Committee on Japanese Language Investigation).

In the Taisho period (1912–1926), Yamada Yoshio wrote *Keigohoo no kenkyuu* (Study of Honorific Expressions) (1924), considered the first research book which treated only honorific expressions: Hozumi Nobushige, in *Imina ni kansuru utagai* (A Question on Posthumous Names) (1919), contributed unique research on the Japanese custom of employing a posthumous name to show respect by avoiding use of the real name of the nobility.

In the Showa period. (1926 to the present), Yuzawa Kookichiroo wrote several articles on the historical changes in honorific expressions. Examples are Kinda'ichi Kyoosuke's "Joodai dooshi keigohookoo (A Study in Verbal Honorific in Old Japanese)" in *Koten no shin kenkyuu* (A New Research on Classics) (1953), and Arisaka Hideyo's "Shimo nidan katsuyoo dooshi no hojodooshi '*tamau*' no genryuu ni tsuite (Origin of the Auxiliary verb *Tamau* of the *Shimo Nidan* Conjugational Verb)" in *Kokugo on' in shi no kenkyuu* (A Study in the History of Phonology in Japanese) (1944). Other works include "Keigoron (Honorific Expressional Theory in Honorific Expressions)" in *Kokugogaku genron* (Introduction to Japanese Grammar) (1941) by Tokieda Motoki, and Matsuo Sutejiroo's *Kokugohoo ronkoo* (Studies in Japanese Grammar) (1961).

In summary, according to Tsujimura Toshiki, Japanese honorific expressions had been researched by Yamada Yoshio, Matsushita Daizaburoo, Matsuo Sutejiroo, and Tokieda Motoki, etc. However, there was little research on the topic of *keiji* (honorific endings) such as *desu* and *masu*. Tsujimura stats that although many of the studies include descriptions of specific historical periods, they do not constitute an exhaustive survey of Japanese linguistic history (1968 : 326-8).

2. Studies in Japanese Sociolinguistics

Although not mentioned by Minami in his article "Nihon no shakai gengogaku (Sociolinguistics of Japan)" (1982), early work in Japan distinguishing honorific words can be found in the *Man' yooshuu Chuushaku* (Annotations on Manyooshuu) by Sengaku (b. 1203–d. unknown), written in the thirteenth century. In 1604 João Rodrigues, a Jesuit missionary who visited Japan, mentioned how honorific words are formed in his *Arte da Lingoa de Japam*, one of his two grammars of the Japanese language.

The research on language in daily life later developed into the so-called *shakaigengogaku*. Minami (1982 : 74) divided the

research into two historical periods: 1. *Shakaigengogaku izen* or the "period before sociolinguistics," which is again divided into three parts as follows:

(a) the first period from 1948 to 1963

(b) the second period from 1963 to 1968

(c) the third period, lasting from 1968 to 1973,

and 2. *Shakaigengo ikoo* or "the period after sociolinguistics."

Minami divides the period after 1948 and before sociolinguistics again into three parts:

1. The Period Before Sociolinguistics:

(a) The first period (1948 to 1963) is labeled by Minami as the period of "research in language of daily life." There was a high interest in limiting the number of scripts such as the designation of 1460 Kanji as *Tooyoo kanji*. The researchers in this field showed a preference for statistical approaches, applied to instances of actual investigation (Minami 1982: 75). During this extensive and varied period, Minami singled out 1. *Chi'iki shakai no jittai choosa* (The Real Situational Investigation on Community) and *Bamenron* (The Theory of Context) as particularly significant.

Chi'ikis hakai no jittai choosa concentrated upon the standard and dialectal language. The investigation was a long-term study of *keigo* (honorific words) at Ueno in Mie prefecture in 1952-53, at Okazaki in Aichi prefecture between 1958-61, at Nagaoka in Niigata prefecture in 1962, and at Shimane in Matsue prefecture in 1963. The crucial figure in the field of *Bamenron* is Tokieda, who stated the necessity of looking at language as an essential element in the process of expressing and understanding. Tokieda emphasized three conditions necessary for speech: the addressor and the addressee, content, and place (Tokieda 1941).

The latter part of the first period--1951 to the beginning of 1960 (Minami 1982: 76--although a time when sociolinguistics grew in popularity abroad, was a period of decline for the Japanese study of language in daily life. Various investigations, such as one at Matsue in 1963, were terminated. Minami suggested the lack of general theory to stimulate research and the insufficiency of existing research contributed to this decline (Minami 1982: 76).

(b) The second period lasted from 1963 to 1968. During this time, linguists turned their attention to the structure of language from the study of language in daily life (Minami 1982: 75). However, this does not mean that no work at all was done in the latter field. Kinda'ichi Haruhiko Kyoosuke carried out research in *keigo hyoogen* (honorific expressions), including non-verbal communicative aspects (1964). Hayashi Shiroo investigated language behavior in various parts of Japan, employing a form of analysis which had not been used before. This was published as "Gengo koodoo no taipu (Types of Language Behavior)" (1966).

(c) The third period lasted from 1968 to 1973; the diverse work in linguistics followed no general trend (Minami 1982: 73)

There was no distinctive research during this period compared with the first two periods, yet interest in language in daily life did not die out completely and in fact revived not long after.

In summary, the field during the third period was dominated by the National Language Research Institute (NLRI) of Japan, which pioneered investigation of standard and dialectal language, as discussed earlier. In 1951, a journal called *Gengoseikatsu* (Language in Daily Life), published by NLRI appeared.

2. The Period After 1973:

The word *shakaigengogaku* (sociolinguistics) was first applied in Japan more than ten years ago (1973). Since then, study in this field has been successfully carried out by many famous Japanese scholars. For example, Shibata Takeshi initiated situational investigation at the University of Tokyo, supplementing the projects done by the National Language Institute of Japan in Tokyo and Osaka during 1974–75 (Minami 1982:78). Hayashi Shiroo, in "Hyoogen koodoo no moderu (A Model of Human Expressive Behavior)" (1973), and Kunihiro Tetsuya in "Gengo no toogoo teki moderu (An Integrated Model of Language)" (1973) attempted to formulate a standard theory of communicational behavior. In the field of language and culture, interest focused on examining the interconnection of social phenomena, language expressions and culture. The representative scholar in this field is Suzuki Takao in *Kotoba to Bunka* (1973). He contrasted usages in Japanese and English, focusing particularly on socially appropriate forms of address.

Much research has been done on the subject of *keigo* (honorific words) as a form of communication. Important scholars in this field include Hayashi Shiroo, Hayashi Ooki, Minami Fujio and Haga Yasushi in "Keigo no taikei (System of Honorific Words)" (1974), and Neustupny' in *Post–Structural Approaches to Language* (1978). Moreover, these *keigo* studies have been broadened through a comparative perspective, as scholars analyze languages besides Japanese. As a result of this, the old misunderstanding that honorific words are a uniquely Japanese characteristic has been changed.

This broadened area of interest also includes non–verbal communication, a subject untouched in the period of language in daily life. At present, real situational investigations continue in a comparative sphere through surveys of non–Japanese speakers of Japanese. Works in this area include those by Nagano Masaru in *Bamen to kotoba* (Context and Language) (1957) Sugito Seiju in "Aisatsu no kotoba to miburi" (1981), Matsumoto Yoshiko in "Nihon ni okeru amerikajin no gengo seikatsu (Language in the Daily Life of Americans in Japan)" (1981), Natsuka Reiko in *Obeijin ga chinmoku suru toki* (When the European Remains Quiet) (1980), and Satoo Maria Luisa in "Aruzenchin nikkeijin shakai ni okeru nihongo (The Language of Japanese Argentines)" (1981). In addition to these analyses, research on non–verbal communication has been published by Kunihiro Tetsuya in "Nihonjin no gengo-

koodoo to higengokoodoo (Japanese Verbal and Non-verbal Communication)" (1977), Ide Sachiko in *Onna kotaba otoko no kotoba* (Men and Women's Language) (1979), Fred C. C. Peng in *Nihongo no danjosa* (The Difference Between Men's and Women's Speech in Japan) (1982).

3. Formulaic Expressions in Japanese, especially aisatsu (Greeting)

In 1968, the journal *Gengoseikatsu* published a special issue on greetings. An interesting article concerning how greetings are used, greeting behavior, and the etymology of *aisatsu* (greeting) is Suzuki Takao's "Aisatsuron (Theory of Greeting)" (1968). Suzuki discusses various functions of greetings and divides them into the three types discussed earlier. The same volume contains the article "Aisatsu no shidoo (A Guidance on Greetings)" (1968), by Saitoo Yoshikado, in which the author discusses what he considers to be correct usage of greeting for elementary and junior high school students. Besides these writings there is an article by Kunihiro Tetsuya under the title of "Personality-Structure and Communicative Behavior : A Comparison of Japanese and Americans" (1980). He attempts "... to explain the difference in verbal and non-verbal communication behavior of Japanese and Americans (in the United States of America) on the basis of a hypothetical difference in personality structure between the two nations."

In "Wakare no kotoba (Expressions of Leave-Taking)" (1982), Mizutani Osamu stresses the importance of words exchanged upon departure, as indications of feelings fo attachment of one person to another. In general, the importance of such expressions is overlooked and people rarely think much of their usage. Even though *sayoonara* is frequently employed, for instance, determining who should use it and to whom is not easily accomplished by most people. Mizutani Osamu illustrates the usage of departing words with examples, showing rules and limitations which are not easily articulated by most people. Indeed, usage depends on the situation, the addressee and the social relationship between the addressor and the addressee.

In "Aisatsu Kotoba (Greeting Words)" (1980), Fujiwara Yoichi argues that even though linguists classify greetings as formulaic expressions, in actual use, they have their own vitality, their own characteristics, and are flexible in any real situation. He emphasizes both the importance and the convenience of greetings in society. Moreover, he observes how greetings very geographically (according to prefecture), and by time of day. He is also interested in how greetings are spoken. However, his work does not explore such facts of contexts as the social criteria for usage, the situation, or even the social relationship between the speaker and the listener: Another interesting work is an article by Tooyama Yasuko entitled "Aisatsu ni okeru koodoo to higengo koodoo no nichibei hikaku (A Comparison of Japanese and English Verbal and Non-Verbal Behavior on Greeting)" (1982). In this article, Tooyama makes a comparative analysis of verbal and non-verbal behavior seen form the greeting of Japanese and American individuals,

Earlier Work in the Field of Sociolinguistics in Thailand

Because the field is relatively new, as yet there have been very few attempts at sociolinguistic research in Thailand. While in Japan research in true "sociolinguistics" was begun more than ten years ago, sociolinguistics is a new academic word in Thailand and is known to only a few specialists. The term, translated into Thai, is *Phaasǎ as ǎŋkhomwidthayaa* (Language–sociology), a new technical term which needs to be explained when listeners first hear it. In western nations, most of the growth in sociolinguistics took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s; it can be seen how young the discipline is. This is not meant to imply that the study of language in relation to society is an invention of the 1960s; on the contrary, there is a long tradition in the study of dialects and in the general study of the relations between word–meaning and culture, both of which might be counted as sociolinguistics (Hudson 1980:1). Still, the field of sociolinguistics as such is very new in Thailand. At present, introductory sociolinguistics is taught in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the famous Thammasat University. The course provides Thai students with the fundamental ideas in the field. Most of the texts used in the course are written by famous Western scholars such as Fishman, Gumperz, Halliday, Hymes, etc.

Thai sociolinguistics, per se, cannot therefore be described as was done above in section 1.2 in the case of Japanese sociolinguistics. However, one can discuss developments in Thai linguistics during the 1970s to provide comparison with Japan. Judging from the materials and research from the 1970s to the present, Thai intellectual activity has progressed greatly. Much of the research carried out in linguistics during this time shows a clear distinction from the previous period. For instance, many years ago famous Thai scholars such as Phrayaa Upakidsilapasaarn, Phrayaa Anuman Rajadhon, Kamchai Thonglaw, and Chalao Chaiyaratana wrote the standard books on Thai grammar. In the 1970s many new grammatical works appeared, written by young scholars using innovative approaches to the study of the Thai language.

As mentioned previously, during the 1970s the amount of research increased compared to the period before, but the theoretical approaches and the topics of research still lay within "traditional" linguistics. Scholars have been mainly interested in the structure of language, to the exclusion of the social contexts in which language is learned and used. In this period various topics such as phonology, syntax, and semantics have been studied. In addition, a new trend has appeared : scholars doing fieldwork among the rural minority people.

Although the few articles and books which have been published during these periods are directly related to the field of sociolinguistics, many are concerned with Thai linguistics and Thai language. It is sometimes very difficult to say that linguistics and sociolinguistics are two different fields, because there are many sociolinguists who also call themselves linguists (Hudson : 1980 : 3). In general, the task of linguists is to work at "the rules of language X," after which the sociolinguist may enter the scene. He or she may study any points at which language rules make contact with society (Hudson 1980 : 3).

Whether the two fields are viewed as similar or different, both deal with languages which exist in human society. Therefore, it is interesting and necessary to briefly point out the works which have been done in the field of linguistics by these new scholars from the 1970s to the present. Only the content of the works which relate to sociolinguistics will be discussed. The works will be divided into the traditional pure linguistics and work in the field of sociolinguistics.

Research in traditional Thai linguistics. During the 1960s, traditional style philological research on the Thai language and grammar was abundant in Thailand. The traditional prescriptive pedagogical approach is represented by one well-known grammar book called *Lăgphaasaathaj* (Thai grammar) (latest edition 1973) by Kamchai Thonglaw. This book was standard Thai grammar and was generally used.

During the 1960s more articles and books about Thai linguistics began to be written by such foreign scholars as Fang Kuei Li, Richard Noss, Mary Haas and Thomas Gething. The work of these scholars has contributed much to the study of the Thai language. In *A Handbook of Comparative Tai* (1977), Li attempted to reconstruct the proto-language from which the various Tai languages and dialects developed, and to trace the phonological changes in the various languages by a comparative study of their vocabularies.

In *Thai Reference Grammar* (1964), Noss used the tagmemic approach to structural grammar as a theoretical base in exlaining usages. He also distinguished the variations in speech levels in spoken Thai. Haas produced a useful dictionary and an extensive classification of Thai words in her *Thai-English Student's Dictionary* (1964). Gething analyzed examples of two types of semantic contrast between Thai and Lao. The first case was one of semantic shift and the second showed semantic dimensions which were in sharp contrast with each other (1975).

Research in Thai Sociolinguistics. An important treatise in the field of sociolinguistics is *Pronominal Reference in Thai, Burmese, and Vietnamese* (1968) by Joseph Cooke. In this work, Cooke describes pronominally used forms both formally and semantically, and discusses the cultural and personal aspects of their use. This useful work provides detailed data on the usage of pronominal pronouns in Thai. Cooke's study, especially

the structural framework, shows that pronominal references occur at varying speech levels not only in Thai but also in Burmese and Vietnamese. Another interesting work on speech levels is *A Semantic Study of Royal and Sacerdotal Usages in Thai* (1973) by Kanita Kanasut Roenpitya. This work investigates the semantic relationships underlying such usages in Thai, based on the framework of Chafe's semantic theory in *Meaning and the Structure of Language* (1970). Another study entitled *A Socio-Linguistic Study of Pronominal Usage in Spoken Thai* (1975), by Angkab Palakornkul, describes the usage of pronouns in spoken Bangkok Thai from a socio-linguistic point of view.

Comparative study of Japanese and Thai pronominal usage has also contributed to the emerging field of Thai sociolinguistics. Some Thai students in Japan studied Japanese and Thai pronouns to discern their differences and similarities. However, a comparative study attempting to find out how the pronouns that are used in each language reflect the society or culture has not yet been done. For example, the phrase *tâj fàa la?ɔɔŋ thùlii phrâbāad* (underneath the dust and dust of the soles of your royal feet) demonstrates the first person pronoun employed by an inferior to a king, or king and queen when together (Roenpitya 1973 : 73). By tracing the original meaning of the pronoun which is employed in each period by relating it to the society and culture, one finds that the word itself reflects the differences in social classes and interpersonal relationships in Thailand. This might be one of the reasons why the Thai language has many pronouns which can be employed and need to be adjusted when speaking to someone who is higher in status, such as the king, the royal family, the monks, a superior, ect. It would be interesting to compare this with Japanese, which also has many pronouns with different usages depending upon the social relationship of the speaker and the listener.

Another research area heretofore overlooked by Thai scholars is "the coining of Thai words," or "neologisms." In Thailand most of the university courses in technical subjects such as economics, politics, business, medical science, linguistics, etc., have to rely on texts written in foreign languages, especially English. Inevitably Thai students must learn how to read foreign texts, because much material is not available in the Thai language. Thai scholars who have studied abroad tend to sprinkle their Thai with words borrowed from English because it is supposedly easy and convenient to do so. When encountering new words in English which have no Thai equivalent, Thai scholars often pronounce foreign words with a Thai accent, thinking the listener will thereby understand, for example, autopsy (ʔɔɔthɔ̀ɔbsîi), cyst (sîid), psychology (sajkholoocîi); G.N.P.(cii en phii). Although these words might be well known technical terms among physicians, nurses, psychologists, economists, it doesn't follow that Thai people in general will understand their meaning. Some groups of Thai seem to think using English words with a Thai accent reflects a good education and upward mobility. This current infusion

of foreign words into Thai merits urgent study. By bringing words from other societies and cultures such as English and Japanese into Thai without adapting or really understanding the meaning of the words used in each society, these Thai overlook the value of their own language and also contribute to a gap in communication among Thai people in the future.

In "A Comparative Study of Three Social Groups" (1984), Wilaiwan Kanittanan argues the address in the Thai language is a very complicated matter. It is so complicated that often speakers avoid addressing their listeners, not knowing with assurance which is the proper term to use. The author divides address terms into five categories :

1) second–person pronouns;
2) kinship terms;
3) titles;
4) tirst names and nicknames;
5) honorifics.

Kanittanan based her work on interviews with 35 informants who had been working at Thammasat University. The subjects were divided into three status groups : teachers, workers and janitors. From her research, she found that the use of address froms reflects, or gives clear indication of, the different status of these three groups. The repertoire of address terms of the members of the three groups might be the same but their usage is different.

In "Maarajâad naj kaan chái thɔ̂ɔjkham (Etiquette in Using Words)" (1981), Chidrinii Thabthiang stressed the importance of speech because it can be employed to make the listener understand the thought, desire and the feelings of the speaker, She also wrote about the usage of words that need to be adjusted according to whether the listener is a superior, an inferior, or a person of equal status. In addition, she discussed pronouns used by the speaker, for example, (*dichân*) (I) (formal polite form for a female), *phôm* (I) (formal polite form for a male), and *khâaphacâw* (I) (formal polite form for both male and female). However, in this article, she did not give any examples of the kinds of pronouns to be used to indicate the social relationship of the speaker and the listener. The knowledge that one might gain from reading this article is the general common sense basis which every Thai speaker has. The article is too brief, too general. It does not go into details or try to explain clearly how one can use words appropriately.

Finally, and most relevant to the present work, there is a thesis entitled *Aisatsu kotoba to nihon bunka : aisatsu kotoba in okeru kyori no ishiki* (Greeting words and Japanese culture : The consciousness of distance in greeting words (1981), by Maarasrii Saennikorn, a graduate student of the University of Osaka. In her work, Saennikorn investigated the greeting words which appear on television recording dramas in video, then interpreting the psychological conditions of space, time, and social relationship. The most important topic of her thesis concerns the space implied by the greeting words, the so–called consciousness of psychological distance. Saennikorn grouped the greeting words

which appeared on T.V. into 40 kinds, after five months of observation. Though Saennikorn's thesis deals with greeting words in Japanese and, to a lesser extent in Thai, it does not concentrate on comparative study of greeting words in the Thai and Japanese languages. The study does touch on some aspects of Thai greetings without going into details or analyzing how Thai society influences greeting expressions.

In conclusion, it can be seen that the field of sociolinguistics has not yet been popularized in Thailand. It is to be hoped that in the future Thai scholars will do more research in this field, just as they advanced in the field of general linguistics during the 1970s. Language is profoundly influenced, both directly and indirectly, dy society and culture. As Thai scholars become more accustomed to investigating the interconnection of Thai language and culture, both fields will be more thoroughly understood.

□ □ □