

An Analysis of Linguistic Politeness in Japanese: A Case Study on the Management of Polite Form among Young Japanese People in Australia

Koichiro KITAMURA

The present paper makes an analysis of linguistic politeness by focusing on the style choice between a formal and plain forms, or “*mas*-form” and “*o*-form” in Japanese discourse. Style shifting from one form to the other is observed in ongoing social interactions taking place in a particular speech community: a group of Japanese Working Holiday Makers in Australia. The author argues, despite an unfavorable view that the group of young Japanese people overseas is not sophisticated in maintaining their speech level in a proper manner, that style-shifting is a meaningful linguistic practice through which they relativize their social relationships with each other in the course of linguistic socialization in a culturally characterized context. As a part of comprehensive research on a correlation of linguistic manipulation with social practices, the primary purpose of this paper is to characterize the distribution of polite forms through questionnaire surveys and discourse analysis by which the author will further investigate into social and psychological source behind the linguistic manipulation shared among members of a Japanese speech community abroad.

Keywords: Linguistic politeness, style-shifting in Japanese, Discourse Analysis, Japanese Working Holiday Makers

1. Introduction

It is recognized that a number of researchers have attempted to characterize the use of *mas*-form¹⁾ in pragmatically cohesive rules. As discussed in Kitamura (2016), the previous studies suggest that a dimension of solidarity as well as formality is operative in the

style choice between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form. However, in order to seek a correlation of the social and psychological forces with the linguistic manipulation, the notion of solidarity needs to be elaborated on particularly in Japanese terms. Crucial to Japanese linguistic politeness is that style choice is codetermined by a range of cultural values, or the two contrasting but shifting parameters of in-group and out-group or *uchi* and *soto*. And equally important is the fact that, due to its fluid nature of the parameters, the frame of social relationships and contexts is not fixed but consistently negotiated in ongoing social interactions. The motivation for style-shifting from one form to the other is therefore to be discussed by examining how people extensively relativize a boundary of *uchi* and *soto* relationships with each other in their social encounters.

In studying linguistic politeness in Japanese, four issues are taken up in Kitamura as research questions to be investigated: (1) what brings about a sense of *uchi* or *soto* among a group of people in their social encounters; (2) how it is realized in their style choice; (3) how the meaning of the linguistic manipulation is exchanged among the members, and; (4) what effects linguistic practices may be imposed on the group (Kitamura 2016:212). In order to answer these research questions, this paper will deal with the investigation of style-shifting as a means to characterizing social and psychological source behind the linguistic management through questionnaire surveys and discourse analysis on the distribution of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form.

By conducting questionnaire surveys to a group of Japanese Working Holiday Makers in Australia, I will pursue their motivations for the linguistic manipulation in terms of the cognitive process of relativizing social and psychological distance in their minds. The main goal of this paper is to demonstrate the distribution of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form marking in both written and spoken discourse, which will lead to a further inquiry into how the

meaning of style-shifting is perceived, negotiated and shared by members of the speech community.

2. Literary Review

The previous studies have shed lights upon the two concepts being operative in Japanese linguistic politeness: the social distance between senior and junior members, and moreover the psychological distance relativized with regard to a distinction between in-group and out-group members. The style choice between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form can be characterized as an accommodating or distancing speech acts to maintain interpersonal relationships between individuals. As pointed out in Kitamura (2016), if the manipulation of the two linguistic forms functions as to controlling the access to solidarity, the avoidance of using *mas*-form can be regarded as a sign of being in in-group or *uchi* relationships where psychological territories are open to each other.

Taking a dimension of solidarity into consideration, style-shifting between two forms is treated no longer as a violation of consistency prescribed in conventions but as an implication of social distance variably relativized by the participants in the discourse. Relatively recent studies on style-shifting or more commonly referred to as “speech-level shift” (Mimaki,2013:85) have provided more comprehensive views of the linguistic manipulation by categorizing the occurrence condition for *mas*-form marking and its pragmatic functions. For example, Maynard (1991, 1997) defines style-shifting as “a manipulative device to express some aspects of discourse modality” (Maynard, 1991:580). The condition for \emptyset -form marking is summarized as follows:

The *da* style is selected (1) when the speaker takes a perspective internal to the narrative setting and immediately responds within that framework, (2) when the speaker presents

backgrounded information semantically subordinate within the discourse structure and (3) when the speaker finds the addressee close enough and the speaker uses a style similar to the style in which he or she self-addresses. (Maynard, 1991:551)

Usami further points out the possibility of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form functioning as indicators of “the social and psychological relationships between the speaker and hearer” (Usami, 2002:138) by demonstrating the correlation between the frequency of occurrence of style-shifting and “the power (age, social status) and / or gender of the interlocutor” (ibid. 3) in discourse level.

The previous studies suggest a dimension of solidarity as well as formality is operative in the style choice between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form. However, it is not likely that they would fully provide the pragmatics of *mas*-form with the social and cognitive process in which the speech participants work out with their interpersonal relationships. In fact, it is not completely clear how the sporadic use of *mas*-form in \emptyset -form-dominant discourse is interpreted as a sign of expressing a sense of distance, not of lacking the ability to maintain the consistency in style. Nor is it clear in what situation the sporadic use of \emptyset -form in *mas*-form-dominant discourse is interpreted as a sign of expressing a sense of solidarity, not of neglecting sets of linguistic etiquette.

Defining the social and psychological relationships in Japanese terms, this study attempts to characterize style shifting as an index to define and redefine interpersonal relationships in terms of a sense of *uchi* or *soto*. The motivations for the linguistic manipulation are to be investigated in a case study by conducting questionnaire surveys and analysis on the distribution of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form in written discourse through a field work in a Japanese speech community abroad.

3. Data and Methods

The investigation of style shifting between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form was made within a specifically targeted speech community a group of Japanese Working Holiday Makers in Australia. A total of eight informants cooperated in providing information for questionnaire survey as well as written text and spoken discourse for analysis. All informants were Japanese Working Holiday Makers staying in Sydney for less than half a year. There were 4 male and female speakers of similar age, between 18 and 24, who came from various parts of Japan. They will be termed as male Speaker (a), (b), (c), (d) and female Speaker (E), (F), (G), (H) for convenience. The contrast between small and capital letters represents their differences in gender. Not all of them knew each other before the collection of conversational data.

For the analysis of style shifting practiced by Working Holiday Makers in ongoing social interactions, the eight informants were invited separately to take part in conversations. Each conversation was performed by two speakers totaling 8 pairs. The pairs consisted of the speakers both familiar and unfamiliar to each other by 50%. There were 4 pairs between friends and also 4 pairs between strangers.

The rationale behind the selection of 8 pairs is that there needs to be an analysis made to characterize how one speaker may treat his / her style differently depending on conversational partners. Some speakers were therefore invited to participate more than twice, in their usual conversation between friends as well as in their first meeting with strangers.

All conversations were audio-recorded in a controlled situation with no outsider present, with minimal guidance to the informants. Only 3-minute segments were selected within 10-minute conversations as data relevant to the analysis of the style choice between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form. Besides the initial 2-minute segments, the last 1-minute

segments were extracted in order to examine some changes in the way the informants treat the linguistic signs during their conversations. Statistical information discussed in this work will be based on the total of 24 minutes of spoken discourse (i.e. 3 minutes each from 8 conversations).

In order to seek social and psychological source for their group consciousness, questionnaire survey was conducted to characterize their view of self in relation to other Working Holiday Makers. A total of eight copies were collected from the informants. The questionnaire was organized for the purpose of understanding the notion of the Working Holiday scheme agreed on by the informants. It was made up of three parts that asked them about their (1) profiles (i.e. age, gender, and current occupational status), (2) images of a typical Working Holiday Maker, and (3) experiences as one of Working Holiday Makers themselves in Australia.

The last part of the questionnaire, Part (3), provided the written discourse to be analyzed to seek motivations for style choice practiced by the Working Holiday Makers. The informants had two pages to write about their own experiences as to the Working Holiday scheme. They were requested to present the same story to the two different types of readers in mind: the first page to Working Holiday Makers and the second page to Japanese university students in Australia. A crucial point in this task was to test if the style choice would be made differently depending on the two types of addressees. It was posited, if a sense of *uchi* or *soto* was being operative, that the informants would use *mas*-form less in writing to the group of Working Holiday Makers as in-group members than to that of university students.

As well as the written and spoken discourse obtained directly from the informants of Working Holiday Makers, data collection was made for text analysis in Australia. There were more than ten Japanese newspapers and magazines, and many of them were

available for free in Japanese restaurants, grocery stores, book shops, travel agencies, and student information centers in Sydney. In addition to news articles, columns, and essays, those free publications would contain a variety of information or advertisements on services available in Japanese such as auto repairs, haircuts, internet providers, medical checks, academic consultations, and visa support. Some articles were extracted from news magazines as the data relevant to the issue of motivations for the management of style discussed in this study.

It should be noted here that, as the main purpose of this study is to demonstrate how style shifting is correlated with social and psychological source that would give rise to a sense of *uchi* or *soto*, the target of analysis on the distribution of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form is the interactional aspect of linguistic practices. Although style-shifting derived from self-addressed speech or as a result of presenting backgrounded information as described earlier in Maynard (1991) may also be counted as the co-occurrence of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form, it is not discussed in detail in this paper.

On the assumption that a linguistic choice of one form over the other would manifest the speaker's recognition of a relative social position to the other speech participants, style-shifting can be regarded as an act of identity. In analyzing the distribution of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form, the co-occurrence of the two forms is to be interpreted as a manifestation of multiple social identities. Two theories relevant to the analysis of the multiplicity are the concept of "voice" advocated by Bakhtin (1981) and the framework of "footing" by Goffman (1981).

In accordance with Bakhtin's view of an utterance as "filled with dialogic overtones" (Bakhtin, 1986:102), the speaker's representing voices are treated as a clue to analyzing style mixing discourse. In identifying social and cognitive source for the linguistic choice, discourse analysis is made to characterize multiple social roles and

moreover the dialogic nature inherent in the speakers' speeches that are what Holquist and Emerson (1981) may call "the speaking personality" or "speaking consciousness."

Furthermore, in order to explain style-shifting performed by a single speaker to the same conversational partner, a change in the speaker's understanding of his / her interpersonal relationship is elaborated on in terms of Goffman's framework. According to Goffman, such a change may imply "a change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance" (Goffman, 1981:128). The speaker's motivations for style-shifting between *mas*-form and *ø*-form can be interpreted as a result of the change in understanding his / her conversational role, be it as an in-group or out-group member, in relation to other participants. The investigation of style-shifting practiced by the eight Japanese Working Holiday Makers is therefore made by inquiring into how they reflectively use *mas*-form and *ø*-form in categorizing their social relationships with each other.

4. Results

4.1. Conversations

The description of the eight conversational partners is made in Table 1, with their age and use of *mas*-form, followed by the numbers and percentages of *mas*-form marking observed in each conversation.

Table 1: The distribution of *mas*-form marking in the 8 pairs

Pair	Speaker	Age	Use	Total 3 minutes	First 2 minutes	Last 1 minute	Style Shifting
1 Friends	(a)	23	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	—
	(H)	24	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	—
2 Friends	(b)	24	Yes	18 (29.5%)	12 (29.3%)	6 (30.0%)	0.7% up
	(F)	24	Yes	10 (16.4%)	6 (14.6%)	4 (20.0%)	5.4% up
3 Strangers	(b)	24	Yes	2 (3.7%)	2 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	5.9% down
	(G)	23	Yes	2 (3.7%)	2 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	5.9% down
4 Strangers	(F)	24	Yes	6 (10.5%)	6 (15.8%)	0 (0%)	15.8% down
	(G)	23	Yes	4 (7.0%)	4 (10.5%)	0 (0%)	10.5% down
5 Strangers	(a)	23	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	—
	(E)	24	Yes	6 (8.6%)	6 (12.2%)	0 (0%)	12.2% down
6 Strangers	(a)	23	Yes	12 (30.8%)	4 (16.0%)	8 (57.1%)	41.1% up
	(b)	24	Yes	20 (51.3%)	15 (60.0%)	5 (35.7%)	24.3% down
7 Friends	(b)	24	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	—
	(c)	24	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	—
8 Friends	(a)	23	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	—
	(d)	18	No	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	—

In Table 1, it is realized that the use of *mas*-form is not simply observed by particular informants. The same speakers in fact present a varying degree of *mas*-form marking depending on their conversational partners. Speaker (b) for example, uses *mas*-form differently in conversation with his friends, Speaker (F) and (c). He frequently speaks in *mas*-form to Speaker (F) in Conversation 2, while he never does to Speaker (c) in Conversation 7.

Moreover, it is noticeable that many of the informants often shift their style even in speaking to the same partners in the course of 10-minute conversations. The increasing number of *mas*-form observed in Speaker (a)'s utterances in Conversation 6 indeed illustrates how variably one may manipulate the linguistic forms. In order to pursue the process of style-shifting, I will attempt to describe which style is used by whom in what situations in the eight conversations.

4.1.1. Conversations between Friends

It is widely recognized that the use of *mas*-form is often disregarded in casual conversations between friends. The absence of *mas*-form in Conversation 1, 7 and 8 seems to agree to the general tendency. No single utterance is given in *mas*-form in the three conversations between friends, i.e. Speaker (a) and (H), Speaker (b) and (c), and Speaker (a) and (d).

However, it should be noted that there are cases in which people employ *mas*-form regardless of the familiarity. Indeed, in Conversation 2, both Speaker (b) and (F) employ *mas*-form to a significant degree (i.e. 29.5% and 16.4% respectively) even though they have been friends for nearly three months in Australia. The *mas*-form marking presented by Speaker (b) and (F) in Conversation 2 suggests that the style choice between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form is not solely dependent on the familiarity between speech participants.

The distribution of *mas*-form presented by Speaker (b), (F), and (G) further poses a question on the consistency in style prescribed in the conventions. Firstly, Speaker (b) is apparently the most frequent user of *mas*-form. The high degree of *mas*-form marking is in fact observed not only in Conversation 2 (i.e. 29.5%) but also in Conversation 6 (i.e. 51.3%). Judging from the distribution of *mas*-form in the two conversations, *mas*-form can be taken as the neutral style for Speaker (b) in speaking to his friends as well as strangers. However, evidenced in the lack of *mas*-form in Conversation 7, Speaker (b) also seems to follow the general tendency to disregard *mas*-form when he talks with his friend, Speaker (c). Moreover, the relatively small number of *mas*-form marking in Conversation 3 (i.e. 3.7%) indicates that Speaker (b) may feel free to go without *mas*-form even to Speaker (G) whom he meets for the first time.

Such an inconsistency in the style choice is further observed with Speaker (F). Speaker (F) is also likely to be an informant who

frequently uses *mas*-form. As well as in Conversation 2 (i.e. 16.4%), she shows a comparatively high degree of *mas*-form marking in Conversation 4 (i.e. 15.8%). However, apart from the similar rate of *mas*-form marking, there seems to be a crucial difference in Speaker (F)'s management of *mas*-form in the two conversations. The difference becomes apparent in focusing on the distribution of *mas*-form in a sequence of conversations. On the one hand, in Conversation 2, there seems to be a little difference in the distribution of *mas*-form in the first 2-minute and the last 1-minute segments (i.e. 14.6% and 20.0%). Regardless of the familiarity for Speaker (b), Speaker (F) maintains or slightly increases the degree of *mas*-form marking in the latter part of the conversation. On the other hand, in comparing the distribution of *mas*-form in the two segments in Conversation 4, it is noticeable that the percentages of *mas*-form marking falls into zero in the course of a new social encounter with Speaker (G) (i.e. from 15.8% to 0%). No single sign of *mas*-form in the last 1-minute segment indicates that Speaker (F) may have gone through some kind of negotiation on the notion of *mas*-form or \emptyset -form with Speaker (G).

In the same manner, Speaker (G) shows a tendency not to use *mas*-form in the course of a new social encounter with Speaker (F) in Conversation 4. As well as Speaker (F), Speaker (G) frequently uses *mas*-form in the first 2-minute segment (i.e. 10.5%) but no longer in the last 1-minute segment (i.e. 0%). As Speaker (F) and (G) get to know each other, they start to disregard *mas*-form. The corresponding style-shifting observed in their utterances may suggest that they seem to have a mutual agreement to go without *mas*-form in their ongoing social interactions. Noteworthy to the linguistic manipulation practiced by Speaker (G) is that such coordination seems to be made in conversation with Speaker (b) as well. The distribution of *mas*-form in Conversation 3 turns out to be similar to that in Conversation 4 in the point that both

participants start not to use *mas*-form to each other in the course of their new social encounter. In fact, Speaker (b) does not use *mas*-form at all in speaking to the unfamiliar conversational partner, Speaker (G), in the later stage of Conversation 3, even though he consistently uses it in speaking to his friend, Speaker (F), in Conversation 2.

4.1.2. Conversations between Strangers

It is widely recognized that the use of *mas*-form tends to be preferred in conversations between strangers. According to the numbers and percentages of *mas*-form illustrated in Table 1, the occurrence of *mas*-form observed in the initial parts of Conversation 3, 4, 5 and 6 largely supports the general view. Not knowing each other well, the participants may find it difficult to make their style choice between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form. However, evidenced in the absence of *mas*-form presented by Speaker (a) in Conversation 5, there are occasions where people start their conversation without *mas*-form in spite of the uncertainty in relativizing their social relationships. For example, Speaker (a) is seemingly an informant who prefers to use \emptyset -form in speaking to most of his conversational partners: not only to his friends, Speaker (H) and (d) in Conversation 1 and 8, but also to unfamiliar conversational partners, Speaker (E) and (b), in Conversation 5 and initially in Conversation 6.

Speaker (a) remarkably shows a tendency to disregard the use of *mas*-form in speaking to his conversational partners. However, it should be noted that such a tendency is not particularly observed by Speaker (a) but rather commonly observed by the other informants. In fact, although Speaker (G), (F), (E), and (b) often employ *mas*-form to their unfamiliar partners at the very beginning, they show the tendency to use \emptyset -form at the early stage of their new social encounters (i.e. within 10 minutes of their conversations).

The tendency demonstrated by the pairs of strangers suggests that the use of \emptyset -form is not solely determined by the familiarity between speech participants.

Furthermore, the stylistic coherence prescribed in the conventions is not tenable in the use of \emptyset -form presented by Speaker (E), (F), and (G). Speaker (E) is one of the informants who follow the general tendency to start using \emptyset -form in the course of 10-minute conversations. The process of her style-shifting from *mas*-form to \emptyset -form is observable in comparing the distributions of the two forms in the first 2-minute and the last 1-minute segments of conversations illustrated in Table 1. In Conversation 5, Speaker (E) uses *mas*-form in speaking to the unfamiliar conversational partner, i.e. Speaker (a), at the rate of 12.2% in the first segment. However, she seems to disregard her initial style in the latter part of the conversation. In fact, in Table 1, the degree of her *mas*-form marking indicates 0% in the last 1-minute segment.

As mentioned above, those pairs of Speaker (b) and (G), and of Speaker (F) and (G) also show the same tendency. It is notable in Table 1 that the degree of *mas*-form marking remarkably decreases in Conversation 3. Only \emptyset -form marking is observed in the utterances given by Speaker (b) and (G) in the last 1-minute segment, while *mas*-form marking is observed to a certain degree, i.e. 5.9%, in the first 2-minute segment of their conversation. The tendency of style-shifting from *mas*-form to \emptyset -form is more notably realized in Conversation 4. Both Speaker (F) and (G) show no single sign of *mas*-form in the last 1-minute segment, though they employ *mas*-form in the first 2-minute segment at the rate of 15.8% and 10.5% respectively.

The above data show a strong tendency for many of the young Japanese Working Holiday Makers to prefer to go with \emptyset -form in associating with each other or exclusively use \emptyset -form in the latter part of their conversations even in their first meeting. However, at

the same time, it is noticeable that such a tendency is not always applied to all the pairs. The opposite direction of style shifting observed in Conversation 6 indicates the necessity for further inquiry into their linguistic management diagnostic of the group.

It is notable in Conversation 6 that Speaker (a), the most frequent user of \emptyset -form, cannot always be so determined with his style choice. Speaker (a) is actually observed to use a relatively large degree of *mas*-form marking (i.e. no less than 30.8%) in conversation with Speaker (b). As illustrated in the number and percentages of *mas*-form marking in Table 1, Speaker (a) for the first time shows *mas*-form marking at the rate of 16% in the first 2-minute segment. Moreover, he even increases the rate up until 57.1% in the last 1-minute segment.

A crucial point to note as to the conversations between the unfamiliar group is that the way a speaker chooses one style over the other is not always fixed but rather reflectively negotiated with the other participant in ongoing social interactions. In order to elaborate on the variable motivations for the style-shifting between *mas*-form and \emptyset -form, further analysis is necessary to explain how the notion of the linguistic forms being exchanged between the participants.

4.1.3. Conversation Category

Based on the description of the eight pairs and their management of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form, the eight conversations can be categorized into four types. The categorization is made in terms of three points: the familiarity of the participants, the percentages of *mas*-form in their utterances, and the shifting degree of *mas*-form marking in the course of conversations as in the following table.

Table 2: The category of the 8 conversations

Type	Conversation	Pair	<i>mas</i> -form marking	Result
1	1 · 7 · 8	Friends	0%	Stable
2	3 · 4 · 5	Strangers	0%~15%	Decreasing
3	2	Friends	15%~30%	Stable
4	6	Strangers	30%~	Increasing

The stability in the degree of *mas*-form marking in Type 1 and 3 indicates that one cannot simply label *mas*-form or *o*-form as a neutral form in conversations. Indeed, as is demonstrated by Speaker (b) in Conversation 2 and 7, even the same informant treats *mas*-form differently depending on his conversational partners. The factors that call for the different style choice seem to lie in the process of relativizing social relationships between the participants. Since the use of the two linguistic forms is deictic to the addressees, the pairs of friends are categorized into sub-groups that use and do not use *mas*-form to each other.

In investigating into the meaning of style-shifting, the category shows the necessity for discourse analysis on such conversations in Type 2 and 4 where the informants reflectively manipulate the linguistic signs in ongoing social interactions. The characterization of their social relationships is to be elaborated on by a range of Japanese cultural values, *uchi* and *soto*. The meaning of disregarding or rather emphasizing *mas*-form will be discussed in the future analysis on Conversation 3, 4, 5 and 6 by focusing on the process of enacting a sense of *uchi* and *soto* based relationships, or in-group and out-group memberships among the eight Japanese Working Holiday Makers in Australia.

4.2. Questionnaire on the Working Holiday Scheme

The answers to the questionnaire give insights into the notion of the Working Holiday scheme for the eight informants. The information gained through each part of the questionnaire is summarized prior to the discourse analysis.

4.2.1. Personal profiles

Part (1) is brief since personal information relevant to this study is only their age, gender, and current occupational status. Their age and gender are illustrated in Table 1. Their answers on social status are simply described as follows:

Table 3: Self-categorization

The number	Social status
8 (100%)	a Working Holiday Maker

It is interesting enough to point out that all the eight informants claim their social or occupational status as a Working Holiday Maker no matter what jobs or activities they are currently engaged in since they came to Australia. It is notable that all of them except Speaker (b) are or were a student of language schools to learn English for one or two months. It seems typical of Japanese Working Holiday Makers to enroll in a language course for the first few months. As they become accustomed to a life in Australia, they try to participate in other activities such as traveling around Australia, working in part-time, or improving skills related to their former jobs. Among the eight Working Holiday Makers, Speaker (b) is rather an exceptional informant who does not study in a language school, but instead works almost every day in a Japanese restaurant in Sydney. However, the difference in their activities is not reflected in their answers in Part (1). A term “Working Holiday Maker” is applied not only to a visa holder, but moreover to a

distinctive social status beyond such categories as a student of a language school, a waiter of a restaurant, and so forth.

4.2.2. The Notion of the Working Holiday scheme

In Part (2), several questions are asked of the eight informants to describe their notions of the Working Holiday Scheme or images typical of a Working Holiday Maker. The questions begin with asking their motivations for participating in the scheme. All of the eight informants state their goals in Australia by describing the opportunities or advantages they can have with the visa. Their answers are listed below:

Table 4: Goals in the Working Holiday Scheme

The number	Aims
7 (87.5%)	to develop English skills
6 (75.0%)	to make a trip around Australia
4 (50.0%)	to make new friends
4 (50.0%)	to experience different culture
4 (50.0%)	to have work experiences in other countries
3 (37.5%)	to enjoy sports game
1 (12.5%)	to become an independent person
1 (12.5%)	to do something different
1 (12.5%)	to quit a job in Japan
1 (12.5%)	to take a lot of nice photos

It should be noted that the aim of the Working Holiday Scheme is stated in general terms and does not describe specific activities to its visa holders in official documents. In the case of the features described by the Department of Home Affairs²⁾ in Australia, it is released that “the Working Holiday visa is a temporary visa for young people who want to holiday and work in Australia for up to a year. It is a temporary visa that encourages cultural exchange and closer ties between Australia and eligible countries” (Working

Holiday visa: subclass 417).

The goals of the eight informants illustrated above go more or less beyond the original scheme. Most of the informants seem to be more concerned about making a trip around Australia, or what they preferably call “round.” The term “round” is synonymous with ‘sightseeing,’ yet more likely to indicate a long term trip through campsites or cheap accommodations such as ‘backpackers’ and ‘youth hostels’ with small funds. With permission to engage themselves in a full-time study (within three months) and work to supplement their funds (through incidental employment), the Working Holiday visa is obviously the most attractive option for them to achieve their various goals listed above.

The description of what a typical Working Holiday Maker would be in the next question results in confirming the popularity of “round” among the group of young Japanese people. Their images of a Working Holiday Maker are described in the following table:

Table 5: Descriptions of a typical Working Holiday Maker

The number	Descriptions
8 (100.0%)	enjoys “round”
6 (75.0%)	shares an accommodation with friends
6 (75.0%)	spends a little money
5 (62.5%)	studies English at school for a few months
5 (62.5%)	works in a Japanese restaurant
4 (50.0%)	hangs around only with Japanese school mates
4 (50.0%)	enjoys what he / she likes
4 (50.0%)	speaks friendly without any polite forms
3 (37.5%)	works in a farm
2 (25.0%)	has a strong motivation to achieve his / her goal
1 (12.5%)	boils rice by a pan (without a rice-cooker)
1 (12.5%)	reads comics in a student information center
1 (12.5%)	has no purpose
1 (12.5%)	has little courtesy in speaking to elder people
1 (12.5%)	speaks English a little

It is remarkable that all of the eight informants mention “round” as an activity that a typical Working Holiday Maker does. The full remark on “round” reflects a strong tendency for Japanese Working Holiday Makers to be engaged in traveling as though it were the main purpose of the scheme. The consensus on the image of a Working Holiday Maker among the eight informants does not seem to be accidental when we are provided a full of information about “round” by a key word “Working Holiday” on web sites. Such a stereotypical view of a Working Holiday Maker as an enthusiastic traveler or “round maker” can be found in many publications that feature the Working Holiday Scheme.

4.2.3. Essay Writing

Writing task is required in Part (3), targeting at two different groups of readers in mind: Working Holiday Makers and Japanese university students in Australia. The number of *mas*-form marking in their essays is counted and analyzed in relation to that of \emptyset -form marking. The distribution is illustrated below:

Table 6: *Mas*-form marking in written discourse

	The number of <i>mas</i> -form marking	
	to Working Holiday Makers	to University Students
Speaker (a)	0 (0%)	8 (100%)
Speaker (b)	8 (81.8%)	11 (100%)
Speaker (c)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Speaker (d)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Speaker (E)	4 (57.1%)	10 (83.3%)
Speaker (F)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Speaker (G)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Speaker (H)	0 (0%)	11 (100%)

It is notable that six informants show a consistency in style in both the first and the second essays. In fact, there is no style

mixture observed in the two contrasting essays presented by Speaker (b), (c), (d), (E), (F), and (G). Two informants, Speaker (b) and (E), employ *mas*-form while the rest of the four informants, Speaker (c), (d), (F), and (G), use \emptyset -form in presenting their essays.

Important to note in analyzing style choice is the complementary distribution of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form observed in by Speaker (a) and (H). On the one hand, when they are asked to write to Working Holiday Makers, Speaker (a) and (H) completely disregard *mas*-form. To university students, on the other hand, both speakers employ *mas*-form in every sentence they write. The consistency in the selective use of style observed in the two speakers' essays may indicate the possibility that a sense of solidarity is being operative to those who are also categorized as Working Holiday Makers. The dichotomy of *uchi* or *soto* relationship can be interpreted to be a key to elaborating on their motivations behind the linguistic choice.

5. Concluding Remarks and Future Direction for Research

Through the field work in a speech community of Japanese Working Holiday Makers in Australia, both written and spoken discourse was collected from the members who had been engaged in the Working Holiday Scheme. Based on the distribution of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form and description of those who categorize themselves to be Working Holiday Makers, their management of the polite form has been partly characterized in this study.

The fluid nature of linguistic politeness in Japanese was most apparently observed in style-shifting from *mas*-form to \emptyset -form and reversely from \emptyset -form to *mas*-form in some conversations. In order to seek the speakers' motivations for the linguistic manipulation, there needs to be a further investigation in terms of their recognition of self in relation to the other in their ongoing social encounters. The social and psychological source behind their style choice is to be pursued in specifying their shared interests that nurture the

sense of solidarity.

Further research on the management of polite form will be made by discourse analysis on the essays provided by the Working Holiday Makers along with the survey on the goals and images about the Working Holiday Scheme, which is believed to be a clue to explaining the dimension of solidarity (i.e. how one may or may not locate him / herself in an in-group relationship with the other). Moreover, through discourse analysis on their conversations, the research will be developed to investigate on the process of style-shifting (i.e. how the meaning of *mas*-form and \emptyset -form is actually exchanged, negotiated and shared or not shared) in ongoing social interactions. The future research is to shed light on a correlation between an act of social identity and style-shifting by demonstrating how extensively the *uchi* or *soto* dichotomy is interrelated with the linguistic politeness in Japanese.

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Notes

- 1) As to the treatment of polite and plain forms, this article describes the forms in verb morphology *masu* / *desu* endings as *mas*-form and *da* endings as \emptyset -form. The rationale for the description is that both *masu* / *desu*-ending and *da*-ending forms or styles do not necessarily determine the level of politeness in the same ways as honorific and humble forms do. Style-shifting between the two forms is therefore not interpreted as an indication of being ‘more polite’ or ‘less polite’. In terms of the neutrality, the absence of *mas*-form is described as \emptyset -form.
- 2) Working Holiday visa (subclass 417). (2018). Australian Government: Department of Home Affairs. Retrieved from <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/visa-1/417> on October 29, 2018

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