

บทความรับเชิญ

กรณีศึกษาการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบระหว่าง ภาษาญี่ปุ่น กับ ภาษาจีนและภาษาไทยตามระเบียบวิธีแบบลักษณะภาษา

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้อธิบายเกี่ยวกับการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบที่ไม่เพียงมีบทบาทเพื่อการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบสำนวนภาษาสำหรับการเรียนรู้ภาษาในฐานะภาษาต่างประเทศ แต่ยังสามารถเป็นระเบียบวิธีหนึ่งที่ใช้จำแนกและจัดกลุ่มภาษาต่าง ๆ ตามระเบียบวิธีแบบลักษณะภาษาด้วย โดยผู้วิจัยได้แนะนำตัวอย่างการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบวัจนกรรม “การขอโทษ” และ “การขอบคุณ” ในภาษาจีนและภาษาญี่ปุ่นซึ่งสามารถจัดอยู่ในระดับชั้นเดียวกัน และเพื่อนำไปสู่ระเบียบวิธีแบบลักษณะภาษา ผู้วิจัยยังได้กล่าวถึงข้อแตกต่างในการใช้คำแทนบุรุษสรรพนามในภาษาไทยและภาษาญี่ปุ่นที่แตกต่างกับความสุภาพเชิงบวกและความสุภาพเชิงลบตามทฤษฎีความสุภาพ จึงกล่าวได้ว่ากรณีศึกษาทั้งสองนำเสนอความเป็นไปได้ของระเบียบวิธีวิจัยวิธีหนึ่งเพื่อสร้างแบบลักษณะภาษาในระดับวัจนปฏิบัติศาสตร์

คำ

สำคัญ

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Invited paper

Examples of Attempts at Contrastive Studies between Japanese and Chinese/Thai toward Linguistic Typology*

Abstract

In this paper, we argued that contrastive studies can be seen not only as studies of language expressions for foreign language education, but also as a methodology for constructing linguistic typologies. As examples, we have reviewed contrastive studies of the speech acts “apology” and “gratitude” in Chinese and Japanese that are taken as the same phase in topology. Furthermore, for the purpose of linguistic typology, we have indicated that the use of pronominal pronouns in Thai and Japanese has different orientations toward positive and negative politeness, respectively, based on politeness theory. Both of the cases suggest the possibility of a methodology for constructing a linguistic typology at pragmatic level.

Key words

contrastive studies, linguistic typology at pragmatic level, speech acts, politeness theory

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1. Introduction

This paper considers language contrastive researches as a methodology for building linguistic typology. Meanwhile, we demonstrate cases of contrastive studies between Japanese and Chinese, also those between Japanese and Thai, for the purpose of discussing linguistic typology at a pragmatic level.

In recent years, contrastive studies have been prevalently conducted in the field of foreign language education. Although they have thought progressive and effective in researches on language acquisition, we argue the use of contrastive studies as a methodology which is not devoted to foreign language education, but constructs linguistic typology (Taniguchi, 2015).

In this paper, we review the history of contrastive studies and contrastive linguistics in the first place. Moreover, we illustrate problems in contrastive studies for foreign language education. Finally, we introduce contrastive studies between Japanese and Chinese on the speech acts of apology and gratitude, as well as studies on politeness between Japanese and Thai, as the examples of contrastive studies as a methodology for linguistic typology.

2. History of contrastive studies

In this section, we review the history of contrastive studies, while mainly referring to Yasui (1981) and Ogoshi (2002). According to Yasui (1981, p.22), when G. L. Trager used the term “contrastive linguistics” in *The Field of Linguistics* (1949), he used it as a description of two linguistic systems, in which it deals with the relations between languages descended from a common original, meaning that there is not only the contrast between two languages, but also the inclusion of two aspects of a single language or of different languages. In this case, different languages could be considered languages with or without a genealogical relation, which means that the term encompassed contrasts between genealogically related languages, also known as comparative linguistics. This refers to a fact that contrastive linguistics include comparative linguistics in a traditional sense, in which there are comparative studies within a single language, as well as those between languages with the same ancestors. Yasui (1981, p.22) notes that while comparative linguistics has established its field with the goal of reconstructing ancestral languages, and determining genealogical relations. However, Contrastive linguistics is concerned aimed at describing two linguistic systems, with support from the American structuralist linguistics, which has systematic description as its primary goal (Ibid.). Meanwhile, Yasui indicates that while descriptive grammars of different periods of time could have formed historical linguistics, and comparative studies of different regions could have contributed to dialectal geography, the current mainstream of contrastive linguistics is limited within the field of foreign language education.

It is a known fact that there was a critical period (1950s~1970s)¹ that was thought to contribute

¹ See Sakota (2002, pp.19-22)

to researches on language acquisition, when comparing multiple language systems and clarifying the characteristics of various languages based on their dissimilarities were considered able to elucidate factors that leads to errors by foreign language learners, thereby predict their errors.

3. Problems of making comparative studies objective

Nowadays, researchers in fields of language education, including Japanese and English language education, are widely conducting contrastive studies between target languages and starting languages. The assumption that linguistic dissimilarities between the target and starting language lead to errors of learners lays the foundation for these studies in the field of foreign language education.

However, the existence of global errors not limited by learners' native language, and errors produced by educators' teaching methods has been revealed. It has been clear that results of contrastive studies do not always directly correlate with learners' errors of the language. We could estimate that there are limitations of contrastive studies in foreign language education and language acquisition. Ogoshi (2002, p.3~4) proposes a contrastive study which aims not merely to compare the regulatory grammatical categories for foreign language teaching, but to reveal universality and diversity of the inter-lingual conceptualization.

There is another problem that contrastive researches of foreign language education are based on the idea that it is desirable for learners to approach the target language in terms of speaking. The dichotomy of language hosts and language guests, and the assumption that the language hosts' speech is the model for the language guests', clarifies the ultimate goal, which is, to make the language guests' speech as close to the language hosts' as possible.

The transmission of a language is produced based on the socio-cultural ideology behind the language. If there is no mutual communicative hindrance, a speaker's expression is still acceptable even if it may not necessarily be natural in Japanese. On the other hand, it may be highly evaluated as an individuality of the language transmitter. Although we advocate the notion that everyone has equal rights of language in today's multilingual and multicultural society, there are some cases commonly observed in contrastive studies of foreign language education where the uneven relation between language hosts and language guests.

4. Studies on linguistic typology at the pragmatic level

We believe that contrastive studies are one of the most effective methods to construct a type of linguistic typology that clarifies the universality and individuality of languages. There are innumerable results of previous contrastive studies on linguistic typology at the phonetic, morphological, and syntactic levels. For example, the studies by Ishiwata & Takata (1990), Ogoshi (2002), and Inoue (2002), etc.

On the other hand, Taniguchi (2009) and Taniguchi (2015) have conducted contrastive studies

of Chinese and Japanese in order to establish a type of linguistic typology in the domain of pragmatics.

4.1. Contrastive studies of gratitude and apology in Chinese and Japanese

Taniguchi (2009) and Taniguchi (2015) have compared and contrasted language functions, as well as the frequency of occurrence of speech acts, apology, and gratitude in Chinese and Japanese based on utterances in TV dramas (400 words each in both the languages). In pragmatic research, speech acts, which were taken over from Austin to Searle, classify speakers' intentions of speech according to their pragmatic functions. The speech acts "apology" and "thanking" have been traditionally studied as separate ones. However, Taniguchi (2009) and Taniguchi (2015) have analyzed the relation between Chinese and Japanese expressions of thanking and apology, and their usage situations. The studies are based on the existence of apologetic expressions in Japanese indicating the intention of gratitude, as well as the phenomenon that expressions of gratitude in Chinese are often used in cases where apologies are made in Japanese. From these facts, we regard that it is necessary to observe both gratitude and apology. The study results prove that expressions of thanking are frequently used in Chinese, and similar Chinese expressions are used in situations where gratitude is displayed via apologetic expressions in Japanese. We could also observe that Chinese expressions of gratitude are used for relationship maintenance between participants and ceremonial purposes, even under circumstances where they are not required. Meanwhile, it is also noticeable that they serve a similar function to *sumimasen*, a Japanese expression of apology. Through viewing various languages in terms of their speech acts, it is suggested that they could potentially be classified into two types: apologetic languages and appreciative languages.

By researching further to extend this result, we could consider that although apology and gratitude are different in terms of actions, they could be concerned at the same phase in the sense that a positive or negative action by oneself or one's interlocutor is returned to zero through articulating gratitude or apology. Although languages could be divided into apologetic and appreciative ones, the point is that both thanking and apology resemble each other in terms of depth, since the positivity and negativity of an action are returned to zero due to the speech².

4.2. A contrastive study of personal and nominal expressions in Thai and Japanese based on the politeness theory

The concept "politeness" refers to consideration for others which aims to build and bolster smooth interpersonal relationships (Kondo & Komori, 2012). Within the field of politeness studies, although many are widely recognized, such as the ones done by Lakoff, Leech,

²Yamanashi (1986) illustrates that based on these conditional rules, apology and gratitude are contrasting actions in terms of whether the subject of the action under discussion is the speaker or the hearer, what kind of mental attitude the speaker has toward the action, and how the person expresses their attitude.

Brown & Levinson, etc. Among which, the study by Brown & Levinson (1987) proposed two types of politeness strategies that take two kinds of face that people are particular about into account. “Face” indicates the desire (in some respects) impeded in one’s actions, and the desire (in some respects) to be approved of. They determined the linguistic expressions which regard each kind of face as “positive strategies” and “negative strategies”. Brown & Levinson (1987)’s idea of politeness is a way of perceiving politeness between individuals, but numerous problems such as overlooking politeness as in social positions of the participants of a conversation, and the conventions of different linguistic society, etc., as well as incorporating both linguistic forms and functions into the politeness strategies, are pointed out by Takiura (2008). Still, the broad categorization of Brown & Levinson (1987)’s politeness theory and politeness strategies is effective in grasping the general framework at various levels, such as individuals, social positions, and cultural practices, also in examining the differences among multiple languages and cultures.

Wittayapanyanon & Tomimori (2020) applied the theory to their study of the usage of personal terms and address terms in Thai language education. They also proposed the application of the CEFR through presenting a conceptual diagram of vertical relationship and intimacy.

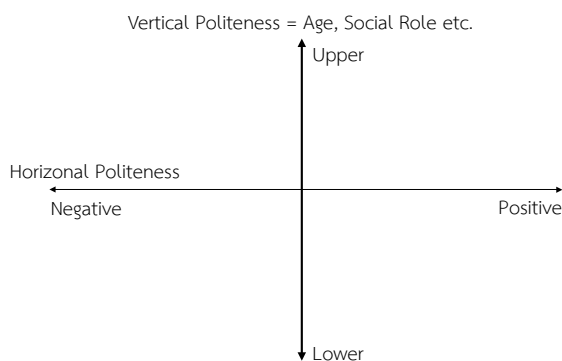
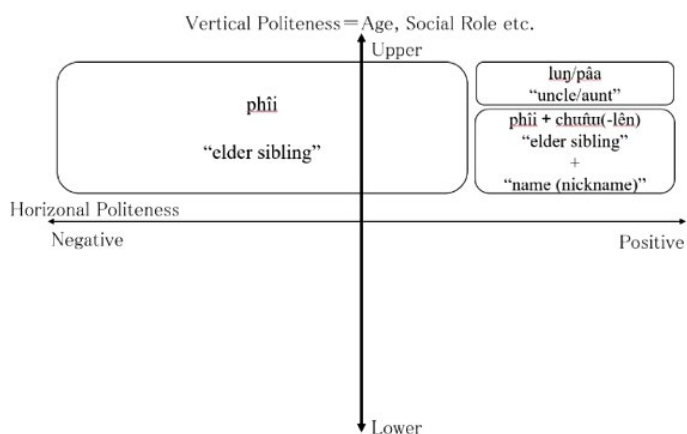


Figure 1: The conceptual diagram of the politeness structure in Thai personal terms and address terms (Wittayapanyanon & Tomimori, 2020, p.105)

According to Wittayapanyanon & Tomimori (2020), the vertical line of politeness showing age or social role, takes precedence over the horizontal line, which indicates the degree of intimacy in Thai. Moreover, Thai speakers select address terms depending on the relationship between the participants of a conversation. On the other hand, it is said that while acknowledging the existence of senior-junior relationship, they also use expressions which takes positive face, the desire of becoming more intimate in to account at the same time. This consideration is mutual, which means that it is taken not only from the junior to the senior, but also vice versa.



(Figure 2: the conceptual diagram of politeness structure in Thai second-person terms when the interlocutor is a senior in Wittayapanyanon & Tomimori 2020, p.106)

In Example 1, the use of personal terms and address terms that appropriately demonstrates politeness. It is a situation where the participants of a conversation are a “younger supervisor” and an “older subordinate” and their vertical relationship in terms of age and organizational are different.

The following example sentences are translated into English, but some personal pronouns and terms in Thai might cause misunderstanding because of the direct translation. Therefore, they are left untranslated in the English version. Note that although the glosses are slightly simplified, personal terms and address terms in the example dialogues are underlined.

(Example 1: Dialogue between a “younger supervisor” and an “older subordinate”)

Supervisor: phîi nít phrûnii mii prachum 8 moon ná? khá?
 (younger) elder PSN tomorrow have meeting 8 AM PTCL PTCL-F
 (sister)-2

phîi nít, we have a mee-ting tomorrow at 8:00.

Subordinate: dây khâ?
 (older) PSBL PTCL-F

Okay.

phîi triam ʔèkkasāan wáy hây ná? khá?
 elder (sister)-1 prepare document for for PTCL PTCL-F
phîi will prepare the documents later.

The speaker, who is a younger supervisor, shows vertical politeness by using the kinship term [phii], meaning “elder sibling”, which is an honorific title for a senior even if the interlocutor is a subordinate. Since subordinates and supervisors are in daily contact with each other and are expected to become intimate to facilitate work, the speaker adds the interlocutor’s nickname [nit] after [phii], indicating the horizontal positive politeness as well.

(Example 2: Dialogue between a “junior employee” and a “senior employee” in a company

Junior: khun mii weelaa máy khá?
 you-2 have time Q PTCL-F
khun, do you have a minute?
khǒw phrúksǎa nòy khâ?
 please consult a little PTCL-F
 Can we have a quick discussion?

Senior: nóŋ bii mii ?aray rǎə chǎən khráp
 younger PSN have what Q go ahead PTCL-M
 (sister)-2
nóŋ bii, what is it? Sure, go ahead.

The dialogue in Example 2 is grammatically and semantically correct, but is problematic in terms of politeness and inappropriate as actual dialogue. Although the meaning of [khun] in Thai is explained as a polite second-person term in many textbooks for Thai learners and is often used as a second-person term in example sentences, its usage in actual conversations is very rare according to the findings in Wittayapanyanon (2019). Although the suffix [khâ?] makes the sentence style polite, [khun] fails to demonstrate vertical politeness, thereby blurring the position of the superior and inferior, thus providing a rude impression to the senior. In Thai, it is undesirable to conceal vertical politeness. In this case, it is reasonable to use [phii], which clearly indicates vertical politeness. To further exhibit horizontal positive politeness, adding the nickname [chúu-lên] after [phii] makes the interlocutor comfortable, also manipulates horizontal distance through using personal terms and address terms.

Here, we raise a question of what about cases in Japanese. When a person of a lower position calls out to one of an upper position, it is not common to add an element of positive politeness to the invocation or the pronominal pronoun. Besides, it is habitual to always stick to negative politeness. Positive politeness is not preferred in Japanese when using an invocation or pronoun substitution from an inferior person to a superior one, unless the two are really close. In the latter situation, the superior person suggests their own invocation, or there is a need to

differentiate them from other. It is unlikely for a junior to directly address a senior by their nickname, even if the two have known each other for a long time and have developed a close relationship.

The above indicates that the default in Thai is the use of positive politeness, while the default in Japanese is the use of negative politeness, with respect to the use of personal and appellative expressions from the inferior to the superior with regard of hierarchical relationships.

The comparison between Thai and Japanese from the perspective of the politeness theory can be viewed as a methodological proposal for the future construction of linguistic typology.

5. Conclusion

To summarize what we have demonstrated so far, we argue that contrastive studies can be seen not only as studies of language expressions for foreign language education, but also as a methodology for constructing linguistic typologies. As examples, we have reviewed contrastive studies of the speech acts “apology” and “gratitude” in Chinese and Japanese that are taken as the same phase. Furthermore, for the purpose of linguistic typology, we have mentioned that the use of pronominal pronouns in Thai and Japanese have different orientations toward positive and negative politeness, respectively, based on the politeness theory. Both of the cases suggest the possibility of a methodology for constructing a linguistic typology at the pragmatic level.

Abbreviation list

1	first person	M	masculine	PTCL	particle
2	second person	PSN	person name	Q	question particle/marker
F	feminine	PSBL	possible		



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