Japanese in the Age of Post-Standardization:
Language Trends in the 21st Century

a virtual lecture by Asahi Yoshiyuki

Language standardization was the most prominent linguistic Japanese phenomenon in the second half of the 20th century. It became widespread across the country, resulting in a linguistic landscape where Japanese speakers nowadays find it easier to communicate with those who live on the other side of the country. Around the turn of the century, we also witnessed the rise of new social network devices and services such as smartphones, e-mail, texting, and so forth, which have impacted our social and life and language. Another trend is the influx of non-native speakers especially into the large Japanese cities, which has contributed to a multilingual and multicultural Japanese society. This talk will focus on how these changes have impacted Japanese, touching on subjects such as de-standardization, new-honorifics, emojis or dialect cosplay as well as linguistic diversity in local administration. I will bring in a sociolinguistic research perspective to explain the current situation, referencing research projects at the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics.

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