

An Analysis of the Use of General Japanese and Tourism Japanese in the World of Work in the Hospitality Field in Hiroshima

Shafa Zahra Annisa¹, Rita Agustina Karnawati²

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka Jakarta Jl. Tanah Merdeka No. 20, Rt. 11/ Rw. 2, Rambutan, Kec. Ciracas, East Jakarta City

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Abstract

This study analyzes the differences between the use of general Japanese and tourism Japanese in the workplace in the hospitality industry in Hiroshima, Japan. The method used is descriptive qualitative with observation, interviews, and document analysis. The theory used is Register theory by Michael Halliday. The results of the study show that there are significant differences between general Japanese and tourism-related Japanese in the context of hospitality. Tourism Japanese tends to be more formal and polite, with the use of specific terms related to guest service and tourism. In addition, tourism language also emphasizes the accuracy of information and friendliness in communication, which are very important to increase guest satisfaction. This study is also useful for the development of language training in hospitality and helps tourism professionals in effective communication.

Keywords: general japanese; tourism japanese; hospitality; professional communication

1. Introduction

In this era of globalization, having the ability to speak a foreign language is a must-have skill. Language is a medium to be able to communicate between fellow humans, including foreign nationals. Therefore, foreign languages need to be learned, understood and mastered (Annisaa Nurul Atiqah, 2023). Learning a language aims to develop four skills, namely speaking skills, listening skills, writing skills, and reading skills (Sri et al., 2022). Of the four skills, the most prioritized is the skill in speaking which is used as a means to communicate. In line with (Rita Agustina K., 2018) which states that speaking skills are an important part of language development in this learning world, because language is a means of communication to express their wishes to others, so speaking skills are needed.

As the population decreases over the years, Japan is facing a shortage of domestic workers, forcing the country to look for foreign workers. Minister of Labor Hj. Ida Fauziah stated that the Japanese government needs a high number of foreign workers because many of its population has entered old age (E.I.H.A Nindia Rini, 2023). Learning Japanese in Indonesia has become a

¹ Email: shafa.zahra@uhamka.ac.id

² Email: rita.agustina.karnawati@uhamka.ac.id

Telp. +62 812-8785-5435

foreign language (L2) learning. Japanese is in demand with many Japanese language learning institutions in Indonesia (Agustina Karnawati, 2023).

Aside from being a means of communication, Japanese is widely studied with a variety of goals. Some aim to be able to work in Japan, become Japanese language teachers, translators, jobs in the tourism sector, such as travel agents, hotel employees, restaurant employees, or tour guides. Nilawati & Suartini, (2021) revealed that one of the fields of work that requires good foreign language skills is work in the tourism sector, especially hospitality.

Research by McGovern (2016) shows that tourism Japanese often includes higher forms of politeness and manners compared to everyday Japanese. This is important in interactions between hotel staff and guests to create a professional and friendly impression. In addition, the vocabulary used is also more specific, covering terms related to hotel facilities, tourist attractions, and additional services.

According to Agung et al., (2024) in (Wahidati & Djafri, 2021) There are several things to consider when speaking in Japanese. Some of the challenges that Japanese language learners usually face are communication difficulties when they speak spontaneously without preparation, this occurs due to a lack of knowledge about the language (*senmonyogo*, respectful language varieties, and certain dialects). Another obstacle is the difference in work culture between the two countries. This makes learning Japanese very important if you want to communicate spontaneously and negotiate with Japanese people.

Based on researcher interviews with several students who have worked in Japan said that if we have not mastered Japanese, it will be difficult to work and communicate with Japanese people. because the language used when working with the language used for daily communication is different. The difference is because hotel employees or employees use hospitality language that elevates the interlocutor (*sonkeigo*) as a form of respect for the interlocutor. One example of the difference in vocabulary in the hospitality world with daily use, namely *ここ、どこ、きょう、きのう、さっき、ちょっと、どうですか?、いま ですか?、わかった、りょうかい* (Japanese commonly used daily). *こちら、どちら、ほんじつ、さくじつ、さきほど、しょうしょうしこ、いかがですか?、いらっしゃいますか? かしこまりました* (Japanese in the hospitality field).

The researcher only focuses on the differences and classifications of the use of General Japanese with Japanese Tourism specifically hospitality based on Michael Halliday's register theory. Halliday's theory, also known as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), is a framework for understanding language as a social semiotic system. Developed by Michael Halliday, it emphasizes the functional aspects of language and how it is used to achieve specific purposes in social contexts. Halliday also introduced the concept of register, which consists of three variables influencing language use:

Field: What is happening (topic or subject matter).

Tenor: The relationship between participants (formality, power dynamics).

Mode: The medium of communication (spoken, written, digital).

Overall, Halliday's theory highlights the interplay between language structure and social context, focusing on how meaning is created through language use.

Researchers chose research on analyzing the use of general Japanese with Japanese in the world of work in the field of hospitality, because so that Japanese language learners who will later work in Japan can understand the use of Japanese in the world of work, especially in the field of hospitality and can practice it directly when working later.

Research on Japanese in the field of hospitality or tourism has previously been researched by (Rita Agustina K., 2018) which discusses effective teaching materials for learning Japanese Tourism used in order to improve students' communication skills. Then, research conducted by (Sri et al., 2022) with the title "Analysis of Japanese Language Learning for Beginner Levels in the Tourism Sector", in his research he discussed Japanese Language Learning for the tourism sector, and found things that need to be studied more deeply at the beginner level.

Furthermore, research conducted by (Wijayanti & Poetranto, 2022) discussed about identifying Japanese Hospitality teaching materials and materials needed by students who will take part in internship programs in Japan, identifying obstacles and analyzing solutions that become obstacles in learning Japanese hospitality for internship programs in Japan.

Based on several studies that discuss Japanese in the field of hospitality or tourism, researchers get a gap, namely there is no research that discusses the differences in the use and classification of the use of general Japanese commonly used in everyday life, with Japanese used in the world of work in the field of hospitality. So the novelty in this research is the analysis of the differences and classification of the use of general Japanese commonly used in everyday life with Japanese used in the world of work, especially in the field of hospitality. In addition, the data source used in this research is conducted by conducting interviews directly with employees or employees of one of the hotels in Hiroshima.

2. Methods

In this study, researchers applied descriptive qualitative research methods because the data to be obtained and processed were not in the form of numbers, but descriptive data in the form of written words. This is reinforced by the opinion (Sidiq et al., 2019) which says that qualitative research is research that produces findings that cannot be achieved using statistical procedures or in quantitative ways. Qualitative research can show community life, history, behavior, organizational functionalism, social movements, and kinship relationships.

Researchers took two types of data sources, primary data and secondary data. The primary data taken from this research is data sourced from interviews with hotel employees in Hiroshima. The Secondary data taken in this sourced from journals, and books related to the discussion being researched, as well as the results of previous research related to the topic. Subject of this research is employees or hotel employees who are Japanese citizens totaling 6 people, and the object of this research is the use of general Japanese with Japanese in the field of tourism, especially in the hotel.

In qualitative research, data collection techniques can be carried out by conducting observations, interviews, questionnaires, documentation or a combination of the four. This is

reinforced by Catherine Marshall, Gretchen B. Rossman in (Sugiyono, 2013), stating that "the fundamental methods, relied on by qualitative researchers for gathering information are, participation in the setting, direct observation, in-depth interviewing, document review". Thus, the data collection technique used in this research is the interview technique. The interview technique used in this research is a structured interview technique, where later each respondent will be asked the same questions, and will be recorded by the researcher, in conducting interviews in addition to bringing question instruments, researchers must also bring tools such as tape recorders or cameras as evidence of having conducted interviews.

In this study, the researcher will discuss the results of the research by analyzing the data that has been classified by describing the related theories by using Michael Halliday's Register theory. Michael Halliday's Register Theory, is very relevant in understanding the difference between the use of everyday general Japanese and formal Japanese in the context of hospitality. Register theory is a variation of language determined by the context of its use, including field, tenor, and mode.

3. Result and Discussion

The researcher analyzes general formal Japanese with Japanese in the world of work, especially in the field of hospitality or tourism using Michael Halliday's Register theory.

3.1 The difference between the use of general Japanese and Japanese in the hospitality

Data 1. Situation when welcoming guests

General Japanese :

いらっしゃいませ、おはようございます、こんにちは、こんばんは

Hospitality Japanese :

いらっしゃいませ、おはようございます、こんにちは、こんばんは

Analysis:

There is no significant difference between hospitality Japanese and general Japanese when it comes to welcoming guests. Both language forms use the same greetings such as "いらっしゃいませ" (Welcome), "おはようございます" (Good morning), "こんにちは" (Good afternoon), and "こんばんは" (Good evening). This shows that basic greetings tend to remain consistent, but context and intonation can be the key differentiators in more formal situations. Based on the results of the analysis, data 1 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Mode'. Mode here refers to the channel of communication and how language is used. In the world of hospitality, the mode of communication here uses oral and face-to-face directly, but with a high level of formality.

Data 2. Situation when asking for a name

General Japanese : 名前なまえ はなんですか？

Hospitality Japanese : お名前なまえ をお伺いしてもよろしいでしょう

Analysis:

There is an important difference in politeness and formality. In hospitality situations, more polite formal expressions such as "おなまえ名前をお伺いしてもよろしいでしょうか?" meaning "May I ask your name?" are used as opposed to the simpler and more direct "名前はなんですか?" meaning "What is your name?". This emphasizes the importance of politeness in the hospitality industry to maintain a good relationship with guests. Based on the results of the analysis, data 2 belongs to Michael Halliday's register theory 'Tenor'. Tenor refers to the relationship between speaker and listener, including their social roles and level of formality. This difference reflects the formal and polite relationship between the hotel staff and the guest, where the hotel staff shows high respect to the guest.

Data 3. Situation when asking if there was a previous appointment?

General Japanese : 予約してありますか？

Hospitality Japanese : 予約しておりますか？

Analysis:

There is a slight difference between general Japanese and hospitality Japanese at the end. Although it literally means the same thing, "Do you have an appointment?". However, hospitality Japanese uses more polite expressions compared to general Japanese. In general Japanese, the phrase "予約してありますか?" uses "ありますか" which is a type of teineigo, while hospitality Japanese in the sentence "予約しておりますか?" uses "おりますか" which is a sonkeigo type of language. This shows greater attention to the certainty of the guest's appointment. Based on the results of the analysis, data 3 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Mode'. Mode here refers to the channel of communication and how language is used. In the world of hospitality, the mode of communication here uses oral and face-to-face directly, but with a high level of formality.

Data 4. The situation when asking how many people are there?

General Japanese : 何人ですか？

Hospitality Japanese : 何名様でございますか？

Analysis:

Hospitality Japanese uses the form "何名様でございますか?" which is more polite than "何人ですか?". The use of "様" in hospitality Japanese means "sir" as a form of respectful address to someone and "ございます" shows higher respect. Based on the results of the analysis, data 4 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Tenor'. Tenor refers to the relationship between speaker and listener, including their social roles and level of formality. This difference reflects the formal and polite relationship between the hotel staff and the guest, where the hotel staff shows

high respect to the guest.

Data 5. Situation when asking how long will you stay?

General Japanese : 何泊ですか？

Hospitality Japanese : 何泊なんばく お泊りますか？

Analysis:

In hospitality Japanese, the form "何泊お泊りますか？" is more formal compared to general Japanese, "お泊ります" here as a form of higher respect. Whereas, "何泊ですか？" here is a sentence that is commonly used in Japanese life, so the language is more relaxed. Based on the results of the analysis, data 5 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Tenor'. Tenor refers to the relationship between speaker and listener, including their social roles and level of formality. This difference reflects the formal and polite relationship between the hotel staff and the guest, where the hotel staff shows high respect to the guest.

Data 6. Situation when providing information?

General Japanese : これがかぎです。部屋は5階の501号室です

Hospitality Japanese : こちらかぎでございます。お部屋は5階の501号室でございます

Analysis:

A noticeable difference is the use of the honorific form "でございます" in formal sentences in hospitality. The use of this form indicates a higher level of politeness, for example "こちらかぎでございます" compared to "これがかぎです". In addition, the use of numbers in formal contexts can also be better conveyed with more subtle intonation and word choice. Based on the results of the analysis, data 6 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Field'. Field refers to what is being talked about in a situation. In the context of hospitality, the fields include guest services, welcoming, providing information, and assistance. The results of the analysis show that the language used in hospitality situations focuses heavily on providing courteous and professional service to guests.

Data 7. Situation when escorting someone to the dining table

General Japanese : ついてきてください

Hospitality Japanese : ご案内いたします、こちらどうぞ

Analysis:

In Japanese, hospitality uses the form "ご案内いたします、こちらどうぞ" which is more formal and polite, proven by the use of "ご" in the word "ご案内いたします" which shows

politeness. Meanwhile, general Japanese uses “ついてきてください” which is more relaxed and commonly used every day. Based on the results of the analysis, data 7 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Field'. Field refers to what is being talked about in a situation. In the context of hospitality, the field includes guest services, welcoming, providing information, and assistance. The results of the analysis show that the language used in hospitality situations focuses heavily on providing polite and professional service to guests.

Data 8. Situation when asking what food or drink you want?

General Japanese : 何を食べますか?、何を飲みますか?

Hospitality Japanese : ご注文はおかまりですか?

Analysis:

In Japanese in hotels, the phrase "ご注文はおかまりですか?" means "Have you decided what to order?" because the hotel staff ask what food the guest wants to order for lunch or dinner, and is also more formal and polite compared to general Japanese which uses the phrase "何を食べますか?" or "何を飲みますか?" which is simpler and more direct, meaning "What do you want to eat?" or "What do you want to drink?". Based on the results of the analysis, data 8 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Field'. Field refers to what is being talked about in a situation. In the context of hospitality, the fields include guest services, welcoming, providing information, and assistance. The results of the analysis show that the language used in hospitality situations focuses heavily on providing polite and professional service to guests.

Data 9. Situation when reconfirming something?

General Japanese : 確認しますが、ちょっと待ってください

Hospitality Japanese : 確認いたしますので、少々お待ちください

Analysis:

There is a slight difference between the use of Japanese in hospitality and general Japanese, namely in the final form. Hospitality Japanese uses the forms "いたしますので" and "お待ちください" in the sentence "確認いたしますので、お待ちください" which is more polite than "確認しますが、ちょっと待ってください". Based on the analysis, data 9 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Mode'. In the world of hospitality, the mode of communication here shows that in hospitality, although oral and direct, there is an effort to maintain formality and politeness in every interaction between hotel staff and guests.

Data 10. Situation when delivering food or drinks?

General Japanese : どうぞ、食べてください

Hospitality Japanese : お待たせしました。お召めし上あがりください

Analysis:

In hospitality Japanese uses the more formal and polite form "お待たせしました。お召し上がりください", compared to common Japanese which uses the form "どうぞ、食べてください". Hospitality Japanese uses "お" in the sentence "お待たせしました" and uses the sentence "お召し上がり" which is more polite language compared to "食べます". Based on the results of the analysis, data 10 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Field'. Field refers to what is being talked about in a situation. In this example, the field of communication here is food service, and the language of hospitality shows more attention with an apology for the wait.

Data 11. Situation when giving directions

General Japanese : 右に曲がって、エレベーターを使ってください

Hospitality Japanese : 右に曲がっていただいて、エレベーターをご利用ください

Analysis:

In giving directions, hospitality Japanese here is more polite, as it uses "いただいて" and "をご利用ください" which are forms of honorific. Compared to general Japanese which uses "使ってください". This shows that even in giving directions, it is important to use language that shows respect and concern for the guest's comfort. Based on the results of the analysis, data 11 belongs to Michael Halliday's register theory 'Field'. Field refers to what is being talked about in a situation. In the context of hospitality, the fields include guest services, welcoming, providing information, and assistance. The results of the analysis show that the language used in hospitality situations focuses heavily on providing courteous and professional service to guests.

Data 12. Situation when offering help?

General Japanese : 何か手伝うことがあったら、言ってください

Hospitality Japanese : 何かお手伝いできることがございましたら、お申し付けください

Analysis:

The expression in the hospitality context uses the very polite form "お手伝いできることがございましたら、お申し付けください" which means "If there is anything I can help you with, please let me know". This form is much more polite compared to "何か手伝うことがあったら、言ってください" which is more direct and less formal. It is important to maintain a professional and friendly impression in service. Based on the results of the analysis, data 12 is included in

Michael Halliday's register theory 'Field'. Field refers to what is being talked about in a situation. In the context of hospitality, the fields include guest services, welcoming, providing information, and assistance. The results of the analysis show that the language used in hospitality situations focuses heavily on providing polite and professional service to guests.

Data 13. Situation when responding to a guest's greeting?

General Japanese: わかりました、了解です

Hospitality Japanese: かしこまりました、承知しました

Analysis:

Expressions in hospitality contexts use very polite forms, such as "かしこまりました" or "承知しようち しました" which means "good, understandable". These forms are more polite compared to "分かりました" or "了解です" which are more direct and less formal. It is important to maintain a professional and friendly impression in service. Based on the analysis, data 13 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Mode'. In the world of hospitality, the mode of communication here shows that in hospitality, although oral and direct, there is an effort to maintain formality and politeness in every interaction between hotel staff and guests.

Data 14. Situation when delivering an apology?

Common Japanese : ごめんなさい

Hospitality Japanese : ご迷惑をおかけして申し訳ございません

Analysis:

In conveying an apology, hospitality language uses the very polite and formal form "申し訳ございません" which shows deep regret and high regard for the guest. Whereas, in common Japanese, the simpler and more informal "ごめんなさい" is sufficient. This reflects the importance of showing regret seriously in the hospitality industry. Based on the results of the analysis, data 14 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Tenor'. Tenor refers to the relationship between speaker and listener, including their social roles and level of formality. In the context of hospitality, the tenor between hotel staff and guests is usually more formal and polite, as hotel staff are in a serving position and guests are considered higher in the social hierarchy while in hospitality.

Data 15. Situation when expressing gratitude?

General Japanese : 来てくれてありがとう

Hospitality Japanese : ご利用いただきまして、誠にありがとうございます

Analysis:

Saying thank you in hospitality language uses the very formal expression "誠にありがとうございます"

います" which means "Thank you very much for using our services". This is much more polite and shows deep appreciation compared to the more common and simple "ありがとう". This is important to create a sense of appreciation for the guest. Based on the results of the analysis, data 15 is included in Michael Halliday's register theory 'Tenor'. Tenor refers to the relationship between speaker and listener, including their social roles and level of formality. In the context of hospitality, the tenor between hotel staff and guests is usually more formal and polite, as hotel staff are in a serving position and guests are considered higher in the social hierarchy while in hospitality.

3.2 Classification between the use of general Japanese and Japanese in the hospitality

Based on the results of the data analysis above, it can be classified in a table, as follows.

Table 1. Table of field classification

Situation	FIELD	
	General Japanese	Hospitality Japanese
Situation when escorting someone to the dining table	ついてきてください	<small>あんない</small> ご案内いたします、こちらへどうぞ
Situation when asking for food or drink?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 何を食べますか? 何を飲みますか? 	<small>ちゅうもん</small> ご注文はおかまりですか?

Situation when delivering food or drinks?	どうぞ、食べてください	お待たせしました。お召し上がりください
Situation when giving directions	右に曲がって、エレベーターを使ってください	右に曲がっていただいて、エレベーターをご利用ください
Situation when offering help?	何か手伝うことがあったら、言ってください	何かお手伝いできることがございましたら、お申し付けください
Situation when providing information?	これがかぎです。部屋は5階の501号室です	こちらかぎでございます。お部屋は5階の501号室でございます

Table 2. Table of tenor classification

Situation	TENOR	
	General Japanese	General Japanese
Situation when asking for names	名前はなんですか？	お名前をお伺いしてもよろしいでしょうか？
The situation when asking how many people are there?	何人ですか？	何名様でございますか？
Situation when asking how long will you be staying?	どのくらい泊まりますか？	何泊でございますか？
The situation when delivering an apology?	ごめんなさい	ご迷惑をおかけして申し訳ございません

Situation when expressing gratitude?	来てくれてありがとう	ご利用いただきまして、誠にありがとうございます
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Tabel 3. Table of mode classification

Situation	MODE	
	General Japanese	General Japanese
Situation when welcoming guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • いらっしゃいませ • おはようございます • こんにちは • こんばんは 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • いらっしゃいませ • おはようございます • こんにちは • こんばんは
Situation when asking if there was a previous appointment?	<small>よやく</small> 予約してありますか？	<small>よやく</small> 予約しておりますか？
Situation when reconfirming something?	<small>かくにん</small> 確認 しますので、ちょっと待 ってください	<small>かくにん</small> :確認いたしますので、 <small>しょうしょう</small> 少々お待ちください
Situation when responding to guest remarks?	わかりました、了解です	かしこまりました、承知しました

This research analyzes about the differences and classifications between general Japanese and tourism Japanese in the hospitality industry, particularly using Michael Halliday's register theory. Japanese in the hospitality is characterized by its emphasis on higher levels of politeness and formality compared to general Japanese. This includes the use of honorific (*sonkeigo*) and humble (*kenjougo*) forms to show respect and professionalism when interacting with guests. The language also incorporates specific vocabulary tailored to hospitality services, such as guest greetings, room information, and dining assistance. These differences reflect the situational need for professionalism and context sensitivity, which are essential in tourism-related interactions.

Using Halliday's register theory, the study categorizes the differences into three aspects. **First**, Field focuses on the subject matter of communication, such as welcoming guests, giving directions, or offering assistance. **Second**, Tenor highlights the relationship between the speakers, with tourism Japanese emphasizing respect and politeness due to the hierarchical nature of interactions between staff and guests. **Finally**, Mode refers to the medium of communication, predominantly oral and face-to-face in hospitality settings, requiring consistent professionalism and friendliness. This analysis provides valuable insights for Japanese language learners aiming to work in the hospitality sector, helping them adapt to the specific linguistic and cultural demands of the field.

4. Conclusions

From the data that has been analyzed by researchers, it can be found differences in the language used in general Japanese with Japanese in the world of work in the hospitality sector. There are 15 data obtained from interviews and observations at the Yuki Lodge Hiroshima hotel.

Based on Michael Halliday's register theory which divides the factors of language variation into 3 namely Field, Tenor, and Mode. There are 6 data included in the Field. The results of the analysis show that the language used in the field of hospitality is very focused on providing polite and professional service to guests, while general Japanese does not have a context that needs to provide special services. Then, there are 5 data included in Tenor. Tenor refers to the relationship between speaker and listener, including their social roles and level of formality. The analysis shows that there is a different level of relationship between hotel staff and guests, as guests are considered higher in the social hierarchy while in hospitality.

Furthermore, there are 4 data included in Mode. The mode of communication here shows that in hospitality, although oral and direct, there is an attempt to maintain formality and politeness in every interaction. Michael Halliday's systemic-functional theory, with its focus on register, provides a framework for understanding how language varies depending on social context and specific situations. In the world of work, the use of more formal, technical and specific language reflects differences in fields, social relations and modes of communication compared to the more casual and general use of everyday language.

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