

THE INSERTION OF PERSON REFERENCES MOTIVATED BY PRAGMATIC DIFFERENCES IN ESTONIAN-ENGLISH-JAPANESE FACEBOOK COMMUNICATION

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Abstract.¹ Sociopragmatic differences have been examined between many languages and cultures, including English and Japanese. However, Estonian and Japanese have yet to be compared, and thus this data of Estonian-English-Japanese communication on Facebook offers a look at a type of code-switching that is caused by the sociopragmatic differences between Estonian and Japanese – i.e. the insertion of person references from Japanese to Estonian and English utterances by native Estonians.

I am using the Estonian-English-Japanese Facebook communication dataset from Kilp (2021) with new added conversations. The data consist of synchronous private Facebook messages between 2015 and 2021: a total of 7 informants, 50 conversations and 14,681 tokens. A usage-based approach and a qualitative analysis are applied to the data from individual informants and particular cases.

These data show that a perception of pragmatic differences causes the insertions of the Japanese person references, *senpai* ‘senior’ and *sensei* ‘teacher’, in various forms (affixed to the name, replacing the name, elongated, capitalised, in the Latin alphabet, in Japanese script) in Estonian and English utterances, while factors such as vertical hierarchy, horizontal solidarity and (situational) salience play an important role in facilitating insertion.

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1. Introduction

There have been no previous contact linguistic studies (to the best of my knowledge) that have compared the sociopragmatic aspects of Estonian and Japanese languages and/or cultures. Nor has an analysis of code-switching between Estonian and Japanese been done regarding person references or deixis, or from the perspective of pragmatics (except briefly in Kilp 2021). This set of data of Estonian-English-Japanese Facebook communication includes several cases of person references that have been inserted from Japanese into Estonian or English utterances due to sociopragmatic differences between the languages and cultures. Therefore, along with input from the informants through a semi-structured interview, this study offers an in-depth view into this phenomenon.

There are different terms used to describe person references. Irgens (2017) uses the term *person deixis*, which can also be called *personal deixis* (e.g. Marchello-Nizia 2006), and which is often used to refer to personal pronouns, specifically. Following Irgens's definition (while using the broader term *person references*), person references are considered here as any linguistic references to discourse participant roles, including "expressions referring to the speaker, listener and to other persons, who may or may not be present in the discourse situation" (2017: v). A distinction will be made between the vocative second person (honorific or descriptive) and third person (descriptive) usage of person references (see Section 4).

Person references may manifest in various ways across languages (Irgens 2017: v). Japanese language and culture have been compared to English, for example, from a sociopragmatic perspective (Irgens 2017), Estonian has been compared to, for example, Swedish

(Keevallik 2012), and the three languages, Estonian, English and Japanese, have been examined separately or in other combinations as well (e.g. Stivers *et al.* 2007, Schegloff 2008, Takahara 1992). This study will use information from prior research about the sociopragmatic aspects of person references in Estonian, English and Japanese for the analysis of the instances present in this set of data of Estonian-English-Japanese communication (Sections 2.2 and 4).

The approach in this study is usage-based (see Backus 2015; Verschik 2019; Zenner *et al.* 2019), applies a cognitive point of view to contact-induced change and is holistic in nature. I use a bottom-up approach with the focus that language change starts in the mind of the speaker (Weinreich 1953: 71), while a qualitative analysis is needed to examine the reasons behind individual cases, as they are highly variable and not evenly distributed among all informants (see Section 5.1).

This paper begins with an overview of the theoretical background and methodology (2), including the background of the study of person references and pragmatic differences (2.1), the sociopragmatic aspects of person references in the Estonian, English and Japanese languages and cultures (2.2), the usage-based approach and a description of the semi-structured interview (2.3). Then follows an explanation of the data and informants (3), examining the nature of the data of Estonian-English-Japanese Facebook communication that has been used for the qualitative analysis (3.1), aspects of computer-mediated communication (3.2), along with characteristics of its informants (3.3) and their input (3.4). The analysis (4) is sectioned according to the types of insertions and divided into second person (4.2) and third person (4.3). Individual cases are analysed along with the conversational backgrounds. The perceptions of the informants are analysed separately (4.1). The discussion section (5) covers the limitations of this study and its data (5.1) and the notion of grammatical correctness (5.2), and outlines some possible future research directions (5.3). Finally, conclusions are drawn from the findings.

2. Theoretical background and methodology

2.1. THE THEORETICAL APPROACH

Person references or deictics have been studied from varying points of view, including in the cases of Estonian, English, and Japanese. For example, Irgens (2017) uses a contrastive approach regarding person deixis (between Japanese and English); Pajusalu (2009) offers a typological overview of pronouns and reference in Estonian (giving choice-influencing categories); Stivers *et al.* (2007) offer a comprehensive cross-cultural overview of person reference in natural conversation (looking at different languages and cultures); Howell (2007) focuses on the use of sociolinguistic and pragmatic resources in the English subtitling of character voice (in Japanese animations); Keevallik (2012) looks at the pragmatics of Estonian heritage speakers in Sweden (specifically pragmatic interference and politeness). The cases of *senpai* 'senior' and *sensei* 'teacher', influenced by pragmatic differences, have also been briefly analysed in Kilp (2021, therein *pragmatic gaps* according to Verschik 2010) along with various other factors that contribute to insertion (therein *code-copying* according to Johanson 2002).

As the perception of sociopragmatic differences is subjective, rather than focusing on structural or 'objective' differences between Estonian, English and Japanese, this work focuses on the cognitive reasons behind the insertion of Japanese person references and the perceptions and aims of the informants, applying a cognitive approach to contact-induced change and utilising semi-structured interviews (see Sections 2.3 and 4.1). Even if there is a difference (e.g. between referencing in Estonian and Japanese, see Section 2.2.), if the user does not (consciously or subconsciously) notice it, it does not affect their usage directly. Vice versa, even if there is no 'objective' difference between the languages regarding a certain aspect, but the user perceives there to be a difference, it may affect their usage and perhaps cause them to compensate for the difference in

some manner (e.g. cause insertions, such as in this data). The specific cases will be analysed in depth in Section 4.

2.2. THE SOCIOPRAGMATICS OF PERSON REFERENCES IN ESTONIAN, ENGLISH AND JAPANESE

Various studies have noted sociopragmatic differences between Japanese and English in general (e.g. Howell 2007: 292), and also in regard to deixis (Irgens 2017: v-vi). Irgens argues that person deixis is less grammaticalized in Japanese than in English based on the fact that nominal ellipsis is widespread in Japanese (2017: v). English has verbal agreement inflection (Irgens 2017: v), as does Estonian (Pajusalu 2009). In Japanese, however, person deixis is “primarily lexically manifested in the form of “person nouns”, whose meanings vary according to different social variables” (Irgens 2017: v), and there is no verbal agreement. This means that situations where the person being referred to can only be inferred from the context and/or previous utterances are relatively common.

Regarding personal pronouns in second person, specifically, there are unmarked second person singular and/or plural pronouns in Estonian and English, while no generic second person pronoun has developed in Japanese (Takahara 1992: 119). The Estonian *sina* ‘you’ (informal, singular), *Sina* ‘you’ (polite, singular), *teie* ‘you’ (informal, plural), and *Teie* ‘you’ (polite, singular or plural) differentiate between number (singular and plural) and register (informal or polite) (see e.g. Pajusalu 2009, Pajusalu *et al.* 2010). In standard English, *you* is used for both singular and plural, and there is no distinction of politeness. However, “no generic second person pronoun has developed in Japanese”, and all of them “are marked for social status, gender, age differences as well as relative intimacy to the speaker” (Takahara 1992: 119). For example, *anata* ‘you’, commonly used as the second person equivalent in teaching Japanese as a foreign language (e.g. in the series of textbooks entitled *Minna no Nihongo*, which the informants in this data were also taught), is rarely used by

native Japanese speakers nowadays; it is used mostly between strangers, where the hierarchical differentiation is not known, in advertisements that are directed towards a wider audience, or by wives to address their husbands (Kaiser *et al.* 2013: 140–141).

In Japanese it is more common to use the person's (sur)name vocatively and most often with an honorific suffix or title (Howell 2007: 294), such as *Tanaka-sensei* 'teacher Tanaka', which is "equivalent to *you* in English" (Yui 2012: 62), although grammatically it is in third person. In this data, similarly, *senpai* 'senior' and *sensei* 'teacher' are used as direct addresses, although the suffix or title is mainly used to replace the name and sometimes together with the given name (in Japanese, honorific usage would require the surname).

There are also differences between first person pronouns (or in the case of Japanese, person nouns), but as none of those were inserted in this data, they will not be focused on.

2.3. THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The focus of this study is on individuals and their language use as "language change ultimately goes back to individual instances of language use" (see Zenner *et al.* 2019: 9). Furthermore, a qualitative approach is needed to examine the implications in individual cases as the elements that are presented in this study are not used by all informants and are used to varying degrees depending on the co-speaker (solidarity) and language ability, among other factors. It is not possible to apply statistical or diachronic methods as the amount of data is not extensive enough and this type of communication is a relatively new phenomenon largely brought about by the globalisation of Japanese media, as well as the growth of Facebook as a conversational medium.

As these insertions of person references from Japanese are, except for one humorous usage by Informant E, present in the usage of only two informants out of 7 (i.e. informants A and B), in addition to a conversational (and situational) analysis of the cases, two

semi-structured interviews were also conducted. It should be noted that my own conversations are part of the data (I am Informant A), and I interviewed Informant B, who showed consistent usage of *senpai* 'senior' towards myself (Section 4.2). Although there was another conversation pair with the senior-junior distinction (A and G), there was no usage of *senpai*, and thus the interviews can show why it is present in the repertoire of Informant B. The interviews are analysed in Section 4.1.

3. Data and informants

3.1. DATA OF ESTONIAN-ENGLISH-JAPANESE COMMUNICATION

This data is based on the data used in Kilp (2021), with new added conversations. The data consists of synchronous private messages on Facebook between the years of 2015 and 2021, with a total of 14,681 tokens. There are seven informants, seven conversation pairs between them, and a total of 50 conversations. In some cases it may be difficult to establish a base language (which can be Estonian but also English or Japanese), but this was not the goal of my research. In trilingual communication, certain social, cultural and psychological factors may assume high significance (Hoffmann 2001: 2), and thus cultural and personal backgrounds are also analysed. The data is not strictly *trilingual*, however, as some cases also include other languages, namely German, Russian, Spanish and French.

3.2. COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

As the data is computer-mediated and involves languages that use different writing systems, we see some cases involving digraphia, i.e. the coexistence of the Latin alphabet and the Japanese writing system (see Kilp 2021: 184). Some sentences in Facebook communication are also very short and may be syntactically incomplete or ungrammatical; therefore, it is sometimes difficult to determine the borders of individual sentences (similar to spoken language). Participants in

computer-mediated communication also inhibit higher awareness than during speech on the level that they can correct their errors (such as spelling) (Dorleijn 2016: 11), although errors (and misunderstandings) do still occur.

Cases using the Japanese writing system have been transliterated in [square brackets] for clarity as square brackets are very rarely used in Facebook conversations otherwise. Line changes have been marked with two forward slashes //, as line changes can occur within an utterance and often replace both inter-sentential and intra-sentential punctuation. Some names and emoticons have also been marked with square brackets.

3.3. INFORMANTS

The informants in this data are coded as letters A to G (referred to here as Informant A, for example). All of them are native Estonian speakers while one of them grew up as an Estonian-Russian bilingual (but has attended Estonian-speaking schools). They were between 18 and 29 years of age at the times of the conversations. Personal characteristics have been coded in the data, such as names or nicknames (marked as [name]).

Most of the informants had studied or were studying Japanese language and culture at Tallinn University at the times of the conversations. There is one informant who has never studied Japanese but has had extensive enough contact with both Japanese language and culture to understand many everyday words and phrases and uses Japanese in communication daily (Informant E). It seems that the more extensive the contact with a language (such as Japanese), the higher the chance is for the user to start to feel pragmatic differences when using other languages, although usage often cannot be explained by the extent of contact and language ability alone. For example, Informant B uses honorifics very often when addressing Informant A in Estonian or English, while other informants rarely use any honorifics (despite having similar levels of language ability and similar input).

3.4. INPUT FROM JAPANESE

As almost all of the informants in this data have studied the Japanese language and culture at Tallinn University (except Informant E, who has never studied Japanese), a certain amount of their input is from language courses at the university. Tallinn University offers Japanese language courses from A1 level to C1 level (according to CEFR levels), and in addition also classical Japanese and practical translation courses (from Japanese to Estonian, e.g. classical literature). At university, students are generally taught standard Japanese in polite style (*teinei-tai*, also polite expressions and honorific suffixes) and at higher levels also polite speech (*keigo*, divided into humble and deferential speech), while colloquial usage, slang and dialects are generally not taught (with the exception of certain verb forms).

All of the informants also have contact with Japanese media, such as animations, movies, TV drama series, manga (Japanese comics) and music, to varying degrees. Media enables them to encounter colloquial language and dialects, which are generally not taught in schools. There may also be slang and jargon, and also ungrammatical and unconventional usage, depending on the particular series. Standard Japanese (which is based on Kantō dialect) is used most commonly, but Kansai and Kyūshū dialects are also popular in media representing characters that are from those regions. Some informants also have Japanese friends (e.g. exchange students), although not too many native Japanese are permanently living in Estonia. Some of the informants have also visited Japan.

4. Insertion of person references in Estonian-English-Japanese Facebook conversations

As the intentions behind the cases of insertion of person references are important, this section will start with the semi-structured interviews with Informant B, wherein their reasons for using *senpai* and

sensei are discussed, along with their perceptions of the underlying meanings and attitudes. Then follow analyses of particular cases, divided between usage in second person (honorific or descriptive), and usage in third person (descriptive). The numbers of occurrences are provided in Section 5.1.

4.1. PERCEPTION OF THE INFORMANTS

In the two semi-structured interviews (conducted in January and March, 2022, in Facebook Messenger), Informant A (who is also the author and interviewer) and Informant B discussed the usage of *senpai* and *sensei* in their conversations. Informant B was asked specific questions, and the viewpoint of Informant A (the author/interviewer) will be provided alongside the questions.

The languages in the interview were mainly Estonian and English, and thus the Estonian text has been translated to English, indicated with [square brackets]. The only Japanese elements used in the interviews were the related terms of person references. No comments were made on the languages used in the interviews, and no restrictions were given, either. Only the relevant questions and answers are shown here, while some irrelevant parts (e.g greetings, agreements, other topics) have been omitted.

Question 1: “[Where did the idea come from to call me *senpai*? If you know.]”

Informant B (towards Informant A/author/interviewer):

“[I don’t remember for certain anymore, but it felt natural], cuz you were a year above me in uni so you were a literal senpai 😊 [I don’t remember if it was before going to Japan or after] 🤔 but it felt like you know so much more about Japanese but also kind of about life? And I guess having seen the whole senpai concept in Japanese culture/media it felt natural but also cool to bring it into our communication. It was definitely a in the moment idea/thought flash that just stuck with usage not really something I consciously planned/though of. Does that make sense? 😊”

From this answer, it can be seen that Informant B did not consciously decide to use *senpai*, but it came naturally as they felt a connection to native Japanese usage (situational salience) and the (hierarchical) similarity in their relationship with Informant A (*a year above me* and *literal senpai*). The discussion of whether they should use *senpai* or *sensei* is seen in Examples 2a and 2b (March 2016, see Section 4.2), while they had already used *senpai* in several cases before that (throughout 2015), without any specific discussions about the usage. As there were many different instances of *senpai* in Informant B's usage, in various forms, I asked a follow-up question. As the question was longer and with clarifications, here is a condensed version:

Question 2: I asked Informant B about the different forms that *senpai* can be used in (towards myself), naming *senpai*, *Geidi-senpai*, *senpai Geidi*, and also elongation and capitalization, and asked if they sense any difference, or whether they intended the meaning or attitude to be different (e.g. in politeness) depending on the choice of the particular form.

Informant B:

"[I wouldn't say there is a difference in the thought/meaning.] I naturally try to bend the language and change it up, so it would stay fun and interesting, at least I think so (haven't given it a thought before), although the intention sometimes is to sound more formal indeed, to show appreciation maybe too. [But I don't remember specifically anymore]" [...]

As a comment, at the start of these conversations, I (Informant A) was not aware of the form distinctions, either, and I had no concept for honorific and descriptive referencing. I knew what honorifics (titles and suffixes) were in general terms, but I certainly did not discern any differences in politeness depending on whether *senpai* was used alone, or before or after my (sur)name. I did, of course, sense a difference in attitude or meaning from other factors, such as that elongation and/or all capital letters may infer a higher degree of emotion, such as excitement, whining or exasperation.

As can be seen from the answers, the forms are not something that Informant B has considered. Nor was Informant A (who *senpai* was used towards) aware of them at the time of the related conversations (starting from 2015). Thus, there is certainly no conscious separation between descriptive and honorific forms within these conversations, nor the knowledge that the grammatical honorific form in the case of *senpai* is surname+suffix (not the given name, and not as a prefix), and thus grammatical correctness will not be the main focus in the analysis (see Section 5.2). It is also evident that Informant B does use *senpai* to signal *appreciation* and to *sound formal*, but this is not the case in every instance of its usage.

4.2. USAGE IN SECOND PERSON

As mentioned, the person references used in this data are *senpai* ‘senior’ and *sensei* ‘teacher’. *Senpai* and *sensei* are conventionally used as honorific suffixes (following the surname), while they may also be used instead of the name (both in descriptive and honorific usage). *Senpai* is very common in this data in the use of Informant B in reference to Informant A, although it is not seen in other conversation pairs. This may be because in most of the other conversation pairs the informants are of relatively equal hierarchical status, e.g. the same year of studies in the case of informants A, C and F, and informants B and D, respectively (while informant E had no formal education in Japanese, and thus no such context). *Sensei* is used in writing only by three informants (see Section 5.1), mostly in meta-linguistic contexts, and only in two cases in reference to a fellow student (Informant B towards Informant A, Example 2a). *Sensei* is more commonly used in speech than in writing, most often in classroom environments. No other types of Japanese honorifics or titles are seen in this particular set of data (including cases other than insertion) although many more exist.

Example (1) shows different instances of the usage of *senpai* ‘senior’ (also ‘upperclassman’, a person ahead of you, e.g. in the

same career, sport, hobby or field of studies, as opposed to *kouhai* ‘junior’), inserted from Japanese. This person reference occurs in both Estonian and English utterances (used on 24 occasions). It can be seen as a replacement for the other person’s (given) name (see Examples 1a, 1c and 1d), or also before it (see Example 1b), sometimes in capitalization (1b), in some cases with elongations (1c), and in some cases also in Japanese script (1d). *Senpai* is not seen suffixed to the name in this data.

- (1a) B: *Sai väga palju abi ;___; thank you **senpai***
 ‘I got a lot of help’ [teary eyes smiley] ‘thank you **senior**’ [heart emoji]
- (1b) B: *PALJU ÕNNE SÜNNIPÄEVAKS KALLIS **SENPAI** [GIVEN NAME]!!!! Soovin sulle ainult parimat*
 ‘happy birthday dear **senpai** [given name]’ ‘I wish you all the best’ [heart emoji]
- (1c) B: *Aitäh kallis **senpai**!!! // **Senpaaaaaaaaaaaaai**, how are you?*
 ‘thank you dear **senpai**’ [heart eyes emojis] // ‘**senpai**, how are you?’
- (1d) B: *Aitäh 先輩!!!! Year 22 here I come!*
 ‘thank you [**senpai**]’ ‘year 22 here I come’

It can be inferred that Informant B senses a pragmatic difference, understanding that the honorific *senpai* is prevalent in usage in Japan(ese) when referring to someone who has more experience and/or knowledge in a field the speaker is also involved in, as they have also stated in the interview (Question 1, 4.1), while no equivalent distinction exists in Estonia(n). There do exist words for *senior* and *upperclassman* in both English and Estonian (*seeniore* ‘senior’, *vanem kolleeg* ‘older colleague’); however, they are not used in this data, perhaps, because they are not used in similar contexts in Estonian or English and do not denote this type of hierarchical (and generally) respectful attitude.

Generally the *senpai* would also be older, although in the context of hobbies, such as sports, it may not always be the case. In

this case, Informant A is two years older than informant B and two years ahead in studies (they mistakenly stated *a year above* in the interview), which matches the Japanese distinction of *senpai-kouhai* (seniors vs juniors) as Informant B themselves has noted (*you were a literal senpai*).

The conversation can be seen here in consecutive Examples 2a and 2b (although 2b is third person) from February 2016, where Informant B first asked Informant A about the appropriate way they should address them. This came up in a conversation where Informant B had referred to Informant A as *sensei* ‘teacher’ while speaking in Japanese, and Informant A had been surprised by that usage (seen in Example 2a). Informant B then proceeded to explain that they do not like choosing and asked Informant A to decide between *sensei* ‘teacher’ and *senpai* ‘senior’ (seen in example 2b; although using an imperative request *~te kudasai*, which should technically be used by someone hierarchically higher, not lower). In this case, the one who is referred to as *sensei* is not an actual teacher but a former student of Asian Studies by that time. Following a metalinguistic discussion on how to say ‘what do you think?’ in Japanese, Informant B says [...] *arigatou sensei* ‘thank you **teacher**’ (see Example 2a) as it was common for Informant B to ask for advice from Informant A regarding grammar, etc. They had been referring to Informant A as *senpai* before this incident, as well.

(2a) B: はい, 分かります, ありがとうございます先生 [*hai, wakarimasu, arigatou sensei*]

‘Yes, I understand, thank you **teacher**’

A: 先生ってね xD [*sensei tte ne*]

‘“**teacher**,’ huh?’ [smiley]

(2b) B: 私は決めることが好きじゃありませんから... 先生/先輩は決めてください。

[*watashi wa kimeru koto ga suki ja arimasen kara... sensei/senpai wa kimete kudasai*]

‘I don’t like deciding, so... please choose **sensei/senpai**’

A: >-< // んじゃあ、先輩でいいかな [njaa, *senpai de ii kana*] // 正式に先生じゃないから [seishiki ni *sensei ja nai kara*] [...] [smiley] // ‘well then, I guess I’ll go with **senpai**’ // ‘as I’m not officially a **teacher**’

There was one other instance (Example 3) where Informant B addressed Informant A as *sensei* ‘teacher’, in which case there were no comments about this usage. It can be seen that this is an instance of asking for advice regarding grammar, which may have prompted the usage of *sensei*.

- (3) B: *sensei* // how do I say // I like Japan more than before” in japanese?
 ‘**teacher**’ // how do I say // I like Japan more than before” in japanese?
 A: 前より日本が好きになった [mae yori nihon ga suki ni natta] // ? // i think
 ‘I’ve come to like Japan more than before // ? // i think’

While in Estonia, for example, it is relatively common to agree upon whether to use polite *you* (*sina* ‘you’, second person singular, or *Teie*, second person plural, polite form) or not, depending on familiarity and preference, and also institutional culture, in Japan it is not common to ask as the usage of honorifics (and registers) is generally inferred based on objective hierarchies and their adequate assessment. It also depends on factors such as the situation (formal or informal) and emotional distance, which may change, and thus the usage of honorifics, and also polite grammatical style, can vary and change over time. Variation can also be seen in the case of informants A and B, although *senpai* is much more prevalent than *sensei* (see Table 1 in Section 5.1).

4.3. USAGE IN THIRD PERSON

The next case, Example (4) of *sensei* ‘teacher’ used by Informant A, is an instance of descriptive usage. It is used in third person to describe a language teacher at the university (of Japanese nationality), likely following the Japanese tradition of referring to teachers using this honorific (which they are also instructed to do in class), although it is used towards Japanese language teachers of Estonian nationality, as well. In speech it is seen both in usage directly with teachers (as honorific usage) and when talking about teachers without them being present (descriptive usage). As mentioned in 4.1, Informant A was not aware of the difference between honorific and descriptive usage at the time.

- (4) A: *sensei küsis kumb on suurem, kas 巨大な [kyodai na] või minigine teine mida ma ei mäleta*
 ‘**teacher** asked which was bigger, gigantic or some other one that I don’t remember’

In addition to referencing people known to the informants, there are also cases of metalinguistic discussions, such as in Example (5). This example is in reference to a character in the *Naruto* series, specifically talking about how in the animated version his name is spelled in two ways, depending on the translator. In Japanese script, the spelling follows the pronunciation (Maito Gai in *katakana*; マイト・ガイ), while there are two Latinized versions (Might Guy or Maito Gai).

- (5) A: *seda on tegelt suht palju // et nimesid kuuldakse valesti // ka see vahe nt kas on gai-sensei või guy-sensei [...]*
 ‘there’s quite a lot of this, actually // that names are heard wrong // also if it’s **gai-sensei** or **guy-sensei** etc’ [...]
 [...]
 B: *[...] Ma olen seda **Guy sensei** asja näinud, aga vist kuidagi ei registreerinud. [...]*
 ‘I have seen this **Guy sensei** thing, but I guess I haven’t registered it.’ [...]

There is also one anecdotal case (Example 6), where Informant A had been memorising politics-related vocabulary for work purposes. In this case, Informant E, who has never studied Japanese and has no knowledge of this type of vocabulary, suggests using *prime-sensei*, literally 'prime teacher', instead of the Japanese word *souridaijin* 'prime minister'. As such a word is not something that could be used with native Japanese, it can be inferred to be humorous.

- (6) A: *souridaijin* // *souridaijin souridaijin*
 'prime minister' // 'prime minister prime minister'
 [...]
 A: *prime minister xD*
 E: ***prime-sensei***
 'prime-teacher'
 A: *lol*
 'laughing out loud'

While *sensei* is more often used by students in spoken language, especially vocatively, and there are not many cases of it in this data, it is still used in different forms (both as a replacement for the name and as a suffix). The opposite order (*sensei* + name; prefixed), like in the case of *senpai*, is not seen in this data (which would also be ungrammatical).

5. Discussion

5.1. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

As this data included only seven informants and a specific situation (friendly, informal), one of the terms (*senpai* 'upperclassman') was only used by one informant (Informant B) and by one other informant in a metalinguistic context (Informant A). If more data were available, it might be possible to see *senpai* in usage by other people and in other settings. However, Informant B used the term *senpai* very consistently (in 24 occasions within 14 conversations, see Table 1 below). A metalinguistic conversation about the usage of

the term is also available in this data. They have also provided their reasons for wanting to use *senpai* towards Informant A during the semi-structured interviews (4.1), and thus we are able to look at their personal motivation and their own perception.

Table 1. *Second (2P) and third person (3P) usages of sensei and senpai*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Sensei 2P	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Sensei 3P	1 reference, 2 meta-ling.	2 meta-ling.	-	-	1 (humour)	-	-
Senpai 2P	-	8 (Jp script) 15 (Latin)	-	-	-	-	-
Senpai 3P	3 meta-ling.	1 meta-ling.	-	-	-	-	-

Additionally, the term *sensei* ‘teacher’ was mostly used descriptively (3P) as these conversations are between friends, and not between ‘teachers and students’. If, for example, classroom (spoken) usage or conversations with natives were observed, honorific usage could be seen, as well. However, within lessons it is generally encouraged to speak in monolingual Japanese, not mixing it with Estonian, for example, and thus insertion may not be very common, depending on the particular students (and the amount of moderation by their teacher).

On another note, usage of *senpai* deviates grammatically and does not comply with traditional Japanese register norms (and is technically not classifiable as honorific usage even though it is intended to be *appreciative* and *formal* by Informant B, among other factors). As Informant B, who used *senpai* frequently, does not feel a difference between the different forms, they themselves did not

differentiate between descriptive and honorific usage (see Section 4.1), and thus a binary distinction between the forms may not be applicable in this case (at least regarding the intention), and thus distinctions were made mainly between usage in second person and third person (vocative or not, respectively).

5.2. GRAMMATICAL CORRECTNESS

The instances in this data are not always used conventionally, at least in an honorific sense. Honorific usage requires the use of the surname, not the given name, or just the honorific alone. It is uncommon to use the person's surname vocatively in Estonian, and the use of the given name is preferred, which may have influenced the name choice. The honorific should also follow the name and cannot be used as a prefix. In honorific usage elongation is not socioculturally appropriate as honorifics are generally supposed to denote respect. The usages of emojis, exclamation marks and capitalizations also indicate that the usage is not conventionally respectful but rather follows the style of playful usage often seen in media. As seen from the interviews (see Section 4.1), Informant B is not aware of these factors, and according to their own perception, there was no difference in intention or meaning depending on the form that *senpai* was used in. Although their perception is different from native Japanese, this does not inhibit insertion as this is a safe environment, where linguistic play is common and where grammatical and cultural correctness is not inherently important.

5.3. POSSIBLE FURTHER RESEARCH

There are many possible future research directions, including a more general analysis that includes person deixis in this type of multilingual communication in general, not just the cases where they occur as insertions from Japanese (focusing, for example, on how Estonians use the terms when speaking in Japanese in comparison

with native speakers and whether they use terms that are sociopragmatically appropriate in Estonian but not in Japanese, such as *anata* ‘you’). Another option would be to look at the pragmatic differences from other angles, like has been done in the case of Estonian and Swedish (Keevallik 2006, 2012), for example, regarding greeting and farewell sequences, where there are certainly differences between Estonian and Japanese, as well. There are also further differences in expressing attitudes and emotion more generally, including phenomena such as language play and humour (also noted by Dezi 2022, about Russian and Italian), as well as (sentence-final) particles (see e.g. Estigarribia 2021, about Paraguayan Spanish) and others.

Conclusions

The aim of this work was to examine which person references are inserted from Japanese to Estonian and/or English utterances, in which forms, and what the reasons are behind the cases. These data show that a perception of pragmatic differences between the Japanese and Estonian (or English) languages and cultures causes the insertion of the Japanese person references *senpai* ‘senior’ and *sensei* ‘teacher’ in second and third person. The person reference *senpai* is used vocatively (in second person) in various forms (prefixed to the name, replacing the name, elongated, capitalised, in the Latin alphabet, in Japanese script) in Estonian and English utterances, while *sensei* is used mainly descriptively (in third person) replacing the person’s name or as a suffix (except for two occasions where it was used in the vocative case). Both are also seen in metalinguistic contexts.

The reasons behind the instances of *senpai*, according to the interviews, are *to show appreciation* and *to sound more formal*, although these factors were not consciously thought of or planned beforehand. The aim was also to imitate native usage, with an influence of the Japanese media, and to show how the conversation partner is a more knowledgeable *literal senpai* (vertical hierarchy). The

addition felt *natural* and *cool*, according to the interviews, and also *fun and interesting*, which indicates an element of language play. There is also an awareness of a similar experience and kinship (solidarity), while accompanied by sociocultural awareness of what is (perceived to be) appropriate in this type of relationship (situational salience). The usage of *sensei* was rare since there were no literal student-teacher relationships between any of the informants, and *sensei* is most often seen in spoken language.

While this work covers a rare, understudied phenomenon, more qualitative, usage-based research is needed to get a broader understanding of the cognitive reasons and intentions behind code-switching (in broader terms) that is motivated by sociopragmatic differences.

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RESÜMEE

PRAGMAATILISTEST ERINEVUSTEST AJENDATUD ISIKUVIIDETE SISESTAMINE EESTI-INGLISE-JAAPANI FACEBOOKI VESTLUSTES

Geidi Kilp

Tallinna Ülikool

Sotsiopragmaatilisi erinevuseid on uuritud erinevate keelte ja kultuuride vahel, kaasa arvatud inglise ja jaapani. Küll aga ei ole varem võrreldud eesti ja jaapani keelt. Antud uurimus eesti-inglise-jaapani Facebooki suhtluse kohta täidab seda lünka, analüüsides jaapanikeelsete isikuviidete sisestamist eesti- ja ingliskeelsetesse lausungitesse eestlaste poolt, mis tuleneb sotsiopragmaatilistest erinevustest nende keelte ja kultuuride vahel.

Kasutatud materjal on Facebooki privaatvestlused vahemikus 2015–2021, kokku 50 vestlust ja 14,681 sõnet. Materjal on 7 keelejuhti, ja igas vestluses on kaks osalejat. Lähenemine on kasutuspõhine ja analüüs on kvalitatiivne, keskendudes üksikisikutele ning nende tajule, arvestades nii nende endi kui ka vestluste tausta. Kahe osalejaga on ka läbi viidud poolstruktureeritud intervjuud.

Materjalist ning intervjuudest võib järeldada, et pragmaatilised erinevused põhjustavad jaapanikeelsete isikuviidete *senpai* 'seenior' ja *sensei* 'õpetaja' sisestamist erineval kujul (eel- ja järellitena, nime asendusena, pikendatult, läbiva suurtähega, ladina tähestikus, jaapani kirjasüsteemis). Olulised kognitiivsed mõjufaktorid on vertikaalne hierarhia, horisontaalne solidaarsus ning (situatsioonipõhine) esilduvus.

Võtmesõnad: deiksis, koodivahetus, vokatiiv, kasutuspõhine lähenemine, kontaktlingvistika, netipõhine suhtlus, esilduvus, eesti keel, inglise keel, jaapani keel

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