

## On the defining properties of spoken and written language

In this paper, I will discuss the stylistic properties of Japanese and their interaction with the modality of language communication, i.e. spoken and written, on the one hand, and the context in which a communication event takes place, i.e. time, location and the addressee, on the other.

Spoken language is typically conceived of as involving online processing on the part of the speaker and the hearer at a space and time that are deictically shared by them. The speaker has a particular addressee in mind when s/he utters a sentence. Written language, in contrast, is generally taken to involve off-line processing, with the coding by the writer and the decoding of the reader conducted at a different time and location. The writer may not have a particular addressee as a reader. In the non-canonical cases, however, the sharedness of deictic time/location of language communication, and the existence of a particular addressee can be independent of the modality in which they are transmitted. In a phone conversation, time is shared but the location may not be. In a prerecorded speech such as voice mail, the coding and the decoding may be done separately both in time and location. Chat room conversation is a written conversation with little time lag and may even involve a virtual location share by the participants.

In this paper, I will demonstrate that the properties of language style which have hitherto been associated with the spoken or the written language, e.g. use/non-use of sentence final particles, use/non-use of address terms, choice of demonstratives, etc. should be attributed to the differences in context in the sense used here, except perhaps for the modality bound features, such as intonation, pause or pause fillers.