Traces of the Past, Horizons of the Future: Exploring Japan at the Crossroads of Humanities, Technology, and Global Dialogue

International Conference Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Japanese Studies at the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Book of Abstracts

Editors:

Irena Srdanović, Matea Radaković, and Saeko Yamauchi

Pula, Croatia | November 14–16, 2025

Traces of the Past, Horizons of the Future: Exploring Japan at the Crossroads of Humanities, Technology, and Global Dialogue
International Conference Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Japanese Studies at the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
Book of Abstracts

Publisher
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Faculty of Humanities
Zagrebačka 30, 52100 Pula, Croatia

For the publisher
Marinko Škare, Rector

Editors
Irena Srdanović
Matea Radaković
Saeko Yamauchi

Reviewers
Boštjan Bertalanič (Josai University), Tinka Delakorda Kawashima (Hiroshima University), Cao Hongquan (Xi'an Jiaotong University), Divna Glumac (University of Belgrade), Nina Golob (University of Ljubljana), Igor Grbić (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Kristina Hmeljak Sangawa (University of Ljubljana), Kamelija Kauzlarić (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Dalibor Kličković (University of Belgrade), Sara Librenjak (University of Salford / Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Jiří Matela (Masaryk University), Takehiko Maruyama (Senshu University), Nagisa Moritoki Škof (University of Ljubljana), Matea Radaković (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Irena Srdanović (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Stefani Silli (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Dragana Špica (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Divna Tričković (University of Belgrade), Vít Ulman (Palacký University Olomouc), Danijela Vasić (University of Belgrade), Nataša Visočnik Gerželj (University of Ljubljana), Halina Zawiszová (Palacký University Olomouc), Kenta Yamada (Senshu University), Saeko Yamauchi (Juraj Dobrila University of Pula), Ra Mason (University of East Anglia), and Stella Todorova Zivkova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

Language-editing and proof-reading
Nina Golob (English language) and Saeko Yamauchi (Japanese language)

Cover page
Matea Radaković

ISBN TBD
The Book of Abstracts was published based on the Decision of the Publishing Committee of the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Class: XXX, Reg. No.: XXX, dated October 13, 2025.

The conference was organized with the support of

TOSHIBA
Toshiba International Foundation

Contents

Preface..... 8

Keynote Speaker Abstracts.....12

Panelist Abstracts..... 17

Workshop Abstracts.....23

Presenter Abstracts..... 26

Exhibition Details "Japan in Pula: 10th Anniversary of Japanese Studies".....90

List of the Conference Participants..... 92

Conference Organization..... 100

Preface

The international conference *"Traces of the Past, Horizons of the Future: Exploring Japan at the Crossroads of Humanities, Technology and Global Dialogue"* is organized by the Department of Asian Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, on November 14–16, 2025, to mark the 10th anniversary of Japanese Studies in Pula. The central objective of this conference is to foster dialogue on Japanese language, culture, society, and history, especially within the evolving landscape of global academic collaboration. It has gathered contributions that explore intersections of humanities, technology, and global dialogue, from digital humanities and artificial intelligence to nation-building, language politics, and cultural heritage.

The event gathers 77 participants, scholars, students, and colleagues from 19 countries, reflecting strong academic ties with a wide network of scholars and institutions involved in Japanese studies, linguistics, culture, and education in the region, Japan, and worldwide. The largest number of participants comes from Croatia (23), representing three universities: Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, University of Zagreb, and University of Rijeka, followed by Japan (16) and Slovenia (8). Scholars and students also join us from across Europe, Asia, and Latin America, including Italy, Hungary, Serbia, Turkey, India, Poland, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Spain, Chile, China, Iran, Taiwan, South Korea, Estonia, and Bulgaria. In addition, thanks to the department's continuous support for student engagement and research, the conference features a remarkable number of young scholars, including nine presenters who are students and alumni of our Japanese Studies program in Pula.

This diversity of perspectives and experiences reflects the fact that Japanese Studies has developed as a scientific field on a global scale, while at the same time celebrating ten years of collaboration and academic growth of Japanese Studies in Pula.

It is our special honor to welcome distinguished keynote speakers to the conference. Professor Emerita Joy Hendry (Oxford Brookes University) explores Japanese anthropology from a global perspective and reconsiders the East West dichotomy in her talk, *Anthropology of Japan in a Global Context: Beyond the East West Dichotomy.* Professor Emeritus Kikuo Maekawa (Director of the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics) presents major results of corpus-based empirical research on the Japanese language and recent trends related to artificial intelligence through the topic *Prospects and Challenges for the Study of the Japanese Language in Japan: Social Change, AI, and Beyond.* Professor Emeritus Andrej Bekeš (University of Ljubljana), whose long-standing support has been of great importance in establishing Japanese Studies in Pula, discusses national languages in comparison between Japan and the South Slavic region in his talk *The Construction of National Language and Nation-State in Comparative Perspective: Japonic and South Slavic Linguistic Continua.*

The scientific program of the conference includes seven thematic blocks of parallel sessions, one panel discussion, and two workshops, covering a wide range of topics in linguistics, translation, anthropology, cultural studies, art, philosophy, and digital humanities. Workshops and panels explore innovative pedagogical and technological approaches, such as *Unwrapping Edo: Ukiyo-e as a Gateway to Culture* (Stella Zhivkova), *Hanjimono: Pictorial Puzzles as Creative Supplementary Materials* (Eddy Y. L. Chang), and *AI in Japanese Language Education* (I. Srdanović, D. Špica, B. Perak, M. Amari). Online sessions enable participation from scholars in Europe and Asia, further strengthening the global exchange of ideas.

In addition to its academic content, the conference offers cultural and networking events – the opening ceremony with a *koto* performance by our distinguished collaborator from the University of Ljubljana, Nagisa Moritoki Škof, a gala dinner, and a guided walking tour through Pula's historic center. The program concludes with a field trip to Brijuni National Park — a boat trip to the island of Veliki Brijun, a guided tour through its natural beauty by mini train through the Safari Park, and a visit to the Museum dedicated to Josip Broz Tito, the former president of Yugoslavia. Once a meeting place of world leaders and a symbol of intercultural dialogue, Brijuni provides participants with a unique opportunity to

reflect on the conference's broader themes — global and historical perspectives and the enduring value of cross-cultural understanding connecting Japan, Europe, and the wider world.

The conference was preceded by the opening of an exhibition designed to display various achievements of the department over the first ten years of the study program. The exhibition remains open throughout the conference. Participants are thus invited to enjoy not only our scientific sessions but also the retrospective exhibition *Japan in Pula,* created by our students and teachers. It features *Nihonga* works by our alumna Kristina Brana; *batik* and *nōtan* techniques by the Batik group led by Vesna Jaklin Pantelić; a photo retrospective on Japan featuring moments from student and teacher mobility programs by Erik Jelčić, Dora Planinić, Sara Dangubić, Stefani Silli, and Irena Srdanović; *yukata* sewing works by Doris Blagar and Veronika Goldiňáková; drawing and kanji workbooks by Olga Đusić; translation works by Laura Šinko and Noel Ivanković; picture book design by Mirna Franušić, Antonio Karan, and Nino Udovičić; a handmade doll by Danijela Radeka; a children's story by Kristijan Modrušan; and a video display of an *ukiyo-e* collection from the Meiji period prepared by our colleague Stella Zhivkova (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski), along with other artistic and cultural displays.

The beginnings of the Japanese Studies program, established ten years ago in 2015, can be traced back to earlier experiences — the building of relations, friendships, mentorships, and international connections. All beginnings have roots that we wish to remember and cherish. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude on behalf of our department and institution to several individuals and institutions who supported us along the way. First of all, I would like to thank Professor Emeritus Andrej Bekeš (University of Ljubljana), who strongly supported both the establishment of the program in Pula and my own professional development. I would also like to thank our colleagues from the Department of Asian Studies at the University of Ljubljana, who have collaborated with us for a long time, especially Associate Professor Nataša Visočnik Gerželj, Assistant Professor Nagisa Moritoki Škof, Professor Chikako Shigemori Bučar, Assistant Professor Luka Culiberg, Assistant Professor Kristina Hmeljak Sangawa, Assistant Professor Nina Golob, Associate Professor Klara Hrvatin, Assistant Professor Hyeonsook Ryu, and Associate Professor Tinka Delakorda Kawashima.

I would also like to thank the University of Belgrade, where I first began my journey in Japanese Studies, for their collaboration and partnership over the years — especially Associate Professor Danijela Vasić, Assistant Professor Divna Glumac, Associate Professor Divna Tričković, and Associate Professor Dalibor Kličković. My sincere thanks go to Professor Emerita Kikuko Nishina, my mentor from the Tokyo Institute of Technology, for her long-standing support, and to Professor Izumi Saita, who was the first to encourage and support the partnership between Tohoku University and the University of Pula. I am also grateful for continuous scientific collaboration with the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics, especially Professor Kikuo Maekawa and Professor Kumiko Sakoda, as well as pedagogical collaboration with Senshu University and Professor Takehiko Maruyama, Waseda University and Professor Jae-ho Lee, and Yokohama College of Commerce and Professor Harumi Kaseda.

We are thankful for academic collaboration through student and teacher mobility, scientific exchange, and traineeship programs with universities with which we have signed mutual exchange agreements (Erasmus, CEEPUS), as well as with other institutions we have collaborated with over the last ten years: University of Tsukuba, Tohoku University, Kobe University, Fukuoka Women's University, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Hanyang University, Seinan Gakuin University, Kanda University of International Studies, Sungshin Women's University, Waseda University, Senshu University, Palacký University Olomouc, Yokohama College of Commerce, Yokohama National University, University of East Anglia, City of Hekinan, Udine Far East Film Festival, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Hiroshima University, Kansai University, and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Toyo Eiwa University.

The organizers express their deepest gratitude to the Embassy of Japan, the Japan Foundation, and the Toshiba Foundation, who have supported our programs throughout these ten years. Special thanks go to the Toshiba Foundation for their generous support of this conference and exhibition.

Our sincere gratitude is extended to all the colleagues at Juraj Dobrila University of Pula and external associates who contributed in various ways to establishing and developing Japanese studies during these ten years.

Finally, I wish to thank all my colleagues and everyone who helped prepare the conference and exhibition. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the organizing committee - first and foremost, our coordinator Assistant Matea Radaković, whose dedication and hard work made this conference possible. My sincere thanks also go to other committee members who contributed to the conference organization: Associate Professor Dragana Špica, Lecturer Stefani Silli, Lecturer Saeko Yamauchi, Assistants Dora Bračun, Nikola Barić, and Sara Dangubić, for their invaluable commitment and contribution, as well as all the students who assisted with final arrangements of the conference.

On behalf of the Department of Asian Studies and in my own name, I wish all participants a pleasant stay in Pula, productive discussions, and inspiring new connections.

Irena Srdanović
Department of Asian Studies, Japanese Studies Program
Faculty of Humanities, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Pula, November, 2025

Keynote Speaker Abstracts

The Construction of National Language and Nation-State in Comparative Perspective: Japonic and South Slavic Linguistic Continua

Andrej Bekeš
University of Ljubljana

This lecture explores the formation of national languages in relation to the development of nation-states, comparing the South Slavic linguistic continuum with the Japonic linguistic continuum. Despite originating from similarly diverse linguistic landscapes, these regions experienced markedly different trajectories in language standardization and national identity formation. After explaining the processes leading to the emergence of nation-states and national languages, the role of language in the emergence of ethnic nations, focusing on the South Slavic case, where medieval Balkan states—Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, and Montenegro—served as sources of identity, is examined. Tracing 19th-century integrative efforts in the Serbo-Croatian-speaking area, the unification policies of the Yugoslav kingdom (1918–1945) and later the Socialist Yugoslavia (1945–1991) are presented, ending with its dissolution into six nation-states. In contrast, the Mainland Japan Japonic area presents a model of successful political and linguistic unification despite early heterogeneity. The lecture details the state-building process, regional diversification during the medieval period, and linguistic centralization following the Edo period. From the Meiji era onward, Japan developed a standardized national language, leading to a cohesive national identity, a policy applied also after the annexation of the Ryukyu kingdom and later in the colonies. The conclusion reflects on the divergent outcomes: while Japan achieved strong linguistic unity, the South Slavic region remains fragmented, illustrating how historical, political, and cultural contexts shape the fate of languages.

Keywords: nation-state, national language, ethnic nation, South Slavic linguistic continuum, Japonic linguistic continuum

Anthropology of Japan in a Global Context: Beyond the East West Dichotomy

Joy Hendry
Oxford Brookes University

This lecture will present the approach taken by social anthropologists interpreting the material they gather, in Japan as elsewhere. Drawing on theory put together during the establishment of our field over a century ago, the aim will be to show how language, ritual, and symbolism in Japan, as well as the underlying social relations, can be understood and explained in a global context rather than using the commonly cited East West dichotomy. Non-verbal communication in Japan can nicely be compared, for example, with the indirect language used by members of Southeast Asian and Pacific communities, and some of Japan's social relations compare rather well with groups found in traditional African societies. Even looking at contemporary links with bordering societies, there has never been a clear divide for social anthropologists between "the West" and "the East" and research on the ground in Japan rather uses 西 and 東 to describe members of the other end of the street/village than other parts of the world, which in the case of my origins would be described as *mukō* (向こう)! I plan to recount some examples of my own long-term social anthropological research to illustrate these ideas.

Keywords: social anthropology, symbolism, Japan, global context, fieldwork

Prospects and Challenges for the Study of the Japanese Language in Japan: Social Change, AI, and Beyond

Kikuo Maekawa

National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics

This lecture aims to help the audience gain a better understanding of the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL, hereafter). The lecture consists of three major parts. In the first part, I will introduce NINJAL, outlining its historical background and how its research activities have evolved in response to social changes. NINJAL was founded in 1948 as a research institute directly affiliated with the Ministry of Education, with the primary mission of contributing to national language policy. At that time, there was virtually no established methodology for the study of contemporary Japanese, and NINJAL played a crucial role in developing the foundations for empirical research on the Japanese language. In the 1970s and 1980s, NINJAL also made significant contributions to the establishment of infrastructure for the teaching of Japanese as a second language.

In 2001, NINJAL was reorganized as an independent administrative institution, aiming to serve the public more directly. This period can be described as a time of identity crisis for the Institute. However, through this experience, a new mission emerged—namely, to develop language resources and establish research infrastructure for Japanese linguistics. This status as an independent administrative institution did not last long; in 2009, NINJAL was restructured again as an Inter-University Research Institute Corporation, a unique form of academic organization in Japan. Since then, it has been functioning as an academic research institute up to the present day.

As representative outcomes of NINJAL's early years under the government ministry, I will briefly introduce three major projects among many others: *The Linguistic Atlas of Japan*, *studies on the grammar of spoken Japanese*, and *surveys on dialect standardization in local communities*. As representative achievements from the current Inter-University Research Institute period, I will also briefly touch on three projects among many others: the *construction and release of language corpora*, *documentation and revitalization of endangered languages*, and *experimental studies on speech production*.

The second part consists of two sub-parts. In the first half, I will discuss the major social and linguistic transformations currently taking place in Japan. The key concepts here are *multilingualism* and *artificial intelligence (AI)*. In the second half, I will introduce several current research projects being conducted at NINJAL in response to the rapid changes in contemporary Japanese. These include studies on *Japanese as a lingua franca*, *linguistic features of Japanese on social media*, *models of language comprehension processes*, and *AI-based technologies for corpus search and analysis*.

The third part will be relatively brief. I will first point out two areas that are essential for NINJAL to address in the near future, but in which little progress has been made so far: *a nationwide survey on Japan's multilingual situation* and *studies on literacy among Japanese people*. Both are indispensable for future language policy in Japan, yet the accumulated data in these areas are extremely limited.

For the former, we are currently preparing a pilot study in collaboration with the Institute of Statistical Mathematics and the Statistics Bureau of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. For the latter, we are re-examining the results of the only nationwide literacy survey ever conducted in Japan, which dates back to 1948. Our reanalysis indicates that the commonly accepted interpretations of the original survey results require substantial revision.

Finally, to conclude the lecture, I will present a preliminary outline of NINJAL's research strategy for the coming decade.

Keywords: Japanese language policy, National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL), corpus-based linguistic research, multilingualism and artificial intelligence, language resources and documentation

Panelist Abstracts

AI in Japanese Language Education: Language Skills, Lexical Networks, and Culture

Panel Chairs:

Irena Srdanović and Dragana Špica

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Panel Participants:

Irena Srdanović, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
AI in Foreign Language Education: From Data-Driven to AI-Augmented Approaches

Dragana Špica, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
Emerging AI Platform(s) for Japanese Language Learners

Benedikt Perak, University of Rijeka
Methodology for Building Personalized AI Agents as Assistants in Language Teaching

Mino Amari, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies
Adapting Croatian Folk Narratives into Japanese with Generative AI

This panel explores the potential of generative AI in Japanese language education and demonstrates its applications across different skills. The first presentation provides background on the use of AI in foreign language education, outlining the shift from data-driven learning using corpora to AI-augmented approaches. It illustrates how state-of-the-art AI technologies can support writing skills, vocabulary learning, and the presentation of local cultural artifacts in Japanese. The second presentation introduces an emerging platform for Japanese language learners, designed to represent AI-generated lexical relations of synonymy and antonymy in the form of a knowledge graph. The platform introduces AI-driven lexical description and exercises that encourage the learner to explore and practice the usage of a chosen lexical item in a relevant context according to the learner's level via chat-based interaction. The third presentation deals with the personalization aspects of AI-assisted language learning. It highlights the integration of traditional data management frameworks, knowledge graph representations, and the generative capabilities of large language models to produce contextually adaptive content aimed at supporting language learning and promoting more effective communication. The fourth presentation describes a framework that adapts well-known Croatian folk narratives into beginner- to intermediate-level Japanese, using generative AI with retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) and prompt engineering. Although online education during the pandemic confirmed that human-to-human teaching is not fully replaceable, new technologies, such as large language models (LLMs) and AI chatbots, offer novel approaches to language teaching and learning. Their usage should be thoroughly explored and regarded as complementary to human educators.

Keywords: AI in language education, Japanese language learning, corpus-based and AI-augmented approaches, lexical networks, generative AI and culture

Panel presentation 1:

AI in Foreign Language Education: From Data-Driven to AI-Augmented Approaches

Irena Srdanović
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

The era of data-driven learning (DDL) (Johns, 1991) emphasized the importance of using empirical data and emerging technologies to study foreign language patterns and usage. It supported both the direct use of authentic data in learning and the indirect use of such data in developing pedagogical materials. This marked a shift away from introspection and prescriptive practices toward systematic, descriptive, and publicly accessible analyses of language through corpora and corpus tools. Recent advances in generative AI, trained on massive datasets, have opened a new paradigm for language education. Learners can now interact with chatbots and immersive applications to explore meaning, usage, and structure, translate, or communicate. Educators and researchers can integrate AI resources into class planning, material design, and the development of AI-augmented tools for specific learner groups. Three illustrative cases highlight these possibilities: AI-assisted writing, which can improve learner texts but also cause overcorrection (Lee et al. 2024); chatbot-supported vocabulary learning, which enables adaptive and dynamic assistance (Jeon 2021; Matsui 2025); ongoing projects for developing an AI- and XR-based model for Japanese language learning in tourism and AI-enhancement of Japanese-Croatian learners' e-dictionary (Srdanović 2018; 2025). These examples connect with the panel's broader focus on AI-augmented methods such as adapting folk narratives into Japanese graded readers, a lexical platform integrating AI-generated content, and personalized AI agents. At the same time, these developments underline the importance of teacher involvement and critical evaluation, while raising questions for this panel on how to best implement, assess, and shape the future of AI-augmented language education.

Keywords: data-driven learning (DDL), AI-augmented language education, generative AI, chatbot-assisted vocabulary learning, corpus-based pedagogy

Panel presentation 2:

Emerging AI Platform(s) for Japanese Language Learners

Dragana Špica

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

This presentation introduces an AI-enhanced platform (https://jln.syntagent.com/) designed to support Japanese vocabulary acquisition through dynamic, graph-based visualization and adaptive learning activities. Advancing the previous attempts to generate lexical networks using the syntactic distribution patterns as an indicator of semantic proximity (Perak & Ban Kirigin 2020 https://emocnet.uniri.hr/congracnet2/), this method uses LLMs to extract the lexical relations from their intrinsic vector representation in the form of a NetworkX graph object (Špica & Perak 2024). The platform represents the Japanese lexicon as an interactive 2D/3D network, where nodes display words and edges indicate synonymy and antonymy relationships. Learners can access various lexical attributes: AI-generated definitions, example sentences, and cultural or pragmatic notes. They can also do exercises matching their proficiency level. These exercises are created in real time, using contextual data from each word's semantic neighborhood, and provide immediate feedback through a chat-based interface. Instructors can use the platform to design vocabulary lists and to facilitate collaborative group work and research-based tasks. By combining LLMs with knowledge graph methods, this platform addresses key learner needs identified in Srdanović & Špica (2021). The presentation highlights how this tool complements human teaching, providing educators with a flexible tool to enrich lesson planning and enhance vocabulary teaching.

Keywords: Japanese language learning, lexical networks, large language models (LLMs), knowledge graphs, AI-enhanced vocabulary acquisition

Panel presentation 3:

Methodology for Building Personalized AI Agents as Assistants in Language Teaching

Benedikt Perak

University of Rijeka

This presentation introduces a methodology for designing AI-powered language learning systems that integrate knowledge representation with multi-modal artificial intelligence to deliver highly personalized, adaptive learning experiences. The approach combines knowledge graphs for modeling complex linguistic and cultural relationships with advanced AI models for content generation, semantic search, and real-time conversational analysis. Central to the methodology is personalization: learner profiles, progress data, and interaction patterns are continuously analyzed to generate individualized learning pathways, adapt difficulty levels, and provide contextually relevant feedback. By uniting computational linguistics, adaptive learning algorithms, and multi-modal interaction, this framework establishes a scalable foundation for creating intelligent language learning assistants tailored to diverse languages, cultural settings, and learner needs.

Keywords: personalized learning, artificial intelligence, knowledge graphs, computational linguistics, language teaching

Panel presentation 4:

Adapting Croatian Folk Narratives into Japanese with Generative AI

Mino Amari

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

A persistent shortage of level-appropriate extensive reading (ER) materials continues to constrain Japanese language pedagogy. This study introduces a semi-automated, human-in-the-loop (HITL) pipeline that combines retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) with prompt engineering to adapt widely known Croatian folk narratives, as culturally salient texts, into Japanese graded readers at beginner to intermediate levels and organize them into series aligned with learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The pipeline enforces explicit lexical and grammatical constraints, calibrates register, and promotes narrative engagement; the outputs then undergo collaborative editing with specialists in Japanese language pedagogy. Preliminary expert review and pilot observations indicate that the prototype readers support immersive, dictionary-free reading and enable learners to engage with first-language (L1) cultural heritage through Japanese. The workflow is estimated to reduce development time from months to hours, thereby lowering instructor workload. To our knowledge, no prior work has systematically repurposed L1 cultural texts for Japanese ER; the approach therefore offers an L1-anchored alternative to the prevailing practice of using Japan-centric content and broadens the scope of multicultural Japanese language education. We document the generation process and initial observations and outline plans for comparative studies of learning outcomes between L1-based and target-culture readers, as well as design guidelines for a general-purpose L1 Culture × Generative AI adaptation platform.

Keywords: extensive reading (ER), Japanese graded reader, generative AI (HITL; RAG), first-language (L1) cultural text adaptation, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Workshop Abstracts

Hanjimono: Pictorial Puzzles as (Inter)active and Creative Supplementary Materials for Reinforcing and Extending Knowledge of Japanese Language and Culture

Eddy Y. L. Chang

University of Salamanca / Autonomous University of Madrid

Through cultural products such as anime, manga, J-pop, and literature, Japan has inspired many people worldwide to embark on learning the Japanese language and culture. However, personal interests often lead learners to a limited and fragmented understanding of both. In seeking materials that may complement class contents, enhance the learning experience, and support retention of fundamental knowledge, the Edo-era pastime *hanjimono* (判じ物) emerges as a potential option. With some basic training and practice, both teachers and students can use existing *hanjimono* or create their own, thereby fostering (inter)active and creative learning. This workshop, designed to encourage creativity and engagement in the acquisition of linguistic and cultural knowledge, will consist of three parts:

- Part 1 (30 min) introduces *hanjimono* and its fundamental system;
- Part 2 (30 min) guides the individual creation of *hanjimono*; and
- Part 3 (30 min) emphasizes group collaboration.

The goal is to gauge participants' competencies in understanding the linguistic and cultural mechanisms of *hanjimono* by having them create their own puzzles to support the learning process. As no prior academic studies exist on the pedagogical effectiveness of *hanjimono*, this workshop will also serve as an exploratory step in examining its potential to enhance Japanese language learning.

Keywords: *hanjimono*, Japanese language education, supplementary material, creative and (inter)active learning, knowledge acquisition

Unwrapping Edo: Ukiyo-e as a Gateway to Culture –
Thoughts on Developing a New Academic Course

Stella Zhivkova
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

The author of the present proposal attempts to design a new academic course for undergraduate students. The course is based on the assumption that there are several compelling reasons to teach social, aesthetic, and artistic trends of Edo Japan by means of ukiyo-e prints` analysis. Woodblock prints will be questioned in their capacity as agile objects (German&Harris, 2017), meaning they will be treated not as a passive container of information, but as an active tool for creative learning and knowledge creation.

It is widely known that the majority of students in Japanese studies are originally attracted to Japan via modern visual media such as manga and anime. It is our belief that, if guided wisely, such existing passion might seamlessly link to the long tradition of visual short storytelling of woodblock prints that reflect the floating world of the Edo period, depicting popular entertainment, fashion, and daily life. Ukiyo-e resonate with the contemporary nature of anime as a popular cultural product, and their study may turn out to be a natural and rewarding extension of students` existing passion for Japanese culture.

Methods of assessment will include individual micro studies, discussions, and final presentation.

Keywords: ukiyo-e, Edo, socio-cultural context, innovative teaching

Presenter Abstracts

Bridging the Gap: Linguistic and Intercultural Challenges of Japanese Volunteer Interpreters in Post-Disaster Türkiye

Umit Altintas and Tolga Ozsen

Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University

This study examines the linguistic and cultural challenges faced by volunteer Japanese interpreters working with Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) teams in Türkiye after the Türkiye-Syra earthquakes. It analyzes the interpreter's experiences through the lenses of linguistic and intercultural communication, aiming to identify key challenges, explore effective coping strategies, and contribute to the development of innovative approaches in Japanese language education. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with interpreters from diverse backgrounds proficient in Japanese. Thematic analysis of the data focused on three core areas: linguistic preparation, translation strategies, and cultural difference management within the crisis response context. Findings indicate that Volunteer interpreters enhanced communication by preparing relevant medical terminology (e.g., diseases, drug names). Oral interpretation was the predominant mode of communication, while written translation was used for official documents. Participants suggested that offline mobile applications were more effective than traditional booklets for technological support. In cultural terms, Japanese teams adapted to the varying language proficiency levels of the interpreters, facilitating communication. Contrary to initial expectations, the Japanese indirect communication style (honne-tatemae) did not create major challenges. However, differences in work habits between local (Turkish) and Japanese team members necessitated mutual adaptation. The study highlights the role of Japanese as a communicative bridge in multilingual and multicultural disaster response settings, and emphasizes the importance of technology-supported language learning (e.g., mobile apps) and culturally responsive interpreter training.

Keywords: Japanese language education, disaster interpreting, intercultural communication, post-disaster crisis management, Japanese

Ōsaka Pass in Medieval Japanese Travel Writing:
Cultural Practices, Literary Space, and Living Heritage

Adam Bednarczyk

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun

Ōsaka Pass/Barrier, as one of the key locations on the route between central and eastern Japan, served not only as a physical border but also as a cultural, spiritual, and literary space. The aim of this presentation is to analyze the interrelationships between place (geo) and literary creation (poeisis) in selected travel diaries from the Kamakura (1185–1333) and Muromachi (1336–1573) periods, with particular emphasis on how the Ōsaka Pass was depicted and interpreted in topographical literary narratives. The paper will also address cultural practices associated with this famous place, both in a historical context and in contemporary representations — from literary tourism to digital humanities projects. The presentation seeks to demonstrate how medieval Japanese travel diary literature has contributed to the shaping of Japan's cultural heritage, also bridging tradition with modern forms of its reception and dissemination.

Keywords: Ōsaka Pass, medieval travel writing, cultural heritage, literary space, digital humanities

Silkworm Diplomacy:

Italy's Role and Position in Late Edo to Early Meiji Japan (1866-1873)

Giulio Antonio Bertelli

The University of Osaka

The Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the Kingdom of Italy and Tokugawa Japan was signed on August 25, 1866. For about a decade prior to this date, the Italian silk industry has been threatened by *pebrine*, a silkworm-egg disease that considerably reduced the production of raw silk, one of the pillars of the Italian economy. The establishment of an Italian legation in Yokohama meant a solid support for the several silkworm-egg buyers, who traveled around the world in order to buy large amounts of silkworm eggs, and who discovered Japan as their last resort in order to overcome the Italian silk supply crisis.

The main purpose of my presentation is to provide a detailed overview of the first contacts between Italy and Japan in the crucial years around the Meiji Restoration, and to insert Italy in the broader framework of Japanese history of diplomacy by using some recently discovered, unpublished primary sources (both Italian and Japanese) related to this topic.

Keywords: silkworm egg trade, diplomacy, Meiji restoration, Italo-Japanese relations, Yokohama

Challenges of Intercultural Communication with Asian Tourists in Croatia

Dora Bračun

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

This study examines the challenges of intercultural communication in tourism, focusing on interactions with Asian, particularly Japanese, tourists visiting Croatia. It identifies key cultural differences between Asian and Western communication styles and explains how these differences influence the quality of tourist experiences and service delivery. The research defines the role of intercultural communication in tourism and analyzes communication patterns of Asian tourists through their historical and social contexts. Reviews and feedback from Japanese visitors to Croatia are used to illustrate both successful and less effective examples of intercultural communication in practice. Based on these insights, the study proposes several recommendations, including specialized training for tourism professionals and the adaptation of communication strategies to diverse cultural expectations. By implementing such measures, tourism providers can enhance visitor satisfaction, strengthen destination loyalty, and promote sustainable tourism that values cultural diversity. The study highlights the importance of continuous learning and cultural sensitivity in building mutual understanding and improving global tourism relations.

Keywords: intercultural communication, tourism, Japanese tourists, Croatia, cultural differences

Rituals and Society in Japan: The Namahage of Oga and Its Social Function

Maria Carlotta Avanzi
Akita Prefectural University

Among the most famous events in Japanese folklore is the Namahage of Oga. In 2019, it was designated UNESCO intangible cultural heritage, drawing international attention. One of the reasons behind the drive for its designation was the attempt to revitalize the peripheral areas of the Japanese archipelago that are experiencing depopulation. Moreover, in an effort to make it more appealing to tourists, Namahage has undergone a merging with other events, distancing itself from its original function.

This intervention aims to clarify the social background that underlies the Namahage event as it was celebrated in its oldest form, known to us through the drawings of Masumi Sugae (1754-1829). It was that particular social background which gave birth to the Namahage, a social background that has changed greatly in these two centuries. Therefore, I will address the following issue: Does it still make sense to celebrate Namahage, claiming that it is the same event experienced and described by Sugae? This intervention is part of a broader study aimed at analyzing Namahage and other similar traditions, highlighting the socio-religious contexts in which similar phenomena have emerged in societies that are geographically distant from each other.

Keywords: Namahage, Masumi Sugae, Japanese folklore

Critical Discourse Analysis Surrounding Japanese Security Policy and International Relations: Narratives of Article 9

Matea Cakić

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

This paper examines how interpretations of Article 9 are constructed in various political and media discourses and analyzes if, and how, the ideology embedded in the aforementioned discourses affects the meaning and creates narratives surrounding Article 9. Additionally, in accordance with the analysis results, this study examines the implications of different interpretations of Article 9 for Japan's security policy and its international relations. Therefore, the method used in this research is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) based on Fairclough's three-dimensional approach, which is the key to revealing how political actors and various media shape the meaning of Article 9, and the balance between its traditional pacifist interpretation and its evolving role in Japan's security policy. The analysis brings out the conclusion that the discourse surrounding Article 9 represents a discursive battlefield between pacifism and militarism. On the one hand, left-leaning and centrist media and politicians from the opposition construct the meaning of Article 9 as the foundation of Japan's post-war pacifistic identity and an important diplomatic element for the creation of regional stability. On the other hand, conservative political parties and right-leaning media construct the meaning of Article 9 as a hindrance for Japan to adequately address contemporary security threats. Furthermore, the results of the analysis indicate that the discourses in selected media and political circles show signs of underlying ideological influences. They thus reflect the societal and political divisions and polarization that currently exists in Japan regarding the constitutional revision of Article 9.

Keywords: Article 9, critical discourse analysis, militarization, pacifism, constitutional revision

Social Tension and Eudaimonia in Japanese New Religions:
A New Digital Humanities Approach

Stephen Christopher

King's College London

This presentation introduces our new project, which runs from 2025-27 and aims to establish the world's largest mixed methods database on new religions. We are creating an infrastructure which will allow researchers to quantitatively explore how new religious groups might promote or hinder well-being. We are particularly interested in concepts of social tension (minoritizing state practices and forms of social tension between groups and mainstream cultural norms and values) and eudaimonia (having life purpose and meaning, experiencing fulfillment through developing personal potentialities, and actively pursuing excellence and pro-sociality). While the data is global, this presentation focuses on Japanese new religions. We are collecting up to 80 entries on Japanese New Religions, including several entries on the same group but from different geographic regions and time frames (e.g., Soka Gakkai in Japan, Hawaii, and Italy, bracketed to specific time frames between the 1930s to 2020s).

Using the research infrastructure of the Database of Religious History (DRH) at the University of British Columbia, our project has created a new 'poll' that captures group-level dynamics and variables. The 'New Religiosity Poll' incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data, allowing for backend statistical analyses and variable correlations. The kinds of questions in the poll diversely encompass dynamics within new religions, such as financial practices, eschatology, millenarianism, gender norms, technology use, beliefs, and values.

We are now beginning to recruit 400 scholars of new religions to complete entries on specific movements. In this presentation, I will outline the recruitment aims in Japan. After collecting 400 entries and tens of thousands of individual data points, completed by scholars of new religions and citizen scientists from within religious groups, we will identify statistically unlikely relationships between variables using a Bayesian analytic model. In this presentation, I outline the project, describe our methodology for data collection in Japan, and explain the criteria for potential contributors.

Keywords: new religions, social tension, eudaimonia, mixed methods, digital humanities

Reimagining Nature: The Role of Animism in Japan's Environmental Imagination

Luka Culiberg
University of Ljubljana

In an era characterized by a worsening environmental and climate crisis, commonly referred to as the Anthropocene, the long-standing epistemological impasse in the humanities and social sciences offers an opportunity for a paradigm shift. The Anthropocene requires a fundamental reconsideration of the prevailing scientific worldview, which is rooted in Enlightenment thinking and has rigidly separated nature from the realms of culture or society.

The implications of this shift depend on how nature is conceptualized. If it is understood solely as material processes, energy flows, and planetary metabolism, then the humanities and social sciences must return to the material foundations that they have long overlooked in their attempt to understand *la condition humaine*. Japan offers a particularly interesting example in this context. Unlike many societies traditionally associated with animist cosmologies, which are often examined in anthropological or ethnographic studies that focus on communities minimally affected by modernity, Japan has fully undergone industrialization and exists as a highly modern, post-industrial society that has experienced some of the worst cases of environmental pollution and degradation. Nevertheless, animist worldviews remain culturally and discursively significant.

While climate change is often presented as a technical problem that requires scientific solutions, many environmental grassroots movements in Japan rely on animistic concepts supposedly rooted in cultural memory. Here, the social sciences find a new meaning – not only to theorize humanity's embeddedness in the natural world, but also to contribute to a new paradigm that reconciles modern rationality with plural, relational ways of being.

Keywords: Japan, Anthropocene, nature, culture, environment, animism

Linking Motivational Theories and Gamification: AI-Supported Analysis of Japanese Language Learning Platforms and Apps

Sara Dangubić

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula / University of Ljubljana

This study explores the intersection of motivational theories and gamification in the context of Japanese language learning. Drawing on established motivational frameworks such as Self-Determination Theory and Expectancy-Value Theory, this research examines the extent to which gamified elements, such as rewards, progress tracking, challenges, and feedback, align with theoretical models of learner motivation and suggests a set of metrics designed to evaluate the motivational potential of gamified Japanese language learning environments.

This is done by employing AI as an analytical tool that is prompted to extract data and score learning platforms (WaniKani and MaruMori) and mobile apps (LingoDeer and Renshuu) based on given parameters. Each platform and app is evaluated based on the alignment of the mentioned gamified elements with motivational theories. By utilizing AI in such a way, the evaluation process is accelerated while data collection and analysis are more convenient and consistent compared to fully manual methods.

This analysis aims to uncover patterns and gaps in gamification strategies, highlighting how these platforms engage users and foster sustained language acquisition. Ultimately, findings provide recommendations for designing more effective, motivation-driven Japanese language learning tools and contribute to understanding how AI can support educational research. This interdisciplinary approach demonstrates the value of integrating motivational psychology, gamification design, and AI in the study of digital language education.

Keywords: Japanese language learning, gamification, motivational theories, AI in education, technology-enhanced learning

The Role of Subjectivity in the Process of Translation From Japanese to English

Blanka Despotović

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

This paper explores the role of subjectivity in the process of translating from Japanese to English, emphasizing the translator's active role in shaping meaning. Translation is not merely a linguistic conversion but a cultural and interpretative act influenced by the translator's background, worldview, and stylistic preferences. The study identifies three key dimensions of subjectivity—linguistic, cultural, and contextual—and examines how each impacts translation choices. Through a comparative analysis of three English translations of The Tale of Genji by Edward Seidensticker, Royall Tyler, and Dennis Washburn, the research highlights generational, stylistic, and ideological differences. Seidensticker prioritizes readability, Tyler strives for cultural fidelity, while Washburn focuses on emotional nuance for contemporary audiences. The paper further illustrates how subjective interpretation influences word choice, tone, and narrative structure. In contrast, the limitations of AI-generated translations—particularly in conveying cultural depth and literary subtlety—are critically examined, confirming the enduring need for human translators in literary contexts. Ultimately, the work argues that subjectivity is not a flaw but a fundamental aspect of literary translation, enabling texts to resonate across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The diversity of translations enriches our understanding of the source text and reflects the multifaceted nature of interpretation.

Keywords: translation, subjectivity, The Tale of Genji, Edward Seidensticker, Royall Tyler, Dennis Washburn

Competing Perceptions: Exploring Japan in a Communist Country

Mária Ildikó Farkas
Károli University

The research on images of Japan and its transformation through time with changes in the international situation and in Japan has significant results in the last decades, but studies about the perceptions of the new Japan in East Central Europe, the countries under Soviet occupation after 1945, have just started to be collected and compared transnationally. The paper presents some of the new results of ongoing research, mainly the process of how Japan was rediscovered during the political, social, and cultural context from the late 1950s until the 1980s in Hungary, and what images were connected to Japan through political pamphlets, newspaper articles, travelogues, and through translations of Japanese literature. These were some of the few available images of Japan and Japanese culture for the public in a period when no or hardly any relations existed between the two countries (starting in 1959), and the information about Japan was strictly limited and filtered through state ideology. We can observe the formation of competing images while navigating through the rules of the communist state ideology, the effects of the Western cultural trends, perceptions of modern Japanese development, and early examples of Japanese pop culture.

Keywords: perceptions of Japan, image formation, Japan in communist ideology, travelogues about Japan, images of post-war Japan

Us vs Them: Constructing National Identity in English Essays on Discrimination by Japanese Students

Maria Elena Garcia Jerez

University of Talca

Japanese students who were part of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class wrote texts about discrimination in English. The resulting essays included not only “discrimination” as a topic but also “inequality”, “gender”, or “*ijime* (bullying)”, just to give some examples. In this presentation, I extend the social construction of words and phrases related to the student’s identity, mainly their national identity, in relation to these topics. The discussion is based on how the students wrote about “Japan” or “Japanese society” when associating those concepts with themselves while writing within the context of “discrimination”. This was carried out using methods of Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Lexical and grammatical choices (Do they write “our society” or “we” vs. “the country” or “Japanese people”?) are analyzed to textually illustrate how the students construct their national identity.

Keywords: Japanese students, national identity, discrimination, English as foreign language, systemic functional linguistics

Individualizing Japanese Pitch Accent Acquisition for Slovene Learners: Prosodic Development, Dialectal Influence, and the Role of AI Tools

Nina Golob
University of Ljubljana

Japanese pitch accent acquisition poses unique challenges for Slovene learners due to fundamental differences in prosodic systems between the two languages. While Japanese relies heavily on lexical pitch accent patterns that affect the overall intonation contour of the utterance, Slovene speakers are accustomed to greater intonational variability and lack systematic pitch accent preservation at the sentence level. This presentation examines the developmental trajectory of Slovene learners acquiring Japanese pitch accent, focusing on the influence of their native dialects and the challenges posed by accentless (*heiban*) patterns, which are absent in Slovene.

Based on classroom observations and learner data, I outline four common stages of acquisition: (a) dialect-dependent transfer of accent patterns, (b) initial attempts at producing accentless words, (c) overgeneralization of accentless forms, and (d) gradual convergence toward native-like pitch contours. These stages suggest that learners enter the classroom with varying predispositions and require individualized feedback for successful acquisition.

Given the time-consuming nature of prosodic instruction and the challenges of self-monitoring, I propose, drawing on findings from research on other languages, that AI-based speech tools (such as pitch contour visualizers and automatic feedback systems) can provide valuable support for both learners and instructors. In my forthcoming research, I plan to examine how, and to what extent, integrating such tools into classroom practice facilitates targeted training, real-time assessment, and more effective progression through the stages of pitch accent acquisition.

Keywords: Japanese pitch accent, intonation, L2 acquisition, L1 dialect influences, AI-based speech tools

Revisiting the American Dream:
Takarazuka Revue's Once Upon a Time in America (2020, Snow Troupe)

Maria Grajdian

Hiroshima University

Despite its controversial subject matter, length, and initial box-office failure, *Once Upon a Time in America* has, over the decades since its 1984 release, become a cult classic. The film highlights both the tensions and promises of the New World, serving as a symbol of dynamic constellations of power, love, greed, sexuality, and violence that cut across diverse intersectional discourses on identity, public representation, and emerging voices in mainstream media. This presentation offers a cross-cultural and cross-medial analysis of the Once Upon a Time in America phenomenon — both the original film and its broader media legacy, which reflects the realities of early 20th-century America and the manifestation of the American Dream.

It also examines the work's cultural import and its 2020 Japanese adaptation as a live performance by the all-female Takarazuka Revue Company's Snow Troupe. Drawing on over two decades of participatory observation and accompanying ethnographic research, the hermeneutic analysis integrates phenomenological experience, empirical inquiry, and extensive literature review, while employing strategies of cultural relativism and object-oriented scientific awareness. It observes changing patterns in the dynamics of media representation mirroring, possibly, larger tendencies looming underneath the surface of the current historical reality and announcing potentially disruptive new realities unexpectedly emerging in the near future. The goal of the presentation is to address the changing proclivities in global media, the slowly shifting centers of politico-economic power in world history, and the manner in which they are reflected in major mass media outlets, both by means of direct representation and by reflections of actual tendencies in the respective societies.

Keywords: renegotiation of modernity, (re-)invention of traditions, occidentalism, live musical theater, ideology vs aesthetics

Discourses on Menstruation and Sanitary Products in Prewar Japan

Xiaoyang Hao
Kyushu University

From puberty to perimenopause, a woman undergoes over four hundred menstrual cycles, thereby necessitating countless menstrual hygiene products. While often less discussed in social life, menstruation and menstrual sanitary products have been the subjects of academic inquiries for decades across various disciplines. Previous studies have shed light on the social history and anthropology of menstruation and sanitary products in Japan and across the world, the representation of gender and sexuality in sanitary product advertisements in the Western context, and the impact of advertising on adolescents and adults in the West. However, very few have examined menstruation and sanitary product advertising from non-Western perspectives, Japan in particular, a scholarly gap this research project bridges. More specifically, it examines the representation of bodies, sexuality, and menstruation in sanitary product advertisements in women's magazines published in the early twentieth century, assessing the extent to which these advertisements challenge or perpetuate the stigma associated with menstruation in prewar Japan. In doing so, this paper contributes to broader discussions on gender history and gender studies, highlighting the role of advertisements in shaping social attitudes.

Keywords: menstruation, advertisement, women's magazine, sanitary products, medicalization

The Ryukyuan language revitalization in the digital age

Zsófia Hidvégi
Eötvös Loránd University

The global discourse on endangered languages and language rights has shaped not only Japan's language policy and planning, but also the language management of its indigenous communities. The 2000s brought a significant change in the indigenous civil activism, which led to a renaissance for Okinawan culture (Heinrich & Hara, 2015, p. 647). Even if the government has not supported nor acknowledged the Ryukyuan languages, the local revitalization movement has found alternative ways to promote their languages with new – and rather ingenious – ways. The online accessible digital databases, the ever-expanding social media, and recently the remote meeting tools have opened new opportunities to build and nurture speech communities, to create a so-called breathing space for new language learners, and to expand and correct language documentation materials. The aim of this paper is to introduce the internet-based digital tools and sources (open access databases, dictionaries, teaching materials, online course platforms, social media, etc.) used for language documentation and revitalization, and to examine their impact on the vitality factors of the Ryukyuan languages, and to what degree they facilitate the democratization of the indigenous knowledge.

Keywords: language revitalization, language vitality, Ryukyu, Okinawa, digitalization

Changing Habits of Dictionary Use among Learners of Japanese

Kristina Hmeljak Sangawa
University of Ljubljana

Dictionaries have long been indispensable tools for language learners, but following dramatic changes in their production and access modes, their role in language learning and teaching has changed in the last twenty years, first with the increasing availability of online dictionary tools, in recent years with ever more accurate machine translation tools, and lately, access to AI-powered tools. Learners of Japanese have increasingly convenient reference tools to choose from. Still, understanding, memorizing, and learning to use new words in a foreign language is a challenging task: learners need to be aware of what tools are available, learn how to use them and critically evaluate what they find. I report on investigations into the use of dictionaries and reference tools by learners of Japanese using questionnaire surveys and direct observation, spanning a 30-year period from the pre-digital to the present, during which much has become easier, while difficulties still remain. Increasingly adaptive reading and learning environments with integrated dictionary functions allow for easier and faster searches, but interpreting the search results still requires a considerable cognitive effort. Findings about more and less successful searches offer insights that can be applied to dictionary use training in Japanese language education.

Keywords: dictionary use, L2 Japanese, Japanese dictionaries, search methods, reference tools

談話における「～てもらう」「～てくれる」の選択
―親疎関係があたえる影響―

The Choice Between *~temorau* and *~tekureru* in Discourse:
The Influence of Degree of Intimacy

池谷知子（Tomoko Ikeya）

神戸松蔭大学（Kobe Shoin University ）

日本語の授受動詞は「あげる」「もらう」「くれる」の三項対立であり、かつ、それらが補助動詞として使用される「～てあげる」「～てもらう」「～てくれる」がある。「私」が「恩恵の受け手」になる場合は「私」をガ格主語にした「（1）私ガ （恩恵の与え手）ニ ～てもらう」と、「恩恵の与え手」がガ格主語になる「（2）（恩恵の与え手）ガ 私ニ ～てくれる」という2つの形式が存在する。

(1) 私が（受け手） 友達に（与え手） クッキーを焼いてもらいました。

(2) 友達が（与え手） 私に（受け手） クッキーを焼いてくれました。

従来の研究では、「～てくれる」「～てもらう」の使い分けは「話し手の視点の置き方による丁寧さの度合い」と「行為の与え手に対する働きかけ性の有無」という点で説明されることが多かった。本研究は話し手と聞き手の関係が「～てもらう」と「～てくれる」の使い分けに影響しているという仮説のもと、大学生56人にアンケート調査を行った。調査では話し手が直接的な恩恵を受けたことを、目の前の聞き手に伝える叙述的な場面を設定し、聞き手を親疎関係の近い順から、母親、親友、友達、ゼミの先生とした。恩恵を受ける状況は「カバンを買ってもらう」「車に乗せてもらう」「教科書をみせてもらう」という3つの状況で確認した。その結果、同じ状況であっても、聞き手が「母親」の場合、「～てくれる」の使用率が高くなり、「話し手」と「聞き手」との親疎関係が「～てくれる」「～てもらう」の使い分けに影響していることが明らかになった。

キーワード:「～てもらう」と「～てくれる」、使い分け、恩恵の授受、叙述的状況、親疎関係

A Study of Božo Kukolja's Croatian Translations of Classical Japanese and Korean Poetry

Anela Ilijaš

Yeungnam University

This study examines Croatian translator Božo Kukolja's translations of classical Japanese and Korean poetry, which were also the first translations of such works into the Croatian language, and in the case of Korean poetry, they represent the first-ever translation of any Korean literature into Croatian. At the time these translations were produced (in the 1950s), there were no experts in East Asian languages, not only in Croatia but in the entire region of Yugoslavia. As a result, the translations were carried out through indirect translation, using intermediary versions in other European languages such as German, Russian, French, and others. This study analyzes the mistranslations and other issues present in the translated poems that arose as a consequence of indirect translation and evaluates the faithfulness of these

translations and the extent to which readers can rely on them as accurate representations of the original Japanese and Korean poems.

Keywords: indirect translation, Božo Kukolja, classical Japanese poetry, classical Korean poetry, translation practices of East Asian literature in Croatia

Digital transformation of Japanese ruralities: Cultural Adaptations and Local Practices

Tsvetomira Ivanova
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

The paper examines Japan's Digital Garden City Nation initiative, framing it as both a technological endeavor and a cultural phenomenon. Its aim is to examine the dynamics of digital transformation in rural Japan, focusing on the importance of broadband networks, smart agriculture, and remote work platforms, as well as the impact of local traditions, community organizations, and cultural identities.

The study utilizes a methodology that combines discourse analysis of governmental policy documents, ethnographic observations, and comparative case studies. Kamiyama, Aso, and Nagano exemplify various methodologies in Japan, encompassing the creation of digital hubs and environmental sensors, as well as the deployment of AI-driven irrigation systems. These modern examples are compared to the historical case of Ogata, a village that represents the construction state. The analytical framework employs Actor-network theory and the concept of technological mediation, focusing on mediators who interpret and adapt national policies into locally relevant practices.

The effectiveness of digital rural policy is maintained solely when technological advancements are incorporated into the cultural ecosystems and communal practices of the area. The paper adds to the discussions on how to revitalize rural areas while also addressing the conference's main topic of technology, society, and cultural continuity in Japan.

Keywords: rural revitalization, Japan, actor-network theory (ANT), technological mediation, community resilience

Contrasting Croatian Cases and Japanese Particles

Jan Marko Jukić

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

In Croatian, grammatical cases determine the roles of nouns within a sentence. In Japanese, comparable functions are expressed through case particles, short words that follow nouns. This presentation examines the functional overlap between the seven Croatian grammatical cases and the Japanese case particles *ga*, *no*, *ni*, *he*, *wo*, *kara*, *made*, *de*, *to*, and *yori*. To do so, a corpus was compiled consisting of an original text in Croatian and its direct translation into Japanese. Nouns in the source text were paired with their corresponding nouns in the translation and analyzed. For example, a Croatian noun in the accusative case was compared with its Japanese equivalent marked by the particle *wo*. This analysis generated numerical data showing how often each Croatian case corresponded to each Japanese particle. Although no one-to-one functional equivalence emerged between any single case and particle, clearer patterns appeared when prepositions were also taken into consideration. Certain combinations of prepositions and nouns in Croatian tended to correspond to specific particles in Japanese. These findings may be useful for Croatian-speaking learners of Japanese and vice versa.

Keywords: Croatian grammatical cases, Croatian prepositions, Japanese case particles, cross-linguistic comparison, translation equivalence

Demonstrative Variance in Three-Term Systems: Experimental Studies on Japanese and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian

Keigo Kamakura

The University of Tokyo

Corpus and experimental studies have identified discourse genre as a crucial factor in explaining the writers' choice between proximal and distal demonstratives in English (*this* vs. *that*), Dutch (*dit* vs. *dat*) and Mandarin (*zhè* vs. *nà*). In these languages, expository contexts (e.g. reporting an incident to the police) elicit more proximal demonstratives, while in narrative contexts (e.g. telling a friend about an incident), distal demonstratives are more likely to be used. This study aims to test to what extent the current proposal can be extended to languages with a three-way demonstrative system (proximal, medial, distal), in particular Japanese (*ko*- vs. *so*- vs. *a*-) and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian [BCS] (*ovaj* vs. *taj* vs. *onaj*). In cooperation with Dr. David Peeters and Dr. Fons Maes (Tilburg University), I conducted text production experiments targeted at 100 native speakers of each language. The results show that in both languages the use of proximal and distal demonstratives is correlated to discourse genres, in the same way as languages with a two-way distinction. However, the effect of genres is more prominent in Japanese than in BCS. Moreover, I found that Japanese medial demonstratives are more likely to be used in expository contexts, while in BCS narrative contexts elicit more medial demonstratives. Theoretical implications of these findings will be discussed.

Keywords: discourse genre, demonstratives, three-way distinction, experimental pragmatics, cross-linguistic comparison

昭和・平成期における「起きる／起こる」の使用率の変化
―『昭和・平成書き言葉コーパス』を利用して―

Historcal Changes of *okiru*/*okoru* during the Showa and Heisei Era:
Using Showa-Heisei Corpus of Written Japanese

鴻野 知暁（Tomoaki Kono）

大阪大学（The University of Osaka）

物事の発生を表す動詞として、現代では「（事が）起きる／起こる」がともに用いられ、ニュアンスの差はほとんどない。古い時代では「（事が）起こる」の方が専ら用いられていたが、「起きる」の語が「（人が）目覚める」の意味に加えて「（事が）発生する」の意味を表すようになり、現代のような「（事が）起きる／起こる」の併存状態に至っているのである。前川喜久雄（2011）では、『現代日本語書き言葉均衡コーパス』の著者の生年代情報によって、これらの語の頻度に関する時間変化が示唆されている。2023年に国立国語研究所から『昭和・平成書き言葉コーパス』が公開されたが、これは昭和・平成期（1933年から2013年まで）の日本語を通時的に研究できるよう設計された画期的なコーパスである。本発表では、本コーパスを利用することによって、「起きる／起こる」の語の使用率の変化について調査し、「起きる」が時代とともに漸増していく様子を見る。また、主語にどのような語が来るかに着目し、「起きる／起こる」の語がどのような物事の発生を表すことができるのかを、具体的に分析する。

キーワード：「起きる」と「起こる」、コーパス、共起語、歴史的変化、昭和・平成期

Towards Inclusive AI for Underrepresented Languages: Evaluating Japanese–Croatian Translation with Open-Source LLMs

Ratomir Karlović, Mieta Bobanović, and Irena Srdanović

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

This study evaluates the translation capabilities of open-source large language models (LLMs), available via the Ollama framework, for the Japanese–Croatian language pair—a typologically distant and low-resource combination. A balanced dataset of authentic (general and tourism-related corpora) and textbook (beginner and intermediate level) Japanese sentences was translated and evaluated by native speakers and experts in Japanology using accuracy assessments and structured error tagging. Logistic regression reveals notable variation in model output, particularly in preserving meaning and cultural context. Common errors such as meaning distortion, ungrammaticality, and cultural mismatch are identified, while statistical analysis highlights model-specific strengths and limitations. Beyond technical benchmarking, the paper highlights macro-level implications for multilingual AI equity, educational accessibility, and cultural sustainability in smaller economies. The proposed evaluation framework offers insights for future research and inclusive language technology policy.

Keywords: large language models, Japanese-Croatian translation, translation accuracy, low-resource languages, open-source AI, multilingual NLP

大学教育と実社会を接続するインターンシップの教育的意義
—留学生のための実践的な日本語教育の視点から—

Methods and Educational Significance of Internships Connecting University Education and Society: A Practical Japanese Language Education Perspective for International Students

栗原 由加 (Yuka Kurihara)

神戸学院大学 (Kobe Gakuin University)

本発表では、大学教育と実社会を接続する教育手法としてのインターンシップを紹介し、その意義を留学生に対する実践的な日本語教育の観点から考察する。現在の日本では、労働力不足を背景に、留学生を高度人材として企業に受け入れる動きが進んでいる。そして、円滑な受け入れと定着のためには、実際の業務に応用できる日本語運用能力の育成が不可欠である。本発表では、筆者が所属する大学で実施している留学生対象のインターンシッププログラムを紹介し、その教育的工夫、教育的効果、企業との連携方法について報告するとともに、他の教育機関や地域にも展開可能な汎用的モデルとするための課題と展望を検討する。本発表は、日本の留学生インターンシップの事例を参照することで、実践体験を核とした日本語教育設計の可能性を提示し、日本語教育にとどまらず、キャリア教育の観点からも大学教育と社会接続の国際的議論を深めることを目指すものである。また、インターンシップの実施により得た知見は、ヨーロッパにおける日本研究・日本語教育にも活用できるものとして、その応用可能性を示唆する。

キーワード:インターンシップ、留学生教育、実践的な日本語教育、大学と実社会の接続、キャリア教育

From Courtly Verse to Classroom Voice:
Motivating Japanese Language Learners through Classical *Waka*

Iva Lakić Parać

University of Zagreb

This paper examines the potential of classical Japanese *waka* poetry as a medium for language learning when framed through the ARCS model of motivational design. The four elements of the model—Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction—provide a systematic framework for rethinking how pre-modern literary texts can engage students of Japanese as a foreign language. Because of its compressed form and cultural depth, *waka* enables learners to practice vocabulary, grammar, and interpretive skills while simultaneously encountering the aesthetic sensibilities that have shaped Japanese cultural expression for centuries.

Through the ARCS lens, *waka* becomes a vehicle for active learner involvement. Attention is elicited by the intensity of imagery and symbolic language, supported by multimodal approaches such as recitation, calligraphy, and visual representation. Relevance is fostered by drawing parallels between poetic themes—love, transience, and the changing seasons—and both modern Japanese society and universal human experiences. Confidence is nurtured through incremental scaffolding, comparative readings with contemporary Japanese texts, and close examination of rhetorical devices. Satisfaction arises from tasks that invite creativity, reflection, and personal interpretation, allowing learners to take ownership of their engagement with classical material.

Findings indicate that *waka*, integrated with a motivational design approach, can transform classical poetry into a resource that supports not only language proficiency but also cultural literacy and learner autonomy. The study argues that positioning *waka* within the ARCS framework revitalizes classical literature for today's classroom, highlighting its capacity to foster motivation, intercultural understanding, and sustainable learning.

Keywords: ARCS model, learning motivation, *waka* poetry, Japanese language learning

Okinawan Hip Hop: Challenging the Notions of 'Japanese' Culture and Identity

Tea Laszowski

University of Rijeka / Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

The idea of Japan being a country homogenous in ethnic identity, culture, and language is nothing new; it had been actively promoted and supported throughout the 20th century and has been making a resurgence, with Japanese right-wing nationalistic parties gaining popularity and attention. Although these sentiments, falling under the *nihonjin-ron* debates, have been disproven in academic circles, the idea of the essence of Japan and its people remains constant in media and political discourse, as well as within the Western perception of Japan.

The aim is to explore how hip-hop musicians from Okinawa challenge these ideas by incorporating *uchināguchi* and characteristics of Okinawan culture, such as dances and traditional clothes, in their songs and music videos.

Okinawan hip-hop artists bring attention to the local language and traditions, as well as challenge the notions of homogeneity of Japan and provide insights into the blend of different socio-historical influences that make up the Okinawan identity. Although not all Okinawan hip-hop music is created with resistance and reaffirmation of identity in mind, it is a useful cultural product for acknowledging the cultural diversity of Japan, especially with the rising popularity of right-wing nationalistic sentiments.

Keywords: Okinawa, hip hop, nationalism, *nihonjinron*, identity

Japan's Soft Power Diplomacy in East Asia: Challenges and Opportunities through the Lens of the Manga-Anime-Gaming (MAG) Industry's Influence on Taiwan and China

Bonnie Yushih Liao

Tamkang University

In recent decades, Japan has strategically deployed its cultural assets—particularly in the Manga, Anime, and Gaming (MAG) industries—as instruments of soft power to strengthen regional influence in East Asia. This study investigates how Japan's soft power diplomacy, anchored in the global appeal of its creative content, has shaped its cultural and economic presence in Taiwan and China, two key yet contrasting recipients of Japanese cultural exports.

This research adopts a comparative approach, analyzing official policies, transnational media flows, and local reception of MAG products. In Taiwan, Japan enjoys a high degree of cultural affinity, which has allowed MAG content to flourish organically and reinforced pro-Japanese sentiment, facilitating broader diplomatic goodwill. In contrast, China presents a more complex environment: while Japanese cultural products enjoy widespread popularity among Chinese youth, they often face regulatory censorship and are subject to nationalist backlash, making Japan's soft power projection more fragile and politically sensitive.

Through qualitative interviews, content analysis, and policy review, this study reveals that the MAG industry not only serves as a cultural bridge but also as a vehicle for value transmission and economic diplomacy. However, Japan's soft power is not without constraints. Rising geopolitical tensions, content nationalism, and China's increasing efforts to develop its own cultural industries present significant challenges to Japan's influence.

In conclusion, while Japan's MAG-based diplomacy remains a potent form of influence, its effectiveness depends on strategic adaptability, local engagement, and the broader geopolitical context. For policymakers, the findings underscore the need to balance cultural outreach with political sensitivities, and for regional observers, they offer insight into how creative industries can both bridge and complicate diplomatic relations in East Asia.

Keywords: soft power, diplomacy, MAG, censorship, Cool Japan

Japanese Philosophy on a Global Scale:
World Philosophies and the Question of Recognition

Hans Peter Liederbach

Kwansei Gakuin University

With the emergence of "world philosophies," we observe an increase in demands for the recognition of Japanese philosophy as philosophy proper. These demands are raised in the form of three projects: (1) the “historical” project of rewriting the history of philosophy from a global perspective (Rolf Elberfeld); (2) the “political” project of incorporating Japanese philosophy into the curricula of higher education institutions, particularly in the USA (Bret W. Davis); (3) the “relativist” project of contrasting philosophical methods that are identified as specifically "Western" with so-called "Eastern" methods (Thomas P. Kasulis).

In my talk, I will subject these projects to critical examination. While the anti-Eurocentric tendencies expressed in these projects are fundamentally to be welcomed, the recognition of non-Western philosophy presents a problem that can be solved neither through historicization, nor politicization, nor relativization alone. The reason for this difficulty lies in the relationship between universality and particularity. For what is to be recognized is not merely JAPANESE philosophy, but Japanese PHILOSOPHY. Using concrete examples, I will attempt to demonstrate that the recognition of Japanese philosophy as philosophy proper must consider the category of singularity alongside the categories of the universal and the particular. Only on a case-by-case basis, that is, can it be determined whether a philosophical position deserves recognition.

Keywords: Japanese philosophy, world philosophies, recognition, universality and particularity, singularity

Computing Kanji Difficulty for Language Learners

Sara Librenjak

University of Salford / Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Despite the central role kanji plays in Japanese literacy, there is no widely accepted standard for measuring individual character difficulty for language learners. Frequency lists and school-grade order offer partial insights but fail to account for cognitive, pedagogical, and visual complexity. This study proposes a multi-factor model to compute kanji difficulty using a weighted combination of features relevant to second-language acquisition, presenting the subjective notion of difficulty as kanji learning cost.

The model integrates data from official frequency corpora, stroke count, component count, component frequency, vocabulary frequency, meaning complexity, and the number of readings, and assigns weights to the traits based on the existing research data. This approach allows for more responsive curriculum design, personalized study recommendations, and better diagnostic tools. It also accounts for learner-facing variables such as visual confusion between similar kanji and the frequency of compounds vs. single-character use. The model supports teachers and developers in selecting kanji appropriate to learners' proficiency levels, avoiding both under-challenging and overloading them.

Ultimately, this work aims to bridge the gap between kanji pedagogy and real learner data by offering a scalable, transparent metric for kanji learning cost. The model will be tested in practice, evaluated, and adjusted accordingly. Future applications include adaptive learning platforms and more nuanced assessment tools for reading and writing skills.

Keywords: kanji, learning cost, Japanese language learning, data driven learning, computational linguistics

日本政府による新しい日本語教育施策について
—CEFR を参照した「日本語教育の参照枠」の意味と課題—

The Japanese Government's New Japanese Language Education Policy: The Meaning and Challenges of the Japanese Language Reference Framework Referencing the CEFR

真嶋潤子（Junko Majima）

大阪大学名誉教授（The University of Osaka)

日本では少子高齢化が予想以上に早く進み、人口減少が続いているが、在留外国人数は史上最高を更新している（出入国在留管理庁　2024）。日本語学習者数も、コロナ禍の後、増加してきている（文部科学省　2023）。「日本語教育の推進に関する法律」(2019)を根拠法として、2024年には日本国内の日本語教育の歴史に残る年になる施策が動き出した。初めて「登録日本語教員」という国家資格ができ、「認定日本語教育機関」の制度と合わせて法制化されたのである。

一方で日本語教育の内容についても「日本語教育の参照枠」報告(文化庁 2021)とその「活用のための手引き」(2022)が出され、「留学」「就労」「生活」の3分野にわけてモデルカリキュラムが作成され、普及・研修活動が進められている。本発表では、これらの背景と経緯と内容を見た後、「日本語教育の参照枠」が拠り所としたCEFRの特徴と、何故、どのように参照されたのかを考える。その上で、「「日本語教育の参照枠」の見直しのために検討すべき課題について　–ヨーロッパ言語共通参照枠　補遺版を踏まえて–」（2024）を元に、今後の課題を検討したい。

キーワード:「日本語教育の参照枠」、CEFR、CEFR-CV、仲介（Mediation)

Serbia through Japanese Eyes: Edo-Period Knowledge of the Balkans in a Global Context

Mateja Matić
University of Belgrade

This paper examines the presence of Serbia in Japanese intellectual and cartographic discourse during the Edo period (1603–1868), before the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between Serbia and Japan in 1882. Despite Japan's sakoku policy, which imposed strict limits on foreign contact, not an insignificant amount of information about distant regions such as the Balkans reached Japanese scholars through indirect channels, primarily via Dutch and Chinese intermediaries. Through ethnogeographic works by writers such as Arai Hakuseki, Kutsuki Masatsuna, Katsuragawa Hōshū, Shiba Kōkan, and Yamamura Saisuke, as well as official shogunate newspapers, we examine the quantity and quality of information about Serbia. Although its quantity is small, information about Serbia is usually correct and contemporaneous. However, in some sources, it is colored by European anti-Ottoman bias, while in the work of Shiba Kōkan, we see a wildly occidentalist and exotic representation of Europe.

Keywords: Serbia, Edo period, geography, Ottoman Empire, occidentalism

An Overview of Japanese Cultural Phenomena in Italy

Roberta Matković
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

There have been many cultural contacts and encounters between the Apennine Peninsula and Japan, which began many centuries ago. This contribution focuses primarily on the visual aspects and their meanings of these interactions, highlighting their influence on Italy, an influence that remains evident today. The first meaningful encounter that brought functional changes to the performing arts was the arrival of Sada Yacco in 1902, when her first theatrical performance took place in Rome. Italian actors (and not only they) understood how important it is to communicate emotions, not just the words and their meaning, on stage. In the '70s of the 20th century, the first anime series aired on Italian television, and it immediately gained popularity among the young (and not only) viewers. Soon after, manga entered the publishing scene. Even if the Italian audience did not comprehend all the cultural details and nuances expressed, the phenomenon's success was undeniable. The success was such that today, there are festivals dedicated to manga and/or anime. These examples demonstrate how Japanese cultural phenomena have not only entered the Italian cultural landscape but have also contributed to shaping new aesthetic sensibilities and modes of expression. And these interactions show no sign of weakening.

Keywords: Italy, theatre, anime, manga

Rebuilding the Tower of Babel in an Era of Linguistic Collapse:
Meta-Reflection on Language in Recent Japanese Literature

Caterina Mazza

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

In recent years, Japanese literature has gained an unprecedented place in the World Republic of Letters: the ever-increasing number of literary works translated and the variety of titles that have won over very diverse readerships demonstrate the central place that Japanese literature now occupies in the international literary scene. While the proliferation of Japanese literary works in translation has, in some cases, reinforced stereotypical images linked to certain supposed peculiarities of the country's cultural landscape, it has also allowed the circulation of texts that contribute to a meta-reflection on the limits and potential of so-called global literature. Among the latter, one of the most relevant themes is the reflection on the role of language and its ability to shape the identity of individuals and reinforce or undermine national boundaries in an increasingly globalized context. Comparing the works that make up Tawada Yōko's latest trilogy [*Chikyū ni Chiribamemarete* (Scattered All Over the Earth, 2018), *Hoshi ni honomekasarete* (Suggested in the Stars, 2020), and *Taiyō Shotō* (Archipelago of the Sun, 2022)] with other works in which this reflection plays an equally central role (such as the recent novella *Tōkyō-to Dōjō Tō*, Tokyo Sympathy Tower, 2024, by Rie Qudan), this presentation will attempt to show how the different approaches of the authors contribute to redefining the relationships and hierarchies between languages in today's hyper-technological context, thus helping to reflect on the very meaning of so-called ‘world literature’ and the symbolic power dynamics underlying it.

Keywords: Japanese contemporary literature, global literature, language and national identity, Tawada Yōko, Rie Qudan

Paradoxes of Piety: The Kumano *Bikuni*s and the Blood Pool Sutra in Medieval Japan

Yamini Meena
University of Delhi

The Kumano *bikuni*, itinerant travelling nuns of the Kumano mountains, epitomise the religiosity and sociocultural dynamics of Kumano. Infamously known for their dual roles as religious preachers and, at times, prostitutes, these nuns navigated a complex landscape of faith and societal expectations. They are most closely associated with the propagation of the *Ketsubonkyo* (Blood Pool Sutra), which they disseminated through the *etoki* (picture scrolls and mandalas) performance of the *Kumano Ten World Mandala*. The relationship between the Kumano *bikuni* and their propagation of the Blood Pool Sutra has been a subject of significant scholarly debate. Some scholars argue that the *bikuni* internalised misogynistic views or were complicit in their own subordination, while others contend that these nuns should be recognised as compassionate figures who provided solace to women facing the harsh realities of female embodiment.

This paper seeks to examine the role of the Kumano *bikuni* in propagating the Blood Pool Sutra within the context of these debates. It analyses the ways in which the Kumano *bikuni* engaged in the dissemination and popularization of a text that paradoxically condemns their own gender while presenting the Kumano faith as both critical of and inclusive toward women. This exploration encourages a nuanced understanding of religious agency, doctrinal interpretation, and gender dynamics within the history of the Buddhist community of Kumano. By investigating the complex engagement of Kumano *bikuni* with the Blood Pool Sutra, this study aims to illuminate the multifaceted nature of their religious practices and their impact on the broader sociocultural and religious landscape of medieval Japan.

Keywords: Kumano *bikuni*, Blood Pool Sutra, religious agency, gender dynamics, Buddhism

Shaping Modern Korean Art:
Complex Encounters with Japanese Art in the First Part of the 20th Century

Beatrix Mecsi

ELTE University

This presentation explores how modern Korean art was shaped through interactions with the Japanese art world during the colonial period (1910–1945) and into the early post-liberation years. While earlier art historical accounts often portrayed this era in terms of clear opposition between colonizer and colonized, this study seeks to offer a more nuanced view of the artistic dynamics at play.

Korean artists encountered new materials (like oil paint) and styles (such as Impressionism and abstraction) primarily through Japanese art schools, exhibitions, and official institutions. These influences were not simply imposed or resisted; rather, artists responded in diverse and often creative ways—adopting, adapting, or rejecting elements to express their own visions of identity, tradition, and modernity.

By examining the works and careers of artists such as Ko Hui-dong, Lee Quede, and others, this presentation highlights how choices regarding style, medium, and participation in Japanese-led exhibitions reflected deeper questions of self-representation and national identity. The paper also considers how these artistic dialogues contributed to longer-term developments in Korean art and were later interpreted differently in North and South Korea.

Keywords: modern Korean art, Japanese art, colonial period, cultural exchange, national identity

普通体応答における「だ」の有無
―日本語教育文法として「「だ」は省略」は妥当か―

The presence or absence of da in ordinary responses:
Is it appropriate to omit da as Japanese pedagogical grammar?

森篤嗣 (Atsushi Mori)

武庫川女子大学 (Mukogawa Women's University)

本稿で主として考察対象とするのは，「お茶飲む？―ううん、大丈夫」のような話し言葉の普通体において応答として用いる「ナ形容詞語幹単独用法」である（以下，「ゼロ形」とする。）本稿では，話し言葉における普通体応答において，ゼロ形によるナ形容詞語幹単独用法を無標として扱うべきであるという主張について，コーパスによる量的調査によって検証する。基本的に日本語教育文法としては，「自分に向けた発話」と「他者目当ての発話」及び，男女での使用傾向差（権威性の差）があるとしても，ゼロ形によるナ形容詞語幹単独用法を無標として扱った方が妥当であると結論づける。ただし，個別の語を見たとき，「嫌だ」についてはゼロ形よりもダ形が多く用いられるという点は日本語教育文法としても留意が必要である。

キーワード：話し言葉，ナ形容詞，文法体系，省略，相対的に生じる効果

A Corpus-based Research of Rangaku Translations:
Integrating Historical Theories Within Modern Methodologies

Lorenzo Nespoli

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

This contribution explores new approaches to historical translation studies by integrating early modern theories with modern methodologies and technologies. In the latter half of the Edo period, Japanese scholars started engaging with European science mediated by the Dutch language. Together with the introduction of new subjects, some have argued that new grammatical structures have also entered the Japanese language. However, due to the huge amount of data that needs to be gathered and processed, those claims were never corroborated with conclusive evidence, due to the lack of tools aiding corpus analysis. I provide evidence that a more substantiated claim can only be made by considering the theories the Japanese translators employed when deciphering the unfamiliar features of the Dutch language. For this purpose, the early morphosyntactic investigations by inquisitive scholars such as Shizuki Tadao prove to be useful tools in linking the theoretical frameworks applied to Dutch and Japanese morphosyntax. Drawing from my corpus of Japanese translations from Dutch, I illustrate how combining older theories with modern technologies allows for the making of new discoveries within translation studies and helps assess whether Rangaku translations have indeed changed Japanese grammar.

Keywords: Rangaku, morphosyntax, corpus analysis, *kakarimusubi*, translation studies

Gendered Role Language in Translation: A Case Study of Dubravka Ugrešić's Fox

Ayako Oku

Kyoritsu Women's University

In the 21st century, debates on gendered role language in Japanese have intensified and become a significant area of sociolinguistic and translation studies. The categories of so-called women's language and men's language are generally understood to have been established in the Meiji period, and gender-based linguistic practices—such as the differentiation between *boku* and *watashi*—have long been reinforced through formal education and everyday discourse. Momoko Nakamura, in Constructing the Japanese Language through Translation (2013), has drawn attention to and criticized the pervasive and often excessive use of gendered speech in translation across a wide range of genres.

Building on these discussions, this presentation explores how gendered role language can and should be approached in the translation of contemporary fiction. As a case study, I examine my own Japanese translation of Croatian author Dubravka Ugrešić's Fox (2023), focusing on how different characters' voices were shaped through the selective use—or deliberate avoidance—of gendered expressions. Through this analysis, I aim to explore how translators can navigate between entrenched linguistic conventions and the risk of perpetuating stereotypical gender representations.

Keywords: gendered role language, women's language, translation, Dubravka Ugrešić

Opening Closed Gates: Epistemic *Ma* as Framework for Inclusive Discourse in Japanese Visual Culture

Makiko Oya-Haragi

Tallinn University

This research applies Pinfield's (2024) concept of epistemic openness—achieving greater diversity and inclusion—to Japanese contemporary illustration (Grove, 2024) practices, proposing epistemic *Ma* (間) as an epistemological framework for revitalizing visual discourse. Drawing on Bai and Cohen's (2019) expansion of Nitschke's (1988) etymological definition, this study conceptualizes *Ma* as a zone of transformation where change possibilities can be discovered and seized upon, while constitutive gates (門) impose structures that both invite in and keep out certain kinds of beings. This framework might address debates surrounding illustration representations that transcend conventional binary categorizations (sexual/artistic, appropriate/inappropriate).

Within contemporary Japanese illustration ecosystems, particularly realms featuring bodily representations, these metaphorical gates remain open exclusively to creators while restricting participation from critics, audiences, and regulators. This closure perpetuates concerns identified in the 2016 UN CEDAW Committee report, which criticised ongoing depictions of women and girls as sex objects, particularly noting how contemporary illustration practices continue to promote sexual violence.

However, employing visual studies methodologies—interpreting multifaceted visuality through Western gaze theory—with post-relativistic approaches offers possibilities for opening these closed gates. By transcending binary frameworks and applying visual culture analysis to contested representations, this research aims to create inclusive discursive spaces welcoming diverse perspectives into Japanese visual discourse.

Keywords: epistemic *Ma* (間), visual studies, Japanese illustrations, bodily representations, post-relativistic approach

Direct Use of Corpora in Japanese Language Education: Implementing the Data-Driven Learning Approach at the Upper-Intermediate Level

Giuseppe Pappalardo

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Large-scale corpora provide access to authentic language and represent a rich resource for Japanese language education. In current practice, they are mostly used indirectly by instructors to create corpus-informed materials, such as example sentence collections, frequency lists, and collocational data (Sunakawa, 2016; Mori, 2018; Nakamata, 2021). Direct learner engagement with corpora—known as data-driven learning (DDL) (Johns, 1991)—has been widely implemented in English language instruction (Chambers, 2007) but remains limited in Japanese language education. This is largely due to factors such as learner proficiency, time constraints, limited teacher training, and the complexity of corpus search tools. This presentation reports on a four-year educational project conducted at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, involving upper-intermediate learners of Japanese enrolled in a master's program. The course aimed not only to enhance linguistic competence but also to equip students with the skills needed to conduct research using primary sources in Japanese. As part of the course, students independently analysed linguistic phenomena using corpora developed by NINJAL and accessed through the Chunagon interface. This study evaluates the effectiveness of this approach by examining both its pedagogical benefits and its limitations, offering insights into the feasibility and potential of implementing DDL in Japanese language education.

Keywords: Japanese language education, corpus linguistics, data-driven learning (DDL), Chunagon search interface, authentic language materials

Understanding Scandal in Japan

Igor Prusa
Metropolitan University Prague

Traditionally, Japan has been conceived as a culture defined by consensus and harmony—a society that actively avoids conflict, a characteristic reflected in its laws, customs, and manners. In such a conflict-averse environment, one might assume there would be little room for scandal. However, the opposite is true: scandals are a cultural constant in Japan, and both tabloids and social media thrive on the circulation of conflict, controversy, and corruption. These media rituals became normalized, challenging the stereotype of Japan as an entirely harmonious and consensual society.

The aim of this talk is to analyze these rituals designed to manifest and manage revealed transgressions in a prescribed way. It illuminates the ritualized means of public apology and the cultural realities of public shaming in Japan. This is important because many scandal denouements in Japan do not get by without a punitive ritual of emotional confession, temporary exclusion, and eventual reintegration. In other words, transgressors confess their sins to the public, they are removed from the limelight, and they are eventually allowed to return to society. The talk illustrates how the ritual of confession, exclusion, and reintegration is turned into a performative media spectacle. By doing so, it offers an opportunity to see how scandals play out in a liberal democratic system that differs in many respects from the United States and Europe.

Keywords: scandal, ritual, Japanese media, transgression, purification

Fragmented Governance? GHQ/SCAP's Moral, Medical, and Legal Struggles over the Regulation of Prostitution in Occupied Japan (1945–1952)

Matea Radaković

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula / University of Ljubljana

In the first months of the Occupation of Japan, the sex economy quickly reconfigured itself in accordance with the new situation: the massive presence of Allied soldiers and the breakdown of the previous regime of supervision and control. In response, the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA) was established, designed specifically for the service of Allied personnel. Simultaneously, a street-based sex market was taking shape, which was embodied by the so-called *panpan* girls. However, prostitution and its regulation soon became a pressing dilemma for the Occupation authorities. Using GHQ/SCAP documents, this paper demonstrates that, although venereal disease control remained the official justification and primary concern in tackling prostitution, interdepartmental conflicts between democratic values, moral debates, cultural relativization, and, ultimately, pragmatic control were significant parts of the discussions regarding prostitution management. Furthermore, it argues that the politics of prostitution regulation during the Occupation period reveal the fragmented logic of postwar governance, where ideals and control were constantly in tension, often to the detriment of the very people affected by these policies.

Keywords: occupation of Japan, prostitution, GHQ/SCAP, venereal disease control, *panpan*

MaMa: Transitions within an Anime and Manga Fan Community

Velna Rončević

University of Zagreb

Before the spread of broadband internet and various streaming services, access to Japanese popular culture was mainly determined by two flows: from above – depended on the offer of national television and cinema programs and from below – where fans independently acquired materials outside of official channels. However, distribution in the West was not uniform. For an understanding of the uneven nature of transnational flows, it is important to discuss different national and local contexts. This presentation will address one such local Croatian context – a community gathered in the multimedia club MaMa in the early 2000s, when fans were directly or indirectly dependent on each other for content. This is a period of transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, which enabled greater access, community expansion, and the development of an anime and manga fan scene – first organized around a newsgroup and later at the multimedia center MaMa in Zagreb. The research is based on semi-structured interviews with fans who were a part of this community. This paper will show how technological circumstances drove anime and manga fans to create a fan community, but also how later technological development, namely greater access to broadband internet, rendered that same community unnecessary.

Keywords: anime fandom, transnational flows, local context, digital media, temporality

Guardians of Tradition: Women, *Kimono*, and the Boundaries of Identity in Meiji Japan

Hosna Salimi

University of Tehran

The *kimono* is considered the representations of Japanese identity *par excellence*. In this view, the Meiji period (1868–1912) is pivotal. In fact, Japan's encounter with the West in 1853—after more than two centuries of the isolation policy, *sakoku* (1639–1853)—coincided with the end of the Edo period (1603–1868) and the start of Emperor Meiji's rule. The West and modernist art and fashion profoundly influenced Japan by prompting transformations in traditional dress for both men and women. This study examines Japanese women's protective reaction to *yōfuku* (Western clothing), their persistence in wearing kimono, and their role in safeguarding *wafuku* (Japanese clothing), asking how gender and collective identity shaped sartorial choices during rapid modernization. The method used in this research is a qualitative historical approach combining textual and visual analysis with archival research. Primary sources include Meiji-period newspapers, governmental proclamations, women's fashion magazines, photographs and prints, in addition to extant garments and records in museum collections, e.g., Bunka Gakuen Costume Museum. Findings, interpreted through Social Identity Theory (SIT), suggest Meiji women acted as guardians of national dress. More precisely, the study contributes to scholarship on dress, gender, identity, and nationhood by showing how women used kimono practice as boundary work and identity performance.

Keywords: Japan, women, *kimono*, identity, West

Mishima Yukio and Cinema - From Aesthetic Vision to Artistic Action

Susanne Schermann

Meiji University

Mishima Yukio (1925–1970), renowned for his contributions to Japanese literature, cultivated a rich and varied relationship with cinema. He not only watched many films but also wrote about them, joined round-table discussions, and reflected on film theory in his essays. He often visited the sets of film adaptations of his works, showing keen interest in shooting techniques and the filmmaking process.

Mishima's engagement with film went beyond observation. After early appearances as an extra and in cameo roles as himself, he took on major acting parts and eventually directed his own short film, Patriotism (1966), based on his homonymous story. His essay "I Want to Become an Object" reveals the motivation behind his wish to experience acting firsthand. This longing, in turn, reflects his view of what it means to be a writer, a theme he revisited in his writings on film and one that is especially clear here.

Unlike his analytical approach to theater and literature, Mishima's interest in cinema was broader and more exploratory, driven by fascination with every aspect of film culture. This presentation examines his critical writings, performances, and directorial work to consider how he envisioned the role of cinema within his larger artistic concerns.

Keywords: Mishima Yukio, aesthetics, legacy

Narrating Sociocultural Reality or Reproducing Borrowed Stereotypes?
Alma M. Karlin and Her Description of Japan in the 1920s

Klemen Senica

Independent Researcher

In recent years, travel narratives authored by women have attracted growing critical attention from both scholars and the general public. Among the writers who have been the subject of particular scholarly focus is the Slovenian-German intellectual, polyglot, world traveller, and author Alma M. Karlin (1889–1950), who visited Japan in the early 1920s during her eight-year circumnavigation of the globe. Her long-standing aspiration to experience Japan was first inspired by her fascination with the country during her pre-war stay in London. Despite numerous difficulties prior to her arrival in Yokohama in the summer of 1922, Karlin was immediately captivated by Japan, where she remained for more than a year. The apparent consonance between her imagined and lived Japan reveals less about the country itself than about the power of pre-existing cultural imaginaries that mediated her perception of it. This paper investigates the intertextual dimensions of Karlin's travel writing, with particular emphasis on her representations of Japan and the Japanese.

Keywords: travel writing, Alma M. Karlin, Japan, intertextuality, cultural imaginaries

Port of Pula between 1867 and 1918: Early Contacts with Japan and Korea

Chikako Shigemori Bučar
University of Ljubljana

Austria-Hungary was a multi-national constitutional monarchy in Central Europe between 1867 and 1918. It was geographically the second-largest country in Europe and the third-most populous (after Russia and the German Empire), while being among the ten most populous countries worldwide.

After the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900, the foreign powers granted Austria-Hungary, who cooperated in suppressing the Rebellion, a small concession zone in Tianjin 天津. The port of Pula was the main port of the Austro-Hungarian Navy, and all the station ships dispatched to East Asia started from here. The officers and sailors on these warships were the first individuals from Central Europe to experience Japan, Korea, and China. They were of various nationalities, among them also Slovene. In this paper, some individual memories and objects brought back by the Slovene officers and sailors are presented. Most of the episodes are findings of our project in recent years at the Department of Asian Studies in Ljubljana. The period of Austria-Hungary overlaps with the Japonism trend in all varieties of art and with the golden era of picture postcards. The focus is on Japan and Korea, since the languages of both nations are currently taught at the University of Pula.

Keywords: Port of Pula, Austria-Hungary, Japonism, Japan, Korea

Anti-Normative Gender Representation of the Protagonist: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Gender Roles in Convenience Store Woman

Stefani Silli

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula / University of Ljubljana

Nagisa Moritoki Škof

University of Ljubljana

This paper examines the construction and representation of gender roles in contemporary Japanese society as depicted in Sayaka Murata's novel Convenience Store Woman (*Konbini Ningen*). Published in 2016 and awarded the 155th Akutagawa Prize, the novel portrays the daily life of a 36-year-old unmarried woman working part-time at a convenience store, highlighting her struggle to live a life that defies normative gender expectations yet remains vital and meaningful. Drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough 2003, 2013), this study investigates how gender identity is constructed, maintained, and challenged through the protagonist's interactions with other characters. Particular attention is given to discourses surrounding marriage, reproduction, and employment, revealing how social norms are constructed and how the protagonist's perspective contrasts with these norms. By conducting a micro-level linguistic analysis of the novel's dialogues within a broader macro-level socio-cultural framework (Fairclough 2003:16), this paper seeks to bridge literary studies and sociolinguistic inquiry, demonstrating how a literary text can illuminate broader questions of gender positioning and social roles in modern Japanese society. This presentation contributes to ongoing interdisciplinary discussions across literature, linguistics, and sociology, complementing socio-cultural analyses of this novel, such as Silli (2025).

Keywords: critical discourse analysis (CDA), gender identity construction, contemporary Japanese literature, Sayaka Murata, Japanese society

Groupthink Dynamics as a Factor in Japan-South Korea Relations

Abhijitha Singh

Jawaharlal Nehru University

Historical disputes continue to strain relations between Japan and South Korea. This is mainly attributable to the groupthink dynamics in the two nations. The groupthink tends to prioritize identity-affirming memories, even at the expense of historical accuracy. The groupthink whips up ultra-nationalistic narratives, suppressing or forgetting negative episodes in their history. In Japan, organizations like Nippon Kaigi spread patriotic education that minimizes the atrocities committed by Imperial Japan during World War II. They present Japan's wartime history as a mission to liberate Asia from Western colonialism. They view Koreans as beneficiaries of Japanese colonial rule. On its part, South Korea paints Japan as a culturally underdeveloped nation that benefited from Korea's advanced culture throughout its history. They view the Japanese as primary villains. They remain oblivious to the role Korean society itself played in the victimization of comfort women. I propose to study how and to what extent groupthink shapes the collective memory of Japan and South Korea. I intend to analyze the nature and methodology of its functioning in the two nations. I also intend to suggest what can be done to address this phenomenon so as to promote ties between the two nations.

Keywords: historical disputes, groupthink, collective memory, ultranationalism, comfort women

SmirAI: Prototype of a Virtual Cultural Tutor

Irena Srdanović, Alma Smajić, and Mia Rovis
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

This research presents a prototype of an interactive Japanese language learning application, which utilizes immersive virtual walks through various Croatian locations to enhance both linguistic and cultural understanding. The application features pre-recorded guided tours of authentic Croatian sites, with accompanying audio narration in Japanese and English, as well as synchronized subtitles in Japanese, English, and Croatian. The prototype has been developed using the collaborative interface design tool Figma, emphasizing a user-centric interface and seamless navigation to support intuitive learning pathways. The name SmirAI is derived from a deliberate fusion of the Croatian word *smiraj* 'repose' with the Japanese word *mirai* 'future', together with AI, symbolizing an intelligent journey from calm reflection toward advanced language proficiency. The full paper and oral presentation will detail the design process, illustrate the prototype's functionalities, and report findings from evaluations, highlighting how digital tours synthesize technology and cultural immersion to enrich language learning and thus contribute to Japanese language education and digital humanities.

Keywords: Japanese language learning, virtual walks, linguistic understanding, prototype design, user-centered design, AI

Navigating Cross-Cultural Challenges in Promoting Japanese Art in Croatia

Laura Šinko

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Japanese art, shaped through centuries of rich history and diverse forms of expression, continues to fascinate audiences worldwide. In Croatia, however, opportunities for interaction with Japanese art remain limited. This study analyses the main cultural barriers influencing its perception, including language obstacles, insufficient translated materials, and a lack of media coverage, while also acknowledging the increasing role of Japanese popular culture and media. In this research, the term Japanese art encompasses not only traditional artistic forms but also contemporary popular culture and media, which serve as accessible entry points for Croatian audiences to engage with Japanese creativity.

The study employs a mixed-method approach, combining a quantitative survey (N=160 respondents) with qualitative interpretation, in order to assess the level of interest, knowledge, and cultural challenges among Croatian audiences. Findings indicate that, despite language and accessibility barriers, there is a strong and growing interest in Japanese culture, particularly in its contemporary forms, providing valuable opportunities for cultural exchange.

The results suggest that more effective and accessible promotion of Japanese art in Croatia could be achieved through increased availability of translated materials, stronger media coverage, partnerships with cultural and educational institutions, and the strategic use of pop-cultural content to introduce traditional artistic expressions. In this way, Japanese art can become both more visible and more relatable within the Croatian cultural context.

Keywords: Japanese art, cultural barriers, pop culture, art promotion, cultural exchange

The Uneven Realities of Internationalization in Japanese Higher Education

Theo Šlogar
Gradec Translations and Tour Guiding

The Japanese government has promoted university internationalization since the late 1980s, first through the recruitment of international students and, more recently, through the *Top Global University Project*. While these policies have encouraged selected institutions to adopt international practices, critics argue that such efforts often amount to a superficial display of "internationalism," masking resistance to deeper institutional change.

This research draws upon a multiple-case study of eight Japanese universities, based on in-depth interviews with 39 internationalization officers. Qualitative data analysis revealed stark disparities between "elite" universities—those receiving substantial government grants—and private "non-elite" institutions with limited access to resources. Elite universities have increased their numbers of international students and faculty, largely through English-medium instruction programs, yet these initiatives primarily serve to meet short-term quantitative targets set by the government. In contrast, non-elite universities employ internationalization mainly as a branding tool, using images of Caucasian international students to appeal to domestic applicants (who are their *actual* customers).

Overall, the study highlights how structural inequalities and performative strategies have shaped Japan's internationalization agenda, raising questions about the authenticity and sustainability of these reforms.

Keywords: internationalization, higher education, education policy, Japan, performativity

Designing Japanese Can-Do Learning Paths with AI: A Graph-Based Micro-Lesson Engine

Dragana Špica
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Benedikt Perak
University of Rijeka

We present an AI-driven system, "Japanese Language Learning Assistant," that generates on-demand lessons from the 605 Can-Do descriptors published by the Japan Foundation (2023), organized across CEFR levels A1–C2. The system uses a directed knowledge graph where each CanDoDescriptor node stores metadata (level, topic, semantic domain) and textual descriptions in Japanese and English.

A key contribution is the use of vector embeddings of CanDoDescriptor description strings to compute semantic similarity. These embeddings enable contextual relationships between nodes, forming a network where edges are weighted by similarity scores and constrained by semantic domain boundaries. This approach connects Can-Dos beyond explicit prerequisites, supporting adaptive learning paths that reflect semantic relatedness.

Each generated lesson includes: (a) Can-Do explanation with objective, topic, and level; (b) scenario-specific text with target vocabulary and grammar; (c) vocabulary and grammar explanations; (d) exercises; and (e) AI-supported conversation practice with feedback. Preliminary prototypes generate coherent A1–B2 content, indicating that graph-based orchestration enhanced by vectorized semantic relations improves the contextual organization of Can-Do descriptors for personalized learning.

Keywords: Japanese language learning, Can-Do descriptors, knowledge graphs, vector embeddings, AI-assisted education

On the Concept of Freedom in the Japanese Language

Divna Tričković
University of Belgrade

Freedom is a universal ideal, yet its meaning is shaped by cultural context. In political and philosophical discourse, it is often framed between individual autonomy and social cohesion—understood as either the freedom to act or the freedom from constraints.

This paper investigates how the concept of freedom is encoded in the Japanese language, focusing on the word 自由 (*jiyū*). Employing an ethnolinguistic approach, we analyze dictionary definitions and collocations from the BCCWJ corpus (via the NLB), alongside comparisons with English, Serbian, and student essays from the *Sumiyasui-kuni* corpus.

Our findings suggest that while *jiyū* largely aligns with the Western idea of civil rights, it retains older semantic layers associated with arbitrariness or self-indulgence. Corpus data reveal two dominant usage patterns: first, *jiyū* frequently appears as an adverb modifying verbs (e.g., 自由にふるまう*jiyūni furumau* to behave freely); second, it commonly occurs in compound nouns or noun phrases (e.g., 自由貿易 *jiyū bōeki* free trade), forming relatively fixed collocations.

By examining the typical meanings and recurring verb and noun combinations of *jiyū*, we explore how language reflects the cultural tension between individual liberty and societal harmony in Japanese society.

Keywords: corpus, dictionary definitions, freedom, meaning, 自由 (*jiyū*)

クロアチアの日本人留学生はどのように留学先の友人関係を構築するのか
―質的事例分析からの異文化間交流支援検討―

Friendship Formation Processes of Japanese Exchange Students in Croatia: A Qualitative Analysis for Developing Intercultural Support Strategies

上林 彰仁 (Akihito Uebayashi)

ザグレブ大学 (University of Zagreb)

留学生は勉学を行いながら、留学先の人々との交流や友人関係も期待している（奥西ほか 2021）。本発表では、ザグレブ大学の2024～2025年度日本人交換留学生2名（以下「学生A」「学生B」）について、クロアチア人や他国出身留学生との友人関係構築に至った過程を解明する。小林（2020）によると、近年の日本人留学生は留学先の多国籍環境下で、人々との触れ合いから達成される自己成長に価値を見出しているという。留学生の友人関係構築までには、留学前期では「相手から教わる」「話題を共有する」、後期では「体験を共有する」「安定した信頼感を持つ」という時系列的な通過点が確認されている（加藤　2024：63）。本発表では、学生Aと学生Bに留学中の友人作りの過程や成果、困難点とその対応方法などについて半構造化インタビューを行い、これらのデータをうえの式質的分析法（上野 2018）で分析する。そして、二者の事例を探り、彼ら以前にいた日本人留学生の振り返り（例．日本の母校大学発行の留学体験記）等とも比較する。これらを基に、クロアチア国内の大学における日本人留学生に対し、友人関係を含む人間関係構築について、学校や教職員はどのような支援ができるかを検討する。

キーワード：クロアチア、日本人留学生、友人関係構築、異文化間交流支援、うえの式質的分析法

Motivation and the Role of Technology in Japanese Pronunciation Development

Motoko Ueyama

University of Bologna

This study investigates multiple factors influencing non-native Japanese pronunciation. Thirty-three Italian learners of Japanese (JLPT N5 level) provided two types of data: (1) online questionnaire responses on their use of digital tools, intrinsic motivation, perceived pronunciation difficulty, and attitudes toward Japanese language and culture; (2) speech samples, consisting of a self-introduction and dialogue reading recorded on their smartphones. These samples were rated for fluency, comprehensibility, nativelikeness, and accuracy by two native-speaking raters (*ICC* = .86). Pearson correlations were used to examine links between questionnaire responses and pronunciation ratings. Results showed neither digital tool use nor perceived difficulties correlated significantly with ratings. Most participants rated pronunciation tools as very helpful (averaging above 4 on a 5-point scale) and showed similarly high cultural interest, suggesting ceiling effects that limited associations with pronunciation outcomes. In contrast, higher ratings across all measures were significantly correlated with stronger desire for fluency (r = .54–.65) and greater value placed on Japanese (r = .49–.75). This underscores the need for pronunciation-focused pedagogical frameworks that integrate digital tools to sustain learners' intrinsic goals. In conclusion, we discuss ways to integrate pronunciation into the learning process, with attention to learners' native language backgrounds.

Keywords: motivation, pronunciation, pronunciation assessment, pronunciation learning tools, pronunciation teaching

Evidentiality in Old Japanese

Vít Ulman
Palacký University Olomouc

This paper focuses on the phenomenon of evidentiality in Old Japanese using the Oxford NINJAL corpus of Old Japanese (ONCOJ). Evidentiality appears as a grammatical feature in some languages of the world where it expresses the nature of evidence for a given statement (direct (sensory) evidence, hearsay, inference, etc.). While evidential markers are clearly present in Old Japanese, they appear not to be as prevalent in the extant texts as in the later stages of the language. The most salient Old Japanese evidential marker is *miyu*, derived from the verb 'to see'. The collocations in which it appears will be analysed to elucidate its semantic scope. Subsequently, other markers that could have been potentially used in evidential meaning will be discussed, such as the modal past marker -*kyeri*. As for *miyu*, preliminary results show a relatively low frequency of use; it is attested only 36 times in the whole corpus. Mostly it appears after motion verbs, which hints towards a relatively low level of semantic bleaching and possibly recent grammaticalization.

Keywords: evidentiality, Old Japanese, ONCOJ, historical linguistics, grammaticalization

Reevaluating Pacifism from Okinawa's Perspective:
People, Movements, and Geopolitical Realities

Nataša Visočnik Gerželj

University of Ljubljana

This paper looks at the idea of pacifism in Japan through the lens of Okinawa, a region with a unique history of anti-military activism and a strong local movement advocating for peace. Japan's constitutional commitment to pacifism, as outlined in Article 9, is a symbol of its national identity. However, Okinawa's residents have a long history of challenging military bases and nuclear threats by expressing resistance, highlighting regional disparities, and challenging national policies. This study explores how Okinawa's civil society and grassroots movements actively promote pacifist principles amid ongoing security arrangements, such as the presence of the US military and regional tensions. It also examines how Okinawan activism interacts with national and international discourse, balancing local pacifist values against geopolitics. Recent policy shifts, such as the 2015 reinterpretation of Japan's self-defence policies, are analysed in detail using Okinawa as a case study, highlighting its ongoing efforts to maintain peace in the face of ongoing militarisation. In the end, Okinawa's case highlights the different and contested ideas of pacifism in Japan, showing how strong these ideas are and the importance of regional voices in creating Japan's peace-focused identity.

Keywords: Okinawa, pacifism, civil movements, identity, geopolitics

Beyond Philology: Teaching Japanese Studies through Ethnography and Transnational Perspectives

Lenka Vyleťalová

Palacký University Olomouc

Traditionally, Japanese philology has emphasized the study of language, literature, and history within the bounded framework of the nation-state. However, such an 'area studies'–based paradigm often perpetuates a rigid separation between the observer and the observed, echoing colonial imaginaries. In Central European Japanese studies, orientalist traditions have long dominated, reinforcing divisions between the humanities and social sciences, as well as between the regions of study in Asia. This paper argues that integrating small fieldwork-based projects enhances students' understanding of Japan in a transnational context. Training in ethnographic methods—through interviews, participant observation, and document analysis—fosters reflexivity, intercultural engagement, and awareness of transnational flows, equipping students to critically examine social and cultural complexities that stem beyond nation-state frameworks. The paper will present concrete examples of this approach. Some projects investigate Japanese diaspora communities in Europe, exploring identity and belonging; others examine Japan-related subcultures, such as anime or cosplay communities, and their local adaptations; still others focus on Japanese gastronomy and restaurants, analyzing culinary practices alongside wider cultural and economic exchange. These fieldwork experiences allow students to observe and analyze Japan's global presence while developing methodological and analytical skills rarely emphasized in the traditional philological curricula.

Keywords: Japanese studies, ethnographic teaching, transnationalism, philology and area studies

Linguistic Tendencies in Japanese Youth Slangs

Naoya Watabe
The University of Osaka

This presentation focuses on how Japanese youth slangs are generated at the present day. It has been stated that neologisms tend to be formed by segmental change (coalescence and/or deletion), compounding and truncation. Reviewing the data from recent surveys released online, we find that this generalization also holds true for the slang that were regarded as 'trend words' in the 2020s. In addition, the following tendencies were observed. First, while short words were popular in 2021 and 2022, relatively long words and phrases have been likely to be used since 2023. Second, even though these words/phrases are used in casual speech, several formal-like components (e.g., *kaiwai* 'group'; *kōbun* 'typical phrase') have recently been adopted. Finally, the number of cases including loanwords or foreign-origin components was small. This point strikingly differentiates the recent slang from those in the 1990s and the 2000s. To summarize, recent youth slang are generally formed in the same manner as previously. What is notable is that formal-like elements are more likely and foreign ones are less likely to be used in recent years. It is expected that the current work provides a clue to elucidation of the present-day Japanese youth culture.

Keywords: Japanese, linguistics, youth slang, neologism, morphology

A Study on the Transformation of Japanese ODA Diplomacy into an Investment-Driven Development Model: The Case of Malaysia

Hung-lin Yeh

China University of Science and Technology

This study investigates the strategic transformation of Japan's overseas aid policy toward Malaysia, tracing the shift from conventional Official Development Assistance (ODA) to a model grounded in investment and development finance. Against the backdrop of China's accelerated expansion in Southeast Asia via the Belt and Road Initiative, Japan has reoriented its aid diplomacy to prioritize high-quality infrastructure investment and private sector engagement, thereby reinforcing its economic leverage and geopolitical presence in Malaysia.

Through in-depth policy analysis and expert interviews, the research examines not only the driving forces behind Japan's strategic shift, but also the operational modalities and measurable outcomes—focusing specifically on flagship infrastructure projects in Malaysia. The results demonstrate that Japan's reconfigured diplomatic model has substantively improved the quality of Malaysia's infrastructure and promoted effective technology transfer, while simultaneously serving as a counterbalance to China's growing regional influence.

By elucidating the developmental trajectory of Japanese aid diplomacy in the Malaysian context, this study also provides broader insights and policy recommendations for Malaysia in navigating international cooperation and strategic partner choices.

Keywords: Official Development Assistance (ODA), Belt and Road Initiative, East Coast Rail Link (ECRL), Japanese foreign policy

異文化理解と自己アイデンティティの変化
—「翻訳を伴わない翻訳」と「仲介」の関係—

Intercultural Understanding and the Transformation of Self-Identity: Exploring the Relationship Between 'Translation Without Translations' and Cultural Mediation

鈴木裕子 (Yuko Suzuki)

マドリード・アウトノマ大学（Autonomous University of Madrid)

異文化理解とは、自己アイデンティティに関わる作業である。日本語、日本文化に出会った一個人がどのように異文化としての日本語、日本文化を理解し、自分のアイデンティティの中に取り込み、変容していくのか。Pym は著書Exploring translation theories 第二版 (2014)で、8.3「翻訳を伴わない翻訳」の中に8.3.1 として「仲介」を書き加え、「翻訳を伴わない翻訳と仲介は同義語である」と言及している。その意味を解き明かすために6,7年前に日本語学習者であるスペイン人にライフストーリー・インタビューを行い、その内容を分析した。個人はまず異文化に出会ったとき、自分の中で異文化に対する「翻訳を伴わない翻訳」を行う。そして、自分なりに異文化を咀嚼し、理解した上で「仲介」という形で他者とコミュニケーションを取る（Suzuki　2024）という結論に達した。今回はその時ライフストーリー・インタビューを行った3名に再度縦断的なインタビューを行った。当時の日本語、日本文化に対する「翻訳を伴わない翻訳」は時を経て、どのように変化し、どのような「仲介」を行っているのか。そこには新たに発見された「翻訳を伴わない翻訳」と、生き様を自己アイデンティティとして示すような「仲介」に挑戦する姿があった。

キーワード：異文化理解、自己アイデンティティ、翻訳を伴わない翻訳、仲介、ライフストーリー・インタビュー

Exhibition Details

“Japan in Pula: 10th Anniversary of Japanese Studies”

Project writing, planning, organization, and implementation of the exhibition

Prof. Irena Srdanović, PhD, Department of Asian Studies, Faculty of Humanities in Pula

Matea Radaković, Assistant, Department of Asian Studies, Faculty of Humanities in Pula

Participation in the organization of the exhibition

Dora Bračun, Assistant, Department of Asian Studies (exhibition setup, organizational support)

Asst. Prof. Breza Žižović, Design and Audiovisual Communications (picture books and easels)

Asst. Prof. Katja Milković, PhD, Design and Audiovisual Communications (photo editing, mural design)

Marko Sandrić, student, Design and Audiovisual Communications (photo editing)

Nino Udovičić, student, Design and Audiovisual Communications; elective course Japanese Language and Culture (picture books)

Vesna Jaklin Pantić, leader of the Batik group, Art Studio Pula (painting exhibition setup)

Snježana Battistin, student of the Batik group, Art Studio Pula (painting exhibition setup)

Doris Blagar, student, Department of Asian Studies (exhibition setup, organizational support)

Saeko Yamauchi, Lecturer, Department of Asian Studies (workshops)

Kristijan Modrušan, *kamishibai* author (*kamishibai* performance)

Sofia Kuwahara, student, Department of Asian Studies (*kamishibai* performances)

Mei Kinoshita, intern, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies (workshops)

Miwa Matsuoka, intern, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies (workshops)

Yuna Obata, intern, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies (workshops)

Davide Criscuolo, Karlo Milutin, Lara Markuš, Antonio Pavković, and Antonia Zeleničić (assistance with exhibition setup)

Participation in the exhibition with works and items

Teachers, alumni, and students of Japanese Studies in Pula: Doris Blagar, Kristina Brana, Andrea Helena Bulić, Sara Dangubić, Olga Đusić, Veronika Goldiňáková, Noel Ivanković, Erik Jelčić, Dora Planinić, Stefani Silli, Irena Srdanović, Laura Šinko, and Dragana Špica

Authors of the Batik Group: Snježana Battistin, Mladenka Čerljenko, Rina Cukon, Tamara Došen, Gordana Ivetac, Ljubica Lipovčić, Neda Morović Dugina, Rozi Peruško,Ljiljana Siljan, Irena Srdanović, Dubravka Sladoljev Jakovljev, and Milena Zirojević Bašić

Picture book design: Mirna Franušić, Antonio Karan, and Nino Udovičić

Handmade doll: Danijela Radeka

Children's story author: Kristijan Modrušan

Ukiyo-e collection video display: Stella Zhivkova (belonged to an Italian architect Pietro M. Montani (1829 – 1887); works by Utagawa Hiroshige III, Ochiai Yoshiiku, Utagawa Yoshitora, Shosai Ikkei, and Eirin Ikkosai depicting the dynamic times of Japan in Meiji period.

Special thanks for item donations: Grad Pula, Grad Hekinan, Gradska knjižnica i čitaonica Pula, Čitaonica Kluba umirovljenika Pula, Veleposlanstvo Japana u RH, Mia Elezović, Reiko Omura-Elezović, Mirna Potkovac - Endrighetti, Danijela Radeka, Barbara Unković, and Hikari Yamauchi

Financial support: Toshiba Foundation

List of the
Conference Participants

Umit Altintas
Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University
altintasumit@yahoo.com

Mino Amari
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies
amari.mino.s0@tufs.ac.jp

Maria Carlotta Avanzi
Akita Prefectural University
mcastorsan@gmail.com

Nikola Barić
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
nbaric@unipu.hr

Andrej Bekeš
University of Ljubljana
linguisticaasiatica@yahoo.com

Adam Bednarczyk
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun
adam.bednarczyk@umk.pl

Giulio Antonio Bertelli
The University of Osaka
bertelli.hmt@osaka.u.ac.jp

Mieta Bobanović Dasko
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
mibobanov@unipu.hr

Dora Bračun
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
dbracun@unipu.hr

Matea Cakić
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
mcakic@student.unipu.hr

Eddy Y. L. Chang
University of Salamanca / Autonomous University of Madrid
idu071438@usal.es / eddy.chang@uam.es

Stephen Christopher
King's College London (KCL)
Stephen.christopher@kcl.ac.uk

Luka Culiberg
University of Ljubljana
luka.culiberg@ff.uni-lj.si

Sara Dangubić
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula / University of Ljubljana
sara.dangubic.sd@gmail.com

Blanka Despotović
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
bdespotovic@unipu.hr

Mária Ildikó Farkas
Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary
farkas.ildiko@kre.hu

Maria Elena Garcia Jerez
University of Talca
maria.garcia@utalca.cl

Nina Golob
University of Ljubljana
nina.golob@ff.uni-lj.si

Maria Grajdian
Hiroshima University
maria.grajdian@gmail.com

Xiaoyang Hao
Kyushu University
hao@scs.kyushu-u.ac.jp

Joy Hendry
Oxford Brookes University
jhendry@brookes.ac.uk

Zsófia Hidvégi
Eötvös Loránd University
hidvegi.zsofia@btk.elte.hu

Kristina Hmeljak Sangawa
University of Ljubljana
kristina.hmeljak@ff.uni-lj.si

Tomoko Ikeya

Kobe Shoin University
tikeya@shoin.ac.jp

Anela Ilijaš
Yeungnam University
anelailijas@yu.ac.kr

Tsvetomira Ivanova
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski
ivanova.tsvetomira@gmail.com

Jan Marko Jukić
University of Juraj Dobrila in Pula / University of Ljubljana
janmarkojukic@gmail.com

Keigo Kamakura
The University of Tokyo
1129kamasan117@g.ecc.u-tokyo.ac.jp

Ratomir Karlović
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
ratomir.karlovic@unipu.hr

Tomoaki Kono
The University of Osaka
t.kono.hmt@osaka-u.ac.jp

Yuka Kurihara
Kobe Gakuin University
kurihara@gc.kobegakuin.ac.jp

Iva Lakić Parać
University of Zagreb
ilakic@m.ffzg.hr

Tea Laszowski
University of Rijeka
tealaszowski@gmail.com

Bonnie Yushih Liao
Tamkang University
cocoaglory@gmail.com

Sara Librenjak
University of Salford / Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
sara.librenjak@gmail.com

Hans Peter Liederbach
Kwansei Gakuin University
hpl@kwansei.ac.jp

Kikuo Maekawa
National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics
kikuo@ninjal.ac.jp

Junko Majima
The University of Osaka
jmajima1@mac.com

Mateja Matić
University of Belgrade
matejamatic098@gmail.com

Roberta Matković
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
roberta.matkovic@unipu.hr

Caterina Mazza
Ca' Foscari University of Venice
caterinamazza@unive.it

Beatrix Mecsi
ELTE University Budapest
bmecsi@gmail.com

Yamini Meena
University of Delhi
yaminimeena333@gmail.com

Atsushi Mori
Mukogawa Women's University
moria24@gmail.com

Nagisa Moritoki Škof
University of Ljubljana
Nagisa.MoritokiSkof@ff.uni-lj.si

Lorenzo Nespoli
Ca' Foscari University of Venice
lorenzo.nespoli@unive.it

Ayako Oku
Kyoritsu Women's University
aoku@kyoritsu-wu.ac.jp

Makiko Oya-Haragi
Tallinn University
makiko@tlu.ee

Tolga Ozsen
Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University
ozsen@comu.edu.tr

Giuseppe Pappalardo
Ca'Foscari University of Venice
giuseppe.pappalardo@unive.it

Benedikt Perak
University of Rijeka
bperak@uniri.hr

Igor Prusa
Metropolitan University Prague
igorprusa@gmail.com

Matea Radaković
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
matea.radakovic@unipu.hr

Velna Rončević
University of Zagreb
vroncevi@m.ffzg.hr

Mia Rovis
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
mrovis@unipu.hr

Hosna Salimi
University of Tehran
hsalimi@ut.ac.ir; hosna.sa98@yahoo.com

Klemen Senica
Independent Researcher
klemen.senica@gmail.com

Susanne Schermann
Meiji University
susanne@meiji.ac.jp

Chikako Shigemori Bučar
University of Ljubljana
Chikako.ShigemoriBucar@ff.uni-lj.si

Stefani Silli
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula / University of Ljubljana
stefani.silli@unipu.hr

Abhijitha Singh
Jawaharlal Nehru University
kj.abhijitha.13@gmail.com

Alma Smajić
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
asmajic@unipu.hr

Irena Srdanović
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
isrdanovic@unipu.hr

Yuko Suzuki
Autonomous University of Madrid
yukoszk24@gmail.com

Laura Šinko
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
laurasinko123@gmail.com

Theo Šlogar
Gradec Translations and Tour Guiding
theo.slogar@gmail.com

Dragana Špica
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
dspica@unipu.hr

Divna Tričković
University of Belgrade
divna.trickovic@gmail.com

Akihito Uebayashi
University of Zagreb
auebayas@m.ffzg.hr

Motoko Ueyama
University of Bologna
motoko.ueyama@unibo.it

Vít Ulman
Palacký University Olomouc
vit.ulman@upol.cz

Nataša Visočnik Gerželj
University of Ljubljana
natasa.visocnik@ff.uni-lj.si

Lenka Vyleťalová
Palacký University Olomouc
vyletalova@gmail.com

Naoya Watabe
The University of Osaka
w.naoya2821@gmail.com

Saeko Yamauchi
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
syamauchi@unipu.hr

Hung-lin Yeh
China University of Science and Technology
shozaemonjp@gmail.com

Stella Zhivkova
Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski
stzhivkova@uni-sofia.bg

Conference Organization

The Conference Organizer

Juraj Dobrila University of Pula (Aldo Negri Street 6 /Ul. Alda Negrija 6),
Faculty of Humanities, Department of Asian Studies

Conference Chair: Prof. Irena Srdanović

Conference Coordinator: Matea Radaković, Assistant

Organizing Committee:

- Irena Srdanović, Full Professor, Head of Department of Asian Studies, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Dragana Špica, Assistant Professor, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Stefani Silli, Language Instructor, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Saeko Yamauchi, Language Instructor, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Matea Radaković, Teaching Assistant, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Dora Bračun, Teaching Assistant, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Nikola Barić, Teaching Assistant, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Sara Dangubić, Teaching Assistant, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Scientific Committee:

- Irena Srdanović, Full Professor, Head of Department of Asian Studies, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Dragana Špica, Assistant Professor, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Stefani Silli, Language Instructor, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Saeko Yamauchi, Language Instructor, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Matea Radaković, Teaching Assistant, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
- Nataša Visočnik Gerželj, Associate Professor, University of Ljubljana
- Nagisa Moritoki Škof, Assistant Professor, University of Ljubljana
- Danijela Vasić, Associate Professor, University of Belgrade
- Divna Tričković, Associate Professor, University of Belgrade
- Dalibor Kličković, Associate Professor, University of Belgrade
- Divna Glumac, Assistant Professor, University of Belgrade
- Kristina Hmeljak Sangawa, Assistant Professor, University of Ljubljana
- Nina Golob, Assistant Professor, University of Ljubljana
- Tinka Delakorda Kawashima, Associate Professor, Hiroshima University
- Boštjan Bertalanič, Associate Professor, Josai University
- Jiří Matela, Assistant Professor, Masaryk University
- Sara Librenjak, PhD, Lecturer
- Takehiko Maruyama, Professor, Senshu University
- Kenta Yamada, Professor, Senshu University
- Stella Todorova Zivkova, Professor, Sofia University
- Halina Zawiszová, Assistant Professor, Palacký University Olomouc
- Vít Ulman, Assistant Professor, Palacký University Olomouc
- Ra Mason, Associate Professor, University of East Anglia
- Cao Hongquan, Professor, Xi'an Jiaotong University
- Igor Grbić, Associate Professor, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula