

# LLL230 The Japanese Language through Time

3rd and 4th quarters, Sophomore

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<b>Instructor</b>	Christopher Hennessy M.A.
<b>Style of Class</b>	Seminar
<b>Number of Credits</b>	2
<b>Day and Period</b>	Tuesday, period 1

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## Course Description

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There are around 130,000,000 million speakers of the Japanese language in the world today. This makes modern Japanese one of the most spoken languages in the history of the world. Yet go back 200 years into history, and already most modern speakers of the language would have trouble comprehending Japanese at that time. What has changed? Why has it changed? Using key principles learned in ENG 200: Introduction to Linguistics as well as introducing important concepts and tools of historical linguistics, this course will take a chronological look at the Japanese language over time – from the Pre-Nara period to present day – and examine issues of historical language change in Japanese, the socio-linguistic dimensions of Japanese, Japanese language instruction, and Japanese in the context of the world's languages.

## Course Objectives

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Students will:

- 1) Examine the historical changes in the Japanese spoken and written languages
- 2) Analyze real language-change phenomena using historical linguistic methods
- 3) Reinforce and apply key linguistic skills and concepts learned in ENG: Introduction to Linguistics
- 4) Understand the Japanese language in a global context

## Prerequisites

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ENG 200: Introduction to Linguistics (Introduction to Linguistics)

## Class Materials

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Textbook:

- (1) Shibatani, M. (1990) *The Languages of Japan*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- (2) Seeley, C. (2000) *A History of Writing in Japan*. Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press.

Reference book:

- (1) Frellesvig, B. (2010) *A History of the Japanese Language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- (2) Ramsey, R. Robert (1982) "Language Change in Japan and the Odyssey of a Teisetsu" in *Journal of Japanese Studies*. Vol. 8, No. 1 (Winter, 1982), pp. 97-131

## Course Methods

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The teaching method used in this course will follow a seminar style. The instructor will regularly offer lectures on the assigned readings. Each student should come to class prepared to actively discuss the assigned texts, as well work in small groups on certain questions or problems presented in class.

## Evaluation/Assessment

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**Historical Linguistic Assignments:** Students will be given four homework assignments throughout the semester which highlight the tools historical linguists use to determine historical change in languages.

**Mid-Term Report:** Students will write a three-page report on a Japanese historical linguistic topic assigned by the instructor. Students should synthesize and express their view on the given topic based on factual evidence obtained in class or in their own independent studies.

**Analytical Paper:** Students will write a five-page paper in which they analyze some aspect of the Japanese language in a historical linguistic context. Students are free to choose their own topic. At the end of the semester, students will present their analytical paper in class.

## Grading

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- 20% Active In-Class Participation
- 20% Historical Linguistic Assignment (4)
- 10% Mid-Term Report
- 20% Analytical Paper Presentation
- 30% Analytical Paper

## Course Schedule

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### ***Week 1 : Japanese and the Language Families of the World***

- Topics Covered: (1) World Language Families  
(2) Japanese Language in the World

### ***Week 2: Old Japanese (700~800 A.D)***

- Topics covered: (1) Phonology [Consonant and vowel structure]  
(2) Grammar [Verbs, adjectives, particles, pronouns]  
(3) Loanwords [Ainu, Chinese, Korean, Sanskrit]  
(4) Proto-Japanese

### ***Week 3: The Written Language of Old Japanese***

- Topics covered: (1) Adaptation of Chinese Script  
(2) Logographic/Phonographic Writing [Kojiki and Nihongi]  
(3) *Man'yōgana and Senmyō-gaki*

### ***Week 4: Early Middle Japanese (800-1200 A.D.)***

- Topics Covered: (1) Phonology [Syllable structure, long syllables, onbin]  
(2) Grammar [Verbs, adjectives, auxiliaries, particles]  
(3) Development of kakari-musubi

### ***Week 5: The Written Language of Early Middle Japanese***

- Topics covered: (1) Development of *kana* [hiragana, katakana, hentaigana]  
(2) Kanji-kana *majiribun*  
(3) Sinification of Japanese

### ***Week 6: Late Middle Japanese (1200-1600 A.D.)***

- Topics covered: (1) Phonology [nasality, loss of /w/, long vowels]  
(2) Grammar [verb morphology, existential verbs, syntactic changes]  
(3) Honorific language

### ***Week 7: The Written Language of Late Middle Japanese***

- Topics covered: (1) *Rekishiteki kanazukai*  
(2) Fujiwara Teika's contributions  
(3) Kamakura and Muromachi era kana usage

### ***Week 8: Early Modern Japanese (1600-1868 A.D)***

- Topics covered: (1) Common language of the Edo period  
(2) Phonology [Merger of /d/ and /z/, delabialization of /f/, phonemic changes due to loanwords]  
(3) Grammar [formation of volitional verb form, adjectives and copula]

### ***Week 9: The Written Language of Early Modern Japanese***

- Topics covered: (1) Historical kana usage of Keichū  
(2) Writing conventions in the Edo Period

### ***Week 10: Modern Japanese (1868-Present)***

- Topics covered: (1) Unification and Standardization in Meiji Japan  
(2) Westernization of Japanese

***Week 11: The Written Language of Modern Japanese***

- Topics covered: (1) Meiji-era reforms to the Japanese writing system  
(2) Post-World War II reforms to the Japanese writing system

***Week 12: Dialects of Japan***

- Topics covered: (1) Dialect divisions and their development  
(2) Theories of dialect division in Japan  
(3) Accent

***Week 13: Japanese Language Education***

- Topics covered: (1) Missionaries and Japanese language education from Edo to Meiji  
(2) American military and the “Army Method” in World War II  
(3) Japanese language education in internment camps  
(4) Modern Japanese and National Language education

***Week 14: Japanese Language in Modern Pop Culture***

- Topics covered: (1) Modern youth language  
(2) Japanese language and information technology

***Week 15: Presentations on Final Report Topic***

**Preparation and Follow-up**

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- Preparation: Read the relevant portions of the reference materials (about one hour)
- Follow-up: Review the content of the lecture and note any points you are not sure of (about one hour)