

The GLOCAL Conference in Asia,
The Conference on Asian Linguistic Anthropology

The GLOCAL 2020

Bintulu, Sarawak, Malaysia

5 - 8 February 2020

Editors: Asmah Haji Omar

Susan Needham

Nathan Hill

The CALA 2020 Proceedings Paper 8 - 3

Ethnographical Language Work, Paper 3

**Compliment Strategies Employed by Japanese and
Malaysian Tour Guides during Tour Sessions**

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Compliment Strategies Employed by Japanese and Malaysian Tour Guides during Tour Sessions

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Abstract

This research is a comparative study of Japanese language communication between the Japanese and Malay tourist guides during tourism tour sessions. The research goal is to examine patterns of compliment strategies implemented throughout the interactions of the tour sessions. The study results acquired are in the form of four recordings of a dialogue between the tourist guides and the tourists, in audio and video modes. The conversations are transcribed and coded. The tour guides included two Japanese native speakers and two Malaysian-Japanese speakers. In contrast, the tourists are Japanese native speakers who visited Malaysia, and Malaysians who attended the tourist attractions in Japan.

The study reveals that the frequency of compliments applied by both Japanese and Malaysian tour guides are alike, or in other words, there are no significant differences. Nevertheless, category, function and topic or theme of compliment utterance present substantial distinction.

Keywords: Humour, compliment, tourist guide, Japanese language, comparative study.

Introduction

One of the characters acquired by Japanese tourists (JT) is that they have high expectations and are demanding towards a service to which they have subscribed, in comparison to other international tourists (Reisinger and Turner 1999). They assume that the value or quality obtained must be equal to their own services in Japan towards foreign tourists. Among the services they subscribed to is the employment of tourist guides (TGs) as communication facilitators with the host country community, in order to obtain information on the tourist destinations that they would like to visit. Hence, by acquiring genuine Japanese communication skills, TGs perform a vital role in delivering tourism objectives for the JT. One of the communication skills that will be examined in this analysis is the compliment strategy that was identified as an essential strategy for facilitating interaction between two parties – tourists and TG during Tour Trip Session (TTS). This comparative study is anticipated to become the foundation for TGs enhancement in Japanese speaking skills, which will immediately influence the expectations of JT and can be a part of a literature review of the speech act of compliments studies.