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Linguistic Strategies Used during a Debate in the Japanese Diet: Individual Characteristics and the Tactical Use of Rhetoric and Impoliteness

Angela A-Jeoung KIM

1. Introduction

This paper aims to address two issues vis. the language use of two politicians in a one-on-one debate in the Japanese Diet, and the artful manipulation of linguistic devices by the two protagonists in employing insult as a strategy within that highly institutionalised setting. Specifically, I will examine, both at the lexical and discourse level, how impoliteness is manifested in the use of honorifics and the choice of terms of address/reference¹.

By examining impoliteness strategies such as insults and face-threatening acts employed in a political debate, the paper aims to contribute to the deeper understanding of the specific and goal-driven use of language in a political discourse.

2. Data, Background and Method

The data used for the current paper is a debate between then the Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda (Democratic Party of Japan, hereafter DPJ) and Shinzo Abe, president of the largest opposition party (Liberal Democratic Party, hereafter LDP) that took place in November 2012. The data was part of one-on-one debate between the party leaders² in a Diet session that took place on 14 November 2012 (Fundamental National Policies (joint meeting of both Houses))³. The transcript of the particular session used for analysis came from a 52-minute session. The transcript was obtained from the on-line full-text database of the minutes of the Diet⁴. It was used together with the unedited video footage from the video library of the homepage of the House of Representatives⁵. The end of the debate between Abe and Noda comes around the 35 minute mark. However, the first 7 minutes of the

session is mostly silent (as the members of the Diet were being seated) and there was an opening statement, followed by an introduction by the speaker of the house, for about 1.5 minutes. Therefore, the actual debate used as the data ran for approximately 26 minutes.

A Prime Minister's one-on-one debate with other party leaders in the Japanese Diet had been held since 1999, and the model on which it was based is question time in the English Parliament (東 2007: 116). Unlike plenary sessions of the Diet, in which prepared notes are read (松田 他. 2008: 55) improvised face-to-face interaction is noticeable in these debates, and thus a particular speaker's natural speaking style is likely to emerge (東 2007: 116; 服部 2011: 45).

The broad historical background of the debate is as following. The Noda government was experiencing a political impasse in which it was unable to "implement important policy measures because they are often met with opposition from within the DPJ" (The Mainichi Nov. 15, 2012). Prime Minister Noda succeeded in passing a package of bills on the integrated reform of the tax and social security system into law in August 2012. In the course of this the former DPJ leader, Ichiro Ozawa, and his allies left the party en masse in protest over the consumption tax increase being part of the tax system reforms. In return for cooperation on the tax raise, Noda was forced to promise the LDP and its ally, New Komeito, to dissolve the lower house "sometime soon" (The Mainichi Nov. 16, 2012). The promise was made to Abe's predecessor Sadakazu Tanigaki in August and the LDP and other opposition parties have been calling Noda a "liar" for not having dissolved the lower house (The Daily Yomiuri Nov. 15, 2012; The Mainichi Nov. 15, 2012). In the debate analysed in these pages, Abe reproaches the Prime Minister for still not having kept his promise. The prime minister, now prepared to give a date, finally announces his decision to call a general election on December 16. However Noda sets some conditions on the election, among which are the LDP's support in passing the two bills: one to allow the government to issue deficit-covering bonds, and the other to reduce the number of lower house seats from 300 to 295 to rectify vote value disparity in the chamber (The Mainichi Nov. 16, 2012; The Daily Yomiuri Nov. 17, 2012).

Political debates with specific purposes such as "negotiating, persuading and position-claiming, both along and across ideological and party lines" (Ilie 2001: 235) have distinct features including "the preference for confrontation and the presence of a multiple audience" (Ilie 2001: 244). The multiple audience includes

the audience directly addressed by the speaker (the members of the Diet), the audience who are witnessing the exchange in the gallery, and the TV viewers (Ilie 2001: 244).

Rudeness in everyday conversation is conspicuous and calls for redress (Kasper 1990: 208). On the other hand, in highly institutionalised political settings such as political debates, rudeness/impoliteness/insults “have acquired an acknowledged legitimacy that underlies ritualised confrontational encounters” (Ilie 2004: 52) and can be used deliberately as a strategy to serve a particular purpose. Ilie (2004: 47) postulates that “[u]nlike other types of insults, parliamentary insults fulfil different functions with regard to reinforcing certain belief and values, challenging others, as well as to [*sic*] imposing or rejecting certain norms and principles that regulate the practices for negotiating short-term and long-term political goals”. Ilie (2001: 258) suggests the following reasons for parliamentarians to use insults in political debates:

It is “the wish to indirectly project a positive institutional and non-institutional self-image by offering a negative image of the political adversaries (MPs and their respective parties), the intention to affect the understanding process of a multiple audience (parliamentary and the public at large), and the expectation of ulterior institutional gains and retribution” (Ilie 2001: 258).

A number of studies have looked at rudeness/(im)politeness/insults in the political setting (Chilton 1990; Ilie 2001, 2004; Locher and Watts 2008; García-Pastor 2008; Sibamoto-Smith 2011, *inter alia*). García-Pastor (2008) refers to political debates as ‘zero-sum games’ which contain a ‘negativity cycle’. In these ‘negativity cycles’, participants in the debates exhibit “a high degree of hostility towards the counter candidate, and constantly attempted to exert power over [the opponent]” (García-Pastor 2008: 102). Locher and Watts (2008: 78) observe that no linguistic behaviour is inherently polite or impolite as politeness/impoliteness has a ‘discursive’ nature. They point out that the notions of ‘polite’ or ‘impolite’ should be “understood as judgements by participants in the interaction in question” and say that “the uptake of a message is as important if not more important than the utterer’s original intention” (Locher and Watts 2008: 80)⁶. Ilie (2001: 256, 2004: 65) also notes that what determines the magnitude of the insulting statement is in fact the uptake or reaction to the perceived insult. Examples of this will be

discussed in 3.4.

In the analysis I adopt the method used in 東 (2006) and 東 (2007) and examine the sentence endings and particular verbs. Examining these reveals the choices made by the speakers. In addition to examining that, I will also investigate their choice of forms of address/reference, which similarly reveal the distinct characteristics of each speaker. The sentence final expressions have been determined by the transcript. This is to say, what is considered as a ‘sentence final expression’ in these analyses is the expression before the punctuation mark or period. This means that final expressions exclude the final expressions in subordinate clauses. For example, in the sentence 「国民の信を問うべきだ、そう要請しました。」 ‘(We) demanded that (the government) must seek a public mandate’, (要請) しました, ‘demanded’ is included as a sentence final expression whereas べきだ, ‘must’ is excluded. There are three exceptions to this convention and they all occur when the word order has been altered for rhetorical reasons (One produced by Abe 「連用制というのは極めて分かりにくい制度なんですよ、皆さん。」, ‘*Renyoosee* is a system that is extremely difficult to understand, for everyone’. The other two produced by Noda 「やりましよう、だから。」, ‘Let’s do it, for that reason’ and 「～がたくさんあります、歴史観、国家観から。」, ‘there are many～, with regard to history and the state’). These were counted as なんです, よ, ましよう, and あります. *Yo* and *ne* are viewed separately as interactional particles, separately that is from the copular or verb to which they are attached (e.g. 思いますよ will be counted as 思います and よ). In this debate only two interactional particles, *yo* and *ne* were used. Also during the debate, Abe used 3864 words which contained 110 sentence endings while Noda used 3314 words and 87 sentence endings.

3. Analysis

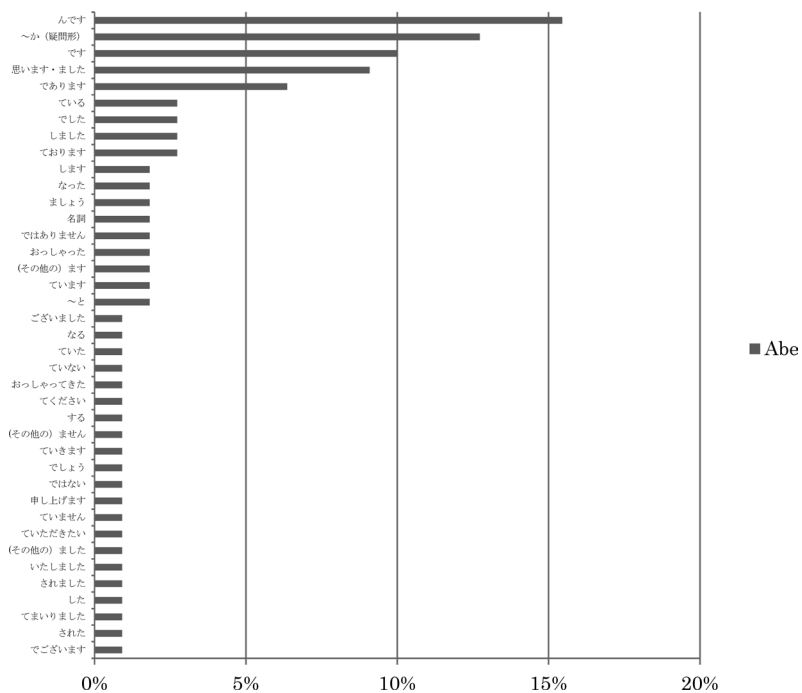
Graph 1 and 2 respectively show the sentence endings and significant verbs used by Shinzo Abe and Yoshihiko Noda in the debate.

In graphs 1 and 2, a significant contrast is clear with respect to the use of different sentence endings by the two politicians. In 3.1 and 3.2 below I will compare and examine the characteristics of Abe and Noda respectively.

3-1 Shinzo Abe, the President of LDP at the Debate⁷

～*N desu* was Abe’s most frequently used sentence ending expression (apart from the interactional particle *yo*) as evident in graph 1. In fact Abe used *yo* 25 times and ～*n desu* 17 times during the debate. Abe used ～*n desu* which express-

Abe



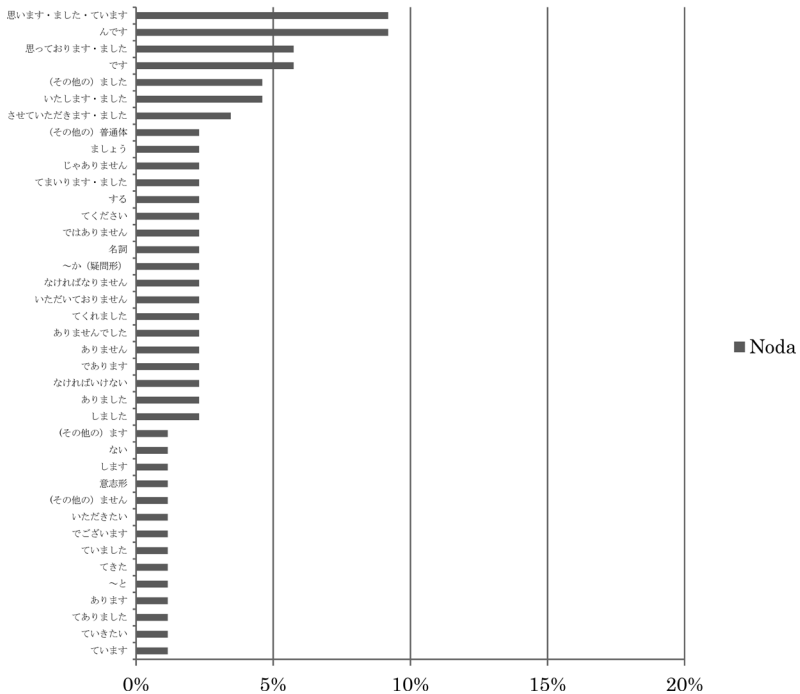
Graph 1. Sentence endings used by Shizo Abe

es an assertive attitude (Maynard 2005: 370) close to twice as frequently as Noda (raw count: Abe 17 times, and Noda 8 times). As graph 3 shows, Abe also uses the interactional particle *yo* extremely frequently. In fact, more than half of his *～n desu* utterances were employed in combination with *yo*. The addition of *yo* to *～n desu* brings an emphatic appeal (Maynard 2005: 291), and the added *yo* to an already assertive *～n desu* conveys “urgency and has the feeling of “I’m telling you, can’t you understand?” or “I’m telling you, please understand me”” (Maynard 2005: 291). This shows his assertive attitude. Some of the examples are as follows:

- (1) a. 三十兆円も圧縮をしているんですよ。

(My previous government) has reduced (the budget) to 3 trillion yen *n desu yo*.

Noda



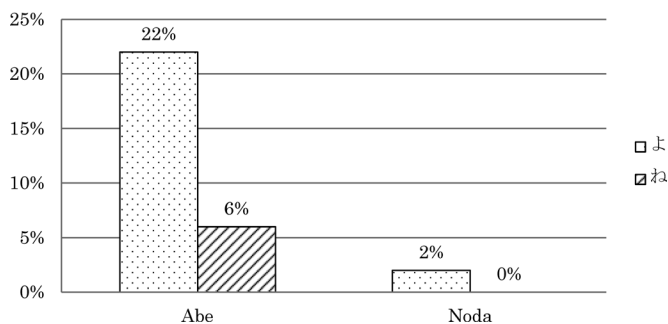
Graph 2. Sentence endings used by Yoshihiko Noda

- b. 野田総理、年末に解散・総選挙を行って、そして国民の信を得た新しい政権がしっかりと予算を編成して、そして思い切った補正予算を組んで、経済を立て直していく必要がある**んですよ**。

Prime Minister Noda, (you) should dissolve the lower house at the end of the year and call a general election. And it will be necessary *n desu yo* for the new government, which will have obtained the nation's confidence, to properly draw up an estimate, and decisively prepare, for the supplementary budget.

- c. 私はこんなことを言いたくありませんが、逃げてはいけな、あるいはうそをつくな、これは野田総理、今、野田総理はそんなことを言う資格は残念ながら**んですよ**。
I don't want to say things like this, but Prime Minister Noda, at the moment, you are unfortunately not qualified *n desu yo* to say things like 'one should not run away' or 'do not lie'.

Use of *yo* and *ne*



Graph 3. *Yo* and *ne* used by Shizo Abe and Yoshihiko Noda

As (1a-c) indicate Abe used $\sim n$ *desu yo* as he was trying to make it clear, to be understood as what he is stating is in fact the case.

Abe's use of the interrogative ending $\sim ka$ is also noteworthy, as he uses it, by percentage, approximately seven times more than Noda (raw count: Abe 14 times, and Noda twice). They are rhetorical questions as they are not really a question, but used in the statements where he "knows the answer perfectly well" (Kiefer 1980: 98). Especially when these questions are negative rhetorical questions, they indicate his 'definite attitude' (Kim 2007) by "emphatically assert[ing] the content being expressed" (Dušková 1981: 188). Also, keeping in mind the fact that the debate involves multiple audiences, this rhetorical characteristic can also function as a strategy to draw involvement from the audience.

- (2) a. そもそもこの党首討論において、野田総理、総理は、憲法違反と言われている定数は正を先行させる、そう約束した**じゃないですか**。

Originally, Prime Minister Noda, the prime minister has promised *janai desu ka* to put the rectification of the vote value disparity, which is unconstitutional, first in this one-on-one debate.

- b. なるべく多くの政党の皆さんが議論に参加をして、賛成できる環境を例えば議長があっせんをしてつくってくる、ずっとこうやってきた**ではないですか**。

So far it has been the case *dewanai desu ka* that, for example the speaker has been an intermediary in constructing an environment in which as many members as possible of different political parties could participate in the discussion and agreement.

- c. それなのに、それを全然進めてこなかったのは、解散をひたすら恐れ、それを行ってこなかったのは皆さんの方じゃありませんか。

And yet, it is you (r party) *ja arimasen ka* that didn't carry out, and didn't proceed with it, because you were afraid of dissolution.

In addition to the use of *yo*, a striking contrast can be seen in the respective use of *ne* in that *ne* is not used at all by Noda in the entire debate with Abe⁸:

- (3) a. 今、総理、十六日に選挙をする、それは約束ですね。約束ですね。よろしいですね。よろしいですね。

Right now, Prime Minister, having an election on the 16th, that is a promise *ne*? A promise *ne*? You are fine with it *ne*? You are fine with it *ne*?

- b. 今、総理は随分長々とお答えになりましたが、私の質問には全く答えていません。大変残念ですね。

The Prime Minister has been answering for quite a while but he has not answered my question. That's too bad *ne*.

- c. そして、今、トラスト・ミーという言葉が軽くなったとおっしゃった。確かにそうですね。

And, now he has said that the import of the phrase 'trust me' has become shallow. That is certainly right *ne*.

In (3a) *ne* is repeatedly used to request confirmation. In (3b) and (3c) however, *ne* is used to comment on what has just been said: in (3b) that the prime minister did not answer his question, and *ne* marks a comment of mild sarcasm. In (3c) Abe quotes what Prime Minister Noda has said, which is that the import of the phrase 'trust me' became 'shallow' and *ne* is used in providing an ironic agreement with that statement. In both cases Abe could have omitted *ne* making the statement sound more formal and severe. Not only do the uses of these *ne* mitigate the severe force of the utterance, but Abe once again is drawing multiple audiences to his utterance, by saying that it is not only him who thinks that, but others as well. With regard to the use of *ne*, Cook (1992) found an interesting tendency in the Diet interpellation. She reports that the opposition party members used *ne* 145 times, 35.51 times per 2000 words, while the government officials used *ne* only twice, 0.52 times per 2000 words (Cook 1992: 531). Cook (1992: 533) accounts for this phenomenon by noting that ministers' speeches are impersonal and de-

tached since the policies about which they are answering are usually made by bureaucrats, they are not necessarily the personal opinions of the ministers. On the other hand, “since the opposition party members are more likely to express personal beliefs, there is less psychological distance between themselves and what they say. Thus, the opposition party members can be more emotionally involved in their speeches” (Cook 1992: 533). The debate under consideration in this paper also confirms this pattern in the frequency of the use of *ne* by Abe, who is the president of the opposition party, and in the absence of the use of *ne* by Prime Minister Noda.

東 (2007: 92–98) discusses Abe’s use of *katakana* words and points out that of all the prime ministers through history Abe is the one who most used *katakana* words in his general policy speech (所信表明演説). The general image of *katakana* words are “new, young, fresh, modern, smart, intelligent, advanced” (東 2007: 96). Although not frequent, Abe used two *katakana* words in this debate⁹. However, it is not the frequency that is under consideration here. What is interesting is the way in which Abe’s two *katakana* words, チャーミング, ‘charming’, and ポピュリスト, ‘populist’ are used.

- (4) たまには総理のチャーミングな笑顔を見たいというふうに思います。

Once in a while I want to see the prime minister’s *charming smile*.

- (5) 民主党というのは、改めて、思いつきのポピュリスト政党だな、本当にそのように思いました。

(It) made me really think once again, that DPJ is an impulsive *populist political party*.

As can be seen in (4) and (5), both are used in the context where they are either ironic or negative. ‘Charming’ in (4) may be considered as a friendly comment, as the adjective ‘charming’ when describing a person according to Oxford English dictionary means ‘very polite, friendly, and likable’. However, ‘charming’ can also be used as an exclamation which can be ‘used as an ironic expression of displeasure or disapproval’. The context in which it is used is in accordance with the former as it is used as an adjective and there may be no clear evidence to say that Abe’s use of the word is being an expression of displeasure or disapproval here. However, the choice of チャーミング over other words such as 素敵な (or フレンドリーな if *katakana* was preferred) raises the possibility of this being an ironic

rather than a sincere statement. Although Abe's tone may not be especially ironic according to the video clip, the interpretation of irony is in relation to the context in which he made the comment about 'charming smile'. Before this, Abe lists how demanding it is to be a prime minister and that as Abe himself has experienced being a prime minister he understands it and would like to express his appreciation for the prime minister's efforts 'if possible' and wanted to see the prime minister's charming smile every once in a while. This is followed by 'but I have been making harsh remarks that he must keep his promises'. This means that the fact that he could not see the prime minister's charming smile is partially because of his own doing. Also with the video clip, there is a background noise right after Abe's mention of 'charming smile'. The background noise is unclear and not very loud but seems to contain mild laughter of his party members. Populist in (5) is used in a context where it is clearly negative¹⁰.

(6) below demonstrates Abe's use of rhetoric, his employment of repetition and metaphor as well as his lively language.

- (6) あの約束の日は八月八日、夏の暑い日でした。夏は去り、そして秋が来て、秋も去りました。もういよいよクリスマスセールが始まろうとしています。いわば約束の期限は大幅に過ぎている。しかし、一度解散を口にした総理大臣は、内閣は、力を失います。経済を再建させていく力も、外交政策を進めていく力も失います。なぜかといえば、相手国から交渉相手としては認められないんです。

That day (you made the promise) was August 8. It was a hot summer day. Summer has passed, and autumn came and autumn also passed. Now the Christmas sales are nearly upon us. That is to say, the time limit has long passed. However, the Prime Minister and the cabinet, in declaring that the dissolution would come in the near future have *lost the power*. They have *lost the power* to rebuild the economy and also (lost) *the power* to promote diplomatic policy. The reason is that they are no longer considered as a valid negotiation partner by other countries.

東 (2010: 203–206) has provided an example of Abe's lively use of language. 東 (2010) regards such rhetoric as one of the strategies of 'rapport talk' which focuses on the audience (東 2010: 203; 東 2012: 24), in contrast to 'report talk' which focuses on delivering information (東 2010: 198; 東 2012: 24). The effect of the former is to draw the attention and involvement of the audience (東 2010: 206). Abe described the day when the Prime Minister promised to dissolve the lower

house “sometime soon” as a hot summer day, and went on to a deliberate narration of the passing of that summer and the coming and going of autumn, followed by the beginning of winter. Here the metaphor ‘now the Christmas sales are nearly upon us’ is used to describe the beginning of winter. This adds the image of Christmas (although it is not yet Christmas) and thus invokes the end of the year. By using the metaphor, therefore, it emphasises how long the promise is overdue and in fact achieves in suggesting to the multiple audiences that even more time than three months has passed. Also note the repeated use of 力, ‘power’ and 力を失います, ‘lose power’ twice, the frequent repetition can be interpreted “as a salient strategy of persuasion in pushing one’s agenda” (Wodak 2009: 137) serving to intensify the urgency and importance of dissolving the lower house.

3-2 Yoshihiko Noda, the Prime Minister (DPJ) at the Debate

As shown in the graphs 1, 2, and 3, Noda used many honorifics in the debate. This is apart from the formal *~de gozaimasu*, and *~itadaku* (used by both Abe and Noda with the same frequency). Noda used *~te orimasu* (humble form II), ‘be’, *~itashimasu* (humble form II), ‘do’, and *~te mairimasu* (humble form II), ‘come/go’ much more frequently than Abe¹¹. The category of ‘humble form II’ is not as self-lowering as the category ‘humble form I’ since in the new typology, humble form I retains “the original force of elevating the referent via self-lowering” whereas humble form II simply relates “the speaker’s own actions, not necessarily involving deference to a referent, to the interlocutor ‘courteously’” (Shibamoto-Smith 2011: 3708). Another honorific expression, *~saseteitadakisasu*, ‘I will do it’ (lit. I will humbly receive the favor of you letting me do it.) is exclusively used by Noda¹². Here follow some examples of Noda’s use of humble form II:

- (7) a. この問題を解決しないと、私は、政治は前進しないと思っております。

Without bringing this problem to a settlement, I think-*orimasu* (lit. humbly think) that the politics will not advance.

- b. ぜひ、これは法案を提出いたしましたから、御党におかれても御決断をいただきますように強く期待をいたします。

By all means, we have already submitted the legislation and I strongly expect-*itashimasu* (lit. humbly expect) that the LDP supports the passing of this bill.

- c. 諦めずにそれは粘り強く主張してまいります。

Without giving up, (we will) persistently insist-*mairimasu* (lit. humbly insist) on

(this).

- d. だから、これからも主張をし、協議を**させていただきます**。

And so, (we will continuously) insist on (it) and have discussions-*saseteitadakisasu*. (lit. ~I will humbly receive the favor of you letting me hold the discussion.)

By using more courteous expressions, however, it does not necessarily and automatically mean that Noda is being more polite towards Abe than Abe is towards him. According to Agha (1998: 153) the term ‘honorific’ is misleading, as the term “describes how a speech variety is characterized by language users, not what the variety can be used to accomplish in usage”. Agha (1998: 153) comments that honorific speech is not only used “for paying respect or conferring honor; it serves many other interactional agendas, such as control and domination, irony, innuendo, and masked aggression, as well as other types of socially meaningful behaviors that native ideologies of honor or respect do not describe”. It could indicate something such as 品位 (井出 2006: 136–138) as observed by Shibamoto-Smith (2011). Although Shibamoto-Smith (2011: 3717) notes below with respect to *ossharareru*-style double *keego*, her observation seems possible to explain the general use of *keego* by politicians.

“Ide (2006: 134–138) offers a clear outline of a use of *keego* not included in the normative descriptions of honorifics reflecting vertical status relationships, horizontal social solidarity or distance relationships, or formality of context; that use is the expression of *hin'i*. *Hin'i* is commonly definable as ‘grace’ or ‘dignity’—or, applied to both animate and inanimate objects, a standard of quality or fineness. Ide’s discussion of this term included a dictionary definition from *Daijirin* (edition unknown) worth quoting in its entirety: there, *hin'i* is defined as “a dignity and stateliness that causes the people around [the person with *hin'i*] naturally to want to respect him or her” (Ide, 2006: 135). Ide follows this definition immediately by suggesting that high status individuals speaking in public may be one group among whom the use of *keego* to assert, and thus to creatively if not presuppositionally index, *hin'i* can be found. If politicians use honorific forms not only to indicate respect for status superiors, or out-group interlocutors, not only to indicate that the context of their speech in publicly televised debate is formal and the topics serious, but also to indicate something about their own *hin'i*, their tendency to use a lot of

keego……is easily accounted for.” (Shibamoto-Smith 2011: 3717)¹³

Noda also used a strategy that can be regarded as in-line with Ilie’s (2009) concept of ‘parliamentary parentheticals’ as in (8):

- (8) 定数削減はやらなければいけないんです。消費税を引き上げる前に、お互いに国民の皆様
に約束したことを、この国会で結論を出そうじゃありませんか。ぜひ、これは法案を提出
いたしましたから、御党におかれても御決断をいただきますように強く期待をいたしま
す。その一方で、どうしても……聞いてください。どうしても定数削減で賛同していただ
けない、あつてはならないことだと思いますが、そういうことがあった場合に、最悪のケ
ースですよ、ここで国民の皆さんの前に約束をしてほしいんです。

We must reduce the number of lower house seats, So let’s draw a conclusion; as both
the DPJ and LDP have promised that to the nation, before we raise the consumer tax.
By all means, we have already submitted the legislation and I strongly expect LDP sup-
port in passing this bill. On the other hand, if you insist on…listen. If you insist on not
agreeing with the reduction, ***I do not think it should happen***, but if it happens to be
the case, ***it is going to be the worst case***, I want you to promise me here in front of the
nation.

Among the few functions of parliamentary parentheticals, it seems best to describe Noda’s rhetoric being used to “increase the emotional involvement and motivation of the audience in order to trigger appropriate reactions and to possibly motivate future decisions and actions” (Ilie 2009: 76). Noda is inserting his personal thought while talking about a situation in which the LDP did not support (passing the bill on the reduction of the number of lower house seats). Here, Noda is trying to encourage Abe and his party to support the legislation which he claims the LDP had also promised to the nation in the past. By inserting his thought in two different phrases, ‘I do not think it should happen’ and ‘it is going to be the worst case’ Noda makes the statement much more personal. He is stating his personal belief, giving the audience an impression of his genuine concern for the nation, as well as keeping his promises. The effects of parenthetical uses of the two phrases, at the same time function as reinforcing the righteousness of his own, as well as his party’s platform, and further serves to promote a positive image of the government to multiple audiences.

One of Noda’s celebrated linguistic devices employed in his speech is the use

of personal stories by which he decreases the interpersonal distance with the audience (東 2011: 66)¹⁴. Although it is unclear how effective the story was in this case to the multiple audiences, it was used to support his position. Noda also uses a repetition of phrases to strengthen his claim with respect to his original intention (i.e. that he never meant to lie). The example of this will be discussed in relation to the uptake of an insult in (23).

3-3 (Im)politeness Observed at the Lexical Level

3-3-1 Use of Address/Reference Terms

Table 1 presents the forms of address/reference used by Abe and Noda in the debate. There are three noteworthy points: (a) The number of ‘we’ used by Abe and the way it was specifically exclusive and different from Noda’s use of an inclusive ‘we’ which includes not only the members of his party, but also includes all the members of the Diet; (b) The number of vocative uses of the 2nd person pronoun by Abe and its range in terms of variation and formality; (c) Different choices made by Abe to refer to his own, and Noda’s predecessor. Here follow examples of ‘we’:

- (9) a. なぜ私たちがそう言い続けてきたか。
Why have *we* been continuously saying that?
- b. 私たち自由民主党は、三年前の総選挙において、将来伸びていく社会保障費に対応するためには消費税を上げていかざるを得ない、正直にそう説明をしてみました。その私たちが、～。
We, the Liberal Democratic Party, have honestly explained at the election three years ago, that there is no other choice but to increase the consumer tax to cope with the ever increasing social security expenses. *We* who have (been honest)...
- c. 私たちは約束を果たし、法律は成立をいたしました。
We kept the promises and the bill has passed.
- d. 私たちは既に、私たちの選挙公約において、定数の削減と選挙制度の改正を行っていくよう約束をしています。
We have already promised a reduction in the number of lower house seats and the amendment of the electoral system in *our* campaign pledge.
- e. 最初から私たちは人質にはしていない。
We have never taken it hostage.

As illustrated by (9), Abe’s use of 私たち and 私たち in combination with 自由民主党

Table 1. Forms of address/reference found in the debate between Shinzo Abe and Yoshihiko Noda

| | President of LDP Abe | Prime Minister Noda |
|--|--|--|
| To refer to/address 1 st person and their political party | 私 (15) 私たち (14) 私たち自由民主党 (2) 我々 (1) 自民党 (1) 我が党 (2) | 私 (13) 私ども (1) 我々 (5) 自分たち (1) 民主党 (2) 我々と党 (1) |
| To refer to/address 2 nd person | 野田総理 (14) (14 including 6 vocative uses) 総理 (10) (10 including 2 vocative uses) 野田さん (3) あなた (1) 御党 (1) 皆さん (4) 民主党 (4) 民主党の皆さん (1) | 安倍総裁 (5) 御党 (3) 野党第一党 (1) 自民党 (1) 皆さん (2) |
| To refer to 3 rd person (when referring to another politician and the nation) | 鳩山さん (1) 谷垣総裁 (1) 国民 (11) 総理大臣 (1) 多くの政党の皆さん (1) 我が党の現職の議員 (1) 比例区の議員 (1) 国民の多くの皆さん (1) この場面を見ている多くの皆さん (1) 国民の皆さん (1) | 谷垣総裁 (4) 石破幹事長 (1) 国民 (1) 国民の皆さん (1) 国民の皆様 (4) 先輩方 (1) ほかの与党の皆さん (1) |

are used to indicate his party's credibility, consistency, and commitment, and the denial of a possible false accusation. This targets multiple audiences to promote a positive image of himself as the president of the party, as well as his party as a whole and its policy. Noda refers to his government as shown in (10). However, he uses the plural pronoun to not only include his party members, but the members of the Diet as a whole as shown in (11).

- (10) 我々は、自分たちが出している法案に御賛同をいただきたい。

We, the government, want your agreement on the legislation we have submitted.

- (11) 一方で、定数削減は、二〇一四年に消費税を引き上げる前に、まず、我々が身を切る覚悟で具体的に定数削減を実現しなければいけないと思っております。

On the other hand, what I think is that we must make it concrete and carry out the reduction. *We* have to do it with a steadfast resolution to reduce the number of lower house seats, before the increase of consumer tax in 2014.

Interestingly, Abe's use of the first person pronoun plural only includes his party. He uses them exclusively and he does not use the word inclusively even when there is a chance to refer to Noda and himself in the first person plural form.

- (12) 私と野田さんだけできめていいんですか。

Is it okay that only *I and Noda-san* make a decision?

Given that he uses 私たち and 我々, it was possible to say only the two of 'us', using either of the two. However, Abe avoids using the term to include his political adversary. This can be understood as Abe wanting to prevent his audience(s) being able to think of him (Abe) and Noda as belonging to the same category; Abe here wishes to maintain a distance between the two of them.

A remarkable contrast can be observed with the second person pronouns. Abe frequently used the vocative to address Noda, while Noda did not use it at all to address Abe:

- (13) 安部： …だからこそ、野田総理に、国民に信を問うてください、そうお願いをした。そして、野田総理は確かに約束をされました。法律が成立をした暁には、近いうちに国民に信を問うと。私たちは約束を果たし、法律は成立をいたしました。(Omitted as this part is the same as the one presented in example (6)). 野田さん、もうこの混乱状態に終止符を打つべきです。一日も早く国民に信を問うて、国民の信を得た強力な新しい政権が、経済を立て直し、そして外交を立て直していくべきであります。勇気を持って決断をしていただきたい。改めて、そのことについて総理の決意をお伺いしたいと思います。
野田： ただいま安倍総裁から私の見解を求められました。

Abe: … and precisely because of that we have asked Prime Minister Noda to seek a public mandate. And the Prime Minister certainly promised. He promised that he

would seek a public mandate sometime soon, once the legislation passed. We kept our promise (to support the passage of the bill) and the bill has passed. (Omitted as this part is the same as the one presented in example (6)). *Noda-san*, you must put an end to this chaotic situation. You must seek a public mandate as early as possible so that a new government, which would have the nation's confidence, can rebuild the economy and diplomatic relations. I want you to be brave and decisive. Once again, I would like to ask the Prime Minister's resolution about this.

Noda: I have been asked my opinion by *Abe-soosai* (President Abe) just now.

Ilie (2010: 892) writes that “(t)he use of a direct form of address in the vocative in combination with a verb in the imperative... is meant to reinforce the straightforwardness of the message, thus, enhancing its face-threatening illocutionary force”. Here the vocative *Noda-san* was used with *~beki desu*, ‘must’. Also the vocative is in the form of *Noda-san* rather than the institutional title. The use of *Noda-san* is condescending in the similar way as using first name in a political setting in a different culture (i.e. See Ilie (2010) with reference to the Swedish parliament). Here Abe used a shift of term: Before using *Noda-san*, he was using *Noda-soori*, ‘Prime Minister Noda’, the institutional title which would have been most appropriate in this setting. He uses that term twice in the narration-style background. At the point where he changes to *Noda-san*, he foregrounds Noda as a direct addressee of the utterance and it has the effect of singling out and foregrounding the targeted recipient of the illocutionary force of the speech act (Ilie 2010: 892). Abe does this to show that the person who could put an end to what he calls the chaotic situation is Prime Minister Noda, who has the power to dissolve the House of Representative and call elections (Hayes 2009: 50; Baerwald 2010: 18; 村松 他. 2001: 185).

Unlike the use of other instances of *Noda-san* which were in the middle of Abe's speaking turn, here in (13) Abe used it close to the end of his speaking turn. This means that Noda could have reciprocated and used *Abe-san* had he wanted. However, he does not do so. The fact that Noda does not reciprocate with the same level of familiarity (or closeness) serves to “deliberately increase the interpersonal distance in an attempt to redress the power balance” (Ilie 2010: 903). While discussing a similar case of a non-reciprocal form of address used as (13) in the context of Swedish parliament, Ilie (2010: 903) points out that familiarity is regarded positively in casual conversations, while the same familiarity in the par-

liamentary discourse is condescending, indeed it “prefaces a face-threatening speech act, is a manipulated downward referring strategy that at the same time reduces interpersonal distance and challenges the institutional legitimacy of the political adversary” (Ilie 2010: 903). This seems to account for Noda’s constant use of institutional title with the last name to address or refer to Abe.

The effect of reciprocating the same level of familiarity and closeness through the use of different forms of address or reference is culturally situated. With respect to the use of address terms in variation and its effects, 東 (2009: 124–128) discusses three 2008 presidential debates between Barack Obama and John McCain and notes that Obama’s mixed uses of ‘John’ together with ‘Senator McCain’ contributed to promoting positive image of Obama as unpretentious and friendly, as well as inviting involvement from McCain. As the debate is a formal situation there is nothing exactly wrong about McCain calling Obama ‘Senator Obama’ throughout the debate, without reciprocating Obama’s use of the given name by calling him ‘Barack’. However, in acting this way McCain conveyed an unintended message to the audiences. In contrast to the positive images of Obama that were conveyed by his use of first name to address McCain, 東 (2009: 124–128) observed that, in an egalitarian society as America, McCain ended up projecting a negative image of being narrow-minded (unable to accept and return Obama’s friendly invitation), unfriendly, and authoritative. Calling a political opponent by the first name is out of question in a Japanese cultural setting, and it is rather difficult to consider such an act as showing involvement and intimacy, or friendliness. This is because in American culture, according to 井出 (2006: 93–96) friendliness and politeness exists in the same category whereas in Japanese they do not (see 井出 2006 for details).

The Japanese debate also saw an asymmetrical use of third-person pronouns when referring to their opponent’s respective predecessors. Noda uses the last name and institutional title not only to refer to Abe but also to refer to Abe’s predecessor, Sadakazu Tanigaki as (14) below.

- (14) しかし、今、安倍総裁からも御指摘があったとおり、八月の八日、当時の谷垣総裁と党首会談を行いました。

However, as Abe-*soosai* pointed out just then, (I had) a one-on-one debate with the then *Tanigaki-soosai* on August 8.

Abe, on the other hand uses *Hatoyama-san* to refer to Noda's predecessor while referring to his own as *Tanigaki-soosai*.

- (15) a. 例えば、私のとくと鳩山さんのときを比べましょう。

For example, let's compare the time when I was in government and the time of *Hatoyama-san*.

- b. さきの国会において、当時の谷垣総裁と私たち自由民主党は、国民の信を問うべきだ、そう要請しました。

In the previous session of the Diet, at that time *Tanigaki-soosai* and us, the Liberal Democratic Party, demanded that (the government) seek a public mandate.

Hatoyama was the predecessor of his political opponent, and Tanigaki was his own predecessor. It is difficult to imagine that Abe's use of *Hatoyama-san* is an indication of friendliness, especially when he uses the institutional title to refer to Tanigaki. Abe had other reference choices for Hatoyama and Tanigaki: Tanigaki could have descended to Hatoyama's level and become *Tanigaki-san* rather than *Tanigaki-soosai*; and Hatoyama could have been raised to Tanigaki's style of reference and become *Hatoyama-daihyo*, the official institutional title of the president of DPJ. The asymmetrical use of reference terms in this way, shows that Abe's use of *Hatoyama-san* is condescending.

Kim (2012) discusses a speaker's use of shift of address term from *sensei* to *anata* to refer to the same person and argues that it shows a change in the speaker's emotional state and regards the action as face-threatening. A similar example including *anata* was found in the current data towards the end of the debate.

- (16) もうまさに、私は、総理、あなたの今の答弁は不誠実だと思いますよ。

Precisely, I think, *Prime Minister*, *anata*'s reply is insincere.

In addition to the meaning of the statement itself which is face-threatening and challenging, the force of the rudeness is intensified with まさに, 'precisely' and the vocative which established Noda as the one and only direct recipient of the attack. In (17) below Abe explicitly points out that it is the Prime Minister Noda and the members of the DPJ who failed to keep their promises.

- (17) なぜかといえば、さきの総選挙において、野田総理そして民主党の皆さんは、マニフェ

ストに書いてあることを実行するために消費税を上げる必要はない、そう約束をされた。

The reason is that, during the last election campaign, *Prime Minister Noda* and *the members of Democratic Party of Japan* promised that a consumer tax raise would be unnecessary in implementing what was promised in the manifesto.

By specifying who is responsible for blame, and by specifying everyone, it not only aims to hurt the Prime Minister's reputation, but also that of the other members of the DPJ, and the party itself.

3-3-2 Use of Honorifics

As mentioned in 3.2, the use of honorific language does not automatically mean that the speaker is paying respect to the listener. This section examines how honorific language can be used as a strategy for insult. Shibamoto-Smith (2011) examines cases of insult through using honorifics in Japanese, and especially focuses on the use of *mooshiageru*, (a humble expression of 'say') and *mooshiagete okitai* ('say' with the auxiliary verb of 設置動詞 'verbs of establishment' *-te oku*, and *-tai* indicating the desire of the speaker). *Mooshiagete okitai* is translated by Shibamoto-Smith (2011: 3714) as 'state for the record' which is adopted here as well. These are expressions of "exclusively held authoritative 'fact'" and "'indisputable' fact" (Shibamoto-Smith 2011: 3715). After examining six taped episodes of the Sunday debate show, *Nichiyoo Tooron* in 2008, Shibamoto-Smith's findings show that only the members of the party then in government (LDP) used this form of the verb and the use of it was patronizing as it was used to draw a line between the members of the government and those who were not in power (Shibamoto-Smith 2011). She also found that there were three uses of *mooshiageru* in the data by the non-LDP members, but she points out that two of those instances were produced by then opposition party representatives who had left the LDP after a long and successful career in the party (Shibamoto-Smith 2011: 3715). Shibamoto-Smith (2011: 3715) opined that the LDP's postwar monopoly as the government is reflected in the almost exclusive use of the expression; having been in government for such a long time has given members of LDP greater access to information and more authoritative knowledge. However, she also noted that as she was analyzing 2009 data, the 2008 data set "turned out to be just the beginning of more broadly distributed use of this term" (Shibamoto-Smith 2011: 3715), the reason for this being that the change of the government took place in the 2009 election.

During the debate, both Noda and Abe used *mooshiageru*. However, *mooshiagete oku*, which Shibamoto-Smith (2011: 3715) specifically defines as an impoliteness strategy (as it denies the interlocutor in-group status) is only used by Abe. *-Te oku* construction particularly “indicates that something is said and is thereafter to continue to stand, here as fact” (Shibamoto-Smith 2011: 3175).

- (18) そもそも、定数の削減、選挙制度、そしてその前に、憲法違反の状況を変えるための定数の是正、これをしっかりと行っていくべきだ、この協議を進めていくべきだ、我が党の方からちゃんと話をしているんですよ。それなのに、それを全然進めてこなかったのは、解散をひたすら恐れ、それを行ってこなかったのは皆さんの方じゃありませんか。そのことはまずはっきりと申し上げておきたいと思いますよ。

Originally, there was the reduction in the the number of lower house seats, the amendment of the electoral system and, before that, the ratification of the vote value disparity to change the current unconstitutional situation. Our party has been insisting that these measures must be implemented, and that discussions on these issues must be held. And yet, it is you(r party) that didn't carry out, and didn't proceed with them because you were afraid of dissolution. This, first of all, I clearly *want to state for the record*.

The use of *mooshiageru* in the data is in accordance with the findings of Shibamoto-Smith (2011) in two related, yet different ways: firstly Noda, who was then in government, was using it, and it was therefore in accordance with the use of it by the members of the government. Noda's use of the term at the same time testifies to Shibamoto-Smith's claim that its use has expanded since the change of the government in 2009. Secondly Abe, who was a member of the opposition at the time of the debate, but who had enjoyed a successful career in LDP and, in fact, had served as prime minister himself, was using it.

Continuing the topos of the use of honorifics as an impoliteness strategy, we can observe a similar effect when the formal *-te orimasu*, (humble form II) 'be' is combined with a self-lowering *itadaku*, (humble form I) 'receive', to make a statement that is a straightforward denial. (19a) and (19b) are produced by Noda and (19c) by Abe.

- (19) a. 野田：答えをいただいております。

Noda: I am *humbly* in the state of not having *humbly received* your answer

(lit.). I have not received your answer.

- b. 野田：明快な答えをいただいております。

Noda: I am *humbly* in the state of not having *humbly received* your explicit answer (lit.). I have not received your explicit answer.

- c. 安倍：私の質問には全く答えていません。

Abe: (You) have not at all answered my question.

(19a), (19b) and (19c) are reproaches for not having answered a question. As noted, (19a) and (19b) contain self-lowering expressions, while (19c) is a straightforward face-threatening statement without any form of honorific expressions or any other possibility of redress. However, this does not necessarily mean that (19a) and (19b) are more polite than (19c). It could be interpreted as conveying a higher degree of impoliteness if it is interpreted as ironic. It shares a resemblance with the significance of the use of the term ‘respect’ in connection with insults by members of the parliaments in British and Swedish settings as observed by Ilie (2004: 58).

3-3-3 Words to Describe the Political Opponent’s Party

In the debate there were specific descriptions used by both speakers to describe the other’s political party. Two instances were found where Abe was directly describing the DPJ.

- (20) a. 約束をたがえた民主党

The DPJ which broke its promises

- b. 民主党というのは、改めて、思いつきのポピュリスト政党だな、本当にそのように思いました。

(It) made me really think *once again*, that the *DPJ is an impulsive populist political party*.

To label a political party as one that broke its promises as found in (20a) is an insult, it challenges legitimacy and credibility. In addition to *omoitsuki*, ‘impulsive’ and *poppyurisuto*, ‘populist’ in (20b) which are not at all flattering, the force of the insult is intensified by the use of the word, *aratamete*, ‘once again’, as it not only captures what Abe thinks of the DPJ at that particular moment, but emphasises that ‘impulsive populist political party’ is what he usually considers the DPJ to be and has confirmed that belief ‘once again’. Below is the description Noda used in

his closing comment.

(21) 技術論ばかりで覚悟のない自民党

The LDP which is full of technical discussion without any resolution

Having *kakugo*, ‘resolution’ is not only an important quality of a politician and a political party, but Noda seems to regard it as an indispensable quality to which Noda himself and his party are committed. Although it is unclear whether it is his personal belief or his party line, the term *kakugo* was used by Noda four times during the debate which indicates its significance. Describing another party as lacking such a crucial value is, needless to say, an insult, and Noda is clearly being disdainful of the LDP.

3-4 Impoliteness Observed at the Discourse Level

Returning to the statement in section 2, which posited that the magnitude of an insult can be identified by the uptake of the insult (Locher and Watts 2008; Illie 2001, 2004), the example (23) below shows the effect. (22a) and (22b) are taken from Abe’s turn before Noda’s uptake shown in (23).

- (22) a. 約束をされた。それで政権を取ったんです。その約束をたがえて、～。
(The DPJ) promised. Because of the promise (the DPJ) came to power. **Breaking** that *promise*～.
- b. 私たち自由民主党は～正直にそう説明をしてまいりました。その私たちが、約束をたがえた民主党と三党合意を成立させ、～。
We, the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan～ **honestly** have been explaining this. We, (who have been honest) brought about the three-party agreement with the *DPJ which broke its promises*,～.

Before Noda’s turn in (23) Abe has used 約束をたがえる, ‘breaking the promise’ twice. Although Abe has not directly used the term うそ, ‘lie’, he has stated that the LDP has been 正直, ‘honest’ while the DPJ has kept on 約束をたがえる, and this implicitly suggests that the DPJ has been lying (see Illie (2004: 60) for a similar strategy in the Swedish parliament, in calling a statement cowardly rather than the person who said it).

Although Abe did not use the word うそ at all, the Prime Minister himself corresponds to this by frequently using うそ (4 times) as well as various expres-

sions stating that he has never intended to lie. There was a newspaper report (The Daily Yomiuri Nov. 15, 2012) which says that Noda's colleagues noticed how Noda could not stand being called a liar. This must have contributed to the elaborate use of the term うそ and his clarifying and justifying of his position. What can be drawn from this segment is that the Prime Minister received the implicit comments shown in (22) as a serious insult, one from which he should defend himself by explicitly denying the unspoken but understood assertion. As mentioned earlier in 3.2. (23) also exemplifies Noda's use of his personal story and use of repetition to strengthen his claim. His personal story contains an episode demonstrating him being considered as honest to a fault. This is also offered as a piece of evidence to reclaim his honesty (and dignity) from what he sees as a false accusation.

- (23) …したがって、そうした政治生命をかけた会談で谷垣総裁をだまそうなどという気持ちは全くありません。近いうちに国民の皆様への信を問うと言ったことにはうそはありませんでした。先輩方から、内閣総理大臣は公定歩合と解散はうそをついてもいいということをお話を自民党政権時代には言っていた人もいたというお話もありましたが、うそをつくつもりは私はありませんでした。私は、小学校のときに、家に通知表を持って帰ったときに、とても成績が下がっていたので、おやじに怒られると思いました。でも、おやじは、なぜか頭をなでてくれたんです。五や四や三、そんなの気にしないで、生活態度と書いた講評のところ、野田君は正直の上には**かがつくと書いてありました**。それを見て、おやじは喜んでくれました。安倍総裁の教育論は傾聴に値するものがたくさんあります。歴史観、国家観から。私の教育論は、そこから始まるんです。偏差値や百点や五段階じゃなくて、数字にあらわせない大切なものがあるんだということをおやじは教えてくれました。だから、もともとうそをつくつもりはありません。

…Accordingly, at the talks with the President (of the LDP) Tanigaki, where my political career was at stake, I *did not have any intention of deceiving* him. *There was no lie* when I said that I was going to seek a public mandate in the near future. Predecessors had said that, during the period when the LDP was in the government, there were people who said the prime minister can *lie* about the official bank rate and dissolution of the houses. However, *I had no intention of lying*. *As an elementary school boy, as I was bringing home a grade report, I thought that I was going to be scolded by my father since my grades had gotten worse. However, he patted me on my head. He was not bothered by whether I got five, four or three. He was delighted to see the evaluation of general behaviour which read 'Noda-kun*

is honest to a fault. There are many valuable points in President Abe's views on education with regard to history and the state. My view on education starts from there. Rather than deviation values, perfect scores, or a scale of one to five, my father taught me that there is something very important that cannot be shown with numbers. Consequently, from the beginning I have not had any intention of lying.

4. Summary of Findings

This paper has examined the individual language use of Shinzo Abe, and Yoshihiko Noda, and also investigated tactical strategies used in the debate between the two politicians, focusing on impoliteness strategies. It is clear that Abe frequently used *n desu* (sometimes in combination with *yo*), the interactional particles *yo* and *ne*, rhetorical questions, and *katakana* words (in negative contexts). It was also shown that he used rhetoric such as repetition and metaphor. Noda was found to use many honorific forms many of which belong to humble form II, which are a courteous way of speaking. His use of parentheticals, personal story, and repetition was also presented. With respect to the use of forms of address or reference, the two politicians showed different tendencies. Abe frequently used the vocative and a variety of terms to refer to Noda, while Noda consistently used Abe's last name with his institutional title. There were differences also in the uses of first- and third-person address or reference. They selected and adopted strategies to hurt the reputation of their political opponent, as shown in how they describe one another's political party. The impact of an implicit insult was also discussed by examining the reaction to the insult.

Overall, the data showed that Noda spoke in a more formal way, by using formal lexical items and expressions. In comparison, Abe spoke in a more casual manner. In addition to what was examined, this tendency is also evident in their referring to the nation as noted in Table 1¹⁵. *~Sama* was used by Noda four times while *~san* was used only once, to refer to *kokumin* 'the nation'. Abe used *~san* without using *~sama* at all. Also Noda seems to be keeping his ritual distance, one of the negative politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson 1987). His maintaining of distance was evident in his choice of address terms and also in the use of the passive construction (as in (19)) which implies his personal detachment (Arndt and Janney 1987). The evidence from Abe's use of interactional particles demonstrates the obverse, and indicates that he has shown more personal involve-

ment in the debate. What is natural yet fascinating is the fact that Abe was also found speaking in a much more formal way in 2006 in a one-on-one debate (東 2007). There are many factors which brought about the change: his opponent for the earlier debate was Ichiro Ozawa, his position at that time was as a new Prime Minister and this was his first debate with Ozawa. Given that politicians make deliberate linguistic choices to achieve specific political effects, it will be interesting to see how these two politicians adopt, and use different styles for their various purposes, in the same setting with different opponents.

Notes

- ¹ The author is disinterested in using any analysis of any particular politician's manner of speaking or their way of being impolite to make a political statement.
- ² 党首討論
- ³ 第181回国会 国家基本政策委員会合同審査会
- ⁴ 国会会議録検索システム (<http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/SENTAKU/ryoin/181/0088/main.html>)
- ⁵ http://www.shugiintv.go.jp/en/index.php?ex=VL&u_day=20121114. The recordings provided in the homepage of House of Representative specifies that "(t)he footage provided in the Video Library is untouched recording, video and audio, made from the Internet TV transmission of House proceedings" (<http://www.shugiintv.go.jp/en/index.php#library>).
- ⁶ Although they are discussed together here, the approaches taken by Locher and Watts (2008) and García-Pastor (2008) are different. The former take a first order approach, the latter a second order approach. First order concepts are a lay person's understanding/judgment of behavior such as impolite, rude, polite, and polished; while a second order approach understands the concepts at a theoretical level (Locher and Bousfield 2008: 5).
- ⁷ For more insight into Abe's characteristics of language use in various political situations, including his general policy speeches and informal interviews with media reporters, as well as one-on-one debates with other politicians when he was prime minister, see 東 (2007) and 東 (2010).
- ⁸ Although 7 uses of *ne* were found in the transcription, there were in fact 14 more examples of *ne* used in the actual interaction. These occurrences of *ne* have been deleted from the transcript since they were all used in the form of *desu ne* (e.g. *somosomo desu ne*, 'in the first place *desu ne*') and regarded as "words without meanings" (松田 他. 2008: 47). It is completely understandable to regard *ne* used in such a way as meaningless considering the purpose for which the minutes of the Diet are transcribed. However, from the perspective of a discourse analyst, it is difficult not to consider even such a use of *ne* as carrying specific meanings such as conveying the speaker's emotional involvement with his

utterance as well as creating the involvement with the audience. Be that as it may they do not alter the current analysis in any meaningful way so I have left them to one side.

- ⁹ Noda also used two, one of which is as following: 「定数削減をするという約束、私はこの国会がベストだと思います」, 'I think that this session of the Diet is the *best* to (get your promise) on the reducing the number of the lower house seats' (the other is ケース, 'case' shown in (8)).
- ¹⁰ Abe's closing comment is also interesting as he used the word 美しい海と日本の国土, 'beautiful waters and the Japanese land'. This may have reminded the audiences of 美しい国、日本, 'Japan, the beautiful country' which he had used in his general policy speech after he had taken his office as the 90th prime minister in 2006. One cannot help but wonder whether this could have been a sign of his confidence in winning the election and returning to the government.
- ¹¹ The classification is according to the new system of *keigo* effective from 2007. See details in the document produced by the Council for Cultural Affairs. http://www.bunka.go.jp/kokugo_nihongo/bunkasingi/pdf/keigo_tousin.pdf
- ¹² With regard to させていただく, Okamoto (1999: 55) points out that there are different perceptions of the expression. Okamoto (1999: 55-56) reports that a column writer of "*Tensee-jingo*" in *Asahi Shimbun* (September 4, 1996), criticizes politicians' excessive uses of honorifics since the column writer "perceives the politicians' use of humble forms toward the public negatively, as excessive, too deferent, and insincere. For him, it is an attempt to unnaturally lower their status vis-à-vis the public. However, his friend perceives the same use of honorifics positively, as gentle and as a sign of the speaker's class status".
- ¹³ Ide (2006) is the same work as 井出 (2006). Following the convention used in this article, only the latter is listed in the reference section.
- ¹⁴ Yoshihiko Noda is famous for his どじょう, 'loach' speech at the leadership election within the DPJ held in August 2012. Some of the characteristics of his speech were the use of metaphor, and presentation of his personal story (東 2011, 池上 2012), as well as the use of repetition in his general policy speech as a Prime Minister (池上 2012). See 東 (2011) for a detailed analysis of Noda's use of linguistic strategies.
- ¹⁵ Although it was not discussed in the paper, they both employed a switch between the casual style *da* and the formal style *desu/masu* to achieve "immediacy and directness in expression and a narrative-internal perspective" (Maynard 2005: 19).

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