

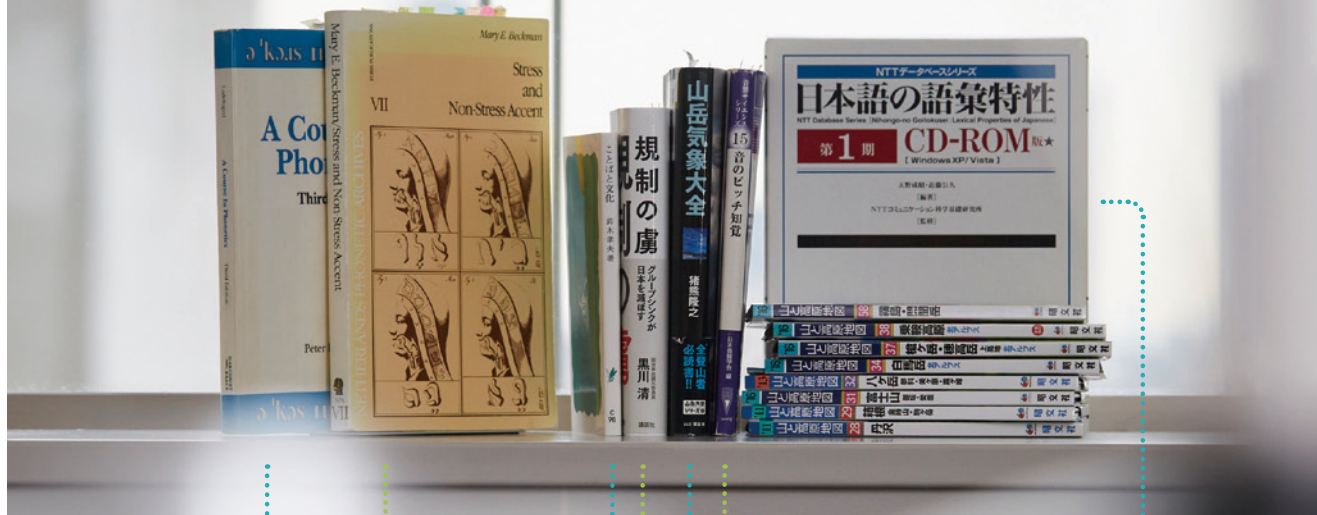
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私の 本棚

My favorite books



Too famous a phonetics book

● A Course in Phonetics

Not only phoneticians but also anyone who has studied linguistics in North America knows this book. The author is famous for having supervised pronunciation and phonetic notation for the movie "My Fair Lady" released in 1964. On the website of this book, you can listen to speech sounds of various languages of the world (<http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/index.html>).

How are Japanese sounds different from English ones?

● Stress and Non-Stress Accent

This is one of the origins of my interest in phonetics. It's truly trailblazing research, empirically comparing the characteristics of Japanese pitch accent and those of English stress accent in terms of acoustics as well as in terms of functions. It's a difficult book to understand. As a graduate student, I read it desperately and repeatedly discussed it with my advisors and colleagues.

Mysteries of Japanese organizations

● Kisei no toriko—grouptink ga nihon o horobosu [Regulatory Capture: Groupthink Destroys Japan]

While living in the United States as a graduate student, I interacted with a number of students from various countries. This made me realize that Japan is such a nice country to live in and that Japanese people are economically privileged. At the same time, as this book and the book "Shippai no hoshitsu [The Essence of the Failure]" point out, I am often puzzled by why some leaders in Japan behave in the way they do, like not taking responsibility for their decisions, their tendency to think only of immediate profit without having a grand design, and their unreasonable optimism which lacks a sense of crisis management.

How language affects the way you see the world

● Kotoba to bunka [English title: Words in Context]

An excerpt of this book appeared in my high school textbook of modern Japanese. I was fascinated to learn that language and culture are so closely related that the way you see the world may be different if the language you speak is different. Takao Suzuki, the author, was once the head of the Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies on the Mita Campus, of which I am currently a member. It was a great honor to have had the opportunity to talk to him in person after I came to Keio.

Wonders of the human body

● Oto no picchi chikaku

[English title: Pitch Percept of Tone]

Pitch refers to the percept of a fundamental frequency. Japanese is called a pitch accent language, in which words are distinguished by the height of tone in addition to vowels and consonants. Typical examples are "hashi (chopsticks)" and "hashi (bridge)" in standard Japanese. You may think that pitch perception is very easy and almost automatic, but many mysteries still remain about its mechanism. The human body is full of mysteries.

Alpine climate is a lot of fun!

● Sangaku kisho taizen

[The Complete Book of Alpine Climate]

Alpine weather changes quickly. Having good knowledge of weather helps you avoid accidents in mountains. I started reading this book hoping to avoid weather-induced accidents, but as I kept reading, I became more and more interested in weather itself. However, the more I learn, the more I realize how complicated it is, only to think that it is out of reach for an amateur like myself.

The definitive version of the Japanese language database!

● Nihongo no goitokusei

[English title: Lexical Properties of Japanese]

This is a database rather than a book. The speed and accuracy with which you recognize a word are subject to factors such as how familiar you are with the word and the number of words that sound similar to that word. Therefore, these factors need to be controlled when conducting experiments. This database is very valuable because it contains detailed vocabulary information of some 100,000 Japanese words.