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Editorial Note

Dear Readers,

As previously announced, Fasc. 71 marks of a multitude of changes in our biannual.

Although the present fascicle comes out late in the summer season, it is released under the heading of “Spring 2024”. This gap between the calendar and the cover page is intentional, as it initiates the change of our publishing mode from Summer/Winter to Spring/Autumn. We are pleased to inform you that the next fascicle, Autumn 2024, is at an advanced stage of preparation and you should expect its release within the next three months.

Another important change that will significantly affect *Silva*'s future is *Silva*'s move to the Adam Mickiewicz University publishing platform PRESSto (<https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/silvajp/index>). As the editorial team, we have many hopes for this cooperation. We expect it to reflect positively on the transparency and smoothness of the editorial process, *Silva*'s visibility, and ultimately *Silva*'s presence in prestigious databases and indices.

To back these expectations up, starting from this Fascicle, texts published in *Silva* will again have a DOI number assigned. Also the back numbers 68–70, which due to unforeseen circumstances had to be published without the DOIs, have now been given their identification numbers, courtesy of the combined efforts of the members of the *Silva* board (Patrycja Duc-Harada and Andrzej Świrkowski) and the PRESSto team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank PRESSto for the professional skill, efficiency and generosity they have shown us throughout our transition to their platform.

Also starting from this Fascicle, our new editorial team member, B.V.E. Hyde will be taking full charge of the Reviews section, ensuring the quality and diversity of pieces published therein. To this end, Hyde has prepared an editorial note introducing key genres in the area of academic reviewership as well as a set of good practices encouraged in each respective genre and in reviewership in general. You are invited to familiarize yourself with Hyde's message and take note of his guidelines when submitting your own review piece.

We are optimistic that all these changes will usher in a new stage of *Silva*'s activity, contributing to a still higher quality reading experience

and making *Silva* an increasingly attractive outlet for publishing meaningful research achievements in Japanology. As this year marks the 20th anniversary of the release of *Silva's* Fascicle 1, we are excited to celebrate it with this specific array of promising developments.

Apart from the aforementioned review editor's note, in the present Fascicle you will find two research papers – one from the field of linguistics and one representing social media studies – and two book reviews.

Przemysław Rozwadowski analyzes a number of popular JFL (Japanese as a Foreign Language) textbooks in their approach to teaching the hortative mood form, and proposes an alternative instruction method, one more grounded in systemic descriptive conventions of structural linguistics and therefore predicted to be more efficient.

Joy Ann Faith F. Tan explores the image of Filipino mothers in mixed Japanese-Filipino households through their representation on TikTok videos, observing how stereotypization and the lived-in reality of ethnic minorities intertwine on this rapidly-developing new media platform.

Michael Wert reviews *Koume's World: The Life and Work of a Samurai Woman Before and After the Meiji Restoration* by Simon Partner (2024), a microhistory presented through the lens of the life of a woman from a low-ranking samurai family, whereas Steven Heine evaluates Yinwen Li's *Networks of Faith & Profit: Monks, Merchants, and Exchanges between China and Japan, 839–1403 CE*. (2023), a monograph on the history of trade between Buddhist monks and secular merchants in a premodern Sino-Japanese context.

At this point, we are still accepting contributions traditionally via e-mail at silva.iaponicarum.quarterly@gmail.com. **October 15** is the deadline for submitting complete papers for Fasc. 73/Spring 2025. Make sure you visit our Call for Papers bookmark (<https://silvajp.web.amu.edu.pl/index.php/call-for-papers/>) on a regular basis, where you can find up-to-date information about our current calls.

For all *Silva*-related updates, make sure to visit our homepage (<https://silvajp.web.amu.edu.pl/>) as well as our Facebook profile (<https://www.facebook.com/silvaiaponicarum/>).

Wishing you a nice remainder of the summer, and please stay tuned for the upcoming release of Fasc. 72.

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A Note from the Reviews Editor on Our Vision for the Journal's Book Review Section, and Some Guidance for Writing Reviews

The purpose of an **academic book review** is to outline a book and to critically assess its contribution to the academe.

Critical notices are like book reviews but longer and focussed on replying to a book.

Symposia are collections of critical notices on a book, often with a summary by the author called a "précis", and are followed by an author's reply to their critics. We publish all these types of reviews in the book review section and welcome unsolicited submissions or proposals to review a book. We judge reviews on their own merits and are happy to receive contributions from students and independent scholars as well as professional academics.

Outlining the Book

Reviews are the most read part of any journal. They tell academics about important new literature and are often instrumental in an academic's decision on whether to read a new book or not. Often, academics and students will read reviews to *avoid* reading the book (either because they are short of time or because the book is only peripherally related to their area of study). In either case, an outline should be more than a simple reiteration of the table of contents: it needs to say not only *what* the book is about, but also *how* the subject matter is spoken about. In other words, the *thesis* of the book needs to be made clear.

For example, when reviewing a hypothetical monograph on the history of the samurai class, it is not sufficient to list that a book speaks about samurai in the Kamakura in the first chapter, in the Tokugawa in the second, and their dissolution in Meiji in the third chapter... What is important is *what* the book says *about* samurai. Knowing this will allow readers to determine whether the book is worth reading or citing and will help them gauge how the book fits in with what they already know about samurai.

From the outline of the book the reader needs to know what the book says. The reviewer should not assume any familiarity with the book on the part of the reader, and that includes the reviews editor who has, at most, only skimmed the introduction to determine whether to solicit a book or not. There is simply so much literature to read these days that it would be a serious mistake to write under the assumption

that everyone reading the review has read the book. In fact, in certain fields, the reverse seems true: those who *have* read a book *hardly ever* read a review of it – except for the authors, who always read reviews of their book.

An outline can take two broad forms: it can be a chapter-by-chapter explanation of the book's thesis and how it evolves, or, in the case of edited collections – which are much harder to review – how the chapters relate to one another; or it can be a more general summary of the book's content. The latter tend to be better written.

The outline in an academic review should not be confused with a publisher's description of the book. Technical, typographic or formatting details such as the number of chapters, the page count, the presence of structural mainstays such as an index or a bibliography, details about the book's binding, and so on, are all out of place in the outline – *unless* they contribute something substantial to the evaluation of the book. The rule for these things is always that they are not worth mentioning unless they diverge from academic convention. For example, if a book does not have a bibliography, then that might be worth mentioning as a surprising feature of an academic book.

Another exception is if these details relate to a book's audience and the reviewer chooses to speak about the book's suitability for a certain audience (e.g. whether the book is suitable for classroom use, such as if it has been branded as an introduction). For example, an editor's note that explains that Japanese names are reversed with the family name first might be worth mentioning if the book is targeted at those completely ignorant of Japan, but it is not a relevant detail if the book is written for Japanologists.

Also to note: in my opinion, a book review should absolutely not contain a litany of footnotes containing further reading. I take a loose attitude towards review editing to encourage individuality – many editors are very heavy handed by comparison – and my only real interest is in whether the review fulfils its basic functions, however the author chooses to write it. That said, there are some things that will have most review editors rejecting a review, and footnotes beginning “for more about x see...” will earn themselves a big red line before even reading the review. By extension, it would be very impressive if a review could have all that many references. All references should be of direct relevance, such as being used to argue against a book's thesis (see below). Many journals even cap references to just a few.

When writing a review, you should ask yourself whether you could spell out the full reference in text and still retain the readability of the review. If you cannot – because you have a dozen references in brackets – there is a very good chance your referencing is either too heavy or irrelevant to the review. Reviews may even have no references, and a very good portion of reviews in top journals have none.

There is, however, an exception to this rule, and that's when book reviews also fulfil a function similar to a literature review, and that further references can make a direct contribution to the purposes of a review. At least in the case of understudied topics and sub-fields, a book review may partially double up as a literature review. However, unless reviewers intend from the outset for their book review to have a dual function as a literature review with the reviewed book at its centre, as a general heuristic, I urge reviewers to avoid filling reviews with footnotes, especially ones with perennial or tangential points.

Finally, there's no minimum length for a good summary of a book. If a reviewer can put it in one short paragraph, then that's fine. Some journals publish reviews that are just a couple of hundred words long.

Criticizing the Book

Criticism is a secondary function of a book review: it is not a failing of a reviewer should they find nothing to say either positive or negative about a book. Nevertheless, a key function of a review is to provide a *critical* reception of the book. This can take various forms: reviewers may reject a book's main thesis; identify faults with the methodology; bring other literature to attention that was neglected by the original author; make adjacent points that positively build upon a book's thesis; apply a book's theoretical findings to other empirical cases; apply the findings to theories in another discipline; and so on. Often, criticisms can be pithy comments, but they are not normally more than a paragraph per point. A long and heavily evidenced argument – like one would expect in a research article – is not found in a book review and is instead the function of a critical notice (see below).

There is no hard and fast rule for what constitutes critical engagement, but there is a rule for what it does *not* look like, and that is mechanically listing aspects of the book that are noteworthy, important, of interest, and so on. If there is a particular finding that stands out, the reviewer needs to explain *why*, not just state that it is so.

Criticism can either take place throughout a review, intermingled with the outline of a book (harder), or can form the latter half of a review with the outline coming first by itself (easier). The best criticisms found in book reviews address a book's main thesis rather than getting stuck in the finer details of individual chapters – which is best left to critical notices. However, a reviewer may choose to focus on only part of a book (which they should declare in their review), should they have good reasons for doing so, such as if one part makes the most novel contribution to the academic literature; if it is a strongly representative chapter of the book; or if it is, for some reason or another, the most problematic or, conversely, most valuable chapter of the book. In the case of histories of Japan, for example, a summary of the history of Japan probably is not required in a journal of Japanology, and it is instead better to focus on what is unique about that particular history of Japan. For histories of less popular topics, a summary is more in order.

Finally, the best reviews are direct. This means that they avoid any sort of “filler language”, such as “it is worthwhile to point out in addition to what has been said before that a particularly relevant aspect of the book is...”. Reviews are, first and foremost, an informative genre. They are meant to be short, sharp, instructive and, most importantly, easy to read. Directness also means avoiding false complements about how riveting or groundbreaking the book was, when in reality, it was a thousand pages long and you barely read the introduction. I have myself, at the time of writing this note, written more than fifty reviews, and I have probably read a hundredfold (skimmed) more books; I struggle to think of many that were really groundbreaking or genuinely enjoyable to read (I mean to the extent that I would recommend the book to a non-specialist). I have made such highfalutin' comments in reviews before, as do many of us in our early careers. Save yourself the regret when you reread them later, and just describe the book how it is!

Critical Notices & Book Symposia

The purpose of a critical notice is principally to criticize a recently published academic book. They are almost always negative but may argue positively for a book's conclusion from a different perspective, with new evidence, or by way of a different argument. These articles tend to run much longer than book reviews and contain a much more substantial argument. They may focus on part of the book or address

its main thesis. They are much more heavily referenced – almost as much as a research article. Critical notices are to books what discussion articles (also known as replies) are to research articles. Some journals, this one included, also publish occasional symposia. These tend to involve a précis in which a book is summarized (ideally by the author) followed by critical notices and possibly replies from the authors. To be clear, symposia do not involve book reviews, which summarize *and* criticize, but critical notices – which only criticize. The outline of a book in a symposium is done in the précis with which it commences.

B.V.E. HYDE
Review Editor

RESEARCH PAPERS

Przemysław Damian ROZWADOWSKI
**Explanations of the Polite Hortative form *-(i)mash-ō* in
Current Resources and a Proposition of a Morphological
Approach** 15

Joy Ann Faith F. TAN
**#フィリピンママあるある (#*firipinmamaaruaru*):
(Re)presentations of Motherhood in Japanese-Filipino
Children's TikTok Videos** 32

REVIEWS

Michael WERT
**Review of *Koume's World: The Life and Work of a Samurai
Woman Before and After the Meiji Restoration* by Simon
Partner, New York: Columbia University Press, 2024. Xx +
289** 68

Steven HEINE
**Review of *Networks of Faith & Profit: Monks, Merchants, and
Exchanges between China and Japan, 839–1403 CE* by Yiwen
Li, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press,
2023. xvi + 211** 71

RESEARCH PAPERS

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Explanations of the Polite Hortative form *-(i)mash-ō* in Current Resources and a Proposition of a Morphological Approach

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/sjip.2024.71.1>

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how the description of Japanese grammar is explained in current resources and to present another, more systemic, morphological approach. It will be achieved by examining explanations of the basic level grammatical unit *-(i)mash-ō* which can be roughly translated as ‘let’s’. At the beginning the crucial characteristics of present description are portrayed. After showing the basics of the traditional, syllabary description, examples of *-(i)mash-ō* explanations derived from textbooks are given. Then the author analyzes *-(i)mash-ō* in accordance with its morphological properties. This approach argues that it is in fact a compound built of smaller units each bearing a separate meaning. Afterwards they can be divided and located in different grammatical dimensions. The morphological segmentation of grammatical units can be used in many other occurrences. This would make paradigmatical descriptions of inflection related phenomena more possible.

KEYWORDS: Japanese linguistics, grammar, hortative mode, systemic approach, non-syllabary approach

Introduction

The aim of this study is to demonstrate the way the polite hortative form *-(i)mash-ō*² is explained in current resources for Japanese learners with its flaws and then to introduce a more systemic perspective on this topic. The main reason why it should be modified can be found in the outbalancing benefits following the change. The currently popular approach, though

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² The element *-(y)ō* primarily marks a proposition but it is also used to denote hortative meaning (Jabłoński 2021a/2: 299–303). For this reason it is referred as PROP(osition) in glossing.

simple in its form, causes many misunderstandings and complications that eventually influence a noticeable part of studying Japanese as a foreign language and simultaneously shape the knowledge of new researchers.

Solutions already exist in publications of linguists studying Japanese grammar. For example, Chamberlain in one of his works (1886: 50–65) presents a systemic description of Japanese conjugation. Still, it lacks clear definitions of terms like *stem*, *ending*, *grammatical marker*, *grammatical dimensions*, *word*, and *grammatical form*, which makes it insufficient especially in the case of morphological analysis. Yet it is quite peculiar as he knew Latin and because of that must have known these terms. The approach he presented can be seen as Anglocentric in a way, which is not suitable for the Japanese language (Jabłoński 2021b: 49–50).

Another well-known publication, written by Bloch (1970: 97–100), seems to be more relevant regarding implemented terminology. However, the linguist appears to focus on word formations and creates inflectional categories based on the formations instead of trying to divide extracted grammatical markers into categories of homogeneous semantics (*ibid.*, 98–102). Moreover, Bloch treats grammatical endings *-na-* and *-ana-* marking negativity as derivational suffixes (*ibid.*, 106). This might be caused by an absence of notions of verbal and nominal elements as well as unambiguous definitions of inflection and derivation. In the light of the facts mentioned above, the publications cannot serve as the primary sources of information. There can be also found more recent resources created by Polish linguists but due to lack of popularity, facilities specializing in teaching the discussed language have not shown interest in adopting them. This itself shows the significance of covering the subject.

The textbooks used for the introduction of the current approach were considered suitable for this paper as they are used at Polish public universities teaching Japanese³. Since they are used as resources for teaching Japanese at academic institutions, their importance and influence on research on Japanese language is even more significant.

It is also crucial to understand that the content of textbooks for studying a foreign language is usually influenced by linguistic description of a given language. An example representing this problem are resources for learning Japanese.

Japanese is considered an agglutinative language (Huszczka et al. 2003: 115–116, Jabłoński 2021a/1: 409–410, Polański 1999: 274, Shibatani 1990: 91) which implies that majority of its word formations are going to be of a

³ The author of this paper himself completed his first year at Japanese studies using *Shokyū Nihongo* 1–2. Later, as a lecturer, he conducted classes relying on all the textbooks discussed below.

synthetic type (Bańko 2012: 211, Huszcza et al. 2003: 115, Jabłoński 2021a/3: 176–177). In the case of an agglutinative language, synthetic forms are built from morphs containing only one grammatical function (Bańko 2012: 48). On the other hand, Polish grammatical morphemes usually accumulate more than one meaning. For this reason, Polish is classified as a fusional language (*ibid.*).

In order to conduct research on any language's morphology it is necessary to adopt proper tools. Morphemes are the smallest meaning bearing units of a language realized by phonemes as morphs (Polański 1999: 376). Every phoneme should be easily differentiated from one another. If this condition is not fulfilled, then it is impossible to determine clear boundaries between morphemes. This problem exists in descriptions of Japanese grammar as many Japanese linguists did their research using a writing system with its smallest units being syllables (Jabłoński 2021b: 53–59).

1. The popular approach

Contemporary grammatical material on conjugation is introduced based on syllabic description *gojū'ongata* 五十音型 in various textbooks for learning Japanese. It refers to the layout of the Japanese syllabary *gojūon* 五十音 and primarily to the layout of the syllables in it (Huszcza et al. 2003: 129, Jabłoński 2021a/2: 92).

There are five inflectional forms of Modern Japanese verbs. As the traditional description was reliant on the Japanese writing system where syllables are the smallest units of analysis, it is rather difficult to find something corresponding with the term *stem*. The closest idea are verbal conjugational forms called *katsuyōkei* 活用形 (Huszcza et al. 2003: 129–130, Jabłoński 2021a/2: 92, Shibatani 1990: 221–222).

All the forms of a verb are arranged in five columns *dan* 段 in consistence with vowels *-a, -i, -u, -e, -o* appearing at the final position of a syllable. To portray that, in case of the verb *nomu* 飲む 'to drink' the element that will change is the syllable *-mu*. It will conjugate as follows: *-ma, -mi, -mu, -me, -mo*. Phonemes located in the initial position appear in the syllabary order, which implies that, for example, the syllable *-ku* of the verb *kaku* 書く 'to write' will precede *nomu* 飲む, as the syllables' onset is *k* which is located before those starting with *m*. These rows coming one after another starting with a different phoneme are called *gyō* 行 'row' (Jabłoński 2021a/2: 92–93).

Japanese verbs are classified into three groups in accordance with the number of conjugational forms they represent. The first one is *godan katsuyō*

五段活用 ‘five grade conjugation’. The verb *nomu* 飲む presented above falls into this category as it has five different forms. The second one is known under the term *ichidan katsuyō* 一段活用 ‘one grade conjugation’ being much simpler to grasp for second-language learners as it has only one form. Verbs associated with this group represent two types: *kami* ‘ichidan 上一段’ ‘upper one grade’, whose conjugational form ends with the phoneme *i* and *shimo* ‘ichidan 下一段’ ‘lower one grade’ with *e* as the final phoneme in their form. The last one called *henkaku katsuyō* 変格活用 ‘irregular conjugation’ consists only of two conjugation patterns called *sagyō henkaku katsuyō* サ行変格活用 ‘irregular conjugation of s-stem verbs’ and *kagyō henkaku katsuyō* カ行変格活用 ‘irregular conjugation of k-stem verbs’. The terms five grade conjugation 五段活用 and one grade conjugation 一段活用 have versions extended by *seikaku* 正格 ‘regular’ that can be used to display their regular pattern in contrary to the irregular conjugation (ibid.). As stated above there are five inflectional forms in the present-day descriptions of Japanese grammar. Although when this description was being developed primarily by scholars from the late eighteenth through the early nineteenth century it contained six distinct forms. It was reduced to five when a category called *rentaikei* 連体形 ‘attributive form’ merged with the terminal form (Shibatani 1990: 222). Due to irrelevancy to the topic of this paper the matter of archaic categories will not be covered here. The modern ones are: *mizenkei* 未然形 ‘irrealis’, *ren’yōkei* 連用形 ‘conjunctive’, *shūshikei* 終止形 ‘terminal’, *kateikei* 仮定形 ‘hypothetical’, *meireikei* 命令形 ‘imperative’ (ibid.).

All the information mentioned above are summarized in the Table 1 below.

inflectional categories	one grade conjugation		five grade conjugation	irregular conjugation of s-stem verbs	irregular conjugation of k-stem verbs
	<i>taberu</i>	<i>miru</i>	<i>nomu</i>	<i>suru</i>	<i>kuru</i>
irrealis	<i>tabe,</i> <i>tabeyo</i>	<i>mi,</i> <i>miyo</i>	<i>noma,</i> <i>nomo</i>	<i>shi,</i> <i>shiyo</i>	<i>ko,</i> <i>koyo</i>
conjunctive	<i>tabe</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>nomi</i>	<i>shi</i>	<i>ki</i>
terminal	<i>taberu</i>	<i>miru</i>	<i>nomu</i>	<i>suru</i>	<i>kuru</i>
hypothetical	<i>tabere</i>	<i>mire</i>	<i>nome</i>	<i>sure</i>	<i>kure</i>
imperative	<i>tabero</i>	<i>miro</i>	<i>nome</i>	<i>shiro,</i> <i>seyo</i>	<i>koi</i>

Table 1. Representation of inflectional categories of Modern Japanese (based on Jabłoński 2021a/2: 93).

As previously stated, syllabary-based grammar explanations can be seen as a simplification for learning Japanese, but in the long run it proves to be delusive, due to the absence of detailed descriptions about morphological changes that appear within a verb. Whenever a student needs to comprehend the rules of building new grammatical structures, the instructions are purely mechanical and the smallest grammatical elements remain unaddressed. Textbooks solely focus on indicating which column of the hiragana syllabary is necessary to create a specific sentence pattern. This method leaves a student without any understanding of the inflection of Japanese words.

Table 2 and 3 below demonstrate how the current, syllabary approach is applied in textbooks. The examples used here are instructions of how to form the plain non-past negative form of verbs, which consists of a specific form of a verb ending with the phoneme *a* and the element *-na-i* ない depicting negation.

	<i>masu-kei</i>			translation	<i>nai-kei</i>			translation
I	<i>su</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>masu</i>	‘to smoke’	<i>su</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>nai</i>	‘not to smoke’
	<i>i</i>	<i>ki</i>	<i>masu</i>	‘to go’	<i>i</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>nai</i>	‘not to go’
	<i>iso</i>	<i>gi</i>	<i>masu</i>	‘to hurry’	<i>iso</i>	<i>ga</i>	<i>nai</i>	‘not to hurry’
	<i>hana</i>	<i>shi</i>	<i>masu</i>	‘to talk’	<i>hana</i>	<i>sa</i>	<i>nai</i>	‘not to talk’
	<i>ma</i>	<i>chi</i>	<i>masu</i>	‘to wait’	<i>ma</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>nai</i>	‘not to wait’

Table 2. A fragment of explanation of how to create the non-polite negation in *Minna-no Nihongo I*. Originally written fully in hiragana without English translations (Suriie Nettowaku 2012: 146).

			translation
<i>aimasu</i>	<i>au</i>	<i>awanai</i>	‘to meet’
<i>kakimasu</i>	<i>kaku</i>	<i>kakanai</i>	‘to write’
<i>hanashimasu</i>	<i>hanasu</i>	<i>hanasanai</i>	‘to speak’

Table 3. A fragment of explanation of creating non-polite negation in *Shokyū Nihongo I*. Originally written fully in hiragana without the column with translations (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japanese Language Center for International Students [JLCIS] 2011: 107).

In both cases at first each verb appears in so-called *masu-kei* ます形 ‘*masu* form’ which is presented to learners just when verbs are introduced in textbooks. Consequently, it is the base form for creating other verbal constructions. The first table is clearer as it shows that the ending *-(a)na-i*

appears in the place of *-(i)mas-u*. It also indicates, relying solely on syllables, that the conjugational form has to be changed so it ends with the vowel *a*.

Table 3 is even more vague as there are three different verb forms listed one after another. In contrary to Table 2, this one also contains verbs in their terminal forms in the middle column. It does not explicitly specify what elements should be removed and what should be changed, nor does it indicate lexical stem. A learner that is able to read the hiragana syllabary can only guess what is necessary to create the non-polite negation form.

The two examples confirm the statements presented prior in this section as all of them are based on the hiragana syllabary layout. Although it is possible to separate the stems and the inflectional endings, these textbooks seem to be avoiding this way of describing formations of synthetic verbal constructions.

2. Explanations of the polite hortative mode

Learners usually come across the polite hortative ending *-(i)mash-ō* very early. This might be the reason why resources for learning Japanese contain little grammatical information related to the ending and focus mainly on its pragmatical aspects. Therefore, a student will be given instructions on when to use it and how to connect it to a verb but will not know that *-(i)mash-ō* is essentially a morpheme sequence made of two separate elements, as this part is omitted, and that the same elements can be found in many other environments. The following part of this section provides examples of this phenomenon derived from textbooks for learning Japanese.

The first one is derived from *Minna-no Nihongo I*, the second one from *Shokyū Nihongo I* and the last one from *Donna Toki Dō Tsukau Nihongo Hyōgen Bunkei Jiten*.

When using *Minna-no Nihongo I*, a student has to be aware that the main textbook will not be sufficient for gathering all the necessary information about *-(i)mash-ō*, as it does not contain instructions on how to use it, but merely gives a few example sentences and explains the way this compound connects to different verbs based on the type of Tables 1–3 mentioned previously. In order to gain knowledge about in what situation this expression should be used, a student is forced to search for it in an additional book for grammar notes – *Minna-no Nihongo Shokyū I: 2nd edition, Translation & Grammar Notes — English*.

Minna-no Nihongo I gives the following three sentences where only the first one (2-1.) is completed. The morpheme sequence *-(i)mash-ō* implicitly appear in the other two examples (2-2. and 2-3.) after the given verbs:

- 2-1. *asoko-de* *yasum-imash⁴-ō.*
 there-INST rest-POL-PROP
 あそこで やすみ ましょう。
 ‘Let’s rest there.’
- 2-2. *shokudō-e* *ik-i[mash-ō.]*
 canteen-ALL go[-POL-PROP]
 食堂へ いき [ましょう。]
 ‘Let’s go to the canteen.’
- 2-3. *sanji-ni* *a-i[mash-ō.]*
 three o’clock-LOC meet[-POL-PROP]
 3時に あい [ましょう]。
 ‘Let’s meet at three o’clock.’
 (Suriie Nettowāku 2012: 50, orig. without square brackets).

At this point a beginner learner would be able to conclude that *-(i)mash-ō* connects to the same form of a verb as the polite ending *-(i)mas-u*. Moreover, the examples in 2-2. and 2-3. in the part with glossing have brackets in the same place as they were put in the Japanese text. Doing so, it becomes clearer that the boundaries of the morphs cannot be set with the syllabary, as the vowel *-i-* cannot be treated as a part of a lexical stem.

For other crucial information, including descriptions of situations when the morpheme sequence should be used, it is necessary to proceed to the additional grammar book. In it, it is stated that the expressions with verbal ending *-(i)mash-ō* are used for giving invitations for someone to do something together in formal speech and as an agreement to a proposition someone was given. The textbook also points out that *-(i)mash-ō* is more direct than another expression of proposition *-(i)mas-en ka* (Suriie Nettowāku 2019: 47). This short explanation is followed by the examples below:

- 2-4. *chotto* *yasum-imash-ō.*
 a.little rest-POL-HYP
 ちょっと 休みましよう。
 ‘Let’s rest a little.’

⁴ For the convenience of the study the vowel *-i-* appearing between lexical stems and ending *-mas-* will be written together with the latter. The status of element *-i-* is worth of its own study. More on this topic: Jabłoński 2021a/3: 301–304.

2-5.	<i>issho-ni</i> together-LOC	<i>hirugohan-o</i> breakfast- ACC	<i>tabe-mas-en</i> eat-POL- NEG	<i>ka.</i> INT(SP)
	いっしょに	昼ご飯を	食べません	か。

‘Why don’t we eat breakfast together?’

2-6.	<i>ē,</i> yeah	<i>tabe-mash-ō.</i> eat-POL-PROP
	ええ	食べましょう。

‘Yeah, let’s do it.’ (ibid.)

There are a few exercises for students to get acquainted with the form but there is no additional information on pragmatical or grammatical aspects of it.

A description of *-(i)mash-ō* in *Shokyū Nihongo 1* is even more limited as it gives only example sentences. The reason is that the concept of the book is that it ought to be used in classes held in Japanese conducted under the teaching term *chokusetsuhō* 直接法 ‘direct mode’ (JLCIS 2011: i–iii). In this case it is assumed that the teacher will be able to give a general description of the grammatical form, especially focusing on its usage and connection to verbs, namely showing what forms of verbs are necessary when ending with *-(i)mash-ō*.

The structure is shown right above two example sentences in the following way: (*issho-ni*) *Vmashō*. *Issho-ni* translates as ‘together’ and the brackets insinuate that it is optional. V symbol stands for ‘verb’ but a student cannot conclude which inflectional form it is based on from just the letter V. As verbs and their polite form *Vmasu* were introduced in the previous lesson, it is probable that the authors believed students will understand that V in *Vmasu* and V in *Vmashō* are the same verbs taking the same form, which can already be considered as a fully correlation-based description. The example sentences are cited below (JLCIS 2011: 40).

2-7.	<i>issho-ni</i> together-LOC	<i>ano</i> that	<i>mise-e</i> shop-ALL	<i>ik-imash-ō.</i> go-POL-PROP
	いっしょに	あの	みせへ	いきましょう。

‘Let’s go together to that shop.’

2-8.	<i>issho-ni</i>	<i>ryō-e</i>	<i>kaer-imash-ō.</i>
	together-LOC	dorm-ALL	go back-POL-PROP
	いっしょに	りょうへ	かえりましょう。

‘Let’s go back to the dorm together.’ (ibid.)

There is no additional information a student would be able to find in the textbook.

The most extensive explanations are in *Donna Toki Dō Tsukau Nihongo Hyōgen Bunkei Jiten*. This dictionary first gives basic translations of any grammatical entries in English, Chinese, Korean and an additional Japanese paraphrase in cases of more advanced Japanese expressions. It is then followed by a few examples that give a better understanding of the proper usage of a grammatical structure. At the end it says what form of a word is necessary and provides more pragmatic information (Tomomatsu et al. 2010: 364). This paper will focus only on the parts of the explanation written in Japanese and English.

The ending *-(i)mash-ō* is translated into English as ‘let’s’. Right under this information six example sentences and dialogs are provided although without translations to other languages. Here is one of them to illustrate what it looks like.

2-9. A	<i>ja</i>	<i>komban</i>	<i>shichi-ji-ni</i>	<i>hoteru-no</i>
	then	this.evening(NUL)	seven-o’clock-LOC	hotel-GEN
A:	じゃ	今晚	7時に	ホテルの
	<i>robii-de</i>	<i>a-imash-ō</i>		
	lobby-INS	meet-POL-PROP		
	ロビーで	<u>会い</u> ましょう。		

‘Let’s meet at 7 o’clock this evening then.’

2-10. B	<i>ē,</i>	<i>ja,</i>	<i>shichi-ji-ni</i>
	okay	then	seven-o’clock-LOC
B:	ええ	じゃ	7時に。

‘Okay, at seven o’clock then.’ (ibid.)

The ending *-mash-ō* is underlined in every sentence it appears in, as it is shown in the given example. Before the part with the explanations on the

usage there is a short note indicating how *-mash-ō* should be connected to a verb: *Vmasu + mashō* (originally fully in hiragana) (ibid.), which should be interpreted as *-mashō* combining with a verb created by losing its ending *-masu*. The main part of the description reads as follows:

1) Actively solicits or urges other party to do something, rather than ask other party's intentions. Also used as answer to such solicitations as *V masen ka* or *V mashō ka*, as in sentence ③ and ④. 2) Action is performed together, as in *mashō ka* or *masen ka* (solicitation). 3) Pattern *V mashō* is polite form of *V yō*. *V yō* is used for close or hierarchical relationships, as in sentences ⑤ and ⑥. Distinguish from *V yō* expressing speaker's volition. (ibid.)

This one is by a large margin the most detailed explanation. In accordance with the fragment cited above *-(i)mash-ō* is used when a speaker wants to actively invite the other party to do something together, but also can be used as a way of accepting a given proposition. There is also information which is usually omitted in textbooks. Namely it is said in the dictionary that verbs combined with the ending *-(y)ō* are the informal equivalents of the form, which are used in remarkably close relationships.

All the explanations work in accordance with the hiragana syllabary or merely show what elements differ while equated with a form introduced earlier in a textbook. It is a purely mechanical approach that leaves learners with little understanding of Japanese grammar. None of the resources presented in this section gives any information about the ending *-(i)mash-ō* itself and components it consists of. These issues can be prevented if a different approach is proposed.

3. Proposition of a systemic approach

The main idea behind a systemic approach is to create a systemic description of phenomena found in Japanese by using the tools of general linguistics. It should contain grammatical elements with their fixed functions and information about their syntactic features⁵. As presented above, the currently popular explanations discuss neither of them.

The approach presented here, in contrary to the one given in the previous section, is called non-syllabic *higojū'ongata* 非五十音型. The aim of this description is to reduce the number of stems in the case of verbs by relying on the phonological features of Japanese. The ideal situation would be to derive one stem to which multiple endings attach (Jabłoński 2021a/2: 94).

⁵ There can be found studies (although not particularly in-depth) aligned with the main thought of this paper (Hansen 2015). This shows the struggle and the need of students to understand rules of building word formations of any type.

This way, rather foreign to Japanese linguistics, was already proposed and characterized in some Polish publications. Based on their content Japanese verbs can be divided into two regular categories and one irregular containing only three verbs: *suru* する ‘to do’, *kuru* 来る ‘to come’ and the copula *da* だ ‘to be’ (Huszczka et al. 2003: 166–188, Jabłoński 2021a/2: 93–94).

Japanese regular verbs fall into two separate categories depending on number of stems they have. The term *bo'indōshi* 母音動詞 ‘vowel verbs’ depicts a group which has one conjugational stem always ending with a vowel either /i/ or /e/. The other group consists of verbs called *shi'indōshi* 子音動詞 ‘consonant verbs’ usually with two conjugational stems with a final position phoneme being a consonant. The environment a verb appears in, determines what type of a stem should be used.

Previously used examples *taberu* 食べる ‘to eat’ and *miru* 見る ‘to watch’ in this perspective are vowel verbs. Their fixed stems are followingly: *tabe-*, *mi-*. The element *-ru* expresses the non-past, affirmative meaning connecting always with this type of verbs (Huszczka et al. 2003: 193–194). Although it seems more proper to treat *-r-* as another grammatical ending as it appears in other positions regularly (Jabłoński 2021a/3: 301–302). The verb *nomu* 飲む ‘to drink’ splits into the stem *nom-* and the non-past, affirmative marker *-u*. The Table 4 below shows how non-past negation forms of the given verbs are created.

non-past affirmative form (stem-ending)	stem	non-past negation form (stem-endings)
<i>tabe-ru</i>	<i>tabe-</i>	<i>tabe-na-i</i>
<i>mi-ru</i>	<i>mi-</i>	<i>mi-na-i</i>
<i>nom-u</i>	<i>nom-</i>	<i>nom-ana-i</i>

Table 4. Examples showing the process of creating the non-past negation form in the non-syllabic approach (based on Huszczka et al. 2003: 195–197).

The first column contains verbs in their so-called dictionary form *jishokei* 辞書形 as they figure in this manner in dictionaries. It is identical to the terminal form *shūshikei* 終止形 in the syllabic description. The ending marking non-past and affirmative values (*-[r]u*) detaches from each verb. In its place comes non-past, negation marker *-(a)na-i*. The vowel *a* is in brackets as it connects only to consonant verbs.

In this approach, the introduction of the two verbal categories should appear at the beginning of any resource for studying Japanese. A learner is able to create any verbal form as long as they are provided with information on the

types of verbs. As endings with their specific meaning will be always given, it is only necessary to master deriving stems from verbs.

4. The polite hortative mode in the non-syllabic description

The non-syllabic description operates on units smaller than syllables. This fact influences the determination of boundaries of verbal stems and grammatical markers as has been shown above. In the case of vowel verbs nothing changes. The stems and the polite hortative mode marker stay the same. However, consonant stems' final phonemes are consonants which means that a vowel is needed before connecting with *-mash-ō*. The necessary vowel is *i* and it can be put in brackets before the ending similarly to *(-a)nai:-(i)mash-ō*.

Having the marker *-(i)mash-ō* and knowing that the *i* attaches to consonant stems the only information a learner needs is to know what type of verbs they work with. Five verbs appeared in the examples above: *yasumu* 休む 'to rest', *iku* 行く 'to go', *au* 会う 'to meet', *kaeru* 帰る 'to go back', *taberu* 食べる 'to eat'. Four of them are consonant verbs (*yasumu*, *iku*, *au*, *kaeru*) and one is vowel verb (*taberu*).

	dictionary form	stem	polite hortative mode <i>-(i)mash-ō</i>
consonant verbs	<i>yasum-u</i>	<i>yasum-</i>	<i>yasum-imash-ō</i>
	<i>ik-u</i>	<i>ik-</i>	<i>ik-imash-ō</i>
	<i>a-u</i>	<i>a-</i>	<i>a-imash-ō</i>
	<i>kaer-u</i>	<i>kaer-</i>	<i>kaer-imash-ō</i>
vowel verb	<i>tabe-ru</i>	<i>tabe-</i>	<i>tabe-mash-ō</i>

Table 5. Non-syllabic approach in attaching the polite hortative mode *-(i)mash-ō* to verbs (based on Jabłoński 2021a/2: 299).

Table 5 summarizes all the information presented in this and the previous section. By removing the marker *-u* from any consonant verb, the stem is created. (However, there are alternatives in the case of verbs ending with *-tsu* and *-su*. When /i/ appears instead of /u/ in this kind of verbs, /ts/ changes into /ch/ and /s/ into /sh/. In all other cases /ts/ changes into /t/). As can be seen, in all four cases the vowel *i* precedes the ending *-mash-ō*. When it comes to the vowel verbs, the stem is made by detaching the marker *-ru*. Then the ending *-mash-ō* simply follows.

This method involves neither other grammatical constructions nor the hiragana syllabary. It implies that that learning process should start with verbs in their dictionary forms and as soon as they appear in textbooks the distinction of vowel and consonant verbs needs to be explained. This approach is universal in its nature, which means it can be applied to verbal constructions of any level.

Current resources treat *-(i)mash-ō* as an indivisible unit, although it is a morpheme sequence consisting of two elements: *-mas-* being a verbal polite marker and *-(y)ō* proposition marker. Traditionally the element *-mas-u* is treated as an auxiliary verb (Matsuda 2021: 56) that inflects just like five grade conjugation verbs. It results from the inability to describe *-u* as non-past affirmative marker in the syllabic approach. The polite marker has two variants: *-mas-/mash-* (Jabłoński 2021a/2: 169). When combining with the proposition marker the latter is used. In *-(y)ō* the phoneme *y* appears only in vowel conjugation. It is then clear that *-(i)mash-ō* is built of *-mash-* and *-ō*. This method of explanation cannot be included in current textbooks due to its purely non-syllabic character.

What is more, learners, by knowing that the function of *-mash-* is only to carry the value of politeness, can realize it is fully removable. By doing so they will be able to create the non-polite hortative mode form, which is treated by textbooks as a separate grammar phenomenon. Vowel verbs will need the phoneme *-y-*.

stem	politeness marker	hortative mode marker	translation
<i>tabe-</i>	<i>-mash-</i>	<i>-ō</i>	‘let’s eat’
<i>tabe-</i>		<i>-yō</i>	‘let’s eat’
<i>yasum-</i>	<i>-imash-</i>	<i>-ō</i>	‘let’s rest’
<i>yasum-</i>		<i>-ō</i>	‘let’s rest’

Table 6. Structure analysis of verbs in hortative mode forms (based on Jabłoński 2021a/2: 169, 299, 2021a/3: 301–302).

The simple examples in Table 6 show that the constant element is *-ō* in both formal and informal usage. When the politeness marker is removed in case of vowel verbs the phoneme *-y-* precedes the hortative mode marker. Consonant stems combine with it directly.

Conclusion

The current syllabic approach, although simple in its mechanical method of explanation, is bound by the writing system. Verbs must appear in textbooks in the *masu*-form so that other verbal constructions can be presented.

Consequently, grammatical phenomena of units smaller than a syllable are either completely ignored like the information about *-(i)mash-ō* being a sequence of two elements performing different functions, or they are modified so they can be described by using the syllabary⁶.

In resources *-(i)mash-ō* and *-(y)ō* are treated as nonrelated endings. Sometimes publications like *Donna Toki Dō Tsukau Nihongo Hyōgen Bunkei Jiten* explain that these two forms share the same meaning, but the latter one is used in close relationships. This is not untrue, but it is possible to explain it by showing learners each element of the morpheme sequence with its function (Table 6)⁷. It will then be clear that *-(i)mash-ō* is in fact *-(i)mash-* (politeness) and *-(y)ō* (hortative).

Japanese grammar dictionaries incorporate hundreds of entries that can be divided into smaller segments. Then the isolated elements fall into specific categories (many of them to specific grammar dimensions) depending on their morphological features. As a result, the number of entries reduces. This way, robotic memorization and putting endings in an appropriate place in a sentence is transformed into a deeper awareness of Japanese grammar.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative
ALL	allative
GEN	genitive
INST	instrumental
INT	interrogative
LOC	locative
NEG	negation
NUL	morphological zero (including the drop of a recoverable case marker)
POL	polite

⁶ It is noticeable that the application of the hiragana syllabary in textbooks interferes with grammatical explanations. This fact was also stated by the anonymous peer-reviewers of this paper. It would probably be justifiable to examine if the current state should remain unchanged.

⁷ There seems to be a clash between the Japanese presented in textbooks for foreigners and Japanese characterization in linguistic publications. The anonymous peer-reviewers indicated this fact as well. This division highly influences the structure of grammatical information incorporated in resources for learning Japanese. As briefly shown above in this paper, the lack of linguistic perspective results in non-systemic descriptions, which leads to making the study of Japanese purely a memorization process. On the other hand, it is not uncommon to find many textbooks, intended for teenagers at European schools, which contain terms specific for linguistics (Kopp et al. 2013, Piotrowska-Skrzypek et al. 2019, Samson 2006, Viúdez et al. 2006, Wiseman et al. 2018). This operation is made to simplify the learning process by showing regularities. Therefore, it seems appropriate to reconsider the content of current textbooks for learning Japanese.

PROP	proposition
SP	sentence particle

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#フィリピンママあるある (#*firipinmamaaruaru*): (Re)presentations of Motherhood in Japanese-Filipino Children's TikTok Videos²

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ABSTRACT

Digital media sites, such as TikTok, are promising spaces that have recently been explored as timely and accessible spaces for analyzing gender, agency, and the wider representation of mixed roots families in Japan. With Japan and the Philippines' differences in gendered norms, there is an incongruity between the real-life experiences of Japanese Filipino children (henceforth written as JFC) vis-à-vis the gendered expectations and views on motherhood in Japan. This gap is explored through a sample of ten comedic TikTok videos where young JFC users (re)present their Filipino mothers' identities via the hashtag #*firipinmamaaruaru*. Using a digital content analysis of their videos, this paper examines JFC's experiences and perceptions of their Filipino mothers. The analysis shows how Filipino mothers are (re)presented in their children's videos as bound by the gendered norms of motherhood in Japan. The humor in JFC's posts points out the reality that their representations of their mothers are not the standard desirable qualities of motherhood as expected in Japan.

KEYWORDS: humor, social media, Japanese Filipino children, motherhood, gender

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² The results of this paper were orally presented at the 16th Next-Generation Global Workshop of Kyoto University on September 29–30, 2023.

Introduction

Throughout the years, Japan has become a regular destination for many foreign migrants around the globe. According to the Immigration Services Agency, the number of foreign residents as of December 2023, was at 3,410,992 (Immigration Services Agency of Japan 2024: 3). In conjunction with this increase of foreign residents, the number of children in Japan with foreign and mixed roots have also increased to 770,759 with 1,214 being Japanese Filipino children born to Filipino women with Japanese fathers (E-Stat Census Vital Statistics Japan 2022). However, studies about Japanese children with mixed roots have described their experiences as varying from being negative to sometimes positive, as well as being subject to a mixture of exoticism and othering. These issues range from terminological debates concerning different nuances of words used to describe mixed roots people, like *hāfu/daburu/konketsuji/ainoko* or *kokusaiji*, to the phenotypical and sociocultural differences. Additionally, it can further extend to issues of identity mis/underrepresentation in the media, which can result in racism, bullying and harsh treatment in society (Murphy-Shigematsu 2012; Iwabuchi 2014; Daanoy 2016; Shimoji 2018c; Törngren and Sato 2021).

On the other end are foreign/Filipino mothers whom having left their home countries, face many struggles in raising families in Japan. These difficulties include struggles dealing with the results of above-mentioned children's experiences of othering, as well as childrearing, language and cultural differences, work struggles, and welfare problems (Uayan et al. 2009; Landsberry and Kanai 2019; Celero 2021). In addition, these foreign/Filipino mothers of mixed-Japanese children are subject to precarities stemming from Japanese gendered societal expectations of motherhood and parenting in Japanese society. These expectations also result in some strains or friction with the parent-children relationships in mixed-households (Cheng-Chua and San Jose 2022).

These mothers and their mixed roots children's negative experiences are exacerbated by media outlets promoting nationwide Japanese identity discourses such as the idea of a distinct and homogenous Japanese people debunked by various scholars (Befu 2001; 2014) and Japan's own ethno-nationalist views of identity (Liu-Farrer 2020). This view, which includes normative gender ideologies of womanhood and femininity in Japan, has been rooted in society for generations (Ochiai 1997; Lebra 2007; Dalton 2013). It is also attributed to the practices of Japanese TV media, a male-dominated group of corporations with male-centric practices, where representations of male and female characters still embody traditional male-female roles (Golovina 2018; Ogawa 2020).

In this superficial industry where mixed-ness and commodification of looks are the norm, some mixed-roots children including JFC are able to leverage their unique physical features to succeed in the field of entertainment because they are commonly associated with ideals of “glamour” (Shimoji 2018b). However, this does not hold true for all, especially those not in the entertainment industry. Iwabuchi (2014) discusses this polarity with both the white and Asian mixed Japanese counterparts in terms of representation. Particularly those with western descent, some have become models and TV media celebrities such as Becky, Triendl Reina etc., where they become epitomized as the standard *hāfu*³ definitions of people with mixed-roots. Likewise, these “model” *hāfu* also excel in sports, for example the famous wrestler Kondō Shuri, and tennis champion Ōsaka Naomi. Those who unfortunately fall short of the imagined *hāfu* “standard” e.g. model-like beauty, or dual/multiple language abilities, skillful athletic prowess, struggle to live up to the expectation. However, the reality is that mixed-roots people in Japan are a melting pot of different cultures, identities, and attributes, yet all are susceptible to negative experiences of alienation and contestation of their own “Japaneseness”, as well as their “*hāfu*-ness”. Unfortunately, this contestation and doubt also extends to their womanhood. This is because their womanhood is a mixture of their gendered literacies from their mothers in the household even as they are brought up in the gender order of larger Japanese society. Often, people with mixed-roots are either under-, or misrepresented in media in terms of diversity, while a select few are chosen to “represent” diversity but still within the terms of wider Japanese media lenses and definitions. Already facing unrealistic beauty and physical standards, such as the 2019 Nissin advertisement scandal of white-washing Ōsaka Naomi⁴, we see the continuous treatment of token mixed-roots subjects which – while famous and successful – are still fit into a set frame of “exotic” people juxtaposed to certain preconceived notions of Japaneseness including womanhood and beauty.

In the case of JFC, many have also been very successful in the television industry. Actresses, singers, and models such as Ikeda Elaiza, Takahashi Maryjun, and Akimoto Sayaka are just a few of these. However, Daanoy (2016) posits how this can be different to those not in the limelight.

³ In this paper, mixed roots people/children will be used as the preferred umbrella term for people with mixed-roots such as *hāfu* and FJC. While *hāfu* is also widely used as an umbrella term for mixed-roots children including FJC, it will only be used as relevant to its common use in media and hashtags used for the digital media trail as examined on TikTok, due to its contestation as a discriminatory term.

⁴ In January 2019, the well-known noodle company Nissin faced backlash for releasing a video advertisement portraying Haitian-heritage Osaka Naomi with white skin (BBC News 2019).

Accordingly, “the children borne of intermarriage between Japanese and former Filipino entertainers, rural and urban brides of the 1980s through mid-2000, bear the marked stereotypes of their mother” (ibid., 164). This validates the abovementioned multifaceted experiences of belonging in a multiethnic household – particularly on how having a Filipino mother may affect their children negatively (Seiger 2019). In Cheng-Chua and San Jose’s work (2022), they analyzed manga by Maeda Musashi entitled *Firipin Kāchan Funtōki* (‘My struggles with my Filipino wife’) published by Bunkasha in 2013. They concluded Filipina women’s “static representations” in the manga as “boisterous, a bit rough, and carefree” (ibid., 218). While they mention Maeda’s work as one with a comedic tone, the work also arguably tends to reinforce preconceived notions of Filipinas as entertainers who are rescued by their Japanese husbands in marriage; further noting that the demographic of Filipinas in Japan have changed and do not reflect those stereotypes. As mentioned above, FJCs can find that having a Filipino mother works as a double-edged sword affecting their parent-child relationships as well. In Cheng-Chua and San Jose’s (2022) analysis of another manga entitled *Kurasumeito-wa Gaikokujin* (‘My classmates are foreigners’), they analyzed a chapter *Mama Gakkō-ni Konaide* (‘Don’t come to school, mom’). It tells a story of Keiko Tanaka, a JFC who, as a result of being bullied, was admittedly ashamed of her mother. In addition to this, her mother’s inability to speak Japanese led her to always choose her father to accompany her to parent-teacher meetings. Indeed, having Filipino mothers has a significant effect on children not just due to their heritage, but also due to outside factors such as school bullies. While the children face these difficult struggles and ambiguous feelings of identity denial, due to not having Japanese mothers, the mothers are also met with the same.

With both Filipino mothers and their JFC facing various types of difficulties in adjusting to Japanese society, this research discusses the interplay of the mothers and their children’s relationship in the space of digital media using gender as an analytical lens. Along with above-mentioned precarities, this research problematizes the Filipina embodiment of their pre-existent Philippine cultural norms, and concepts of femininity and womanhood while having to live with new ones within Japanese society and their new households. In Cheng-Chua and San Jose’s research (ibid.), it was apparent how Filipino women are represented in a different light in comparison with Japanese women. While the stereotypes of the “boisterousness, a bit rough, and carefree” (ibid., 218) attitudes of Filipino women reflected in their study are not always true, this contrasts with Japanese norms of femininity which

are the opposite. Hence, this becomes an overarching struggle in the new generation who absorb these understandings of identity: both Filipino and Japanese as well as their knowledge of gender in both cultures.

The Filipino mothers, who have already faced specific gendered expectations in Filipino society, do not just carry the burden transnationally, rather, they experience an additional layer of expectations in their new homes. After the mothers migrate to Japan, the expectations of fitting into the mold of womanhood due to the new motherhood concepts and practices in Japan are manifested towards their treatment of their JFC offspring. It is also seen through their children's reactions and feelings toward the Filipino mothers' ways of mothering. These realities reflected in their digital media (re)presentations are highlighted and dissected in this paper.

Furthermore, as they establish their mixed families in Japan, newer expectations become reinforced by the people around them, such as their extended family, neighbors, peers, children's teachers, and the JFC themselves. Therefore, this paper aims to answer two questions. First, how are these expectations represented through the digital media practices of JFC on short videos hosting platform TikTok? Second, what do these (re)presentations reveal about the realities and precarities of Filipino motherhood in Japanese society? The liminality between converging beliefs about the old and new societal pressures has a significant impact on homes and relationships, both the mothers and their Japanese-Filipino children's identities, and therefore shapes young JFC's beliefs about their Filipino and Japanese heritage as well as their gender identities as they grow older within Japanese society.

Through an exploration of representations of Filipino mothers using the hashtag #firipinmamaaruaru – *aruaru* being the Japanese slang for typical/common things, hence 'typical Filipino mom things' (further explained in section 2) – from the lens of young JFC's use of digital media, particularly TikTok, this paper reveals how even the lighthearted medium of humor can expound on deeper seated issues of race, gender, intergenerational family issues, and motherhood in Japan. It also shows how digital media practices on social media sites like TikTok can contribute to a more personal, if not better, representation of mixed roots/*hāfu* in Japanese society compared to conventional television media.

1. From conventional media to new media: television and/or TikTok

The above section provided a background on Filipino mothers and their JFC's various struggles stemming from preexistent homogenous and

gendered frames of Japanese society, as well as stereotypes about Filipino mothers and JFC as popularized through television media including manga. However, now that we are in an age where digital media, particularly SNS (Social Networking Sites) such as TikTok has been gaining wider audience and reach, we should not discount its utility to shift and shape the representations and narratives of minorities such as JFC and their mothers. When identity performance is available in other forms of media, where one can control their own representation, these tools can be empowering agents for awareness which can challenge and “erode” certain views about groups of minorities such as people with mixed roots, including JFC (Shimoji 2018a) and their foreign mothers. Ultimately, even though foreign mothers and mixed roots children such as JFCs are still considered a minority in Japan, it is important to dissect and discuss their situation because it contributes attention to minority inclusivity in Japanese society.

TikTok is a platform increasingly recognized as a promising explorative site for analyzing JFC, and other *hāfu* mixed roots children in Japan’s cultural and identity presentations. TikTok is a social media platform created in 2016 by a Beijing company Bytedance for international users as an equivalent of its home-version Douyin. An application focusing on videos, it has over 1 billion monthly active users and is in the top five of the most popular social network sites used as of April 2024 (Dixon 2024). With its appeal to the youth, and thanks to gaining steam during the isolating days of the Covid-19 era, it has presently become one of the go-to applications of the youth including those in Japan due to its mobile accessibility. According to Sandvine reports, “time spent on mobile apps has grown from about three hours pre-pandemic to a global average of about 5 hours per day, currently”. In addition, TikTok was noted to be in the top 3 in terms of mobile video traffic reach globally (Sandvine 2023).

In the past, the absorption of media and the internet occurred in a one-way linear fashion. For conventional media, users watched and consumed information straight from television screens. In the case of internet use, the early 2000s also saw a unidirectional flow, namely Web 1.0. This was when consumption of data and information was passive, like television media where people sat, watched, and consumed videos. However, in the era of Web 2.0 in the late 2000s, the shift to two-way bidirectional flows of data allowed users of social media to post their own information and videos on websites. This way, “users without technical knowledge can easily transmit information, and the knowledge and information of various transmitters combine to form the ‘wisdom of crowds’” (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2023). As a result, communal practices of creating,

sharing, and consuming digital media have evolved and become the latest norm. So much has changed during the last two decades including the worldwide pandemic, leading to these new social media practices of sharing online all over the world including Japan. According to online statistics, “the number of social media users in Japan is forecasted to increase from 102 million in 2022 to 113 million in 2027” (Dixon 2024). There is no doubt why several researchers have set their sights on the viability of research on these digital media platforms in its many forms.

Crystal Abidin, a pioneer on SNS studies has done substantial work on “influencers” – celebrities online, featured on different platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Tumblr and TikTok. Her work on various sites of digital media shows the research potential of social media platforms across various disciplines. Furthermore, her research on internet celebrities and initial mapping of TikTok cultures of “Visibility Labor” shows TikTok’s business side of incentivizing and quantifying labor in terms of visibility and attention (2020). A few researchers have also studied the phenomenon of mixed-identity sharing on TikTok. King-O’Riain (2022) talks about multiraciality on the platform using the trend and hashtag *#wasian*, which refers to the identities of East Asian + White users. In Japan, focusing on the umbrella term of *hāfu*, Ariga (2023) has studied the phenomenon of TikTok hashtag sharing with *#hāfuaruaru*. This, as well as a comparison of media versus TikTok representation, strikes a familiar vein of research. In Ariga’s paper, it maintains how TikTok tends to mirror the representational tendencies of conventional media in terms of the overrepresentation of whites as opposed to the Asian counterparts. Ultimately, the paper posits that despite the lesser popularity of TikTok in Japan as compared to other digital platforms, its utility as an alternative space for the performance of personal identities should likewise be recognized. While these emerging literatures discuss the utility of TikTok as a performative space of mixed-roots identities, their focus still leans on more western tendencies (as agreeing with Ariga’s conclusions). Although the above-mentioned research on the umbrella term of *hāfu*, as well as studies on *#wasians* opens up a healthy discussion of mixed roots Japanese identities, there is a breadth of knowledge yet to be learned from specific cultures such as the non-white Japanese Filipino counterparts. This paper attempts to fill this gap by focusing on Filipino culture and JFC practices showcasing their mothers on TikTok.

Digital media’s appeal to the youth, as well as its accessibility as a space for mixed-roots families like those with FJC in Japan is indeed not just a tool for open performance of cultural identities but is viable tool for research as

well. As a welcoming space to share the youth's mixed-cultural and gender-diverse characteristics free from the constraints of traditional media, these new mediums such as TikTok are becoming a strong competitor of conventional TV media. It has therefore become a big part of our communication and consumption culture. As it is compact, appealing to the youth, and offers interesting connections worldwide, we can recognize its potential as a space without borders, and an accessible lens for examining changes in norms and cultural behaviors especially of those immersed in the digital media sphere. As Sawyer and Chen posit, "Intercultural dialogue is critical today in our globalized and blended world, where different cultures encounter each other daily, especially through social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and the iPhone" (2012: 154).

2. Hashtags as a collective culture: #*hāfu* and #*firipinmamaaruaru*

According to the Help Center website of X (formerly Twitter) "A hashtag—written with a # symbol—is used to index keywords or topics on X. This function was created on X and allows people to easily follow topics they are interested in" (X Help Center, n.d.). It is a powerful search tool that has spread across platforms including TikTok for its use in search functions.

Inputting the hashtag #*hāfu* on TikTok, a quick search generates 1.4 billion views on the hundreds of videos posted. As an accessible research tool, the symbol "#" hashtag serves as a tracing tool for keywords which can potentially benefit our understanding of the phenomenon of sharing not just by JFC but by all the possible mixed roots-*hāfu* identities and experiences featured through the SNS application.

With its utility to chain similar ideas together, it has the function to connect overlapping identities when used. With #*hāfu* for example, it can serve as an overarching representative of the wide range of *hāfu* identities presented in digital media. In addition, if you pair this symbol with specific groups of people, such as #*hāfu* and #*firipinhāfu* it will be chained with *hāfus* with Filipino roots' posts much like above-mentioned #*wasian* trends connecting to Western-Asian groups of people online (King-O'Riain, 2022).

As such, we see the collective culture that the hashtag function affords. It strings together various cultures with overlapping similarities which offers a breadth of knowledge and opens discussion on mixed-roots identities online.

The utilities on these platforms have been characterized as internet affordances and/or communication affordances (Schrock 2015). The internet, with its many digital platforms, has brought in novel ways of communication and representation, allowing individuals to exercise agency

and express themselves free from the constraints of conventional media outlets. Through quick access from their smartphones, people with mixed roots such as JFC can communicate their daily practices and their identity presentations efficiently. On their TikTok posts, they can curate and paint a more nuanced story of their personal experiences of living in mixed-roots households with Filipino mothers and share it to a collective culture (e.g. others of Japanese-Asian descent, wasians etc.) or of those who share similar experiences all over the world, and thus they are not limited to their own sphere e.g. #firipinhāfu who have #firipinmamas.

In this paper, #firipinmamaaruaru is studied in order to look at Japanese children with specifically Filipino roots, particularly those with Filipino mothers. This stems from the hashtag trend of “*aruaru*” or the Japanese slang of typical things/common things. #firipinmamaaruaru therefore means “typical Filipino mom things” but for Japanese children. These hashtags designate unique and humorous parodies and re-enactments of their mothers in the form of short videos. As JFC perform their mothers’ identities, this paper suggests a re-expression or (re)presentation. This is because, even though the personas performed in the study are not the JFC’s own, since they (re)present those of their mothers through mimicry posts, it is still arguably demonstrative of their whole identities as JFC as an interplay of their learned cultural and gendered literacies from their mothers. As such, this paper sees these (re)presented characteristics of their mothers as part and parcel of the JFC’s socio-cultural identities. In the context of performance, Butler (2006) helps clarify the significance of imitation in performativity. She explains how people frequently imitate or act out gender roles and behaviors that they consider to be norms, emphasizing the importance of mimicry in the formation of gender identities. In this context, the opposite is true as what is performed is opposite from the norm. It is thus the humor which signifies that the performed identity is regarded as the undesirable. Since JFC’s digital posts are all done in jest and presented in a comedic manner, this humor becomes instrumental in communicating the complexities of their identities and familial dynamics, elucidating certain Japanese gender stereotypes, and fostering a sense of connection within their online community.

3. Research methods and hypothesis

This research employs the various theoretical perspectives of social identity, internet affordances, and humor in contextualizing the practices of digital media posting by JFC. Through Gee’s proposition of “identity as an analytic lens” (2000: 100), he discusses “affinity-identity”, or “experiences shared in

the practice of affinity groups”. This paper argues that public sharing of the *#firipinmamaaruaru* videos helps connect, relate, and validate the group’s understanding of their mixed identities, therefore fostering mutual understanding among those with similar experiences, or “affinity groups”. Theories of the communicative affordances of mobile media posit an affordance perspective that links “individual and technological agency” (Schrock 2015: 1233). Within this perspective, the individual’s agency is afforded by the digital media instruments they use. In this case, their smartphones and TikTok applications. Therefore, social media can be seen as an agentic tool for representation and for shaping wider beliefs of the JFC TikToker group’s cultural identities.

While the videos are done in a meme-like humorous construct, they afford us a reflexive analysis of gendered norms in Japan pertaining to motherhood. Douglas’s famous theory on humor and social incongruities (1968) explicates Han and Kuiper’s depiction of “jokes in the social structure” in her work (2021). Also focusing on digital videos of Chinese mothers in the pandemic, her take on jokes in the social structure and how it reflects cultural norms of gender in China effectively translates if applied to this current *#firipinmamaaruaru* study; hence, we can apply her discussions and theoretical approach to fit the goals of this research.

Through a digital content and contextual analysis of JFC’s online TikTok videos via the hashtag *#firipinmamaaruaru*, this paper examines the JFC’s experiences and perceptions of their mother’s child-rearing practices vis-à-vis normative motherhood and expectations in Japan. Using data collected from their digital videos, the study examines the contexts behind JFC’s (re)presentation of their mothers’ identities through humor, ultimately shedding light on prescriptive gender roles and motherhood expectations in Japan.

To gather a representative sample of TikTok videos, the paper employed the hashtag by searching *#firipinmamaaruaru* to sample videos between August and September 2023. It used a purposive sampling strategy by sampling over 300 videos to reach the number of 10 videos for this study. By analyzing the top posts using this hashtag and purposively filtering duplicating themes, it helped ensure that the data represents content that has gained significant visibility and engagement within the TikTok community while guaranteeing that the chosen videos represent a wide range of perspectives and content pertinent to the research goals and questions.

4. *Firipinmamaaruaru* representations on TikTok⁵

4.1. *Firipinmama* 1: A disciplinarian

In the first video, the *firipinmama* is represented through expressions of anger. With the caption translated as “When I was young, these were the things my mom used to scare me when I was misbehaving”⁶, the video shows four items for different levels of anger. First one shown is the fist, followed by a slipper, and a hanger. Finally, the belt is shown as level 100. In the video, it is not just the employment of corporal punishment that is highlighted, but the use of swear words such as *punyeta* (‘brat’) and shouting as strong expressions of anger (see Figure 1).

The visuals of employing a big almond eye and large mouth filter are a part of the humorous aspect of this video. TikTok’s filters are examples of affordances for the development of an online persona which may help users with both anonymity as well as showcasing a different character. This also highlights exaggeration in each of their videos. As one of the older proponents of this TikTok hashtag, this TikToker’s posts which use the same filter for most of the posts about her mother have indeed shaped the practices and encouraged those who followed to post under the same hashtag in a memetic fashion.

In using these filters, visual appeal is applied while agency is ensured as the creators are afforded freedom to do whichever impressions, they feel suitable without the risk of showing their real faces. Filters may serve as an agentic tool primarily because it acts as a mask. With this use, it eliminates a) the time to put on makeup for the sake of posting and going live online, and b) inhibitions and reservations in doing exaggerated movements, and actions.

⁵ The following data is part of a working dissertation and was orally presented in the Faculty of Intercultural Studies, Kobe University Colloquium, February 9, 2024.

⁶ Translations in this paper are all done by the author from the original mixed Japanese and Filipino audio on TikTok.





Video 1: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> holding up various implements angrily		
<p>Username:</p> <p>Juliana.kawaii1220</p> <p>383.9k likes</p> <p>6,138 comments</p>	<p>Caption:</p> <p>Things that my mom used to scare me with when I was misbehaving.</p> <p>Hook/introduction:</p> <p>Things that my mom used to scare me with when I was misbehaving.</p>	
 <p>Firipinmama and fist</p>	<p>Transcript</p> <p>Things that my mom used to scare me with when I was misbehaving.</p> <p>Level 1: Fist</p> <p>M: Do you want me to hit you?</p> <p>Level 2: Slippers</p> <p>M: You brat! Don't make me count to three. One...two...!</p> <p>Level 10: Hanger</p> <p>M: Which one is better, will you listen properly, or do you want to get hit?</p> <p>Level 100: Belt</p>	
 <p>Firipinmama and slippers</p>	 <p>Firipinmama and hanger</p>	 <p>Firipinmama and belt</p>

Figure 1. Screenshots of Juliana.kawaii1220 (2020a).

With the visuals aside, the most telling of the comedic “punch” of this portrayal is the disciplining tactics of the *firipinmama* in the video which resonated with many of the JFC in the TikTok space. With 383 900 likes and

6,138 comments, many users agreed that they experienced the same. In addition, one user wondered in the comments whether Japanese children experienced the same when they were young (chiigyūko 2020)⁷. This is because in Japanese social context, corporal punishment is frowned upon, and is illegal. Society stresses the importance of using positive disciplinary techniques.

The jovial truth of a *firipinmama*'s child experiencing these tools for discipline is funny because many relate to the experiences, and it also sheds light on the norms of Japanese motherhood that do not condone this disciplinary practice. With the above comment, digital media becomes a tool for reflexivity on the difference of both cultures. While no one answered the above question, it reiterates an affordance of cultural inquiry that highlights a positive quality of digital media, which is the affordance of a cultural dialogue.

4.2. *Firipinmama* 2: A tough fighter for her children

In Video 2, the filter employed is the big face with big round eye. This is the usual filter the user Ouchi1213 uses when she (re)presents her *firipinmama* on her videos. To note, as observed in many of Ouchi1213's videos, this is not done to preserve anonymity due to many of her videos showcasing her real face. With 200,000+ Likes on this post, 641,000+ followers and a huge 22.6 million Likes on the platform, she is considered a micro-celebrity and thus filtering is done not as an anonymity tactic but rather as a (re)presentative persona of their *firipinmama*.

In analyzing her video content, it presents a strong expletive tone of language like Video 1. The (re)presentation is a strong, opinionated and loud mother who is ready to fight for her children. When her child was crying due to bullying, the reaction was to fight and reprimand the classmate. Like the first video, the strong Filipino accent is exhibited, and a directness and non-filtered way of speaking while criticizing the physical qualities of the classmate of the JFC was presented. In this video, it strikes a familiar chord in viewers of Filipino mothers' strong and tough expression of love that extends to their family, and in turn affects their children's peers. The willingness to fight in public for their children is evident and can be contrasted with the normative socio-cultural ideals in Japan which value the preservation of peace within the community, school, and peers of their children. This depicts the normative Japanese mother as expected to keep

⁷ While this paper does not cover the comments of all digital media posts, the inclusion and analysis of one comment aims to show how future research can be expanded by also employing an analysis of the viewers' engagement and comments.

the peace in public and restrain from causing a scene in public to save face. The humor lies with the normative ideals of group-conforming decorum of Japanese mothers which may not be completely gendered but nevertheless reflects the way mothers are expected to deal with the peers and classmates of their children in school and in the community.


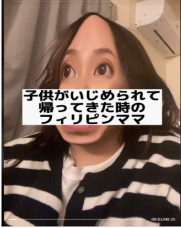
Video 2: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> having a conversation with her child	
<p>Username: Ouchi1213</p> <p>200.5K likes</p> <p>1,813 comments</p>	 <p>Caption: Filipino mom when her child comes home after being bullied.</p> <p>Hook/introduction: Filipino mom when her child comes home after being bullied.</p>
 <p><i>Firipinmama</i> watching</p> <p>TV</p>	<p><i>Firipinmama</i> fleeing scene angrily</p> <p>Transcript</p> <p>M: Welcome back! Ay!</p> <p>What's wrong with you, you're crying, ha?</p> <p>Why are you crying, ha?</p> <p>FJC: I got bullied (cry)</p> <p>M: Bullied? Who? Which? Which?</p> <p>FJC: My seatmate Takashi-kun (cry)</p> <p>M: Your seatmate, that idiot boy? That ugly boy that one!</p> <p>You were beaten by that? ha?</p> <p>Where is that (boy) I will get that boy that (brat)!</p> <p>Where? Where?</p> <p>FJC: No, mama!</p> <p>Mama!</p>

Figure 2. Screenshots of Ouchi1213 (2023a).

4.3. *Firipinmama* 3: A critical mother

In Video 3, the *firipinmama* is critical of their child's makeup style. With cultural differences including the ways of putting on makeup, the *firipinmama* could not help but criticize her own daughter's way of doing

makeup. This represents a feature similar to Ouchi1213’s mother lacking restraint in using strong words such as *hoy*, used to call one’s attention, and in further criticizing their physical attributes. However, in this case, she criticized their own children and admonished her to take the makeup off. The makeup translated as “baby-eyes” is a makeup trend in Japan to create a cute image like that of an innocent baby. Having this kind of eye makeup signifies youth and childlike appearance. This is humorous because it shows both the apparent gaps in knowledge and styles of makeup due to age and culture. While to a Japanese mother, this makeup style may be understandable, the cultural gap as well as the age gap adds to the joke. However, in the motherhood role perspective, as a recurring theme, the joke lies on the unthinkable way that a Japanese mother would be like this outright and outspoken critical *firipinmama* to their children. It suggests and paints a picture of a normative Japanese mother who is gentle with their words to their children and is supportive of the makeup trends they follow.




Video 3: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> having a conversation with her child	
<p>Username: Juliana.kawaii1220 574.9K likes 2,369 comments</p>  <p>Hook captioned: “When I tried to go out with thicker makeup than usual”</p>	 <p>Caption: In the Philippines, they don't draw baby eyes...(wondering)</p> <p>Hook/introduction: Mom's reaction when I go out with thicker makeup than usual.</p> <p>“Take it off”</p>
 <p><u>Firipinmama captioned:</u> “That does not look good on you!”</p> <p>Transcript M: Hoy, there's something swollen under your eyes! FJC: Oh no, it's not that. It's just baby eyes. Baby eyes? M: What's that?</p> <p>FJC: I drew makeup on, so my eyes look bigger. M: What the...That doesn't look good on you! Take it off!</p>	

Figure 3. Screenshots of Juliana.kawaii1220 (2020b).

4.4. *Firipinmama* 4: An enabling mother

In Video 4, the representation extends to a broader Filipino audience as the hashtag describes a general culture of Filipinos when committing the act of lying. When Filipinos lie, their body language may employ winking to those who understand the same joke, or the same lie they are committing to signify mutual understanding. This user depicts their mother doing the action sometimes, therefore it is still suitable to be used for the hashtag of *#firipinmamaaruaru*. The translation shows how the *firipinmama* sometimes lie to their JFC's teachers so they can take a break from school, thereby enabling their children to commit school misdemeanors from time-to-time. The comedic tone of this action both explicates how body language is cultural and how it is understandable to members of the same culture with the same affinity. The hashtag including "I cannot copy/do it well" symbolizes the knowledge of the culture of being Filipino and solidifies the affinity in this regard, but by being Japanese as well, it may not be a commonly occurring practice and therefore entails more practice and skill. In terms of discussions about normative Japanese motherhood, the humor lies in that education is placed with utmost importance, as with the existence of terms such as *kyōikumama* ('education mothers') where placing intense devotion and investment in one's children's education is a normative Japanese mother's role. The "joke in the social structure" hence shows how this practice of skipping school for leisure would not be possible if your mother was Japanese.


Video 4: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> having a conversation with her child	
<p>Username: <u>9cmn9_</u> 82.1K likes 783 comments</p>	<p>Caption: I cannot copy it well (laugh)</p>
	<p>Hook/introduction: My Filipino mother uses it a lot, and it's something she always does when she's talking to someone while telling a lie or a joke.</p>
	<p>Transcript</p> <p>M: Hello, good morning! This is Keina's mother! Yes. Well, Keina has a fever. Is it okay to take a day off from school?</p> <p>(wink)</p> <p>Oh, I'm sorry, thank you, thank you!</p> <p>(wink)</p>
<p><i>Firipinmama</i> winking at her daughter while telling a lie</p>	

Figure 4. Screenshots of 9cmn9_ (2022).

4.5. *Firipinmama* 5: A mother with limits

While the previous video (re)presented a mother enabling their children's whims of not attending classes, this video presents a characteristic that shows Filipino mothers' limits. In the Philippine context, when a mother counts from one to three, the number three suggests a limit and will entail further consequences if not acted upon. In this case, the mother was asking her child to eat after dinner had been served. However, the JFC was still busy watching their drama series which was in an interesting scene at the time. However, since the mother reached the count of three already, the JFC jumped up startled and acted in the common knowledge that reaching the third count meant consequences such as tongue-lashings, anger, etc. The hashtag translates 'If you are not there by the time she finishes counting, you are in trouble'.



Video 5: A depiction of a <i>FJC</i> having a conversation with her <i>firipinmama</i>	
<p>Username: kajimari222</p> <p>Likes:4,421K</p> <p>Comments:221</p>  <p>FJC: I'm coming!</p> <p><i>FJC</i> startled by <i>firipinmama</i>'s counting</p>	<p>Caption:</p> <p>If you are not there by the time she finishes counting, you're in trouble. (laugh) (clap)</p> <p>Hook/introduction:</p> <p>Filipino mom when the meal is ready.</p>
 <p>FJC: It's just getting to the best part!</p> <p>M:</p> <p>One...Two...Three!</p>	<p>Transcript</p> <p>When the meal is ready.</p> <p>M: My child, dinner is ready!</p> <p>FJC: Yeah, I'm watching a drama right now, wait a minute.</p> <p>M: The food will get cold, hurry up!</p>

Figure 5. Screenshots of kajimari222 (2021).

As with the previous video, the humor lies in the collective knowledge of the cultural nuances behind the counting of one, two, three. To some, these may just be numbers but in the cultural affinities of JFC, they understand how it means trouble if the limit of counting is reached. This also applies to the JFC's use of '*nak*' which is an abbreviation for *anak*, meaning 'my child'. With the gender roles of both Filipino and Japanese mothers in this context, the similarity of roles such as the role of cooking is evident although the humor in this being applicable to the Japanese context is not evident.

4.6. *Firipinmama* 6: A multifaceted mother

In Video 6, the description of a *firipinmama* has more content as it uses a memetic copying of the TikTok *doremi* trend wherein users will try to fit as much in their dialogue that corresponds to the beginning of each syllabic sound of the song. With music in the background, this video was one of the longest ones spanning 1:08 minutes.

“Do” describes mother’s exclamations of *dōshita* (‘why’), also recreating the mother of Juliana.kawaii1220’s disapproval of her eyelashes and asking them to remove it as it looks *kimochiwarui* (‘gross/weird’).

“Re” describes the mother’s request to call her when she goes out to hang out with friends. It also asks her to show the faces of her friends to ensure that they are safe, but then moves on to criticize the ugliness of her friends.

“Mi” describes the mother showing off her clothes and how cute they are, while offering praise for her own sexiness.

“Fa” describes the mother eating Seven Eleven chicken⁸, and reminding her JFC that it was chicken from Seven Eleven that she wanted. The mother initially thought it was Family Mart’s chicken, and the JFC kept on saying that it was indeed Seven Eleven as they requested, but the mother does not listen and further comments on how it was not so bad after all even if it was Family Mart’s chicken.

“So” describes the mother’s distinct pronunciation of the term for homework, (translated as ‘humwork/homework’ for relatability) which is *shukudai*, the distinct Filipino accent makes it sound like *sokodai*, leading to the JFC not comprehending what the mother was saying. The tendency to pronounce “so” instead of “shu” is a representation of the variety of ways people in the Philippines speak stemming from different regions of the country.

“La (Ra)” talks about the JFC’s tendency to attend live (*raibu*) shows or concerts which therefore accounts for her not having money.

“Ti (Shi)” describes *shiranai* which means ‘I don’t know [where the items are]’, showing how the mother is angry because the JFC keeps on leaving her items out untidily, which results in the *firipinmama* throwing out her possessions.

⁸ Seven Eleven and Family Mart are two popular convenience stores chains in Japan.


<p>Video 6: A depiction of a confused <i>firipinmama</i></p> <p>Username: Ouchi1213</p> <p>278.1K likes</p> <p>1,210 Comments Caption:</p> <p>Filipino Mama's Doremi Song</p> <p>Transcript</p> <p>Hook/introduction:</p> <p>Doremi song introduction (Music)</p>  <p>DoM: What's wrong with that? The one on your eyes, what's that?</p> <p>FJC: Oh, these false eyelashes.</p> <p>M: What the. That looks weird, take it off!</p>	<p>ReM: Please call me, you know that already! Who are you going out with? Show me who you are with, do you have a picture? Is this your friend?</p> <p>FJC: Yeah.</p> <p>M: Well, they're ugly!</p> <p>FJC: Mom, you're the worst!</p> <p>MiM: Look at my clothes, these are cute right? I bought it!</p> <p>FJC: Oh, really?</p> <p>M: What do you think? I'm still sexy right?</p> <p>FJC: No way!</p> <p>FaM: Is this family mart chicken?</p> <p>FJC: No, it's seven eleven's</p> <p>M: Well, seven eleven is my favorite.</p> <p>FJC: Huh? Yeah, I told you it was seven eleven's!</p> <p>M: Well, if it isn't it's not that bad.</p> <p>SoM: Do your hum work!</p> <p>FJC: What's hum work?</p> <p>M: Huh?</p> <p>FJC: Oh! Homework!</p>	<p>RaM: You're too obsessed with live concerts! Ha?</p> <p>FJC: What's wrong with that?</p> <p>M:Whose concert are you going to this time?</p> <p>FJC: It doesn't matter right?</p> <p>M :That's why you don't have any money!</p> <p>SiM: I don't know</p> <p>FJC: I've just left it here, the card!</p> <p>M: Didn't I tell you</p> <p>FJC: Did you throw it away?</p> <p>M: Ha? You never clean up by yourself, so it's your fault!</p> <p>FJC: You're the worst, mom!</p> <p>M: I threw it all away.</p> <p>And I will throw away all those other things too!</p> <p>FJC: I don't understand you!</p> <p>M: I'll even throw these away too!</p> <p>FJC: What? Mom!</p> <p>M: Because you never clean up!</p>
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Figure 6. Screenshots of Ouchi1213 (2023b).

This video, with its lengthy form and comedic structure, encapsulates the experiences of user Ouchi1213 in her household. What is unique in this video as compared with the previous ones is *firipinmama*'s expression or admittance of personal sexiness. The jovial self-praise is contrasted with the Japanese norms of humility and lowering down oneself especially in public.

Furthermore, the “So” section on pronunciation as in *sokodai* instead of *shukudai* (‘homework’) is reflective of certain biased stereotypes and depictions of Filipino mothers who may come from different educational backgrounds and those who may have broken Japanese, or perhaps users of “non-standard” Filipino resulting in a distinct pronunciation of *shu* (*so*).

For “Shi”, the humor lies in the frowned upon disciplining aspect of the mother which does not respect boundaries around the items of their children. While cleaning is encouraged in the disciplining norm of both cultures, respecting personal space is apparently not a common ground for both cultures hence the comedic appeal of this practice of throwing away their children’s items when they are unorganized.

Ultimately, humor in this video shows a myriad of (re)presentations of Ouchi1213’s *firipinmama* which effectively affords her agency in representing her own experiences at home with her mother. It affords her “affinity experiences” to connect with her peers and to those who have the same kind of mothers with every single post. However, the affordances do not always reach the same goal with different audiences. This is because in the process of sharing, the digital media can also serve as a tool to spread the pervasive stereotypical view of Filipino mothers which may not fully represent the diverse realities and characteristics of Filipino mothers and Japanese mothers alike all over the world.

4.7. *Firipinmama* 7: A publicly affectionate mother

In this video, upon calling the school, the mother appends the term of endearment *-chan* to their child’s name, which is commonly used at the end of younger toddlers’ names. The joke in the usage of this video, with the JFC asking in the captions “Is it just my mom who is like this?”, reflect norms in Japan of not showing too much affection and endearment in public even with their own children.

The use of expressions such as *ay* or exclamations of surprise or mistake, as well as the hashtag *#saramappo* written in hiragana meaning ‘thanks’ in Filipino or *salamat po* as typically incorrectly pronounced by Japanese native speakers points to the strong affinity markers of both the combined cultures of Japanese and Filipino.


Video 7: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> talking on the phone	
<p>Username: rrules_riyo</p> <p>161.4k likes</p> <p>1,220 comments</p> <p>Transcript:</p> <p>When calling the school</p> <p>M: Hello, I'm the mother of Nishijimaruyo-chan from the fourth-year class.</p> <p>FJC: "Why use ~chan?"</p>	<p>Caption:</p> <p>Is this just my mommy? (laugh) (laugh)</p> <p>Hook/introduction:</p> <p>My mom when I was in elementary school.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">"FJC Wondering why ~chan?"</p>

Figure 7. Screenshots of rrules_riyo (2020).

4.8. *Firipinmama* 8: A caring yet strict mother

Both Video 7 and Video 8 show how *firipinmama* show their affection in different situations. The 8th video shows how both the Japanese and Filipino mother are asking where their children are. For the “typical” mother’s case, the response was to go have fun and come home. However, in the *firipinmama*’s case, their child was scolded and told to go home as it is already late.

The video format has an interesting comparative tone of what a typical mother/person does, as opposed to their *firipinmama*. In this, it is even more obvious how the comedic tone of the videos in the hashtag certainly work as a social commentary on why their mothers are such. Furthermore, the inclusion of typical mothers in the scene exemplifies the “joke in the social construct” aspect, alluding to the desirable characteristics of the “typical” mother (in this case is we are to assume a Japanese person). In this, it is

evident how the goal of social media is also to complain about their mothers to the same audience who understands them. The digital media TikTok affords them that platform. These kinds of posts enable inference, critique and analysis of why JFC's mothers' attributes are (re)presented as such; and it is because these are not the desirable attributes of mothers in Japanese society. It also suggests how JFC children indeed may have polarizing feelings of why they have mothers who are "different" from the typical.




<p>Username: 9cmn9_</p> <p>23.4k likes</p> <p>147 comments</p>	<p>Video 8:</p> <p>A comparison of two people talking on the phone</p>	
<p>The difference between a typical person and my mom</p> 	<p>Transcript:</p> <p>Mom when Keina is out at night.</p>	
<p>Caption:</p> <p>Isn't she too overprotective? (facepalm)</p> <p>Hook/introduction:</p> <p>The difference between a typical person and my mom.</p>	<p>普通の人</p> 	<p>私のママ</p> 
	<p>Typical person/mom: Hello, where are you now?</p> <p>Oh, you're going to be late today?</p> <p>I see. Well, be careful and have fun!</p> <p>Child: Yes. Bye!</p>	<p>My mom: Hoy! Where are you?</p> <p>What time will you be home?</p> <p>Huh? Look at the time! It's so late!</p> <p>Hurry home!</p> <p>Okay?</p> <p>(Do you understand?)</p>

Figure 8. Screenshots of _9cmn9_ (2021).

4.9. *Firipinmama* 9: A hardworking and earnest mother

In this video, the JFC was asking help to do her homework, but then was later scolded for not trying her best on her own. The mother was pictured washing plates in the video and describing her hardships in Japan angrily to her child. This is a common theme in parenting and in socio-cultural norms of Filipinos encouraging resiliency in the face of hardships. According to the mother, she came to Japan without knowledge of any Japanese, unable to read nor write hiragana, or *kanji*. But with her wit and street-smarts, she was able to differentiate whether the things she bought in the supermarket were pork, or fish, etc.

Contrary to the videos above referring to Japanese mothers' placing high importance on education, here the mother is too occupied with her roles and burdens (in this situation, washing the plates) to help her child. To add to this, her hardships, and role as a migrant mother in a different country is expressed. Therefore, helping her JFC with their education and homework may not be the priority. This is an interesting facet of *firipinmama* identity, reflecting nuances of difficult migrant experiences. It also touches on the great value placed on resilience imposed on Filipino children, which can affect JFC's experiences of having a Filipino mother and their identities as being Filipino. With this trivial post about hoping that her parents help her with homework just like other typical mothers, this video highlights the intersectional issues facing migrants in other countries like Japan, where they experience a transnational double layer of motherhood expectations from both Japan and the Philippines, while experiencing a myriad of migrant struggles in adapting to the broader Japanese society. In a single video, viewers can see multifaceted issues of gender, identity, and representations of migrant issues which are important to highlight and problematize.

Video 9: A depiction of FJC doing homework while a <i>firipinmama</i> is washing plates	
<p>Username: mikupanpi86</p> <p>10.3K likes</p> <p>168 comments</p>	 <p>Caption: Mom Series (raise hands) (women)</p> <p>Hook/introduction: When I ask mom to help me with schoolwork</p> <p>I cannot understand!</p> <p>Please teach me, mama!</p>
 <p>“I did not know Japanese coming to Japan but here I am, I studied well!”</p>	<p>Transcript:</p> <p>FJC: Hey, mom, I don't understand this, please teach me!</p> <p>M: Huh, what? schoolwork? not again!? Why is it when you do not understand, you ask right away!? Try it by yourself more using your own head!</p> <p>Look at me, I came here from the Philippines, and I couldn't read Japanese. When I went shopping, I didn't know if it was beef, pork, or fish, I didn't know anything. I didn't even know how to ask anybody. But I did my best to learn! You are my child so I know you can do it if you think about it well.</p> <p>But if you still don't get it, you can call the school and ask your teacher.</p>

Figure 9. Screenshots of mikupanpi86 (2022).

4.10. *Firipinmama* 10: Different from Kansai and Kantō mama

In this video, it is seen how mothers are depicted in different contexts. The comparison of a Kantō, Kansai, and *firipinmama* is presented in three personas. Together they have created a few videos describing the differences of motherhood styles.

The Kantō region is located in the east of Honshu Japan and is known to be where Japan's capital, Tokyo, is located along with the six prefectures of

Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa. Since it is home to Japan's most famous center, it is also the epitome of "standard" notions that is regarded as representative of "true" Japanese-ness. On the other hand, the Kansai region is located in the western part of Japan, which includes the prefectures of Kyoto, Ōsaka, Hyōgo, Nara, Shiga, and Wakayama. With these borders, there is a perceived cultural difference from their counterparts in the capital in Kantō. These differences include language use, way of life, decorum, and this extends to motherhood practices.

When a child loses a game, mothers have different ways of expressing support. The Kantō mother implores "It is okay, you grow and learn with the experience". The Kansai mother on the other hand also shows encouragement by saying the child will become "stronger with the failure". Further offering *okononiyaki*, a Kansai comfort food particularly from the city of Ōsaka. The Filipino mother on the other hand expresses the above-mentioned criticizing of their children's peers with *busu* or 'ugly', and emphasizing self-praise with "It is okay, you win because you are *kawaii* ('cute') and they are *busu* ('ugly')". This indicates that the physical appearance is the win for the mother.

This captures the argument of the paper on how posting *firipinmama* videos have afforded the users the ability to complain in a comedic manner, while at the same time helped them relate and connect with common affinities and experiences. With the users (re)presenting their own identities, even in different circumstances of having a *Kantō* or *Kansai* mother, they can share humor as afforded by digital media and indicate the "joke in the social structure".

The Kantō mother (re)presents the normative characteristic of a gentle and soft-spoken mother and is visible in many other videos of this group. On the other hand, the Kansai mother also describes the stereotypical ways of the strong, direct and fast way of speaking in the Kansai region. Hence mothers there are also marked as different from their Kantō counterparts.

In this comedic video 10, we see a summative picture on how Kantō represents the ideal, while the Kansai and *firipinmama* are the "odd" ones. The inclusion of the Kansai mother on the other hand shows how each mother can be different from the standard. By recognizing both the Kantō mama and the Kansai mama as differently marked, it alludes to the fact that there is a hegemonic ideal of a Japanese mother. However, adding the layer of *firipinmama*, and laughing at the Kantō mama also shows how it is not true and representative of all Japanese mothers in the Kantō region. As with many different prefectures, both in Kantō and Kansai, one type of motherhood which is from the "standard" Tōkyo and one Ōsaka mother who

always cooks okonomiyaki cannot arguably be representative, as there are many prefectures and many cities, as with many unique mothers in Japan.




<p>Username: am0princess</p> <p>324.1K likes</p> <p>698K comments</p>	<p>Video 10:</p> <p>A comparison of a <i>Kanto</i>, <i>Kansai</i>, and <i>Firipin</i> mother</p> <p>Caption/Hook/introduction:</p> <p>Parents' reactions when we lose a match</p>	
<p><u>Kanto</u></p> 	<p><u>Kansai</u></p> 	<p><u>Firipin</u></p> 
<p>It's okay, it's a learning experience</p>	<p>Don't feel down. You'll be stronger next time! Let's have okonomiyaki for dinner!</p>	<p>Did you lose? Who did you lose to? Oh! They are all ugly, and you're all cute that's why you're winners to me!</p>

Figure 10. Screenshots of am0princess (2023).

Although Japanese gendered norms are prescriptive in their ideals of motherhood, social media shows how various experiences exist. The representative archetype of the Kantō mama, although desired and strongly highlighted by traditional media, is not the reality of all Japanese children including JFC, and children from other region such as Kansai. Thus, every mother is different.

Conclusions

This paper showed snippets of experiences and online (re)presentations of Filipino Japanese Children's various *firipinmama* through a study of ten videos. The Filipino mothers were (re)presented in many ways, being tough but also caring even in public, being disciplinary but sometimes enabling, being loud and unable to speak "standard" Japanese but also street-smart and witty enough to survive despite the language barrier and their migrant burdens.

These depictions through their children show the viewers a portion of their lives and identities. However, the jokes and humor in the hashtag *#firipinmamaaruaru* afford a sense of truth to their collective cultural experiences of not having a Japanese mother. It reflects a candid admittance to the fact that their mothers are different from what one would expect of a mother in Japanese societal standards.

It was also revealed how digital media affords them a space to vent and connect with members of the same affinity groups. Through the internet affordance and utility of hashtags, the various users were able to connect to their "affinity-identity" markers of having Filipino mothers.

In the process, their TikTok posts also give space for an alternative voice which stems from their own experiences and depictions, a voice different from conventional media, which tends to highlight the Kantō or "standard" norms of a mother.

While not explicit in their goals, the process of posting videos also gave space for a new affordance other than the intended, which is an open space for reflexive thinking of cultural and gendered norms as well as an open online dialogue on the social structure of what is desirable in a mother in Japanese society.

The above (re)presentations, no matter how lighthearted and funny they are, sheds light on the reality that these are not the desirable traits of a mother in Japan. However, the inclusion of the Kantō, Kansai and *firipinmama* archetypes importantly shows how things will not be the same for all Japanese and Filipino mothers as well as for any child in general.

To note, with the positive affordances of a cultural collective, online connections and the fostering of online communities, this paper recognizes the digital space also as a possible echo-chamber of spreading stereotypes about a particular people/culture (one of the pitfalls of viral memes), as seen with the Filipino mothers' accents (re)presented.

The examples on the TikTok posts discussed in this paper confirm that digital media/social media sites are instrumental to increasing dialogue about diversity and contribute not only to our knowledge of culture, but also

to the sense of belonging had by JFC. Through further research on these topics, we can foster deeper discussions on the vital issues of gender and identity representation of migrant mothers, and mixed minority youth in Japanese society. With the above-mentioned changing landscape and habits of media consumption in Japan, as well as the changing constructs of Japanese families, e.g., mixed-race, LGBTQ, etc., there is indeed a need to explore alternative platforms that paint a better picture of minorities and their experiences.

Finally, because the internet knows no borders, research on this phenomenon should not just be limited to within Japan but can also extend to those mixed-roots children who share similar experiences all over the world be it *hāfu* or *firipinhāfu*, or wasian, etc. for as long as they share the same #hashtag.

Abbreviations

JFC Japanese Filipino Children
M *Firipinmama*

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#フィリピンママあるある ...

SILVA IAPONICARUM LXXI

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「子供がいじめられて帰ってきた時のフィリピンママ #フィリピン #フィリピンママ #フィリピンハーフ #フィリピンハーフあるある #fyp」.

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REVIEWS

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Review of *Koume's World: The Life and Work of a Samurai Woman Before and After the Meiji Restoration* by Simon Partner, New York: Columbia University Press, 2024. Xx + 289

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/sjip.2024.71.3>

Simon Partner's *Koume's World* joins a genre of microhistory using an individual life in Japanese history². He does an excellent job illustrating what often happens to scholars who spend a lengthy period of time living in Japan, especially rural Japan or smaller cities outside of the big triumvirate of Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka. One inevitably meets local historians or history enthusiasts, sometimes through a local museum or public community center (*kōminkan*), where students, working adults, and retirees, with varying degrees of historical training, learn about some local event, people, et cetera, often through the reading and transcribing of early modern, or at least, early twentieth century documents.

Before I began graduate school, but knowing I would try to become a scholar, I took a free course at the Gumma Prefectural Museum on reading temple textbooks (*terakoya*) where participants, at least fifty of us, learned how to read handwritten documents the way that children during the Tokugawa period did, through readers used at so-called “temple schools.” Some of us progressed to a smaller reading group where we read through records kept by local domain samurai, which, at that time, had not yet been transcribed or published. Many dissertations and first books written by English language speakers who spent time as assistant language teachers (ALTs) on the JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) Programme began their projects through local history and interacting with local historians, as happened to me³. Even in Japan, professional historians, mostly as historians working as university professors, also draw upon the such local historical knowledge production in their own works, and local people are often at the forefront of local historical preservation, as they were after the destruction of 3/11.

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² See Gramlich-Oka (2006), Nenzi (2015), Stanley (2020), and Walthall (1998).

³ My first book drew in large part from local historians, boosters, and research groups related to the history of Oguri Tadamasu, a Tokugawa bannerman who was beheaded not far from the house where I lived as a JET teacher from 1997–1999. See Wert (2013).

Inspired by the work of local people, and using Koume's extant, and incomplete, diary, Partner demonstrates microhistory at its best, in this case, when a life history is used as the locus of a study rather than its focus. In other words, instead of just succumbing to the minutia of daily life, which can quickly drive a reader to think "ok, so what", Partner is able to balance micro and macro history by highlighting the latter without sacrificing the former. And he makes a good case for why using Koume, an otherwise little-known woman with only a local historical and historiographical presence in Japan, as a lens into the late Tokugawa and early Meiji periods is useful: she's from a low-ranking samurai family (we have few details in English on their lived experience), in a politically significant domain (the Kishū domain ruled by one of the Tokugawa branch families), that was nonetheless geographically distant from Edo (most domain studies in English are about domains from eastern Japan, or Satsuma and Chōshū).

Thus, the first two chapters focus on place and time, namely, the challenges and opportunities facing low-ranking samurai families in the region in general, especially during the deadly Temmei Famine (1783–1788). Through Koume, readers learn about how the famine affected her family, which could be generalized to other, similar low-ranking families, and how the famine tied into all kinds of other fields of study like economics, religion, et cetera. True to the book's title, Partner uses the details of Koume's life to illustrate broader issues. I found myself taking notes to add to lectures, and writing down statistics that help me round out observations in my own research. Similarly, in chapter three, one really feels the sense of panic in the domain--and Koume's family--when Perry's "black ships" arrived, even though the domain was located far away from Edo. Partner includes amusing, and telling, rumors that Koume had heard about the ships, for example, that the ships were from France, or that ninety ships had arrived, instead of four (Partner 2024: 71), and, given the distance from Edo, it tells much about how quickly news spread, how accurate it was, and the speed of local reaction.

It is not until the fourth chapter that Partner slows down, and I mean this in a good way, to focus more on the daily life of Koume and her family. The death of her husband, loss of a grandchild, attempts to organize servants and record accounting for the house, gift-giving, and pursuing side employments to supplement the family income are just some of the details that Partner focuses on at just the right section of the book. This chapter pairs well with the following fifth and sixth chapters, which cover the chaos of the years leading up to the Meiji Restoration era and her work as an artist. She does

not say anything about the Restoration and its immediate aftermath itself. In fact, the extant part of her diary ends in late January 1868 and does not begin again until 1876. During this time, her diary reflects more of her family concerns, which are affected, but not dominated by larger events. A final chapter tells much about the difficulties low-ranking samurai families faced during the early Meiji period as their privilege and financial support dried up with the gradual disappearance of their status. Widowed, Koume and her son Yūsuke tried to eke out a living through teaching, tutoring, and the low rents from their tenement house (*nagaya*).

A fellow Japanese historian told me of the time he heard Carlo Ginzburg, one of the most famous practitioners of microhistory, giving a talk at his university where the introducer warned, “don’t try this at home.” This was related to me during a discussion about the seduction, and dangers, of microhistory, especially ones that take an individual as its subject. As someone who has written local history in the past, a field adjacent, perhaps even overlapping, with microhistory, I understand the lure of digging into the details while neglecting the larger historical and historiographical issues, in other words, the looming question of “so what?”. For some readers, this is not an issue, any life is deserving of attention. Fair enough. Luckily, Partner’s work will satisfy all types of readers. It is a useful addition to many subfields within Japanese studies.

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Review of *Networks of Faith & Profit: Monks, Merchants, and Exchanges between China and Japan, 839–1403 CE* by Yiwen Li, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2023. xvi + 211

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14746/sijp.2024.71.4>

Yiwen Li's new book, *Networks of Faith & Profit*, does an outstanding job of carefully examining nearly six centuries of unofficial, de facto maritime exchange networks involving highly productive if seemingly conflicting interactions between Buddhist monks--who sought to spread their teachings and build monastic institutions through non-clerical support--and secular merchants--who pursued economic profit by purchasing or selling valuable products that were otherwise unavailable partly in order to also gain prestige through promoting religious affiliations. Some of the monks became key players in the world of commerce, and merchants greatly benefited from their connections with the clerical world. In both cases, cultural creativity such as poetry or other literary constructions helped facilitate the intricate interactions between exchange partners.

The saga that Li tracks began in the aftermath of the Japanese monk Ennin's early ninth-century travels to the mainland, which marked the end of the official tributary system and its replacement by alternative networks that often worked more efficiently than the stilted procedures of the official trade process. The story continued throughout the late Tang, Song and Yuan periods of China and the Heian, Kamakura, and Muromachi periods of Japan, until the tributary system was eventually restored at the beginning of the fifteenth century and a new era of regulated collaborations was launched just before the advent of Western colonialism that intruded on East Asian affairs.

In between the start and finish of the de facto networks, not only did commerce and the circulation of commodities remain uninterrupted, but in many ways the inventive methods of exchange thrived through the formation of complex religio-commercial arrangements that replaced tributary

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relations. Free of many governmental restrictions that frequently caused long delays, the new networks were able to make practical decisions for promoting growth without suffering from outside interference. The main locations contributing to the networks were the cities of Hangzhou and Ningbo in Zhejiang province, key ports near where major Tiantai and Chan school temples were located, and Hakata, Kyoto, and Kamakura, three major Buddhist centers across Japan that saw the rise of the Zen sect in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The development of Hakata and Kamakura as hosts for numerous well-funded and well-connected Zen monasteries was directly linked to the Chinese trade networks and the support received from, but also sometimes given to, the continental counterparts. Some of the most coveted products were silver, sulfur, mercury, wood, medicines, and vases and bowls, in addition to sutra scrolls, iconic statues, mandalas, cloths for robes, and paper and ink for painting and calligraphy as desired by monks and their patrons.

As Li notes, connections concerning religious-based travelers and traders was a longstanding tradition among Arabs and Jews, yet the Buddhist case appeared to be different and has for the most part been understudied largely because Indian Vinaya monastic regulations tried to preserve the purity of sanctuaries by prohibiting “unclean” practices, such as touching gold or silver as well as the misconduct of undertaking transactions for the purpose of profit. However, recent scholarship has shown that Buddhist monks often did take part in commercial enterprises, ostensibly in support of expanding the reach of the dharma rather than personal benefits. Historical continental Silk Road linkages between monks and merchants highlighted that Buddhist temple networks could appeal to traders eager to establish a stable foothold for their businesses, yet also contribute to evangelical efforts since the awarding of spiritual merit became a prime incentive for lay followers to find rapport with monastic-related rituals and related activities.

In her extensive research, Yiwen Li makes use of many kinds of materials including correspondences, diaries, pilgrimage accounts, and biographies by and about monks in addition to monastic histories as well as letters and poems regarding commercial engagements or written accounts of various kinds of gifts exchanged between clerics and merchants, plus some quantitative records of the outcomes of the export-import industry. Several especially interesting artifacts discussed by Li include: a) a set of at least nine poems written by the Chinese merchant Cai Fu to the Japanese monk Enchin, Kūkai’s nephew who sojourned for three months on Mount Tiantai in the mid-800s, which conveyed expressions of friendship and appreciation;

b) letters from mercantile partners received by the Chinese Chan school monk Yikong, who was invited by the royal family in 847 to spend five years in Japan, which provide details of exchanges that are cited in a table on page 39; c) the pilgrim monk Chōnen's early eleventh-century letter to Emperor Taizong indicating holdover elements of the tributary system along with key features of the novel era of unofficial exchange networks; d) a letter written in 1245 by the Chan master Wuzhun Shifan thanking his former Japanese disciples who, after returning to Hakata in the southwest island of Kyushu, shipped large amounts of wood for the rebuilding of prestigious Jingshan temple near Hangzhou; e) the shipwreck in Sinan, southwest of the Korean peninsula, which shows that in 1323, forty years after the defeat by Japan of the second Mongol invasion, a commercial ship was carrying, before it sank, very large amounts of ceramics (an ideal substitute for precious metals at the stricter monasteries), sandalwood, and bronze coins and artifacts, among other commodities; and f) a verse composed in 1342 by the Japanese poet-monk Chūgan Engetsu, who had traveled to China two decades before to study the prosody of Chan verse, which depicts the ten-year suspension of Sino-Japanese trade due to shifting political circumstances that led directly to a sharp increase in the cost of continental goods available in Japan.

The chapters of *Networks of Faith & Profit* are structured chronologically. Following an informative introduction explicating the book's scope and methodology, the second chapter covering the ninth century shows that while merchants, who increasingly traveled on a regular basis, were usually referred to as disciples (*dizi*) or lay disciples (*sudizi*) of monks, this did not deter their aggressive pursuit of greater profit. The third chapter, which deals with the tenth and eleventh centuries, focuses on three Japanese monks, Chōnen, Jakushō, and Jōjin, with the latter two spending decades in China and enhancing considerably the communications and commercial exchanges between business representatives and monastic institutions of the two countries. The next chapter on the twelfth century, when Zen Buddhism was initiated in Japan by Eisai, a pilgrim who traveled to the continent twice, highlights the expansion of the Chinese quarter in Hakata, which is known today primarily through the details of archaeological finds rather than written accounts which have been lost.

Then, the fifth chapter treating the span from 1200 to 1270 describes the way Enni Ben'en, a Zen pilgrim who spent six years beginning in 1235 studying with Wuzhun at Jingshan temple, created a long-lasting network connecting Jōtenji temple which he founded in Hakata and Tōfukuji temple in Kyoto, which was awarded to him by Fujiwara family support, with southeastern

China as a forerunner to the monastery-based trade expeditions that took place over the next centuries. The following chapter examining 1270 to 1368, or the end of the Yuan and the beginning of the Ming period, explains how the Sinan ship was linked to Jōtenji, but another vessel headed back to Japan from China in 1325 with supplies for the rebuilding of Kenchōji temple in Kamakura not only survived the arduous journey but also carried in both directions important Zen leaders and trainees, including Chūgan and other prestigious poet-monks. Then, the final chapter documents the renewal of the tributary system after the Ming rulers abolished in 1374 the Maritime Trade Superintendency that oversaw the private trade networks linking China with foreign countries and Ashikaga Yoshimitsu realized the benefit in paying homage to Emperor Yongle so as to maintain his power in a conflicted Japan.

As a contribution to the Cambridge University Press series on Asian Connections, Yiwen Li mainly deals with the aspects of material culture that were fostered by the trade networks connecting monks with merchants. In that context, the remarkable flourishing of literary and artistic culture that transpired through the cross-cultural maritime interactions—with poet-monks seeking instruction in the rigors of Chinese verse from continental teachers, and Chan painters such as Muxi (or Muqi) in the thirteenth century having their works appreciated more in Japan than their native country because of indifference on the part of the Chinese academy—is relatively underreported in this book. As Li does note in citing Izumi Mari, “for Chinese objects bound for Japan, once they left the Chinese ports, they would be evaluated according to a new framework, a framework shaped by the needs and tastes of the Japanese” (p. 180). Yet, for aficionados of the creative arts, what Muxi and others produced should not be reduced to the status of a material object and they are deserving of attention in their own right. With this minor critique notwithstanding since it is beyond the scope of Li’s scholarship, *Networks of Faith & Profit* should be considered an exceptionally informative and insightful volume that will long serve as an invaluable resource for historians and religious studies scholars of East Asia and realms beyond where comparable developments took place.

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