〔Research Paper〕

# The Use of Metalinguistic Expressions and Their Characteristics with Reference to the Level of Oral Proficiency of Korean Learners of Japanese:

## Focusing on *Ronten-ka* and *Iiyodomi*

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**Abstract**

In this study, the Japanese Language Learner Conversation Database from the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics was used to clarify the use of metalinguistic expressions and the characteristics of Japanese learners whose native language is Korean, as seen in interview tests, by level. The data of 5 learners at the novice-upper level, 14 learners at the intermediate-upper level, 8 learners at the advanced-upper level, and 3 learners at the superior level were examined, and the 6 categories of metalinguistic expressions ((1) focalisation, (2) *ronten-ka*, (3) action indication, (4) excuse, (5) *iiyodomi*, and (6) mitigation) proposed by Nishibe et al. (2023) were applied to make judgements. As a result, no meta-linguistic expressions could be found at the novice-upper level; they were observed at the intermediate-upper level and above, however, there was also a lot of incomplete use at the intermediate-upper level. From the analysis of (2) *ronten-ka* and (5) *iiyodomi*, it was observed that in (2) the object of reference was not limited to the speaker, but extended to the hearer and third parties. In (5), it was observed that there was *iiyodomi* in searching for appropriate words, and also *iiyodomi* that showed consideration and connection with the hearer's speech. Consequently, it was suggested that there was a process of creating collaborative discourses.

[Keywords] Metalinguistic Expressions, Characteristics with Reference to the Level of Oral Proficiency, *Ronten-ka, Iiyodomi,* Japanese Interview Test