# *YAKUWARIGO* ON SAMURAI CHARACTERS IN THE RUROUNI KENSHIN MEIJI KENKAKU ROMANTAN

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## ABSTRACT

*Yakuwarigo* is a specific language pattern or style of speaking that originates from stereotypes. This style of speaking involves the use of vocabulary, grammatical structures, expressions, intonation, and other elements associated with a person's characteristic image, such as age, occupation, social status, time period, facial and physical appearance, traits, and so on. This study aims to describe the *yakuwarigo* used by samurai characters, based on the theory of kinsui (2007). The data source taken is the manga Rurouni Kenshin Meiji Kenkaku Romantan Hokkaido-hen Volume 1. This research uses qualitative descriptive method. The results of this study are from 3 samurai characters in the Rurouni Kenshin Meiji Kenkaku Romantan manga, there are 2 characters using *danseigo*, and 1 character using *bushi kotoba*. in the character who uses *danseigo*, he uses *ore* as a first person pronoun. whereas in the character who uses *bushi kotoba*, he uses *sessha* as a first person pronoun.


***Keywords:*** *yakuwarigo, bushi kotoba, danseigo, manga*

## INTRODUCTION

*Yakuwarigo*, or 'role language,' is an important concept in Japanese that brings a unique characterization to characters in works of fiction. According to Kinsui in (Emanuella, Rahmalia, Syarani 2023) *Yakuwarigo* or role language is a special variety of language often used in fictional works derived from stereotypes that include vocabulary, grammar, language, expressions, intonation, relating to characteristics such as age, occupation, social status, era, facial and physical appearance, traits, and so on. In the context of Japanese fiction, *yakuwarigo* is a tool that allows authors to bring their characters to life. Through certain word choices, speech styles, and expressions, *yakuwarigo* gives the characters a distinctive identity, which helps the reader or audience to better understand and feel the character. One of the distinctive features in works of fiction is the use of *bushi kotoba*.

*Bushi kotoba* or Samurai Language refers to the language and communication used by the samurai. Samurai language is not only a means of communication, but also reflects the values and cultural identity of the samurai class. According to Febrianty (2016) Samurai comes from the ancient Japanese 'samorau' which means to serve, then it became 'saburai' and later 'samurai', which means a servant who serves his employer. There is also the term 'bushi' with a similar meaning of 'armed man' or 'military man'. The terms 'samurai' and 'bushi' became synonymous by the end of the 12th century.

Research on yakuwarigo has been carried out by previous researchers such as: Hardianto Rahardjo (2016), Maulina & Nurjaleka (2020), Rullis, Aibonotika, Budiani (2021), Utami (2022), Emanuella, Rahmalia, Syarani (2023). However, most of it focuses on yakuwarigo. This causes research based on certain types of characters such as samurai characters to be less explored.

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The aim of this research is to explain whether there are other forms of communication besides *bushi kotoba* for samurai characters In manga, especially samurai-themed ones, or do samurai characters only use *bushi kotoba*?.

This research applies a qualitative descriptive research approach as its method. Qualitative research methodology emphasizes the analysis of conclusions with deductive and inductive approaches, and analyzes the correlation between phenomena through the use of reasoning and logic (Abdussamad, 2021). The purpose of qualitative research is to explore as much data as possible (Paltridge and Phakiti, 2015). As stated by Gunawan (2013), qualitative research begins by looking at the object of research from the actual state of the environment.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Yakuwarigo*

*Yakuwarigo* is a linguistic construct consisting of a unique arrangement of speech or self-expression, the roots of which come from stereotypes. Kinsui in Merilehto (2022) Explains that in role language, there is often the use of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and special ways of pronunciation that reflect character attributes, such as the character's gender or social status.

Stereotypes occur from childhood in our environment and evolve over time. Devine in Kinsui (2017) reveals that "the influence of those who care for us and our surroundings" is an inescapable certainty. As children, we may be exposed to certain views or behaviors in fictional works that we are told or watch continuously. Thus, the knowledge possessed by the author or creator flows into the minds of children from a young age.

*Yakuwarigo* is used in fictional works as a story development by relying on the knowledge possessed by the creator, which is then shared with the audience. Kinsui (2017) explains that *yakuwarigo* not only includes uncommon or unreal expressions in fictional works, but is also considered a form of communication tool through fictional characters. The use of these characters aims to convey the creator's intentions to the audience and increase the effectiveness of the story.

Kinsui (2014) explains his view that "stereotypical knowledge is often related to prejudice and discrimination, among other things, and is socially difficult to eliminate." Thus, this indicates that *yakuwarigo* is effective in the following two aspects:

1. When dialog is expressed in *yakuwarigo*, the author's intended character description can be accurately conveyed to the reader.
2. The author's use of unfamiliar expressions in the work, which have an impact on society, can increase the general understanding of *yakuwarigo*.

One of the functions of *yakuwarigo* is how creators convey the characteristics of the characters they create. Kinsui divides the types of *yakuwarigo* based on the characteristics of the speaking style, where age, gender, dialect, social position, and other things become the parameters of the *yakuwarigo* itself. Examples of *yakuwarigo* types are *bushi kotoba*, *hime kotoba, hakase go, danseigo and joseigo.*

**1. Feminin dan Maskulin ( Joseigo dan *Danseigo*)**

It is common that the feminine and masculine aspects of Japanese are typically associated with the female language variety (joseigo) and the male language variety (*danseigo*). Both varieties of language have become references when speakers use a style of speech that is feminine or masculine in nature.

According to Kinsui (in Andrássy 2014) the language patterns commonly used by women tend to avoid direct expression. When speaking, women tend not to highlight their talking points directly, but rather try to convey them through other means of communication. In contrast, masculine ways of speaking present everything directly and emphatically.

The relationship between feminine and masculine elements with *yakuwarigo* involves the creation of new types of language that are both feminine and masculine. One of the new forms of language that emerged from feminine language in *yakuwarigo* is *hime kotoba*. Characters who are

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considered to use *hime kotoba* often use ichininsho daimeishi わたくし (Watakushi) and end each word with the suffix わ (Wa).An example is in the following quote.

この古代時計室には、私が昏睡させられて鎖じ込められていたのですわ。

*Kono kodai tokei shitsu ni wa, watakushi ga konsui saserarete kusariji komerareteitano desuwa.*

The above quote reflects an example of a sentence using *hime kotoba*. Although in the quote the word "watashi" is written with the kanji "watakushi", with the suffix "wa", the kanji pronunciation of "watashi" changes to "watakushi" due to the influence of *hime kotoba* (Kinsui, 2014). The new language that emerged from the masculine language in *yakuwarigo* is *bushi kotoba*.

**2. *Bushi kotoba***

*Bushi kotoba*, also known as samurai language, often appears in manga that tells the story of the Sengoku era or the period when samurai still played a role in everyday life. In various media such as manga, anime, games and dramas, we often find samurai characters who represent Japanese historical figures.

However, Kinsui (2007) reveals that not only do samurai characters reflect historical figures, but legendary samurai characters tend to speak in a polite and educated manner. In addition, the speaking style of these samurai was generally dominated by *danseigo*, which later became the foundation for the use of *danseigo* that still persists in Japan today (Kinsui, 2003).

Table 1: Characteristics of words used in *bushi kotoba*

| *Ichinininsho daimeishi* | ～拙者「～せっしゃ」(~Sessha) |
|---|---|
| **Polite change from です(desu)** | ～でござる(~degozaru) |
| **Polite change from 来る(kuru)/ 行く(iku)** | ～参る「～参る」(~mairu) |
| **Polite change for doing something** | ～いたす(~itasu) |
| **Polite change to say something** | ～申す「～もうす」(~mousu) |

(Kinsui, 2014)

**METHODOLOGY**

This research applies a qualitative descriptive research approach as its method. Qualitative research methodology emphasizes the analysis of conclusions with deductive and inductive approaches, and analyzes the correlation between phenomena through the use of reasoning and logic (Abdussamad, 2021). The purpose of qualitative research is to explore as much data as possible (Paltridge and Phakiti, 2015). As stated by Gunawan (2013), qualitative research begins by looking at the object of research from the actual state of the environment. The steps that the author will take to collect data are by listening and recording any *yakuwarigo* that appears. Furthermore, the author collects and enters data into Microsoft excel data tabulation consisting of character names, sentences, lingual markers, and types of lingual markers.

To answer the problem formulation in this study, the author will take the following steps: Classify the lingual markers used by samurai characters in the Rurouni Kenshin Meiji Kenkaku Romantan manga based on what *yakuwarigo* is used. Describe the types of lingual markers used.

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The object of research that the author chose was Rurouni Kenshin Meiji Kenkaku Romantan Hokkaido-Hen volume 1. This manga began monthly publication in Jump Square magazine on September 4, 2017, with 213 pages. The author is Nobuhiro Watsuki.

## DISCUSSION

In this study found several lingual markers of *yakuwarigo* in the manga Rurouni Kenshin Meiji Kenkaku Romance Volume 1 according to Kinsui (2003) and according to Kinsui (2007), the results are as in the table below:

Table 1.2: Lingual Markers

| No. | Character Name | Sentence | Lingual Markers | Types of *Yakuwarigo* | Data Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Kenshin Himura | それで**拙者**の 力量は 如何に こさった? | Sessha | *Bushi kotoba* | Vol. 1 : P. 184 |
| 2. | | ・・・**お主**なら拙者とは違う形 で極められると思う・・・ | Onushi | *Bushi kotoba* | Vol. 1 : P. 187 |
| 3. | | ここは一つ 拙者に代わって 夕飯の仕度を 頼む**でござる** | Degozaru | *Bushi kotoba* | Vol. 1 : P. 174 |
| 4. | | 剣に信念と 命を懸けて 斬り 結んだ 幕末の士と思って **参る** | Mairu | *Bushi kotoba* | Vol. 1 : P. 181 |
| 5. | Akutaro Hasegawa | **俺**が見たのは 包帯ぐるぐるの 怖え奴だ | Ore | *Danseigo* | Vol. 1 : P. 51 |
| 6 | | オイ...なんで**お前**が 泣くんだ よ | Omae | *Danseigo* | Vol. 1 : P. 36 |
| 7 | | **あいつ**なら 頭いいから・・・ | Aitsu | *Danseigo* | Vol. 1 : P. 105 |
| 7 | | **てめえ**は俺の 邪魔すんじゃね ぇ!! | Temee | *Danseigo* | Vol. 1 : P. 108 |
| 8 | Yahiko Myojin | **俺**は 行かねえ よ | Ore | *Danseigo* | Vol. 1 : P. 164 |
| 9 | | **お前**主婦だろキチンと 金勘定 しろよ | Omae | *Danseigo* | Vol. 1 : P. 165 |
| 10 | | 裏に何か 描いてある**ぞ**! | Zo | *Danseigo* | Vol. 1 : P. 130 |

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1. **Kenshin Himura**

   Based on the table above, it is found that the samurai character named Kenshin Himura uses *yakuwarigo* of the *bushi kotoba* type. There are findings of *bushi kotoba* lingual markers in the character Kenshin Himura sessha. sessha is a lingual marker of *bushi kotoba* of the ichininsho daimeishi type. The next lingual marker finding is onushi, onushi is a lingual marker of the nininsho daimesishi type. The next finding is degozaru, degozaru is a polite change from desu. The last finding in the character Kenshin Himura is mairu, mairu is a polite change from kuru or iku.

   The lingual markers seen in Kenshin Himura's use of *bushi kotoba* are in accordance with kinsui theory (2003) and (2007), which states that samurai characters do not only reflect historical figures, but legendary samurai characters tend to speak politely and are educated.

2. **Akutaro Hasegawa**

   Furthermore, it was found that the character named Akutaro Hasegawa used *yakuwarigo* type *danseigo*. There are findings of *danseigo* lingual markers in Akutaro Hasegawa's character. The first finding is ore, ore is a *danseigo* lingual marker of the ichininsho daimeishi type. The next finding is omae, omae is a lingual *danseigo* marker of the nininsho daimeishi type. The next finding is aitsu, aitsu is a lingual marker of *danseigo* which is of the saninsho daimeishi type. The last finding on Akutaro Hasegawa's character is temee, temee is a lingual marker of *danseigo* of the nininsho daimeishi type.

   The lingual markers seen in Akutaro Hasegawa's use of *bushi kotoba* are in line with kinsui theory (2003) and (2007), which states that the samurai's speaking style was generally dominated by *danseigo*, which then became the basis for the use of *danseigo* that still takes place in Japan today.

3. **Yahiko Myojin**

   Furthermore, it was found that the character named Yahiko Myojin *yakuwarigo* is of *danseigo* type. The first finding on Yahiko Myojin's character is ore, ore is a lingual marker of *danseigo* of the ichininsho daimeishi type. The next finding is omae, omae is a lingual marker of the nininsho daimeishi type. The last finding on this character is zo, zo is a lingual marker of the shuujoshi type.

   The lingual markers seen in Yahiko Myojin's use of *bushi kotoba* are in line with kinsui theory (2003) and (2007), which states that the samurai's speaking style was generally dominated by *danseigo*, which then became the basis for the use of *danseigo* that still takes place in Japan today.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the research conducted by the author, it can be concluded that not all samurai characters use *bushi kotoba*. In the findings of 3 characters in the manga Rurouni Kenshin Meiji Kenkaku Romantan Hokkaido-hen, it was found that 1 character used *bushi kotoba*, and 2 characters used *danseigo*.

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