

# GPJ

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON JAPAN

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## Scope

“Global Perspectives on Japan” focuses on developing a global perspective on the study of Japan and Asia. The journal promotes innovative, interdisciplinary, inter-regional and transnational approaches to Japanese Studies.

The journal aims to be a venue for scholarship in E.M.E.A. region with a special focus on Turkey and neighboring regions. It especially encourages scholars from the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia and the Mediterranean but also welcomes scholars from other parts of the world.

GPJ invites papers in the fields of history, humanities, and social sciences including topics of the past and the present. In addition to articles, the journal publishes occasional article size translations, book reviews, and surveys of current trends in Japanese and Asian Studies.

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No. 6



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# From The Perspective of Language Simplification Easy Japanese and Sign Language News\*

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## 1. Introduction

With the increase in the number of local residents with foreign roots, “Easy Japanese” for people who do not speak Japanese as their first language has been receiving attention. “Easy Japanese” is Japanese that has been simplified by controlling the vocabulary and grammar of ordinary Japanese; however, there is no established theory as to what constitutes “easy”, and there is ambiguity about the matter.

Therefore, this research, it is aimed to investigate what “Easy Japanese” is, how it is simplified, and how native Japanese speakers can make full use of it. Hence, “Sign Language News”, which has a track record in broadcasting and other activities, is analyzed from the viewpoint of “language simplification” in sociolinguistics.

## 2. Previous Research

### 2.1. Rules of Easy Japanese

Firstly, the rules of Easy Japanese summarized by Yoshikai are reviewed in this section. Regarding the level of grammar and vocabulary of Easy Japanese,

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\* This article was originally published in Japanese: 松本美穂.『言語の簡略化から見た「やさしい日本語」と「手話ニュース」』。かほよとり、18 38-50, 2022-04-01 <http://doi.org/10.14993/00002377>. It was abbreviated and translated by Ayşe Nur Durmaz for GPJ.

he suggests that it is at Level 3 (current N4 and partly N3 of JLPT<sup>1</sup>) and Level 4 (current N5 of JLPT) in the old JLPT proficiency levels. (Yoshikai 2020)

Yoshikai lists three rules for Easy Japanese in speaking. The first rule is to “speak clearly”, which implies that it is important to pronounce clearly, and without ambiguity. The second rule is to “complete the utterance”; it is important to avoid hesitation and speak until the end of the sentence. The third rule is to “shorten the utterance”, which means that simple sentences are easier to understand.

## 2.2. Current Status of Easy Japanese

In this section, the spread of Easy Japanese as of 2021 is reviewed. According to Yoshikai, Easy Japanese had been used in local government policies for a long time; however in 2018, the policy changed to attract foreign workers, and as a result, it was used in ministerial ordinances such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Also, in 2020, the Immigration Bureau and the Agency for Cultural Affairs created and published the “Guidelines of Easy Japanese for Residency Support.” Since then, lectures and training on Easy Japanese have been actively carried out. There is workshop-style training using Easy Japanese for companies with foreign employees, and lectures for practicing Easy Japanese for educational institutions with foreign children. In addition, in 2020, the “Introductory Easy Japanese” certified instructor training course was held.

The target audience of Easy Japanese is not only foreigners, but also Japanese children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. There are many websites that post news for children in Easy Japanese, such as Nihongo Kids Corner.

## 2.3. Sign Language as a Language

Ethnologue, a database published by the Minority Language Research Group, states that there are approximately more than 7,000 languages in the

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1 Abbreviation for Japanese Language Proficiency Test. The Japanese Language Proficiency Test is a test that measures and certifies the Japanese language proficiency of people whose native language is not Japanese, conducted by the Japan Foundation and the Japan Educational Exchanges and Services Association. There are 5 levels, with N5 being the easiest and N1 being the most difficult.

world, of which 149 are still in use. Sign languages are the languages created and used by hearing-impaired people to communicate, and they differ from country to country.<sup>2</sup> There are three types of sign languages used in Japan; “Japanese Sign Language,” which is the mother tongue (first language) of hearing-impaired people, “Signed Japanese,” which is used by people who have lost their hearing due to accidents or illness, and “Intermediate Sign Language”, which is used in communication between hearing-impaired and hearing people. “Japanese Sign Language” has a vocabulary of about 5,000 words and has its own grammatical system. On the other hand, Signed Japanese and Intermediate Sign Language is based on Japanese. Signed Japanese matches sign language words to Japanese grammar and word order, and Intermediate Sign Language expresses words in sign language in Japanese word order, being supplemented with orally uttered particles.

There are some differences between Japanese and Japanese Sign Language. Japanese sign language expresses words and sentences through finger movements, shapes, and facial expressions, and differs from the word order and grammar of language spoken by hearing people. According to Kamei (2009), the word order of the sentence “*Watashi ga tabetai no wa sakana desu* (What I want to eat is fish)” changes to “*Watashi(I)+taberu(to eat)+hoshii(want)+nani(what)+sakana(fish)*”. In this case, “I want to eat” is expressed by a combination of the sign language of “eat” and “want”, and since there are no particles, it can be seen that the grammar is also different from Japanese. In addition, facial expressions, as Sign Language differs from Japanese, play an important role in Japanese Sign Language. In Japanese Sign Language, facial and neck movements and facial expressions also play a role in expressing words and sentences, and it is necessary to read them at the same time as hand movements. In Japanese Sign Language, if you nod at the end of a sentence, it becomes a declarative sentence, and if you stick your chin out, it becomes an interrogative sentence asking “what” or “who”.

Japanese sign language has two characteristics. One of them is called CL (Classifier), and it is “a method of focusing on the shape and nature of something and conveying it to the other person by capturing the characteristics of the object itself, regardless of what it specifically refers to” (Kamei 2009,

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<sup>2</sup> Here, it refers to a person who is hearing-impaired before acquiring spoken language.

supra). For example, “cane” and “bat” are expressed as “long and narrow things” in Japanese Sign Language, and depending on the facial expression and the position of the hand, it can mean “cane” or “bat”. The other one is finger spelling, which is a method of expressing Japanese syllabary with one hand, and it is used for place and people names whose sign language is not known to be expressed in sign languages such as Belgium and Denmark, and also for new words of which the sign language has not been created. However, in conversations between hearing-impaired people, words that can be expressed in sign language, such as “nice to meet you”, are not expressed by finger spelling alone as “ha, ji, me, ma, shi, te.”

#### 2.4. Simplification in Japanese Sign Language and Sign Language News regarding Easy Japanese

To summarize the simplification in Japanese Sign Language and Easy Japanese in previous research; simplification in Japanese Sign Language is simply being able to express the characteristics of things such as shapes and figures with hands and fingers, and by combining facial expressions and movements, such as expressing concrete objects with facial expressions and hand positions. In this way, the vocabulary is reduced; thus, the burden on hearing-impaired people is lessened.

Parenthetically, for the hearing-impaired,<sup>3</sup> there are several Sign Language News programs on television, by which information is conveyed through multiple means such as Japanese Sign Language, audio that is read aloud by an announcer, and Japanese subtitles with furigana. There are simplified expressions that can also be seen in these voices and subtitles.

The simplification in easy Japanese is centered on restricting vocabulary and character expressions, paraphrasing, using simple sentences, and indicating the end of the sentence. In addition, it is necessary to control the information given in order to emphasize content delivery; while to avoid seeming unnatural to Japanese speakers, it is also important to be careful of the selection of the words. Based on this kind of simplification, this research does not focus on Japanese Sign Language itself, but further analyzes the

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3 Here, it refers to people with some kind of hearing impairment, such as mild to severe hearing loss or deafness.

Japanese in the subtitles and audio used in Sign Language News and the linguistic simplification in Easy Japanese, in detail, and from their searches for ways to make it easier to use Easy Japanese.

### 3. Main Survey

#### 3.1. Target

In this research, data is collected and used for analysis from three news programs: “General News”, “Easy Japanese news”, and “Sign Language News”. Data collection had been carried out for about two months from May 5th to June 30th, 2021, and news with contents common to the three news sections was processed (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Data information of each news**

Item	General News	Sign Language News	Easy Japanese News
Period	5/5/2021 - 6/30/2021		
Medium	News Web Hand	Story News 845	News Web Easy
Media	Online	Tv Broadcast	Online
Subject	General Audience	Hearing Impaired	Japanese Learners, Etc.
Time	1 to 4 Minutes		
Language	General Japanese Character Information Video With Some Audio	Japanese Sign Language And Audio Subtitles	Easy Japanese Character Information Synthesized Speech
Number Of Items	42	40	40
Characters	392 To 5,449 Characters	81 To 1,321 Characters	273-394 Characters

42 General News items were collected from the “News Web” on the NHK news site. News Web is targeted at general viewers, and information is transmitted in general Japanese using text information and some videos with audio.

40 Sign Language News items were collected from a TV program called

“Sign language news 845”. Sign Language News 845 mainly uses Japanese sign language for hearing-impaired people along with reading aloud by an announcer, and each piece of news is about one to four minutes long.

For Easy Japanese News, 40 articles were collected from “News Web Easy” on the NHK news site, as well as General News. “News Web Easy” is mainly targeted at Japanese language learners, and provides text information written in easy Japanese. It is also possible to listen to the news with read aloud option in AI voice.

There are 392 to 5,449 characters for General News, 81 to 1321 characters for Sign Language News, and 273 to 394 characters for Easy Japanese News respectively.

## 3.2. Data Collection

### 3.2.1 News Web

The data of General News was collected from News Web which is a news site of NHK. News Web contains many interviews and comments, but most of them are the comments of cabinet ministers and governors, and each news summary is posted at the end of the article.

### 3.2.2 Sign Language News 845

Sign Language News data was collected from a program called “Sign Language News 845”, which broadcasts for 15 minutes from 20:45 to 21:00 from Monday to Friday. In “Sign Language News 845”, there is a headline introduction at the beginning of the program, and each piece of news introduced is about 4 minutes long, and the short news that follows and news about events introduced at the end of the program is about 1 minute long. The news about the events does not have sign language or the voice of the announcer and is introduced only with video and subtitles. Since the subjects of this research are subtitles and audio used for Sign Language News, they were excluded from this survey.

Sign Language News 845 conveys information through multiple means, such as voice and sign language interpreters, Japanese Sign Language by hearing-impaired newscasters, and Japanese subtitles with furigana; however, since the subject of this survey are voice and subtitles, Japanese

Sign Language was not included.

### 3.2.3 News Web Easy

News Web Easy, the name of which was changed to Easy Japanese, is used to collect General News data. News Web Easy is written in Easy Japanese mainly for foreigners living in Japan and children, and it is also possible to listen via the read-aloud option at a slightly slower speed with the voice created by AI. In addition, it is possible to select the display of furigana and select the color-coded display of proper nouns such as personal names, place names, and company names. For difficult vocabulary or vocabulary that becomes unnatural due to rewriting, explanations are supplemented in the sentences, or explanations from dictionaries for elementary school students are displayed in a pop-up.

### 3.3. Survey method

General News, Easy Japanese News, and Sign Language News all report the same news, but how much difference is there in terms of language? In order to clarify this, it is aimed to compare the amount of language (number of words, number of sentences, etc.) and the quality of language (differences in the vocabulary used, etc.). In terms of the quality of language, the composition of the types of vocabulary that appear in each piece of news is examined. In addition, it is aimed to compare the vocabulary that appears only in Sign Language News or Easy Japanese News and explore the characteristics of simplification in news vocabulary from the viewpoint of lexical adjustment such as paraphrasing in each news.

First, the sentence data of the three news programs were run through the "KH Coder"<sup>4</sup> to check the number of sentences and words. Then, the usage frequency of the words extracted by KH Coder was calculated and the 150 words with the highest frequency were analyzed.

Next, "Reading Tutor"<sup>5</sup> was used to examine the difficulty of 150

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4 KH Coder is free software that extracts vocabulary from text data, calculates the number of extracted vocabulary and their frequency of use, and displays co-occurrence relationships in graphs and diagrams.

5 Reading Tutor (Ri-dingu Chu-ta) is a Japanese reading comprehension support system, through which the difficulty level of the word is displayed after submitting a sentence. The display of



frequently used vocabulary words extracted by KH Coder. Then, in order to investigate the differences in the vocabulary used in the three news programs, the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics' morphological analysis tool "Web Chamame"<sup>6</sup> was used to compare the number of vocabulary used in the three news programs, further investigate the differences in the vocabulary used in each program, and analyze the differences in the distribution of vocabulary difficulty.

## 4. Analysis Results

### 4.1 Linguistic Volume

#### 4.1.1 Word Count

Three news programs were applied to KH Coder and the words that appeared were analyzed. The total number of extracted words was 48,130 for General News, 12,835 for audio of Sign Language News, which was about one-quarter of the number of words for General News, and 9,862 words for subtitles. Easy Japanese News had 8,516 words, which was about one-sixth of General News.

Comparing the top 6 words in Easy Japanese News, "hito (person)" was used 69 times, "tsuki (gatsu/getsu)" 63 times, "iu (say)" 62 times, "virus" 55 times, "Tokyo" 42 times, and "atarashii (new)" 34 times, with "hito", "tsuki", and "iu" appearing overwhelmingly the most. Comparing the number of appearances in General News and Sign Language News respectively, the ranking is that "hito" was 5th in General News with 112 times, 21<sup>st</sup> in Sign Language News with 21 times, "tsuki" ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in General News with 128 times, 10<sup>th</sup> in Sign Language News with 26 times, "iu" ranked 141<sup>st</sup> in General News with 21 times, and 268<sup>th</sup> in Sign Language News with 4 times. "Virus" ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> in General News 60 times, and 22<sup>nd</sup> in Sign Language News 20 times. "Hito" and "iu" were not necessarily the top words in General News and Sign Language News. Hence, it was assumed that easy Japanese news tends to use simpler words such as "hito" and "iu" when paraphrasing.

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vocabulary difficulty is based on the Japanese Language Proficiency Test.

6 Web Chamame is a tool that divides sentences into morphemes, which are the smallest meaningful units, and determines the parts of speech and type of each word.

#### 4.1.2 Number Of Sentences/Phrases

Comparing the number of sentences that made up a single piece of news, the average for general news was 20 sentences, for sign language news 11 sentences, and for Easy Japanese News, 7 sentences. Compared to General News, the number of sentences in Sign Language News is about half, and that in Easy Japanese news is about one-third; thus, it can be seen that there are fewer sentences when the target audience is limited from general readers to hearing-impaired people and Japanese learners.

In addition, when all the collected news was divided into phrases based on the manual “Criteria for Identifying Phrases” in “How to Build a Corpus of Spoken Japanese,” the average number of phrases in one sentence was 18 in General News, while Sign Language News had an average of 7 phrases, (less than half of General News), and Easy Japanese News had an average of 10 phrases, (about half of General News). Hence, it can be observed that the length of the sentences in Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News is shorter than in General News.

Furthermore, regarding the end-of-sentence expressions, interviews and comments were written in a *da-dearu* style in General News, and other sentences were written in *desu-masu* style. The subtitles of Sign Language News ended with a full-word stop or *da-dearu* style, but the audio was in a *desu-masu* style. On the other hand, the end of the sentences of Easy Japanese News were all in *desu-masu* style, even for press conferences.

#### 4.2. Language Quality

The quality of language here refers to differences in lexical levels, word types, and paraphrasing. For each news program, firstly KH Coder was used and the top 150 words that were frequently used were extracted. The vocabulary level was further investigated using Reading Tutor.

As a result, General News and Sign Language News had the most vocabulary from N2 and N3, but Easy Japanese News had the most vocabulary from N5 for beginners. Of the top 150 words used in Easy Japanese News, N5 and N4 combined accounted for 58 %, with a high usage frequency of 63 %. Also, from the figure below, it can be observed in Easy Japanese News the number of words and the number of times they were used from N1 and

other vocabulary were smaller than at other levels. News Web Easy used N4 vocabulary in general, and in this survey, it was also found that it was generally the same (Figures 2, 3, 4, 5).

**Figure 2: Vocabulary Extracted From General News and Their Frequency (General News)**

Level	Vocabulary (Words)	Number Of Times
N1	15	738
N2/N3	56	2,470
N4	30	1,156
N5	19	701
Other	21	787

**Figure 3: Vocabulary Extracted From Sign Language News and Their Frequency(Audio)**

Level	Vocabulary (Words)	Number Of Times
N1	18	254
N2/N3	53	757
N4	21	254
N5	25	272
Other	22	274

**Figure 4: Vocabulary Extracted From Sign Language News (Subtitles) and Their Frequency**

Level	Vocabulary (Words)	Number Of Times
N1	18	233
N2/N3	55	645
N4	20	192
N5	20	187
Other	26	273

**Figure 5: Vocabulary Extracted From Easy Japanese News and Their Frequency**

Level	Vocabulary (Words)	Number Of Times
N1	8	90
N2/N3	25	324
N4	38	468
N5	49	633
Other	15	122

## Language

Web Chamame was used to investigate three news word types. General News consisted of 1038 Japanese words, 1818 Chinese words, 62 mixed words, 284 loanwords, and 281 proper nouns. The audio of the sign language news consisted of 560 Japanese words, 932 Chinese words, 32 mixed words, 97 loan words, and 102 proper nouns. Easy Japanese News contained 287 Japanese words, 271 Chinese words, 9 mixed words, 55 loanwords, and 107 proper nouns.

General News and Sign Language News were most often written in Chinese, while Easy Japanese News was most often written in Japanese. There was not much difference between the number of words in Chinese and Japanese in Easy Japanese News; the large difference between General News and Sign Language News demonstrated that general Japanese news tends to use more Chinese than Japanese. Since Chinese words can express meanings with a small number of characters, it is assumed that Chinese words would be used more frequently in Sign Language News, which has a limited broadcasting time.

## Proper Nouns

There were six categories for proper nouns: “People names”, “Place names”, “Facility names”, “Organization names”, “Legal names”, and “Others” (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Vocabulary For Each Classification Of Proper Nouns in Three News Programs**

	General News (Word)	Sign Language News (Word)	Easy Japanese News (Word)
People Names	131	35	22
Place Names	67	48	44
Facility Names	86	11	6
Organization Names	79	38	21
Legal Names	5	3	2
Others	42	16	12

Firstly, comparing the number of words for people's names with General News, the number of words in Sign Language News is about one-fourth, and that in Easy Japanese News is about one-sixth. In General News, the comments of representatives of each party and experts are listed along with the names of organizations and people they belong to. For the same reason, the number of words for organization names was also considered to be less than half that of General News in both Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News. Also, in General News, people's names are listed along with opinions, but in the case of the necessary information in Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News, the names of people are simply rephrased as "experts,"; and for that reason, it is speculated that the number of words for people names in Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News decreased significantly.

As for facility names, the number of words in General News is considerably larger than in other news programs. It is assumed that the main reason for this is the difference in news information about Olympic spectator numbers. General News listed the names of the facilities to be used for the Olympics and their capacity, but Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News did not include that information. This was assumed to reflect the recognition of the importance of capacity.

## **Paraphrasing**

Based on the aforementioned results, what kinds of paraphrases were done for Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News were analyzed.

In Sign Language News, there were specific paraphrases such as “Kansai” to “Osaka, etc.”; whereas there were paraphrases such as “25<sup>th</sup> of April” to “last month”. In addition, there were paraphrases of Chinese words into Japanese, such as “shiyou (use)” to “tsukau (use)”, and paraphrases of a group of words into single words. Many sentences in Sign Language News are the same as sentences in “General News,” and word-to-word paraphrasing not being frequent, there were many changes in expressions unique to the news.

## **Paraphrasing That Is Not “From Difficult To Easy”**

One of the differences between the paraphrasing methods of Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News is the difference in the vocabulary level of words paraphrased in General News and Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News. Most of the Easy Japanese News paraphrases were from difficult to easy vocabulary, but Sign Language News did not necessarily paraphrase from difficult to easy, and sometimes paraphrased more difficult Chinese words than the vocabulary of General News. For example, when paraphrasing a group of words into single words, expressions such as “hijouni kibishii (extremely severe)” were used in General News, while expressions such as “hippaku (tight)” was used in Sign Language News. This rephrasing is not a simplification in the sense of adjusting the difficulty of the vocabulary level.

The reason behind this issue is considered to be that the broadcast time of Sign Language News is limited to 15 minutes, and the program structure is to convey seven news stories within that time; so it is necessary to shorten the time spent on one news story. In order to avoid wasting time by repeatedly using a group of words, even difficult vocabulary must be paraphrased into accurate Chinese words. In other words, the simplification in Sign Language News does not mean paraphrasing it into simple vocabulary, but using multiple means of expression, including sign language, subtitles, and audio, to convey information to hearing-impaired people in a limited broadcast

time. It can be said that it is an adjustment that puts emphasis on conveying. This point will be discussed later in Section 5.

## **5. Consideration**

In this research, the focus was on the vocabulary level, paraphrasing, and information content of each news item. It was found that the simplification common to Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News was to shorten the sentences, reduce the number of sentences in the news as a whole, and extract the necessary parts of the information. On the other hand, some differences in simplification were also observed. 1) Style, 2) adjustment of information, 3) paraphrasing, 4) who the language used is, and 5) simplification in Easy Japanese are discussed in the following sub-sections.

### **5.1 Style**

In Sign Language News, most of the audio parts end in desu-masu style, but in the subtitles being with a noun ending or da-dearu style, multiple writing styles were used at the same time. On the other hand, Easy Japanese News had simple sentences ending in desu-masu style, and press conferences and interviews were also standardized in desu-masu style.

### **5.2 Adjustment of Information**

In Sign Language News, some of the footage from General News was used for press conferences and interviews, and they were broadcasted with subtitles. Information is adjusted by adding subtitles, and information with low importance and urgency is deleted to simplify as a whole.

In Easy Japanese News, information such as interviews necessary for the target foreigners is used, but in the sense of information adjustment, instead of using them the way they were, they were narrowed down to the necessary information. An example of this is proper nouns such as place names and personal names.

### 5.3 Paraphrase

Sign Language News did not have many paraphrases of vocabulary from General News. The vocabulary of N2/N3 is used most often, and vocabulary that is difficult with audio alone was supplemented with visual information through video and subtitles.

On the other hand, Easy Japanese News has the most N5 vocabulary and more paraphrasing methods than Sign Language News, the first method being paraphrasing Chinese words into Japanese, such as “kansen (infection)” to “utsuru (to infect)”, the second method being converting difficult kanji into simple kanji, such as “heni (change)” to “henka (change)”, the third method is changing Chinese words to English words, such as “saigai (disaster)” to “risuku (risk)”, the fourth method being rephrasing some words into a group of words, such as “heinen (normal year)” to “itsumono toshi (normal year)”, and the fifth method being indicating specifically in the same way as Sign Language News. Vocabulary for N5 and N4 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test was used without change, and vocabulary for higher levels was replaced with simpler words as much as possible.

These are paraphrases with lexical restrictions that do not deviate from the context. Comparing Sign Language News and Easy Japanese News, it can be observed that the vocabulary used was different according to the target.

### 5.4 Simplification For Whom?

The use of multiple writing styles and paraphrasing in Sign Language News is further examined in this section.

As a premise for simplification, it is necessary to keep in mind that there is a big difference between Japanese learners who need Easy Japanese and hearing-impaired people who are native Japanese speakers, in the sense of Japanese proficiency. Hearing-impaired people who watch Sign Language News are native speakers of Japanese who live in Japan and understand Japanese on a daily basis, even if sign language is their first language. This does not simply refer to vocabulary and grammar, but rather a knowledge of the Japanese language (multiple writing styles, etc.) and an understanding of the social context behind the news. Sign Language News provides audio, sign language, and captions (a means of conveying information by ending the



sentences with nouns or using *dearu* style). Both the use of multiple writing styles and the frequent use of Chinese characters are necessary adjustments in terms of conveying information accurately in a limited amount of time.

On the other hand, for those who need Easy Japanese News, Japanese is just a foreign language, and the writing style is only *desu-masu* style, sentences and the vocabulary at the beginner level, limitation of information related to social context are required. In other words, even if it is simplified Japanese, the Japanese used in Sign Language News may not necessarily be “easy.”

### 5.5 Simplification In Easy Japanese

As mentioned above, in order to make complicated things with a lot of information easy, it is important to first judge whether the information is necessary and organizes the information. Then, it becomes “easy” by changing sentences that are complicated into simpler sentences, shortening sentences, and adjusting the end of sentences. In doing so, it is determined that by adjusting the paraphrase to match the context when paraphrasing so that it does not sound unnatural, supplementing the explanation if it is difficult, and using simple grammatical patterns, natural Easy Japanese can be created.

## 6. Summary

In this research, by comparing Easy Japanese News and Sign Language News, the difference in simplification between Easy Japanese and Sign Language News was clarified.

Both Easy Japanese and Sign Language News use general Japanese simplifications to suit the target audience, but the method of adjustment varies depending on the target audience. Since Easy Japanese News is aimed at foreigners who are learning the Japanese language, the vocabulary should be paraphrased into simple vocabularies such as N5 or N4 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, and simple sentence patterns should be used instead of using various sentence patterns.<sup>7</sup> Japanese speakers need to adjust

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<sup>7</sup> Of course, foreign learners come from a wide variety of backgrounds. There are many points to consider, such as the fact that the Chinese language is not necessarily an obstacle for the person.

their language, such as paraphrasing into simple vocabulary or making simple sentences according to the Japanese level of the person who is targeting Easy Japanese.

On the other hand, Sign Language News conveys information by compensating for the lack of hearing ability with sign language, simplified expressions, subtitles, etc. Despite the hearing impairment, adjustment of the vocabulary that is for Japanese learners (difficult to easy) is not necessary; rather, it is necessary to adjust the amount of information and the method of dissemination of information.

For these reasons, in simplifying Japanese, it is necessary to adjust the vocabulary and speaking style according to the addressee, yet one should also be aware of the diversity since what is said (information) and how it is said (method) differs according to the situation. For those who speak Japanese as their first language, this will lead to the development of diverse communication skills with diverse people.

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