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## Editor's Preface

The present volume gathers contributions from young Japanese studies researchers and is dedicated to the concept of *yakuwarigo* ‘role language’ presented from the perspective of the Japanese language, literature and translation. The term *yakuwarigo* refers to the various styles of language used in the speech of the characters in Japanese comic books, animated movies and novels that convey special features and attributes of the characters such as age, gender, affiliation, profession, status, place of birth, etc. Even with a basic knowledge of Japanese, the foreign viewers of Japanese *anime*, as well as the readers of *manga*, light novels or fantasy books, usually can notice the variation in speech styles of peculiar characters. Among them, the most recognizable types are: dialects (e.g. *Kansaiben* ‘dialects of Kansai’, *Tōhokuben* ‘dialect of Tōhoku’), young ladies’ language (*ojōsama kotoba*), the language of the warriors (e.g. *bushi kotoba*, *ninja kotoba*), the speech of elderly people (*rōjingo*) or the speech of certain minorities (e.g. *aruyo kotoba* as a speech style of the Chinese minority or the aliens). The growing popularity of Japanese role languages leads to the common misconception by foreign receivers that the contemporary Japanese do use these speech patterns in real-life Japanese. However, although role language depicts certain features of the Japanese language and is rooted in its linguistic tradition, it is, to a certain extent, stylized and stereotyped, and hence, it should not be applied without awareness and alertness.

The present volume includes the papers of five authors who attempted to present the subject of role language and language stylization from various perspectives. Wojciech Gęszczak suggests the revision of the terminology used in the discourse on *yakuwarigo* in order to differentiate between character stylizations, their linguistic markers and the distinctive features of fictional characters with whom they correlate. Hana Kloutvorová analyzes and compares the self-referring expressions used by teenage girl characters of *shōjo manga*, whom she divided into protagonists, major and minor characters, and colligates a relatively low variation in their use with how the heroines are portrayed in Japanese romance stories. Patrycja Duc-Harada attempts to describe the examples of “role languageness” of standard language observed in both real-life and fictitious Japanese in order to emphasize its reliable function in both variants. Magdalena Kotlarczyk analyses the examples of role language implementation in the

Japanese translation of Andrzej Sapkowski's *Chrzest Ognia* and compares it with the original version and the English translation, focusing on such aspects of stylization as archaization, colloquialisms and vulgarisms. Finally, Katarzyna Sonnenberg-Musiał refers to the mosaic of styles in Natsume Sōseki's *Wagahai-wa neko de aru* and suggests that when discussing Sōseki's novels, the notions of style and stylization reflect the creativity, interrelatedness and humour of the characters' languages more adequately than that of role language.

The volume also contains an additional text, namely a review of Alexander Vovin's *Descriptive and comparative grammar of Western Old Japanese* written by Aleksandra Jarosz.

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