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“This newly revised edition provides in-depth coverage of all areas of Japanese grammar, in an accessible style which will make it a valuable pedagogical and reference work for anyone interested in Japanese linguistics.”
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Praise for the Second Edition:
“While maintaining the well-balanced coverage of Japanese linguistics of the earlier edition, Tsujimura manages to explore a variety of new issues in the experimental and applied areas. The well-chosen additional problem sets guide students towards important topics for future research.”
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An Introduction to Japanese Linguistics

Third Edition

Natsuko Tsujimura
To my mother and my sister
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Throughout my education I have been blessed with a number of great teachers from whom I received unfathomable influence. Adrian Akmajian is high on that list. Adrian used to say that writing a textbook is more challenging than one might imagine because you get criticized no matter what. Of course I did not realize what exactly he meant until I wrote one. While I may not agree with some of the criticisms on the earlier editions, I am fortunate that many of the criticisms were constructive and informative so as to help me produce yet another edition which I hope can be considered an improvement. I think I have achieved that goal – at least to some degree – in this third edition.

The second edition included significant revisions in the chapters on morphology and semantics with an additional chapter on first language acquisition. For this current edition, I have made extensive revisions in the chapters on phonetics (Chapter 2) and syntax (Chapter 5), some in the chapter on phonology (Chapter 3), and minor modifications in the rest of the chapters. The chapter on first language acquisition in the second edition has been revised and incorporated as sections in each of the chapters in the third edition with additional discussion of second language acquisition. For the phonetics chapter, unlike in the previous editions, which separated the discussion of the Japanese and English sound inventories, the presentation of various phonetic issues in this third edition keeps its primary focus on the Japanese sound system and pertinent phenomena with occasional comparative reference to English. Responding to the frequent criticism that the syntax chapter in the previous editions is too technical, I have decided to eliminate most of the tree representations as well as the theoretical discussion, but instead to keep the chapter as descriptive as possible and to include some typological comparisons. Putting together all the revisions made in the second and third editions, the current edition is quite a departure from the original book that was published in 1996. The theoretical approach underlying the book is still primarily that of generative grammar, but where possible and appropriate, I have tried to shy away from theoretical matters and to include occasional crosslinguistic comparison regardless of theoretical orientation so that the Japanese-internal as well as typological descriptions are more enriched than in earlier editions.

As I stated in the preface to the second edition, the primary goal of this book is to examine spoken Japanese, presenting linguistic description and analyses of
a wide range of phenomena. It is intended to serve as a descriptive source and a theoretical foundation for an audience that includes students and scholars in linguistics as well as in Japanese language pedagogy and education, and more generally for those interested in the Japanese language. It is hoped that students will find the book a useful pedagogical tool to learn basic notions and terminology in linguistics and to develop their skills in linguistic analysis and argumentation. Depending on the chapter and on the reader's background, the user may feel that the extent of the details and the level of complexity are either too advanced or not adequate. Especially in a classroom setting, the instructor is advised to make pedagogical judgments appropriate for the students' background and needs, and additional materials may be used as supplements; or this book can be used as a supplement to other pedagogical tools. For the novice student, this book is more effectively used as a textbook in a classroom, rather than as a self-guide to a general introduction to Japanese linguistics. Professional linguists who are not proficient in Japanese have found this book useful as a reference in providing examples and descriptive analyses of linguistic phenomena in Japanese. A suggestion was made to include examples written in the Japanese script, but I have kept the same representation in Romanization with such an audience in mind.

The publication of the third edition is somewhat of an irony since I was originally not interested in writing it, still feeling a residual sense of burnout. I am grateful to Wiley Blackwell's linguistics acquisition editor, Danielle Descoteaux, for encouraging me to work on a new edition and for once again planting the seed of excitement in me back in 2009. Danielle quickly solicited four reviews for the second edition, which served as a springboard for the current edition. Without these reviews I would have been close to clueless as to how I might improve upon the previous edition. Two additional reviewers examined the pre-final version of this edition, and thanks to their careful reading, I was fortunate to make the last round of significant revisions. I thank Danielle and the six reviewers for leading me to the path I needed to take. In the process of revising the third edition, I further benefited from comments on previous editions. Atsushi Fukada at Purdue University, who adopted the book for his linguistics course, sent me e-mail messages to inform me of a number of counterexamples to the generalizations pertinent to accentuation. His comments gave me a chance to revisit the topic in the phonology chapter. The revisions of the phonetics chapter would not have been possible without the technical assistance on spectrograms and wave forms that Kyoko Okamura kindly and patiently offered to me. I particularly appreciate her generosity in having spent hours of recording (and re-recording) with me during the hot and humid summer of 2010 in Bloomington. Shigeru Miyagawa and Peter Sells, my long-time colleagues, gave me very useful suggestions as to how I might re-work the syntax chapter. Although the chapter ended up being one that is not consistent with their recommendations, I would not have been able to make my decision without their initial input. Sara Sowers did an incredibly thorough job in going over the references and the text, which
saved me countless hours. The frequent appearance of Stuart Davis in my acknowledgments faces the risk of obscuring their sincerity, but I do not know any other way than simply thanking him profusely for the professional and personal guidance he has endlessly offered me during this project and far beyond. Julia Kirk of Wiley Blackwell patiently responded to my numerous questions on copyright permissions. It was to my pleasure and relief that Fiona Sewell once again took care of fine-tuning of the book, for the third time. The finesse and professionalism she provided in editing this edition have made the very last stage of the production much less stressful than it would have been otherwise. I am greatly indebted to her. Thank you all for helping me survive another round of revising the book through your professional expertise. Finally, I am indebted to my mother and my sister for my professional career, of which this book forms a significant part, as well as for my personal life; their sacrifice is something for which I can never repay them. This last edition is dedicated to them.