

# The Cultural Scripts of Five Apologetic Expressions of Japanese

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## **Abstract**

This thesis focuses on five apologetic expressions of Japanese and aims at summarizing their functions as well as applying Natural Semantic Metalanguage to describe their functions. The study is based on a corpus including 465 examples gathered from the authentic materials of four recent Japanese TV dramas which were broadcasted during 2009-2013.

There are numerous apologetic expressions in Japanese which are used under various circumstances and therefore acquiring a full picture of their functions has always been a fascinating field. Nevertheless, past studies were either limited in the number of samples or were inadequate in the means of describing the functions. Therefore, this study applies Natural Semantic Metalanguage to attempt a new way of description while using a corpus of authentic material as the source of data to carry out a scaled statistical analysis.

This study includes three stages. The first stage draws the experience from componential analysis – a traditional method of meaning analysis widely used in the field of semantic studies – to tag the examples and put them into patterns. The second stage involves statistical analysis on the feature bundles of each example and summary of their functions according to the result of statistical analysis. The final part applies cultural scripts written in Natural Semantic Metalanguage as a means of descriptions of

the functions, attempting to obtain a neutral and non-culturally biased description of the functions of the apologetic expressions.