Experience Day
Japanstudies
23 November 2018

Lecture:

Title: Experimenting with the Japanese language

Lecturer: Wataru Uegaki

Information lecturer: Wataru Uegaki is a University Lecturer at Leiden University in the Institute for Area Studies and the Centre for Linguistics. At Leiden, he teaches a variety of courses in BA Japanstudies, BA Linguistics, MA Asian Studies and MA Linguistics. He holds a PhD in Linguistics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2015) and has conducted research in theoretical linguistics (especially in the field of semantics and pragmatics) and Japanese linguistics. Within Japanese linguistics, he investigates various aspects of the grammatical structure of the languages/dialects in Japan, with an aim to uncover the nature of the similarity and differences that the Japanese languages have with other languages in the world. More information can be found on his personal academic website: www.wataruuegaki.com.

Abstract:
Biikaa, ryukkusakku, sukoppu. These are all Japanese words “borrowed” from Dutch in the premodern era. Can you guess what they mean? Those words in a language borrowed from another language are called “loan words”, and the sound patterns of loan words reveal interesting facts about the grammatical system of pronunciations (called “phonology” by linguists) of the language that has borrowed these words. In this seminar, we will discuss what the sound patterns of loan words such as biikaa, ryukkusakku, sukoppu reveal about the pronunciation system of Japanese. Doing this, you will be introduced to the world of Japanese linguistics, an academic field that investigates the system governing the Japanese language in relation to Japanese history and culture.

Tutorial:

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Abstract:
During the tutorial, dr. Wataru Uegaki will discuss the homework and elaborate more on the information given in the lecture. There is also room for a discussion and questions.

Preparation:
From subtitled Japanese movies or online videos, find at least three examples of Japanese loan words from English or Dutch. Describe in your own words how the pronunciation of the words are different from the original pronunciation in English/Dutch.