

Florian Coulmas



CURRICULUM VITAE

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2015– Senior Professor, Institute of East Asian Studies IN-EAST / Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Duisburg-Essen
- 2004–2014 Director, Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien DIJ, Tokyo
- 1999– Professor of Japanese Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen
- 1987–1999 Chuo University, Tokyo, Professor of Sociology of Language
- 1995 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque Visiting Professor Summer
- 1994/95 Institute of Advanced Studies, Berlin, Fellow
- 1986/87 Georgetown University, Washington DC, Visiting Professor
- 1984/85 Gakushuin University, Tokyo, Visiting Professor
- 1981–83 The National Language Research Institute, Tokyo, Researcher and Lecturer
- 1979–87 University of Düsseldorf, Assistant Professor, Professor
- 1977–78 University of Bielefeld, Assistant Professor
- 1975–77 Hiroshima University, Lecturer

EDUCATION

- 1980 University of Düsseldorf, Habilitation, *venia legendi* (qualification of full professor) General Linguistics
- 1977 University of Bielefeld, Dr. phil. General Linguistics
- 1974/75 Free University of Berlin
- 1974 Free University of Berlin, M.A. Linguistics and Sociology
- 1972/73 Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio
- 1969/70 Sorbonne, Paris
- 1968/69 Free University of Berlin

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- 1999 Editorial Board *Current Issues in Language Planning*
- 1997 Editorial Board *Written Language and Literacy*
- 1994 Fellow Institute of Advanced Studies Berlin
- 1988 Editorial Board *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*

1986	Associate Editor <i>International Journal of the Sociology of Language</i>
1984	Editorial Board <i>Journal of Psycholinguistic Research</i>
1983	Heisenberg Fellow of Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG
1982	Japan Foundation Publication Grant
1981	Editorial Board <i>Journal of Pragmatics</i>
1980	Fellow of Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)
1974	Ph.D. scholarship, Free University of Berlin

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Linguistic Society of America

Nihon gengo gakkai (Japanese Society of Linguistics)

Gesellschaft für Angewandte Linguistik (German Association of Applied Linguistics)

EDITORIAL BOARD OF JOURNALS

Contemporary Japan

Language Policy

Journal of Asian Pacific Communication

Writing Systems Research

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research activities involve three major endeavours:

(a) Writing, its linguistics and ethnography

(b) Japanese society and culture

(c) Language planning and policy

Although these areas seem to be unrelated, this is not really the case. The manifestation of language in speech and print, the function of writing for language standardization, the segmentation of linguistic units, and the question of how these modes of language representation interact and are put to use in different linguistic and cultural settings pose interrelated questions.

Writing is a means of representing language, but it also exercises an influence on its development and on the way speakers perceive, conceptualize, and use their language. So far we know little about the differences between spoken and written language as well as those between written and unwritten languages.

TEACHING

My work is an attempt to find new and productive ways to view some of the problems in question.

In addition to my work in Sociolinguistics, I have developed an interest in demography in recent years, as I directed a major research project about population ageing and decline, at the German Institute for Japanese Studies. This unprecedented population change affects virtually all spheres of life, including language and its evolution. The assumption, so far largely unchallenged in variationist linguistics, that historical language change occurs in a stable population can no longer be taken for granted if, as is true of Japan, a population doubles its life expectancy within a mere century. What this implies for language change is an under-researched question of theoretical significance to which I have devoted some attention of late and intend to do more research about in future.

My primary fields of specialization, Sociolinguistics and General Linguistics, offer students a perspective on language that is constructive and useful, focussing as they do, both on the social context of languages as an instrument of interaction and on the universal conditions of language as a symbolic system. While the focus of my research is in Sociolinguistics, I have taught courses in other areas as well, particularly Writing Systems, Pragmatics, Lexicography, Language and Culture, History of Linguistics, Japanese Grammar.

I have been involved in classroom teaching in a number of different institutions. I have taught courses at Bielefeld University, Essen University, Düsseldorf University, Duisburg University, all in FRG, as well as at Hiroshima University, Gakushuin University, Saitama University, Chuo University, the University of Tokyo and at the National Language Research Institute in Tokyo. For two years I taught in the Linguistics Department of Georgetown University, Washington DC.

RECENT BOOKS

2020 Ich, wir und die Anderen. Zürich: Orell Füssli.

2020 Die Kultur Japans. 4. Aktualisierte Auflage. München: C.H. Beck.

2020 Venezianische Wahrheiten. Japanische Lektionen in der Stadt Marco Polos. Tokyo: Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien: Miscellanea 20,
<https://www.dijtokyo.org/publication/venezianische-wahrheiten/>

2019 Identity. A very short introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

2019 Das Zeitalter der Identität. Zur Kritik eines Schlüsselbegriffs unserer Zeit. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.

2018 文字与社会导论 (Wénzì yǔ shèhuì dǎolùn) [Chinese translation of Writing and Society: An Introduction. Canbridge University Press]. Beijing: Wàiyǔ jiàoxué yǔ yánjiū chūbǎn shè.

2018 An Introduction to Multilingualism. Language in a changing world. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

2016 Guardians of Language. Twenty Voices through History. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

2014 Tokio. Vom Glück urbanen Lebens. Munich: C.H. Beck.

2013 Writing and Society. An Introduction. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

2011 (jointly with Judith Stalpers) Fukushima. Vom Erdbeben zur atomaren Katastrophe. Munich: C.H. Beck.

2010 Die Illusion vom Glück. Japan und der Westen. Zürich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung.

2011 (jointly edited with Ralph Lützel) Imploding Populations in Japan and Germany. A Comparison. Leiden, Boston: Brill.