

Stoicism or shyness?: Japanese professional matchmakers and new masculine conversational ideals

Erika Alpert

Sociology and Anthropology Department

Abstract

I examine data from my fieldwork with Japanese professional matchmakers and their attitude towards new, “less masculine” masculinities. Matchmakers’ ideologies of conversation show that they understand “good partners” as having personality traits that are not particularly ascribed to any gender. Consequently, they allow for flexibility in gendered behavior, as long as their clients can be brought within the heterosexual institution of marriage. As in previous work in the field of language and sexuality, I focus on the way that genders and sexualities are performed through language. However, by focusing on matchmakers, I aim to examine the institutional structures and language ideologies that constrain the process of self-fashioning. Like other recent work on topics such as “personal development”, I treat “self-fashioning” as a multiparty process by addressing the role of the expert in constructing the advice by which clients are supposed to (re)-fashion themselves.

Original language English

Pages (from-to) 191-218

Number of pages 28

Journal [Journal of Language and Sexuality](#)

Volume 3

Issue number 2

State Published - Jan 1 2014

Alpert, E. (2014). *Stoicism or shyness?: Japanese professional matchmakers and new masculine conversational ideals*. *Journal of Language and Sexuality*, 3(2), 191-218. DOI: [10.1075/jls.3.2.02alp](https://doi.org/10.1075/jls.3.2.02alp)