Japanese Language

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Have you ever heard any of the following nouns?

haiku, futon, judo, kamikaze, karaoke, karate, ninja, samurai, sayonara, tsunami, sushi, sudoku, typhoon, sumo, origami.
Spoken by about 125 million speakers, primarily in Japan, where it is the national language.
Major Characteristics of Japanese Language

I. Phonology

1. Mora – a simple phonotactics that can be represented by one letter; each letter is equivalent in length to a word.
   (example) MacDonald:
   ma-ku-do-na-ru-do.

2. Five vowels, each is monophthong; and can be short or long. 
   /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/
## 3. Consonants

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<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
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4. Lexically significant pitch accent.

A me (HL) -- rain
A me (LH) -- candy
II. Grammar

1. SOV

2. Nouns: No grammatical number, gender, or article aspects.

3. Particles: Indicates the grammatical function of nouns.
   - Watashiwa bangohano tabemasu. (I eat dinner)
   - Anatawa watashini hono kuremasu. (You give me a book)
   - Toshokande de benkyooshimasu. (I study at library)
5. Verb: conjugates to show tense and affirmative/negative.
   - tabemasu, tabemasen
   - tabemashita, tabemasendeshita

6. Yes/No question sentence: Add “ka” at the end of sentence (and intonation is raised).
   Tabemasuka.

7. Three language levels:
   - Conversational/informal
   - Polite
   - Honorific
III. Writing system

Mixture of three writing systems:

• Kanji (Chinese character) – ideographic;
• Hiragana -- syllabic and phonographic;
• Katakana – syllabic and phonographic; is used for foreign words and onomatopoeia.

ﬁ はうちでテレビを見ました. (I watch TV at home.)

ﬁ 犬がワンワン吠えています。 (A dog is barking.)
Thank you very much for listening. Please feel free to contact for more information:

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