What are the main features of Japanese language?

29 March 2018 (Thursday)
4:00 - 6:00 pm
Room 5206, 5/F, Lau Ming Wai Academic Building

Abstract
Japanese language has a long history as other languages in the world, yet, How did Japanese people develop the writing system? What are the distinctive features of Japanese? Why is it so difficult for foreigners to pronounce Japanese? Why does Japanese language have so many borrowed words? How was the so-called Kokuji (国字) invented? Why does Japanese language have only two styles in the Kana writing form? These questions are also crucial for us to understand the nature of Japanese culture itself. The historical documents have shown that the Japanese language was formed under a very complicated international environment, especially during the East Asian political and cultural interactions in the ancient past. This lecture attempts to answer all these questions but also introducing the latest research theories which combine both cultural and linguistic studies. An interactive discussion session with the audience will also be held.

Biography
Professor Makoto Otsuki obtained his PhD from the Graduate School of Letters at Kyoto University. Graduated in 1995, Professor Otsuki has been served as Assistant professor at Hokkaido University and Aichi Bunkyo University, and Associate professor at Kyoto University. He is currently Professor of the Graduate School of Letters at Kyoto University. He has published extensively in Japanese language, Japanese Kunten Manuscripts, and Japanese literature which mainly covered the periods between the 10th and 15th centuries. His publication includes The Origins of Japanese Prose: “Reding” and “Writing”; On the Native Japanese words in Wamyoruijisyo; On the relation between Shinsenjikyo and Its Native Japanese Words. Collaborating with a number of the traditional Buddhism temples and academic institutions, he also conducts field trips every year for the cultivation and discovery of new sources for research publication.

*All are welcome*