

Watashi/Watakushi: It's the regular, polite way of saying "I". In common speech, most men do not use it, because it sounds too feminine and goody-goody. However, certain cool guys like Zechs Marquis in Gundam W and King Endimyon in Sailor Moon have been known to use it; [**watakushi**] does have a touch of regal dignity to it with some people. [In other cases, it adds] a certain degree of androgynous coldness and detachment, [as it is in the case of] Cell. Women very often use it in different levels of speech. Makes you sound like a good girl, but it's ok. Lilina Dorian's [Relena Darilan, Gundam Wing] incessant use of watakushi--an extremely formal form of "I"--annoys the hell out me.

[Dot's note: the stereotypical well-bred and/or snobby girl--such as Sumire from *Sakura Wars* or Karin from the Street Fighter series--will use **watakushi** in conjunction with very polite speech patterns to emphasize her status as upper class.]

Atashi: That's the very popular feminine version of watashi. Used in everyday conversation, it sounds fresh, cute and sometimes flirty (used by Bulma, Usagi, etc, etc...) Don't say 'atashi' when you speak with the Emperor or some high-ranked dudes you don't know well (like, let's say, the principal of your school...)

Boku: For little boys and some young men. Sounds cute and sweet, but sometimes a little too much like "mama's little man" (again, it depends on the situation) Heard out of the mouths of Gohan, Goten (as a kid only). Some tough girls use it, shocking all the decent people out there (think of super cool Tia Not Yoko, in *Bastard!*)

Ora: Used in familiar male speech, but more like some kind of rural patois than standard speech. The only person I've ever heard say it so far is Goku and Chi-Chi; provincial women often use male speech, like adding the male particle -zo after a verb.

Ore: the tough, slangy male "I". No need to say, don't speak like that when addressing the president unless you don't give a s***, like a certain Saiyajin Prince we all know. It's used by most high school, college students and men in general among familiar company; then it doesn't necessarily sound like gangsta speech. Little boys who want to show how tough they are use it; think Chibi Trunks. It's also interesting to notice that Goku, when he turns SSJ for the first time after seeing Friza kill Kuririn, says "ore" instead of his habitual, "nicer", sweetie-pie "ora"--that's because he's seriously pissed...

Thanks, Celine!

Here's some more that I found while reading comics and watching anime:
atai--an even more abbreviated form of "atashi", as far as I can tell only used by men (or very aggressive-sounding women).

sessha--a rather old, and very humble, form of self address. The only English equivalent in modern language would be "yours truly, but "this lowly/unworthy one" is closer to what it actually means. It's probably what servants and/or samurai use to when addressing their masters. Kenshin of *Rurouni Kenshin* uses this form of self-address.

uchi--an *extremely* cutsey way of referring to yourself. Lum's "accent", which in addition to calling herself **uchi**, tags **-tcha** to the end of every sentence, was an actual speech pattern employed by pre-teen girls at the time.

ware--generally a term of self-address used by adult males over 30; more often than not heard in gangster-type films as **wareware**, "we".
