

〈研究ノート〉

Age Difference in the Dialect Image of the Japanese People

— An age-comparative analysis of the NHK survey, 1996 —

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1. Introduction

The subject of this paper is to examine the changes of the dialect image of the Japanese people of different generations. This examination is based on a surveys conducted by the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute (NHK 放送文化研究所) in 1996.

2. The data

While the whole survey has dealt with various questions, in this research only those of linguistic relevance will be affected. The questions examined were:

21-E Do you like the language of your local region? (「あなたはこの土地の言葉が好きですか」)

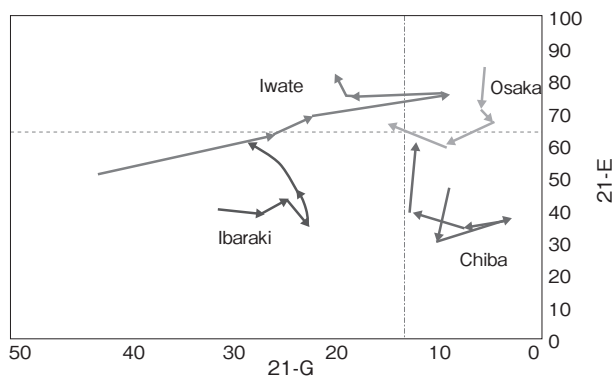
21-G Do you feel it is embarrassing when someone accidentally speaks in dialect while trying to speak standard Japanese? (「あなたは地方なまりが出るのは恥ずかしいことだと思いますか」).

3. Selection

During the research, five generations in four prefectures will be examined from the 1996 survey. The generations are: 16-25 , 26-35 , 36-45 , 46-55 , 56 and older. The four prefectures selected are Iwate, Ibaraki, Chiba and Osaka. These four regions of Japan bear the most extreme (positive or negative) reputation among the Japanese dialects according to Inoue. The data will be obtained from the official data book published by the NHK Institute.

4. Evaluation

The following chart presents the NHK data of 1996, distributed according to the location. The age difference is indicated with the arrow symbols on the respective graphs.



According to this graph the dialect image of the citizens can be divided into four groups. These groups can be referred to by their representative prefectures:

Osaka = people, who like their dialect and are not ashamed of it

Iwate = people, who like their dialect, but are ashamed of it

Chiba = people, who do not like their dialect, but not ashamed of it

Ibaraki= people, who do not like their dialect and ashamed of it

The generation difference is rather interesting as well. In most cases the graph shows a particular V-pattern, which conveys that the younger and the older generation have relatively more positive image about their language than the middle generation has.

5. Further Research

The NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute conducted the first survey in 1978 and thus those results can be compared with this 1996 data. Both surveys have dealt with several other questions concerning economy, social life, family, etc. I believe that contrasting these seemingly unrelated matters to the change of dialect image could lead to a better understanding of the generational language change.

Bibliography

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