High dialect contact, the acquisition of sociolinguistic variation, and the role of a standard variety: the case of a Japanese New Town

Yoshiyuki Asahi (NINJAL)
yasahi@ninjali.ac.jp
2012.2.11
Introduction

- This paper primarily deals with
  1. Second dialect acquisition
  2. First dialect acquisition
  in Japanese language
- Also, this paper considers
  1. a degree of an influence from a standard variety
- Based on my study on ...
  1. a Japanese New Town koine in Kobe
Research questions

(1) as a second dialect acquisition
   - which variant(s) is(are) chosen as a result of dialect contact and why
   - dialect levelling
   - an influence from a standard variety
Research questions

(2) as a first dialect acquisition
- which variant(s) wins/win out of other variants
- a degree of influence from their parents
- definition of their target variety?
- an influence from a standard variety?
- a change towards pan-regional variety?
Japanese New Town

- First new town was established in 1920s
- Its notion came from the UK
- A majority of Japanese New Towns
  - designed and developed since 1950s
  - in order to tackle with a population problems in large cities
  - today 50 new towns in the suburbs of large cities
Seishin New Town
A brief description

- Located in Kobe city
- Immigration started from 1980
- Planned population: 60,000
- Dialectal background:
  - 75% from Hyogo Pref. (including Kobe)
  - 20% from Western Japan
  - 5% from other areas
Location of the Kobe city
Location of Seishin New Town
Some photos of Seishin New Town (1)
Some photos of Seishin New Town (2)
Some photos of Hazetani-cho (1)
Some photos of Hazetani-cho (2)
Data and informants

- Data: 13 hours of spontaneous speech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seishin New Town</th>
<th>Hazetani</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Locals</td>
<td>Aliens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two variables

1. complementizer ‘to’ and its deletion
2. verb negation (root ending: consonant)
Variable 1: complementizer

- Complementizer “to (tte)” and its deletion
  - observed in dialects in Western Japan
  - occurs in two verbs
    - ‘iu’ (say) and “omou” (think)

(1) Mary-wa gohan-wo tabe-ru tte / to / φ itta
    Mary-Nom meal-Acc eat comp. say pst
(2) John-wa T-shirts-wo ki-ru tte/to/φ omou
    John-Nom T-shirts-Acc put on comp. think nonpst
Variable 2: verb negation

- Verb negation
  - verb conjugations: some patterns
  - root ending = important
    (a) consonant root ending
      e.g. *ik-u* “go”  *okor-u* “get angry”
    (b) vowel root ending
      e.g. *ne-ru* “go to bed”  *tabe-ru* “eat”
Negation in consonant root ending verbs

- Analysis: (a) consonant root ending
- One meaning is analyzed
  (i) non-past form (i.e. –(a)nai ending)
    e.g. aruk-anai  okor-anai (Standard Japanese)
    aruk-an/-ahen okor-an/-ahen (Kobe dialect)
    aru-kan  (Western Japanese dialects)
Results
1. Complementizer (1) Hazetani
1 complementizer (2) Seishin New Town First generation
1 complementizer (3) Seishin New Town
Second generation

- Hazetani: 14
- Locals: 12
- Aliens: 5

- φ
- tte
2. Verb Negation (1): Hazetani

The graph shows the distribution of three verb negation patterns among Old, Middle, and Young speakers:

- Blue line (nai):
  - Old: 3
  - Middle: 1
  - Young: 3

- Red line (hen):
  - Old: 37
  - Middle: 48
  - Young: 26

- Green line (n):
  - Old: 60
  - Middle: 51
  - Young: 71

![Graph showing verb negation statistics for Hazetani, Locals, and Aliens]

- Nai: 
  - Hazetani: 3
  - Locals: 12
  - Aliens: 20

- Hen: 
  - Hazetani: 26
  - Locals: 35
  - Aliens: 28

- N: 
  - Hazetani: 71
  - Locals: 53
  - Aliens: 52
Acquisition of sociolinguistic variation
- first generation
  - do not choose variants from the neighbor community
  - a choice of non-dialectal feature (i.e. standard variety)
- possible reason: social status
  - Seishin New Town > Hazetani
- Second generation
  - first dialect acquisition
    - quite influenced by the neighbor community
    - a case of pan-regionalization
      e.g. verb negation, -hen/-n
    - influence from their parents:
      some, but not much
      e.g. verb negation, -nai
Discussions (3)

- possible reasons:
  - interaction between Seishin New Town residents and Hazetani residents
  - go to the same high school
  - stronger tendency to associate themselves with Kobe city residents (not purely New Town residents)
Conclusions

- This talk raised the acquisition of sociolinguistic variation in a high dialect contact situation
- Looked into a Japanese new town
- Use of Spontaneous speech data (13hrs)
- Analyses of two variables (complementizer, verb negation) were conducted
- Nature of acquisition in two generations was discussed.
Further research questions

- Longitudinal studies on the acquisition of sociolinguistic variation in the koine-formation
- Social value of each variable needs to be further analyzed
- A comparative studies of the acquisition of the variation in different contact settings.
  e.g. new town, Japanese immigrant communities
Thank you for your kind attention!