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Abstracts

Kana Suzuki



Negatively formulated interrogatives in Japanese conversation: A small conjunction between grammar and interaction.

One small conjunction between grammar and interaction is explored here by examining the employment of negatively formulated interrogatives in Japanese conversation. When a speaker is about to produce a yes-no interrogative, there are, at least, two choices available to them: one is positive and the other negative. One grammatical explanation of the difference between them would be that whereas the positive interrogative is generally neutral, with no bias in expectation towards a positive or negative response, the corresponding negative expresses speaker's surprise, disbelief, disappointment and/or annoyance by implying their old expectations for a positive response that now turned into new expectations for a negative one with evidence (Quirk et al. 1985:808-810). The examination of naturally-occurring materials, however, shows that the selection of a negative interrogative over a positive one actually emerges from the preceding talk, rather than occurring inside the speaker's mind. And co-participants of the conversation, as well as analysts, can see where that selection comes from. This is also evidenced by the cases in which a negative interrogative is employed with no apparent ground in the preceding talk. In such cases, the use of the 'unwarranted' negative interrogative engenders a subsequent sequence in which both speaker and recipients of the interrogative collaboratively work out 'why' that interrogative is constructed as negative in that point of the conversation. In short, the employment of negative interrogatives in conversation is an 'accountable' matter, and speakers are normatively required to provide an account for their selection of this particular form. Negatively formulated interrogatives are therefore not equal alternatives of the corresponding positive ones, and the selection between them is not only the subject of grammar, but also an interactionally consequential issue.

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Chryso Hadjidemetriou



The Armenian linguistic minority community of Cyprus: The acquisition of the Cypriot-Greek definite article and grammatical gender by Armenian speakers.

This presentation is a work-in progress report on two specific linguistic features - the behaviour of the definite article and grammatical gender of Cypriot-Greek (CG) - appearing in the CG of bilingual speakers in Armenian and CG. The modern history of the Armenian community in Cyprus began when the first Armenian refugees arrived in Cyprus from the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire in 1895, escaping, at that time, the massacres of the Ottoman Empire and thus finding refuge in Cyprus, which then was under British control. More Armenian refugees arrived at the island during 1920-1922 and some a bit later.

In this presentation, I focus on two linguistic features appearing in the CG of the Armenian bilingual speakers. The data analysed here were collected after long-term fieldwork in Cyprus. Interviews with speakers of different ages, but mainly older speakers, were recorded on a mini-disc player. Around 50 speakers were recorded in total; however, not all of them were actually born in Cyprus. For the purposes of this presentation, data from interviews with five different speakers, males and females, were transcribed and analysed.

The two features analysed here are concerned with the behaviour of the CG definite article - *o* (masculine; /o/), *η* (feminine /i/), *το* (neuter /to/) - and the grammatical gender - masculine, feminine and neuter - in the CG of the Armenian speakers. Concerning the definite article, it is examined why there are examples found in the speech of the Armenians where the definite article is absent, whereas it is obligatory to appear, that is, in the environment where there should be a definite article there is \emptyset (zero) article. For instance:

1. / \emptyset kiri@a mu traÄuDa@ me@sto xoroDi@A/ (male speaker, 77 years old).

(\emptyset My lady mine sings in the church choir.)

In this example, whereas it is obligatory to have a definite article preceding the NP *kiri@a*, we have instead a \emptyset element. The aim of this analysis is to investigate the reasons of this phenomenon, that is, whether this phenomenon is due to language contact and, thus, is a case transfer features from the Armenian linguistic system into CG or whether the reason for this relates to a second language acquisition process and/or limitation.

As far as the CG grammatical gender is concerned, it is examined whether there is a pattern concerning the reasons where and why the Armenian speakers are producing the wrong grammatical gender for a specific NP or an AP. For instance:

2. /sto te@los ete@lios en to po@lemon eÄe@mosen i aÄora@ me embo@re@vmata/

(=At the end, the war finished and the marked was filled with merchandise).

In this example the definite article /to/ preceding the NP /po@lemon/ disagrees in gender with the noun. The noun here is masculine in gender, whereas the article accompanying it is neuter in gender. Again, this feature is examined under both the light of language contact studies and SLA studies as well. I attempt to give an explanation why the acquisition of

grammatical gender poses such a problem for Armenian speakers and for L2 learners in general.

Praparat Khamkhong

Mixing, levelling, simplification and reallocation: Dialect contact in the Ban Khlong-Sathon speech community, Thailand.

This paper studies the linguistic variability in the Ban Khlong-Sathon (BKS) speech community, a newly established village in Thailand. It takes into consideration the age group and birthplace of the speakers. The community under study is a clear example of a dialect contact community and a new town, settled about 40 years ago. Its population consists of people from various places speaking different regional dialects. This study is based on the diachronic approach using the inhabitants' casual speech between friends. The informants are divided into three age groups: old, middle-aged and young generations. The results are analysed and interpreted within the dialect contact and new dialect formation theoretical framework. It is assumed that the dialect contact processes as proposed in Trudgill (1986) must have taken or have been taking place in the speech community. That is, the process of koineisation: mixing, levelling, simplification and reallocation, should have occurred. Moreover the principles of koineisation proposed by Kerswill and Williams (1992 & 2000) could also be used to predict the outcome of dialect contact in the speech community. In short, the study aims to find out whether the speech community undergoes the process of koineisation; if it does, which processes are found and at which stage of koineisation it currently is in. The study also attempts to explore which principles of koineisation are at work in BKS speech community. The study investigates four variables in the BKS speech community: the negator variable, the (r) variable, the clusters, and the diphthong (ue) variable. It finds that there are two variants of the negator: [mai] and [bor]. The negators [mai] and [bor] have gone through the process of levelling and reallocation. Although there is an increase in use of [bor], [mai] is not levelled out. The two forms are refunctionalised. [mai] is used in a more formal context while [bor] in a more casual one. The (r) variable has three variants: [r], [l], and [h]. These variants have also undergone the process of levelling and focusing. The [r], [l], and [h] are competing, leading to the reduction of [r] and [h], and the adoption of [l], because [l] is the majority variant. In terms of clusters, the (r) and (l) clusters have undergone the cluster dropping change, which involves the deletion of the second consonant of the clusters. The (w) cluster is the only cluster that is adopted into the speech community. For the diphthong (ue), it has [ue] and [ia] as its variants. [ia] is levelled out, leaving [ue] to be the sole survivor. The disappearance of [ia] comes from the fact that it is highly restricted, marked and stereotyped.

Dave Sayers



Mockery, oppression, and solidarity - The sociolinguistics of humour.

With language we organize the world and fit patterns around it. To communicate efficiently, we use linguistic conventions and connotations which allow sentences to communicate more than the sums of their parts. An example is an idiom such as "Time is money", whose meaning is understood via the implicit reference to gainful employment - the meaning of this ellipsis is a compaction of a larger expression. This example

demonstrates the possibility of communicating many times faster than if we interpreted every linguistic construction on the value of individual words.

These conventions create expectancies on which we depend. It toys with the expectancies created by convention, and shows the susceptibility and fragility of language. Ostensibly, humour makes us laugh, but by breaking and disrupting convention, it battles the mediocrity of a predictable world, allowing the mind some space to re-interpret its surroundings. Humour is a means of disrupting linguistic order within certain boundaries; as such it is a conformist's form of non-conformity.

This paper will discuss the linguistic machinery behind linguistic and extra-linguistic frivolity: how it works, how it obeys convention itself, how we 'understand' the transgression from convention, and why this is funny. This will lead onto the social aspect of humour, its social functions, and its place in human interaction; also how it can establish dominance, subservience, empathy, camaraderie and so on.

Concerning definition, in examining humour I have find a common thread of incongruity; that is, the contrast between what is expected and what is delivered, and the clash of two very different worlds. If this is captured in a neat package and transmitted with words, it is a joke. If not, it is no less funny; this definition unites linguistic and situational comedy.

Manuel Camacho



Evaluation strategies on narratives about bullfighting.

Narratives are present in the everyday social interaction, and all individuals have stories to tell; thus, narratives represent an important source of linguistic knowledge. In this sense, the community of aficionados to bullfighting has proved to be extremely prolific at narrating stories for membership development, for mastership showing, for institutional-memory maintenance, and many other purposes.

This paper reports on preliminary findings obtained through a first exploration of a series of narratives (11 narratives so far) told by aficionados to bullfighting. It basically is a reconnaissance of the structural possibilities the latest put in practice when recounting either first or third person experiences. For the purpose of the current talk, I will be discussing three different narratives where the relevance of the story, the making sense of the experience recounted, and the narrators' intentions are highlighted by different evaluation devices. Such narratives were not elicited but came out in natural conversations; the three speakers play important roles in the bullfighting environment, and that situation becomes a crucial element in that the individual roles are projected linguistically by the attitude they adopt when evaluating objects, people or facts. A theoretical basis is formed by Labov & Waletzki (1967), Labov (1972, 1997), Polanyi (1985), Linde (1986), and Georgakopoulou & Goutsos (1997).

Mona Al-Qooz



Dialectal convergence in Manama, Bahrain: Shia towards Sunni dialect?

This paper is a report of general elements of convergence observed in a data collected over a period of a month for my preliminary study of my PhD thesis aiming to investigate dialectal convergence in the capital city of Bahrain, Manama.

Within the linguistic context of Bahrain, sect-dialect correlation is an important and a day-to-day living fact. There are mainly two religious sects among the Bahraini nationals: (1) the Sunni community comprising at present 30% of the native population whose members are mostly Arabs who came to Bahrain in the 18th century and during subsequent years. The Ruling Family of Bahrain, the Al-Khalifa, is in this group. The Sunni community, however, also includes a large number of Huwala Arabs who profess Arab descent but whose grandparents were in fact once resident on the Persian littoral. (2) the Shia community - also known as the Baharna - (70% of the native population) who are said to be descended from Arabs taken by Nebuchadnezzar into Iraq, who later fled from that country and settled in Bahrain.

These two sectarian communities were reported to have segregated themselves geographically with the Shia community living in villages and the Sunnis in urban centres. Apparently, this geographical segregation has resulted in conspicuous dialectal variation at all linguistic levels: phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical. However, this geographical segregation is found to be less prominent at present time as the Shia community lives in most, if not all, city centres with varying density allowing for more day-to-day dialect contact situations.

The project as a whole is an attempt to take findings obtained by Al-Tajer (1981) in his synchronic analysis of the Baharna dialect, and Hole's (1987) study of the motivations and mechanisms of dialectal change in Bahrain one stage further through investigating elements of dialectal convergence resulting from day-to-day contact among speakers of both dialects in the Capital City, Manama. The data as a whole seems to support Hole's claims that certain degree of dialectal convergence of the Shia dialect towards the Sunni dialect is to take place.

This presentation specifically reports a selection of Shia dialectal elements (phonological, morphological and lexical) that are clearly undergoing change and are thus apparently being replaced by Sunni elements. It also reports those Shia elements that seem to be resisting change in the speech of seven female Shia speakers of different age groups (60s, 40s, 30s, 19, 13, 12, 12).

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Andromahi Koufogiorgou

Ethnicity, identity and language: The case of the Vlachs/Aromanians of Metsovo.

This paper investigates the relationship between language, ethnicity and identity in Metsovo, Greece. The data were obtained from a large-scale sociolinguistic research (328 speakers) in Metsovo, a village, largely bilingual in Greek and Vlach/Aromanian. The data have been subjected to quantitative (SPSS) and qualitative analyses. The qualitative analyses are based on long interviews with representative members of the community as well as on observations and participant observations.

The issue of identity and ethnicity of Vlachs/Aromanians is very complex, as they remain one of the ethnologically, linguistically and historically puzzling cases of the Balkan area. The link between language and identity is an area of study fraught with controversy. In order to look into the issue I investigate the characteristics that the Vlachs of Metsovo demonstrate and compare them with various definitions of “ethnicity” and “ethnic group”. I base my argumentation on elements of the definitions given by Ross, Allardt, Barth and Ballibar. A journey through the history and events that have played an important role in the formation of Vlach identity over time, an investigation of the social and economic organization of the community and an examination of the surrounding environment and socio-political and economic situation in Greece assist us in attempting to answer the question “are we justified to characterize this population as an “ethnic group” or “ethnic minority”?”.

Within the framework of sociolinguistic theory and on the basis of my data analysis, I explore what constitutes the Vlach identity in Metsovo, its relationship with the Vlach language and the form that this relationship takes at this crucial point in time, where the language is experiencing shift. Linguistic distinctiveness appears to be downplayed in the context of language shift. I will also show how the Vlachs of Metsovo use language to construct their identity, and how terminal speakers of Vlach negotiate a fluid identity, on the borderline of the two worlds they are members of, through a usage of Vlach anchored in a metalinguistic-metacommunicative frame.

The case under discussion argues for the fluidity, dynamic character and multidimensionality of identities, and suggests that markers signaling certain identities can be circumstantial and resorted to as needed.

Michelle Straw

Variation and contact in Ipswich: An acoustic profile of word medial (t).

This paper presents ongoing work which examines variation in the phonetic realisation of (t) for two ethnic groups in Ipswich. Interview data were collected for 4 Anglos and 4 Barbadians: each group composed equally of males and females from two age groups. An average of 28 tokens were analysed per speaker.

Several claims have been made about the variable (t):

- (t)-glottalling is widely becoming the most frequent realisation for many urban British varieties of English (Williams and Kerswill 1999, Tollfree 1999, Milroy et al 1994, Stuart-Smith 1999).

- (t)-glottalling in word medial intervocalic position is reported to be the most salient and stigmatised environment and the last environment for diffusion - the Diffusion Pattern (Mathisen 1999, Stuart Smith 1999, Trudgill 1999, Tollfree 1999).
- In England, London is generally considered to be the main source of diffusion for English and Welsh varieties (Wells 1982, Williams and Kerswill 1999, Mees and Collins 1999) but also Norwich is cited as a potential source of diffusion (Trudgill 1999).
- (t)-glottalling is a stereotypical feature of Barbadian Island English but is absent from other Caribbean English varieties (Wells 1982, Roberts 1988, Blake 1994).

Ipswich lies between Norwich (45 miles) and London (77 miles). We would expect that (t)-glottalling intervocalically would be the least favouring environment for Ipswich speakers, given the town's proximity to the two sources of diffusion cited above. However we have previously reported for word finally at least, that the Ipswich pattern differs from the general Diffusion Pattern. In addition we have reported that Barbadians do not have the Ipswich pattern, but neither do they have the Diffusion Pattern (Straw and Patrick 2003).

This paper employs instrumental techniques together with quantitative and qualitative analyses to identify and compare the variants of word medial (t) for both Ipswich Anglos and Barbadians. It addresses the following questions:

- What is the distribution of variants for the variable (t) in this environment for the two ethnic groups?
- How far has t-glottalling progressed word medially for Ipswich Anglo speakers and is word medial intervocalic the least favouring environment?
- Is there evidence of acquisition of the local Ipswich pattern by Barbadian immigrants?

Hanadi Ismail



Sociolinguistic analysis of (h) in the dialect of Damascus City

This paper is based on the preliminary analysis of data collected from two neighbourhoods in the city of Damascus. The study aims to investigate current trends of linguistic variation and change in the city's dialect, within the framework of variationist theory.

The data show that the third person singular feminine pronominal suffix (ha) and the third person plural (feminine and masculine) pronominal suffix (hon) are realized as: [ha], [ja], [wa], [Oa] for the singular suffix, and as [hon], [jon], [won], [Oon] for the plural suffix as in: [maSSa:ha] 'he walked her', [x«dija] 'take it'; [farfaduwa] 'they spread it' and [/«sma] 'her name'. The third person plural pronominal suffix (hon) follows the same pattern as in (ha). The data also show that in the h-zero vowel form, the glide is determined by the quality of the preceding vowel, hence a palatal glide follows a high front vowel, whereas a high back rounded vowel is followed by a labial glide.

Two questions will be raised here:

1. Is the /h/ actually part of these suffixes and hence its absence in certain environments was a case of h-dropping in the traditional dialect, or is it a case of h-epenthesis?
2. What is the sociolinguistic profile of the innovative speakers, and what patterns can be deduced about linguistic variation in the city's dialect?