“The Kantō-Echigo Divide”

ABE Seiya

Japanese dialects reveal several outstanding patterns of their own distribution. Hitherto well-known patterns are (a) peripheral distributions covering both eastern and western Japan, (b) patterns of distribution only observable in western Japan, (c) patterns of distribution only observable in eastern Japan, and (d) distribution patterns showing the East-West Contrast, divided by the Itoigawa-Hamanako Line.

The present writer pointed out (Abe 1989, 1991) that we can observe another outstanding dialect distribution, which might be termed as “three peripheral distributions”.

The East-West Contrast, divided by Itoigawa-Hamanako Divide, corresponds to the geographical boundary line at Fossa Magna. However, our recent study revealed that there are other important boundary lines which divide Japan into two areas.

These boundary lines run along the line connecting the Kanto area and Echigo in the Niigata prefecture. These boundary lines are shown in the following dialect map:

These boundary lines (Kanto-Echigo lines) share some common characteristics. The writer is planning to make more detailed analyses and observations of this problem and its relationship to the research done by other scholars. Furthermore, the writer would like to compare this new theory of his with the established view of Itoigawa-Hamanako Divide, and to consider this theory through a historical perspective.

This series of maps of dialects was compiled as a continuation to the book of maps by Abe (1989) and also Abe (1997). Broad boundary lines and English explanations are newly added in this latest version.

(Notes)
(1) The present writer (Abe 1997) advocated a hypothesis which has the highest probability from a historical perspective. This hypothesis is explained in easier and clearer terms in his article entitled “Multiple aspects of dialects in Japan from the Standpoint of Linguistic Geography” (Several strata in the formation of Japanese dialects)
An alternative demarcation in Japanese dialects.
もう一つの東西対立境界線、関東・越後線群。
The Distinction between [ji] and [su] [OOISHI·UEMURA(1975)] from S E L

1 no distinction, same as [sY]
2 no distinction, same as [su]
3 a distinction exists, but the centralized vowels [Y] or [U] are used
(/si/ ≈ [sY], /su/ ≈ [su])

The Distribution of Voiced Pronunciation and Nasalized Pronunciation of Consonants [OOISHI·UEMURA(1975)] from S E L

1 used as voiced [k], [t], [tf], [ts] between vowels
2 used as voiced [k] between vowels
(The rest is omitted (all others are nasalised).)

出典：「方言と標準語－日本方言学概説」(1975)による。
The Distribution of Japanese Phoneme Types [by KINDAICHI(1953)] from S E L

図2 音声分布図

- 西日本方言：URA-Japan type (A)
- と の間の西部：the intermediate type between A and B
- と の間の東部：OMOTE-Japan type (B)
- と の間の中部：the intermediate type between B and C
- 崖型方言：SATSUGUU-type (C)

出典：「日本の方言」(1953) による。

The Distribution of Japanese Accent Types [by HIRAYAMA(1980)] from S E L

図5 アクセント分布図

- Tokyo type
  - 東京式
- Keihan type
  - 京阪式
- No-pattern type
  - 無型アクセント
- Kagoshima type
  - 鹿児島型

出典：平山朋男「全日本アクセント分布図」(「語語学大辞典」1980 付録) による。
もう一つの東西対立境界線「関東・越後線群」。

The Distinction between [i] and [e] [KATO(1986), revised map of KATO(1975)]

The Division of Japanese Dialects from the viewpoint of ‘Honourifics’ [KATO(1977)]

1 used for in-groups as well as out-groups
2 same as above, except for a small number of “Keigo” expressions.
3 used exclusively for out-groups
4 same as above, except for a small number of “Keigo” expressions.
5 only “Teineigo” (polite expressions) used
6 no use

1 身内尊敬表現を持つ方言域
2 (同上，ただしあまり敬語がない)
3 他者尊敬表現方言域
4 (同上，ただしあまり敬語がない)
5 丁寧表現のみの方言域
6 無敬語方言域

図 9 敬語による区画（加藤正信）
昭和48年『敬語講座』6 により作図
図7. 本時期の50名圏

A area（the area of the words in 8c.）

A. JODAT（OLD=8C） JAPANESE AREA

Areas where over 50% of the Prefecture use These Words as Common Japanese [INOUE,1990]
SEVERAL STRATA IN THE HISTORICAL FORMATION OF JAPANESE DIALECTS