

Major Syntactic Differences between Sakhalin and Hokkaido Dialects of Ainu

Hiroshi Nakagawa
Chiba University

Several differences between Sakhalin and Hokkaido dialects of Ainu, phonologically, lexically and syntactically, hitherto have been pointed out. From syntactic viewpoint, one of the biggest differences seems to be the existence of “gerund”, as Kyoko Murasaki calls it, in Sakhalin dialects, which is formed with a suffix $-hV$ (V =vowel) attached to verbs. Mashiho Chiri explained this form as a special personal form of verbs, not referring to its nominal feature. I think this form is diachronically connected to a formal noun or a complementizer hi in Hokkaido dialects. The major difference between $-hV$ and hi is that the latter is invariant of its form, while the former changes its V according to the last vowel of the verb stem, so that the former shows more dependent characteristics to the verb than Hokkaido hi . The default form of $-hV$, however, is estimated as $-hi$, that is the same form of Hokkaido hi . Adding to it, the position of $-hV$ is after personal and plural suffixes, so that we cannot regard it as a derivational affix. Murasaki herself explained it in the section of formal noun. Therefore, we had better treat it as not a suffix but a clitics like Hokkaido hi . Moreover, syntactically they show closely resemble functions.

Hi changes a sentence (a clause) into a noun phrase and can be translated “that, where or when”. Similarly, the “gerund” in Sakhalin dialects does not simply nominalize verbs into nouns, but changes the forms of verbs with personal affixes (that is, with its subject and object) into noun phrases. In other words, both of them don’t nominalize the conceptual notion of verb itself, but the events connected to a concrete person, place and time. This concreteness is the shared function between them.

In $-hV$ Chiri had included also the sentence final form $-hVV$, which indicates interrogation or emphasis of the sentence meaning. Murasaki regards this form different from $-hV$ and categorizes the former as a “final particle”, but $-hVV$ changes its V s according to the final vowel of preceding verb like as $-hV$, and the $-hV$ ’s function as the nominalizer can be seen also in $-hVV$.

In Hokkaido dialects the formal nouns *ruwe*, *siri*, *hawe*, *humi* are used to make noun phrases from sentences and to make interrogative or exclamatory sentences when they

are placed at the sentence final position, too. It can be recognized as parallel functions with *-hV* and *-hVV*. On the other hand, in Hokkaido dialects, at the sentence final position *hi* is rather restricted to such cases as, *hawean hawe ene a hi.* ” (he) said as follows.”.

In Sakhalin dialects, too, we can find *ruwehe(ruuhe)*, *sirihi*, *hawehe* and *humih* as formal nouns, but it doesn't seem that they are used at the sentence final position. Therefore, we might think Sakhalin *-hVV* form fulfills the Hokkaido *ruwe* and others' function at that position. In recent years these sentence final forms (*ruwe* etc.) in Hokkaido dialects have been studied earnestly as evidentiality markers but in Sakhalin dialects this usage seems to be rather restricted. This might be the biggest syntactic difference between them.