

## Workshop 1

### Innovative Dialects: The Spoken (Social/Regional) Dialects in Media

Date: 2017.08.07 (Mon) 14:30-17:00

Organizers: Yoshiyuki Asahi, Rebecca Starr, Mie Hiramoto

1. Rebecca Starr: *Investigating the suprasegmental features of ASMR, a new pan-regional, cross-linguistic register.*
2. Rika Ito : *You used dialect!: The representation of Hokkaido dialect in a Japanese anime, Silver Spoon.*
3. Mie Hiramoto, Yoshiyuki Asahi : *[V + ~te ageru] in instructor speech: Polite register as a social dialect in YouTube tutorial videos.*
4. Cindi SturtzSreetharan : *Representing dialect: Semiotic partials, saliency, and masculinity.*
5. Momoko Nakamura ( Discussant ).

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### **Abstract:**

This special session is interested in investigating the presentation of regional dialects and sociolects in contemporary media data such as YouTube videos, TV programs, and films. Specifically, these papers will investigate how regional features are recruited to construct authenticity in media, and how media allows for the creation and circulation of pan-regional styles and registers.

Dialects today do not just belong to a specific group of speakers in a specific region or social class; rather dialectal features work as linguistic repertoire for all speakers to project different personas in different social situations. From viewpoints of mediation and mediatization, such dialectal features work very well when indexing context-specific personas or figures of personhood (Agha 2007). For this reason, dialectal features such as voice quality, phonetic or morpho-syntactic features, or lexical features associated with specific regions or social classes are easily represented in media to index assumed attributes of media figures (Starr 2015).

In this special session, we present how a wide range of different sociolinguistic features are employed in linguistic repertoires appearing in different types of recent media; the personas created range from the idealized figures of the cooking and gardening instructor or the ASMR-tist, to the otherized figures of Hokkaido and Kansai natives. Our analyses will highlight the representation of both the regional and the aregional in mediatized language.

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## Abstracts

### **Investigating the suprasegmental features of ASMR: a new pan-regional, cross-linguistic register**

**Rebecca Lurie Starr (National University of Singapore)**

Recent scholarship on indexical meaning and embodiment in sociolinguistics has emphasized that iconic relationships between features of the human voice and their associated social meanings are created “only through ideological processes” rather than being “innate biological fact” (Bucholtz & Hall 2016). While it is inarguable that much of indexical meaning in language is socially constructed, this line of discourse in sociolinguistic theory overlooks evidence from neuroscience that certain aspects of human perception of the voice are, in fact, inherent physiological responses. One notable set of responses in this class are those that result from the brain’s broad tendency to mirror perceived stimuli (see Rizzolatti et al. 2008). Investigating how these physiological factors interact with ideological processes serves to deepen our understanding of the construction of social meaning.

The role of inherent physiological response in the perception of voices is highlighted in the recently-recognized sensory phenomenon of Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR), in which individuals experience a pleasant tingling sensation when exposed to certain stimuli, including particular voice qualities (Barratt & Davis 2015). Since 2011, a novel genre of performance that intentionally induces ASMR has developed on the YouTube video-sharing platform; these videos provide a range of sensory stimuli to trigger ASMR in viewers. One of the intriguing aspects of this genre is the pan-regional, cross-linguistic nature of the virtual community of practice surrounding it. The present analysis contrasts the ASMR and non-ASMR-style performances of speakers of English, French, Spanish, Russian, Korean, Mandarin, and Japanese in order to investigate to what extent these speakers are converging on a limited set of ASMR performance registers, how these registers may be characterized in terms of their suprasegmental features, and why this phenomenon is occurring pan-regionally. I will argue that a range of both ideological and physiological factors underlie ASMR performance.

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## You used dialect!: The representation of Hokkaido dialect in a Japanese anime, *Silver Spoon*

Rika Ito (St. Olaf College)

While dialect use is stigmatized under the standard language policy enforced in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Yi 1996; Sibata 1999), new meanings are emerging due to recent “dialect boom” (NINJAL 2006). Inoue and his associates (2006) report young Tokyonians’ incorporation of various dialect features (*Namara ii ya nai ka* “Isn’t it very good?” combining Hokkaido and Osaka dialects) for indexing cuteness, fun, and humor. Tanaka (2011) calls this *hōgen kosupure* (“dialect costume play”). Contrary to this innovation, the research on dialect usage in *anime*/TV dramas shows biased representation of dialects/users and reproduction of hierarchical relationship among varieties of Japanese dialects/users (Hiramoto 2009; Occhi et al. 2010). Is there any trace of this innovation in recent media representation?

This paper examines the representation of Hokkaido dialect in a Japanese TV anime series, *Silver Spoon*. It focuses on the range of linguistic features, the character roles, and metalinguistic comments to assess indexical meanings attached to the dialect. Created by a Hokkaido native, this story situates in eastern Hokkaido with all characters from the region, except the main character, Yuugo Hachiken, a high school student from *Sapporo*. Hokkaido dialect is chosen since previous perceptual and attitudinal studies show that Hokkaido dialect tends to be associated with standard by both locals and non-locals (Long 1999; Tanaka et al. 2016).

The preliminary analysis shows that dialect features are used by various characters but rather sporadically. Local older male characters use dialect most while local young female characters least. The main character, Yuugo, did not use the dialect at all. In one episode, Aki Mikage, Yuugo’s romantic interests, used a local sentence-ending expression, *~ssho* “right?” which triggered Yuugo’s metalinguistic comment—“You used dialect!” Aki was hugely embarrassed. This suggests that even Hokkaido dialect may trigger dialect complex despite its association with standard.

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**[V + ~te ageru] in instructor speech:  
Polite register as a social dialect in YouTube tutorial videos**

**Mie Hiramoto (National University of Singapore)  
Yoshiyuki Asahi (National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics)**

This study investigates a semi-formal register of Japanese that we call “instructional speech”—a speech register used by those providing lessons and tutorials in lifestyle and hobby-related topics. For this study, 60 YouTube gardening tutorial shows are analyzed; the videos feature 30 female and 30 male tutors, totaling 181 and 189 mins of data respectively.

In this register, the benefactive form ‘verb-*te-ageru*’, is used in a salient manner. The verb *ageru* ‘give’ functions here as a ‘giving verb’ and carries a meaning of ‘to give up for’ or ‘to do something for’ a recipient (e.g., Kuno 1978). The beneficiaries of the action in this construction are conventionally animate arguments, such as people or pets.

The data, however, show regular use of the verb-*te-ageru* form by both female and male instructors for unusual objects: namely, inanimate objects, such as plants and gardening equipment.

(1) Male, on replanting tomato trees (63,988 views, Uploaded on 4/18/2015)

<i>shichū-ni</i>	<i>ne,</i>	<i>tomato-o</i>	<i>shiba-tte-age-masu</i>
post-LOC	PRT	tomato-ACC	tie-TE-give-COP
‘to the post, you see, (I) tie the tomato plant (for its benefit)’			

(2) Female, on cutting a lavender flower (104,526 views, Uploaded on 3/28/2013)

<i>happa-no</i>	<i>shori-o</i>	<i>shi-te-age-te-kudasai</i>
leaves-GEN	trimming-ACC	do-TE-give-TE-polite imperative
‘please trim the leaves (for its wellbeing)’		

One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that the instructors, due to the specialized nature of their work, have anthropomorphized the objects used in these constructions. This explanation seems unlikely, however, in the semi-formal context of this register.

Based on our overall observation of instructional speech, we propose that this non-canonical verb-*te-ageru* usage originally became popular in female-dominated tutorial settings. Scholars have discussed politeness as demonstrated by women in the culinary domain regarding *nyōbo-kotoba* ‘the language of court ladies’ (Shiota & Takishima 2013; Tanaka & Yamashita 2009), and politeness hypercorrection (e.g., *o-sōsu* ‘POLITE-sauce’) (Inoue & Yamashita 2011). Following this line of work, we also hypothesize that verb-*te-ageru* use has spread into other tutorial domains over time, resulting in the

establishment of this innovative, hypercorrected feature in general instructional speech style.

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## Representing dialect: Semiotic partials, saliency, and masculinity

Cindi SturtzSreetharan (Arizona State University)

Kansai or Osaka dialect is recognized as one of the main languages of entertainment in Japan. It can be heard on a variety shows. Indeed, the well-known comedy troupe, Yoshimoto Kogyo, Ltd., is located in the heart of Osaka City. As such, the language of the Kansai region is consumed nationally and well received. Nonetheless, the actual linguistic features of the dialect that are used across these various programs are neither the same nor consistent. And yet, the language itself is identified as belonging to the Kansai region which allows further stereotypical identities to be indexed and drawn upon by producers, directors, actors, and audience.

In this paper, I examine the bits and pieces of non-standard Japanese language that are used in 3 televisual media: 1) *Soshite Chichi ni Naru*, a 2013 full length feature film featuring a dialect-speaking character; 2) *Massan* a 2015 NHK morning serial drama that takes place in Osaka in the Taishō period; and 3) *Junjō Otokogumi Gakuen* (Academy of Devotion: Boys Team), a variety program aired by Asahi Broadcasting filmed in the greater Kansai region. Each of these programs feature male protagonists (*Soshite Chichi ni Naru* and *Massan*) or are dominated by male characters (*Junjō Gakuen Otokogumi*). My specific focus will be to (1) identify the specific features of Osaka dialect used in these programs; and to (2) identify which features are considered most pragmatically salient (or enregistered). I propose that there are a set of core linguistic features which can be called upon to index an Osaka identity.