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DIALECT DICTIONARIES IN JAPAN: COMPARISON WITH ALCOVER'S DICTIONARY (DCVB)¹

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Abstract

Exhaustive dialect dictionaries in Japan are compared with Alcover's dictionary and the coincidences and divergences between them are explained. The first group of dialect dictionaries, edited by Misao Tojo, Masanaka Oiwa, and Munemasa Tokugawa, were compiled based on previous documents reporting dialects. The second group of dialect dictionaries, edited by Teruo Hirayama and Yoichi Fujiwara, were edited mostly based on fieldwork. Both types are useful to consider the geographical distributions and historical changes of Japanese dialects. Digitalization and publication of the data from these dictionaries and description of lexical systems in local dialects should be advanced to promote lexicography of Japanese dialects.

Keywords

dialect dictionaries, compilation from documents, fieldwork, digitalization, lexical systems

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**LOS DICCIONARIOS DIALECTALES EN JAPÓN:
UNA COMPARACIÓN CON EL DICCIONARIO DE ALCOVER (DCVB)**

Resumen

En este trabajo se comparan los diccionarios dialectales exhaustivos japoneses con el diccionario de Alcover (DCVB) y se explican las mutuas coincidencias y divergencias. Los diccionarios dialectales del primer grupo, editados por Misao Tojo, Masanaka Oiwa y Munemasa Tokugawa, fueron compilado sobre la base de documentos anteriores que reportaban dialectos. Los diccionarios dialectales del segundo grupo, editados por Teruo Hirayama y Yoichi Fujiwara, fueron recopilados principalmente basándose en trabajo de campo. Ambos tipos son útiles para tomar en consideración las distribuciones geográficas y los cambios históricos que los dialectos japoneses han experimentado. La digitalización y la publicación de los datos de estos diccionarios y la descripción de los sistemas léxicos en los dialectos locales deben desarrollarse para promover los estudios dialectales en los dialectos japoneses.

Palabras clave

diccionarios dialectales, compilación documental, trabajo de campo, digitalización, sistemas léxicos

1. Introduction

Fukushima (2013) introduced dialect lexicography in Japan and described its history and characteristics using five factors: 1. area that the dictionary covers, 2. data on which the dictionary was based, 3. content, 4. editors and audience, and 5. purpose. This paper compares dialect dictionaries in Japan with the Catalan dictionary edited by Antoni M. Alcover (1862-1932) and Francesc de B. Moll (1903-1991) and explains the coincidences and divergences between them. The dictionary, the *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear* (DCVB), hereafter also referred as “Alcover’s dictionary”, is a multi-dialect dictionary of Catalan which is “the most complete lexical repertory of spoken and literary forms of Catalan” (Perea 2004: 109). What dictionary of Japanese dialects is equivalent? There have been many local dialect dictionaries in Japan, so the following characteristics of DCVB should be used for judgment: the exhaustive dictionaries which cover all dialectal variation of its language. Therefore,

the dictionaries edited by Misao Tojo and the scholars in his next generation are compared.²

2. Misao Tojo and his dictionaries

Misao Tojo (1884-1966) was a scholar of Japanese language and dialects, who is called the “mother of Japanese dialectology”.³ He graduated from Tokyo Imperial University in 1910 and worked for the Language Research Commission at the Ministry of Education, conducting the second all-Japan dialectal research. The Commission had published *Phonetic Dialect Atlas* (1905) and *Grammatical Dialect Atlas* (1906), the first atlases of Japanese language. After the Commission was closed in 1913, he became assistant at Tokyo Imperial University and started to make cards by copying dialectal words from local dialect dictionaries from all over Japan. He dreamed of editing a dialect dictionary in the future, and as a first step, he published *Dialectal Materials of Southern Islands* (1922), which included materials of Ryukyuan dialects. However, all his collection of dialect dictionaries, cards, and linguistic maps were reduced into ashes because of the Kanto Great Earthquake in the same year. He moved to Shizuoka and Hiroshima and continued his collection. In 1934-1936, the dialectal data of 40,000 entries that Tojo offered was published as part of a comprehensive dictionary of Japanese language, *Unabridged Dictionary*, and it became the basis of the future dialect dictionary. In the meantime, his concern was on dialect demarcation rather than linguistic geography; thus he classified dialects based on the dialectal materials he had collected and demarcated dialect areas on a map.

In 1949, Masao Tojo completed a set of about five million cards of dialectal forms taken from dialect dictionaries all over Japan, which had been collected from approximately 500 dialect dictionaries and 350 dialectal materials including reports on

² Sato & Maeda (eds.) (2014) are consulted for the biographic information of the scholars described in this article.

³ Kunio Yanagita (1875-1962), who collected dialectal forms of snails from all over Japan, drew a linguistic map, and initiated linguistic geography in Japan, was called the “father of Japanese dialectology”.

local history. The first dialect dictionary covering the whole country, *Dialect Dictionary of All Japan*, was edited based on these cards and published in 1951. In this dictionary, the words are alphabetically ordered and followed by definition and names of local areas where the word is used. Another dialect dictionary, *Classified Dialect Dictionary with Standard Language Indexes*, was published in 1954. Words in standard Japanese are used as indexes and classified into 14 categories by concepts. Standard words are alphabetically ordered as an entry in each category and each entry lists dialectal words. The areas where the words are used are not listed because the entries of the first dictionary and its appendices include them. This dictionary also contained appendices of *Dialect Dictionary of All Japan*.

Tojo had a belief that a study of a language must include not only standard language but also dialects (Tojo 1951: 1). This belief is similar to Alcover's aim "to create a dictionary of all the Catalan varieties" so that it "would recover, order, classify, and preserve the heritage of the language" (Perea 2004: 110). Alcover travelled throughout the Catalan-speaking territories in 1900-1928 and obtained linguistic data based on questionnaires including oral information regarding phonetic, morphological, syntactic, lexical, folklore, and sociolinguistic aspects (Perea 2004: 111). On the other hand, Tojo was not a field researcher; he did not investigate dialects for himself but collected dialectal words from contemporary reports and past dialectal materials with the help of many co-operators. Alcover's dictionary includes songs and folklore, while Tojo's dictionaries do not include much vocabulary of animals, plants and folk customs because the pages of the dictionaries had a limit and he believed that such words should be collected by the experts in the field. Still, words related with everyday life such as names of clothing, food, and tools are included and some even with images (See Figure 1-3).



Figure 1. The image of *kera* 3): a kind of straw raincoat. Source: Tojo (1951: 312).

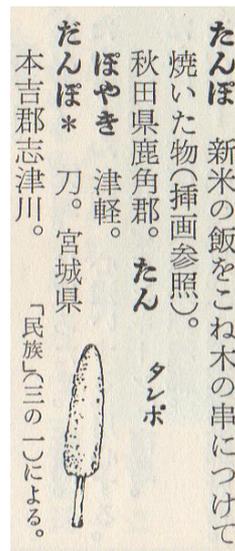


Figure 2. The image of *tampo*: a rice cake stuck around a wooden stick and baked. Source: Tojo (1954: 604).

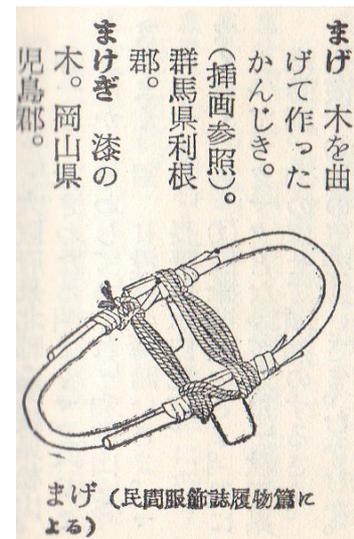


Figure 3. The image of *mage*: a crampon for a snowshoe. Source: Tojo (1951: 766).

3. Masanaka Oiwa and Munemasa Tokugawa

Masanaka Oiwa (1909-1972) helped Tojo to make his dictionaries. Oiwa continued his efforts to collect dialectal word cards, which were offered to make entries of dialectal words for *Unabridged Dictionary of Japanese Language* (1972-1976), 20 Vols. This dictionary is a comprehensive dictionary of Japanese language including historic, classical Japanese and contemporary Japanese. After Oiwa died, the dialectal data was enlarged and published as *Unabridged Dictionary of Japanese Dialects* (1989), 3 Vols. This dictionary is a compilation of all documents reporting dialects from the 17th century. Also, the dictionary has new features such as linguistic maps redrawn from *Linguistic Atlas of Japan* (LAJ), catalogues of phonological features in Japanese dialects, and standard language indexes made by computer. Munemasa Tokugawa (1930-1999), the supervisor and editor of this dictionary, had been in charge of planning, surveying, and editing LAJ. Tokugawa was one of the pioneers of linguistic geography and sociolinguistics in Japan.

4. Teruo Hirayama and Yoichi Fujiwara

Teruo Hirayama (1909-2005) clarified the accent⁴ systems of Japanese dialects based on fieldwork throughout Japan. He considered it difficult for dialect speakers to master standard Japanese accent, that is, Tokyo accent; thus, in order to promote learning to speak standard Japanese, he edited *Accent Dictionary of All Japan*. This dictionary includes summary of accent and pronunciation of Japanese dialects including Tokyo dialect, tables comparing accents of 14 localities, tables of accents of various word combinations, and maps of phonological differentiations all over Japan. The main part of the dictionary shows accent of three representative localities, Tokyo, Kyoto, and Kagoshima, under each entry word.

Hirayama also led his team to describe dialects of various areas and published comprehensive reports of dialects including phonology, accent, grammar and vocabulary. The compilation of all his studies was *Dictionary of Japanese Dialects* (1992-1994), 6 Vols. This dictionary was edited based on survey results at 72 locations in Japan. The vocabulary of each locality was surveyed on the list of basic vocabulary in following 18 fields: 1 Nature & Seasons 2 Animals 3 Plants 4 Human Body 5 Clothing 6 Food 7 Housing 8 Folklore 9 Games 10 Education 11 Human relationships 12 Society & Transportation 13 Behavior & Feelings 14 Time, Space & Amount 15 Occupations 16 Agriculture, Forestry & Fishery 17 Work & Business 18 Particles, Auxiliaries & Pronouns. The first chapters include an outline of characteristics of Japanese dialects and local dialects. Standard words are used as entries and dialectal forms collected by the field survey are listed under each entry. Based on this dictionary, a series of local dialect dictionaries for each prefecture entitled “Series Language of Japan” are being published.

Yoichi Fujiwara (1909-2007) was Tojo’s disciple but initiated his own school of dialectology. He made millions of dialectal records by traveling throughout Japan. He recorded dialectal sentences into paper strips and wrote dozens of books based on their analysis. Among them, he published *the Linguistic Atlas of the Seto Inland Sea*

⁴ In English dialectology, “accent” simply refers to pronunciation (Trudgill 2004: 7). In Japanese linguistics and dialectology, “accent” refers to pitch accent which varies according to areas.

(1974-1976) by surveying at 925 localities in and around the Seto Inland Sea; the informants at each locality were female from two different generations, an elderly woman and two junior high school students. Based on this linguistic atlas, he published *Dialect Dictionary of the Seto Inland Sea* (1988).

Finally, as the compilation of all his studies, Fujiwara published *Dialect Dictionary of Japanese Language* (1996-2002), 4 Vols. The main data of the dictionary was his own data from one-week surveys made at 57 localities in 1950-1972 and fieldwork made throughout Japan in 1930-1994. Cards made from local dialect dictionaries and historical dialect dictionaries were also used. The dictionary is unique in the following points. First, dialectal sentences are used as entry words as well as dialectal forms. Second, entry words are not only nouns, adjectives, or adverbs, but also particles or interjections. Third, example sentences he collected at various localities are listed to explain the differences of usage. Sometimes one entry uses a couple of pages and the patterns of usage are described.

Hirayama and Fujiwara's dictionaries are closer to Alcover's dictionary than those described in Section 2. & 3. because these are based on fieldwork. However, both groups of dictionaries include comprehensive descriptions of dialects or linguistic features.

5. Conclusion

Exhaustive dialect dictionaries in Japan have been compared with Alcover's dictionary. The first group of dialect dictionaries were edited by Misao Tojo, Masanaka Oiwa, and Munemasa Tokugawa. They were compiled based on previous documents reporting dialects. The second group of dialect dictionaries were edited by Teruo Hirayama and Yoichi Fujiwara. They were edited mostly based on fieldwork.⁵ Both types are useful to consider the geographical distributions and historical changes of

⁵ There were other scholars who planned to make a dialect dictionary of all Japan but could not complete it: Shoichi Tachibana (1902-1940) and Toso Miyara (1893-1964). Tachibana belonged to the first group, and Miyara the second group.

Japanese dialects. However, unlike Alcover's dictionary, most of them have not been digitalized except dialectal entries of *Unabridged Dictionary of Japanese Language*, which is now the second version and is being updated on the web. In order to make use of these academic heritages, digitalization and publication of the data should be seriously considered.

The vocabulary and grammar of local Japanese dialects have been described by various scholars, and these studies will be the foundation of future exhaustive Japan dialect dictionary. As early as 1978, Takesi Sibata edited a book entitled *Lexicon of Japanese Dialects*. He emphasized the importance of structural analysis in the study of lexicon and let scholars describe the system of kinship terms in various dialects as an example. The lexicon of a dialect includes standard forms as well as dialectal forms, and both types of forms consist of the lexical system. Because the lexicon of a language would be aggregates of the lexicon of dialects, we should start from description of lexical systems in local dialects in order to promote lexicology of Japanese dialects.

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