

BRIDGING EAST AND WEST: GROOTAERS, SIBATA AND BEYOND

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Abstract

Introduced here are the papers in the special issue of *Dialectologia* devoted to the special relationship between Japanese and Dutch-Flemish dialectology and further development of the discipline in the involved countries. The papers focus on the academic outcome influenced by the encounter of two prominent scholars and also parallel but independent development in later years.

PUENTE ENTRE EL ESTE Y EL OESTE: GROOTAERS, SIBATA Y MÁS ALLÁ

Resumen

Se presentan aquí los artículos del número especial de *Dialectologia* dedicado a dar cuenta de la relación especial que existe entre la dialectología japonesa y la holandesa-flamenca y el posterior desarrollo de la disciplina en los países involucrados. Los artículos se centran en los resultados académicos influidos por el encuentro de dos destacados académicos y también en el desarrollo paralelo pero independiente de la dialectología en años posteriores.

1. Introduction

This special issue of *Dialectologia* focuses on the special relationship between Japanese and Dutch-Flemish dialectology originating from the encounter of two

prominent scholars and further development of the discipline in the involved countries. Willem A. Grootaers, a Belgian dialectologist and Catholic priest, transmitted theory and method of linguistic geography used in Dutch dialectology to Japan,¹ and Takesi Sibata, a great Japanese dialectologist and sociolinguist, worked with him to establish linguistic geography in Japan.² Japanese and Dutch dialectology has developed in its own context since then.



Fig. 1 Willem A. Grootaers



Fig. 2 Takesi Sibata

The origin of this publication was the workshop held in Vilnius in July 2018 under the 9th Congress of the International Society of Dialectology and Geolinguistics. The coincidences and divergences between Japanese and Dutch dialectology were discussed in the year of 2018, the 100th anniversary of Sibata's birth. This issue aims to deepen the theme with contributions from the Netherlands, Belgium and Japan.

¹ Inoue, Fumio. First Dialectologists: Willem A. Grootaers (1911-1999), *Dialectologia*, 7 (2011), 167-174 <<http://www.publicacions.ub.edu/revistes/dialectologia7/>>.

² Fukushima, Chitsuko. First Dialectologists: Takesi Sibata (1918-2007), *Dialectologia*, 8 (2012), 175-181 <<http://www.publicacions.ub.edu/revistes/dialectologia8/>>.

2. The Papers

The papers published in this issue introduce the origin and development of Japanese and Dutch-Flemish dialectology with more focus on one of the countries.

Sawaki explains how linguistic geography was introduced to Japan, with the special focus on Grootaers's original contributions, namely the location-numbering system adapted in Japan and the making of symbol maps using stamps.

Fukushima describes the theory and method of Japanese dialectology established by Sibata after the encounter with Grootaers. Sibata's theory and method is both scientific and humanistic.

Onishi gives comments to Sawaki's and Fukushima's paper focusing on the relationship between the location numbering system and the humanities.

Inoue discusses quantitative method of dialectology developed in Dutch-Flemish and Japanese dialectology. The topics include glottogram, a technique born in Japan; perceptual dialectology, transplanted from Dutch dialectology and developed in Japan; and dialect classification and dialectometry, with the focus on railway distance.

Heeringa & Hinskens study the change of Dutch dialect area by comparing the data between old male speakers and young female speakers using statistical methods. They make most of systematically collected data and obtain the results based on an aggregate analysis. This highlights an eminent phase of the Flemish Dutch methodology.

Van Keymeulen, De Tier & Chambers describe the making of the dialect database aggregating three comprehensive thematically arranged dictionaries, which are the results of efforts by the father of Willem A. Grootaers. The structure of the database and the editorial problems are explained.

Finally, Kumagai describes two Japanese dialect researches related with Sibata and Grootaers. The S&K Network Method, originally proposed by Sibata, divides dialect areas objectively by using network of linguistic similarities. Another project Linguistic Atlas of Japan Database (LAJDB) aims to make all information of the Linguistic Atlas of Japan (LAJ) available on computer. LAJ is the first nation-wide linguistic atlas in Japan, produced by Sibata and Grootaers as keymen.

Titles

Motoei Sawaki, “Reverend Grootaers’s Contributions to Linguistic Geography in Japan”.

Chitsuko Fukushima, “Towards interlingual dialectology: Takesi Sibata”.

Takuichiro Onishi, “Basic Thoughts on Geolinguistics: A Response to the Papers by Sawaki and Fukushima”.

Fumio Inoue, “Common Developments of Japanese and Dutch-Flemish Dialectology: Computational Dialectology in Japan”.

Wilbert Heeringa & Frans Hinskens, “The change of Dutch dialect areas in apparent time”.

Jacques Van Keymeulen, Veronique De Tier & Sally Chambers, “The Dictionary of the Southern Dutch Dialects (DSDD): Designing a Virtual Research Environment for Digital Lexicological Research”.

Yasuo Kumagai, “Contact, Network, People and Geographical Space: Perspectives of S&K Network Method and Linguistic Atlas of Japan Database”.