4-21-2023

People's Perceptions of Language Variation, South Korea

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Abstract

The project was aimed at verifying the hypothesis "Do Subconscious Biases about Dialects Exist in South Korea?" It was set up based on a research method called perceptual dialectology, which examines people's judgments and perceptions of language variation. First, on an empty map of South Korea, I asked 6 participants to draw the boundaries around each part of the country where they believe people speak differently and write down any thoughts about each region's dialects. I looked at the collected data by dividing it into subjective representations and they attempt to describe grammatical features objectively.

PRESENTER: **Subin Jang**
INSTRUCTOR: **Gail Shuck**
CLASS: **LING 105 Language Myths**

INTRODUCTION

Abby Kaplan's
Women Talk More Than Men…And Other Myths about Language Explained

1. Definition of Dialect

"We use the word *dialect* to refer to an identifiable variety of a language" (Kaplan, p. 9)

2. Judgement about Others' Language Usage

Language Variation tends to be a source of conflict or argument between groups of people. It happens in every country.

HYPOTHESIS

"Do the Subconscious Biases about Dialects Exist?"

MAP ACTIVITY GUIDELINE
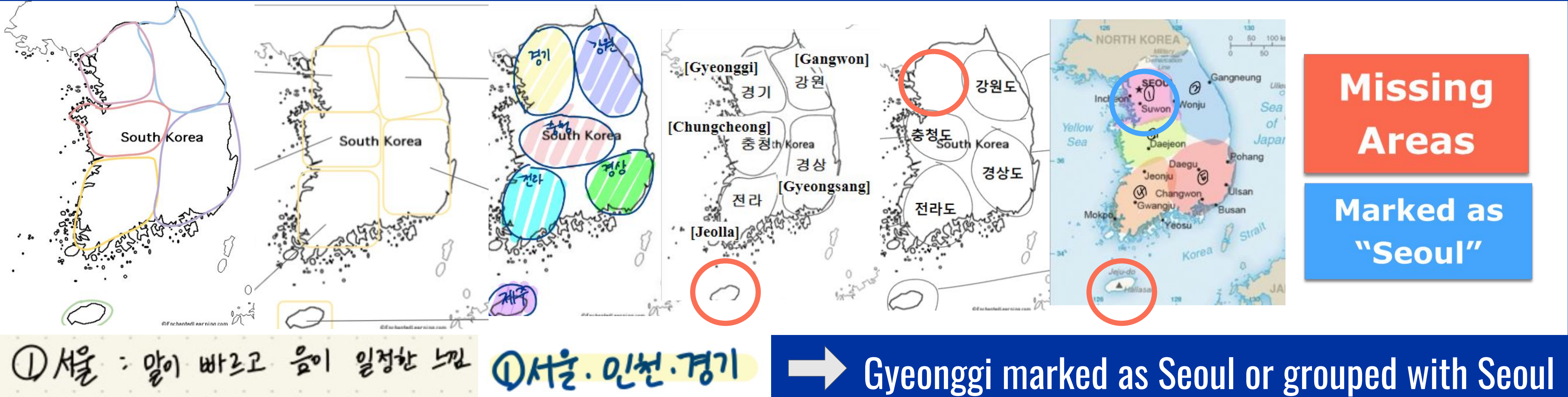
Part of Class Project
6 people did this activity for Korea.

1. Draw a boundary around each part of the country where you believe people speak differently.
2. Write down any thoughts about each region's dialects.
3. I translated their contributions into English
4. You can distinguish the participant's thoughts by fonts.

GREEN LABEL:

Grammatical features

RED LABEL:

Subjective expressions

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Map Data Analysis

1. Salient Regions - **Clear** and **Specific**.
2. Jeju and Gyeonggi was **ignored** in some maps.

Missing Areas

Marked as "Seoul"

➡ Gyeonggi marked as Seoul or grouped with Seoul

Gyeonggi-do

It has an image that the speed of words is generally appropriate and gentle.
It feels soft and friendly because it has low mountains and many rivers.
1. Pronounce o as u
2. Pronounce eo as eu
3. Pronounce a or eo as eh

It's the standard, but sometimes it feels like 'Seoul dialect'(?)

Seoul/Incheon/Gyeonggi
Standard and soft Image
Like a words used in the news

[Seoul]
Speedy and stable melody
Kind way of speaking

Gangwon-do

Gangwon-do: similar to the North Korea's accent, 'yo' or 'ya' is added at the end of the sentence
The dialect of Gangwon-do is similar to North Korean dialect in the north, Gyeongsang-do dialect in the south, and Gyeonggi-do/Chungcheong-do dialect in the west.

It's like a North Korean accent because the end of the sentence goes up and the accent is so high.

Gangwon
Strong and hard Image
This accent reminds us North Korea one

Gangwon-do dialect? Actually, I've never seen anyone who speaks in this dialect.

High tone
Strong and aggressive way of speaking

Jeolla-do

Jeolla-do: usually stretch the end of the word, 'ing' is added at the end of the sentence
'~haeya' , '~dangkke' , '~haje' at the end
'~ing' , '~nya' at the end of the sentence

Jeolla
There are so many 'Chuimsae' (Reaction words) and it's unique

Speedy and aggressive
It sounds like Chinese

[Jeolla] It's not as common as Gangwon-do dialect that feels similar to the dialect of the surrounding area. It is in somewhere between Chungcheong and Gyeongsang It's not too soft or too sharp.

Gyeongsang-do

Gyeongsang-do (with Busan): largest difference in the level of intonation, prefer short and simple sentence, tough and cool image

[Gyeongsang] It's the same coastal development terrain as Jeolla… There is a rumor that fisheries and iron industry have developed since ancient times, so the way of speaking sounds rough and aggressive. And I think it's the most prominent of all dialects.

Gyeongsang
Fast and strong
It shortens the pronunciation well (?)

They usually prefer short speaking form but have strong accent.

Gyeongsang-do people use a mixture of written and spoken languages.
'~na' , '~no' , '~ma' at the end

The most strong accent
A distinctive tone with other regions' accents
It sounds like Japanese

Chungcheong-do

Chungcheong-do: the most slow-paced dialect - people who has this dialect tend to look carefree

Slow. But actually I think it is not slow to speak, but rather to stretch the end of the sentence and tend to speak indirectly.
The magic word of Chungcheong-do: "Mueoveo?(What is it?)"

Chungcheong
'Yoo' at the end
Slow and soft
Familiar and relaxed image

Depending on the tone, you can use it when you're dumbfounded, surprised, or even happy. The end of speaking is soft : and kind
Slow and stretch the end word
It sounds relaxed because it sounds like it's stretching. Relaxed image

Jeju-do

Jeju-do: It is known to be the most difficult dialect to imitate because the form of the word itself is different so it is difficult to infer. I think it has exotic words and expressions that are difficult to even guess the meaning.
'~suga' , '~suggwa' at the end of the sentence

Jeju
'~Han? '~Gan.'
The most unique accent and words
Like an old Korean

RESULTS

Biased Perceptions
- Gyeonggi dialect is standard one like Seoul's.
- Some dialects get compared to other countries or neighboring regions.
- People who use Chungcheong dialect look carefree. They are associated with a farmer image.

Facts

- There is a grammatical difference between Gyeonggi and Seoul's dialects.
- Most South Korean have little chance to hear the North Korean accent in person.
- People who use Chungcheong dialect tend to elongated vowels.

CONCLUSION

"Yes, It Exist."

People used subjective expressions a lot when they judge dialects, even if grammatical features can be used to describe.

In my opinion, Jeju and Jeolla dialect don't much have biased perceptions compared to others, because they are the most difficult dialects to "mimic".

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