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.
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

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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INSTRUCTOR: Gail Shuck
CLASS: LING 105 Language Myths

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