

Sociolinguistic Representation of Code choice and Code-Switching in a Japanese TV Drama

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The aim of this paper is to examine representations of sociolinguistic differences in a Japanese TV drama in order to see how the protagonists' code choice and code-switching work as a means of negotiation for (re)constructing their identities, and to discuss how a new recognition of relationship between a regional dialect and the standard variety emerges through reinterpreting the social meaning of the varieties.

The TV drama to be analysed is '*Ama-chan*', broadcast in 2013 as a morning drama serial (*Asadora Drama*). The narrative is set in two places; a small fictitious fishing town in the Tohoku (Northeast) Region and Tokyo. Using the analytical frameworks of film (Androutsopoulos 2012) and written works (Shibuya 2015) from sociolinguistic perspectives, the act of choosing and switching codes done by the two young heroines, *Aki* and *Yui*, is analysed in qualitative and quantitative ways. *Aki*, who moves to the fishery town from Tokyo, starts using a 'fake' (not authentic) local dialect to style herself. On the other hand, *Yui* is an indigenous Tohoku girl but speaks the standard variety of Japanese exclusively due to her detachment from the town. Their extraordinary ways of code choice are the key to understanding the social significance of this drama after the disaster caused by the Great East Japan earthquake in 2011.

The results of the analysis show that the heroines' attitudes and behaviours toward their linguistic repertoires contribute not only the progress of the narrative, but also disclose social issues reflecting the relationship between Tokyo, the established centre of contemporary Japanese society, and other peripheral areas by re-contextualizing the social meaning of available codes.

And finally I suggest an improved framework for examining sociolinguistic variation in the media and the theoretical potentiality of investigating interaction between the media and the real world (Queen 2015).