

Workshop 4

Contrastive Geolinguistics

Date: 2017.08.10 (Thu) 13:30-17:30

Organizer: Takuichiro Onishi

1. Ray Iwata : *Introduction.*
2. Takuichiro Onishi : *Reconsideration of blending change.*
3. Akihiko Shibahara : *Dialect distribution and topography.*
4. Yuji Kawaguchi, Ray Iwata, Seiichi Nakai : *Item-based contrastive map: Potato in French, Chinese and Japanese.*
5. Takuichiro Onishi, Yuji Kawaguchi : *Problems of standardization: Japanese and French.*

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Abstract:

1. Background

In line with the traditional view of linguistic geography, the present workshop will investigate the mechanism of linguistic change and the relationship between linguistic change and geographical distribution. The contribution of J. Gilliéron and his followers should be re-evaluated: they proposed and practiced the method of reconstructing the history of each linguistic item and discovered various phenomena relating to linguistic change. However, interpreting a linguistic map is a tough target since there is no formula for interpretation which is comparable to sound correspondence in the comparative method. This is because linguistic change, especially lexical change, is governed by numerous non-mechanical factors, including extra-linguistic ones, and whether or not such factors get triggered depends on chance. While empirical evidence has been accumulated abundantly in this field, it is necessary to integrate the relevant data for making certain the interpretation. In this respect, recent developments in Chinese dialectology brought about fruitful data, which show mechanisms operating in lexical changes similar to those in European and Japanese languages. An idea of *contrastive geolinguistics* was conceived under this context.

2. Example

We utilize linguistic maps of three genetically unrelated languages: Japanese, Chinese and French. As a simple example, the case of homonymic collision is illustrated here. Three stages are distinguished as to the process of change.

(1) Condition or motivation

Ex. 1 French *coq* and *cat* (*gat*): regular sound change

Ex. 2 Japanese 'be scared' and 'be tired' (*kowai*): semantic change

Ex. 3 Chinese broad bean and soybean (*dadou*) : introduction of new species from outside (extralinguistic condition)

(2) Implementation

In each of the three examples, homonymic collision was likely to be triggered. It is unknown, however, how this status diffused over the given area.

(3) Outcome

In each of the three examples, homonymic collision was eventually avoided by the dialects forming a geographically complementary distribution.

3. Method

The goal of this study is to make a collection of contrastive maps, consisting of two types: phenomenon-based and item-based types. The former type does not look at the linguistic item per se, but rather focuses on such phenomena as folk-etymology, phonetic attraction, homonymic collision, word blending and analogy. In this way, it illustrates how the change was triggered and geographically implemented under a common factor. The latter type focuses on the outcome of change, and thus illustrates the parallel change which occurred to a specific item in the three languages.