

Accent, dialect, and language 1

September 12, 2016

Review

- Last week we talked about variables and variants.
 - Vowel height can be a variable, and \perp /o/ and \top /u/ can be variants.
- This variation is not constrained. It cannot be perfectly predicted by the environment.
 - The realizations of \sqsubset in 당근 and 자두 are completely predictable.
- However, it's also not totally free variation, either. It is not random.
 - We don't say “우징어” or “두서관”.
- The set of contexts in which \perp /o/ becomes \top /u/ is called the envelope of variation.
 - We notice that \perp /o/ is more likely to become \top /u/ when it's not at the beginning of a word, e.g. “나두”, “-하구요”, “그래두”
- The study of how variants pattern across speakers falls under both regional dialectology and social dialectology.

Motivation for variation

- Why does language variation exist? What motivates these differences between regional or social groups?
 - A desire to fit in with a group and show that you are different from others.
 - A desire to not do things that are looked down upon in a community.
- Take Korea for example.
 - When people from the south to up to Seoul, what happens to the way they speak?
 - What happens when people from Seoul move to the south?

Stereotypes and markers

- A linguistic **stereotype** is a feature of a dialect that speakers are widely aware of and frequently comment on. Stereotypes are what people typically use to describe or impersonate (or mock) the dialect.
- A linguistic **marker** (or **indicator**) is also a feature of a dialect, but one that speakers are less aware of and may not comment on.
- Were the examples we discussed in class last week *stereotypes* or *markers*?

How do we talk about variation?

- There are many different terms used to describe the way people talk. In English, the two most common terms are accent and dialect.
- **Accent** generally refers to variation in pronunciation only. There several common types of accents:
 - **Regional accent**: The speaker is a native speaker, but from a certain part of the country.
 - **Foreign accent**: The speaker is from a different country.
 - **Non-native accent**: The speaker is a native speaker of a different language.

How do we talk about variation?

- **Dialect** generally refers to more than just pronunciation, but it is also restricted to domestic, native speech.
- Talking about variation in English gets quite complicated:
 - Some native speakers have foreign accents.
 - But most people with foreign accents are non-native speakers.
 - Non-native speakers have foreign accents, and they usually have problems with their grammar, but we don't say they speak a dialect, and the term accent only refers to pronunciation.
- For these reasons, linguists like to use the word **variety**, which can refer to any distinctive form of language.

How do Koreans talk about variation?

- What words do Koreans use to talk about variation?
- How and why do these words differ from the words used to talk about variation in English?
- Are there any gaps in the terminology?

Homework

- Read Meyerhoff Ch. 3
- Try to read everything, but focus especially on pp. 31-32 and pp. 41-43.
- There will be a quiz on Monday, 9/19, covering the highlights of chapters 2 and 3.
- If you would like to get a head start, you may start reading O'Grady 2015.