About the final project

Final project: Choose one topic

1. **Language variation.** Come up with an hypothesis about language variation (region, age, gender, register, audience, etc.) and confirm it with your own data.

2. **Word in discourse.** Discuss the role of a linguistic item (such as “uh”, “well”, “you know”, “んー”, “やっぱ”, “-じゃん”) in discourse with your own data.

When dialects were a shame

In May 1964, a 19-year-old man from Akita Prefecture was arrested in Tokyo from fatal assault. Newspapers reported that his accent was being laughed at.
When dialects were a shame

A passage from Shiro Hattori (1960), a renowned Japanese linguist

方言が絶滅してうのが理想であることはいうまでもない [Needless to say, our ideal is that dialects go extinct.]

“Dialect card”

You have to carry this if you use a dialect in school. When you find someone else uses a dialect, you can pass it to him/her.

This was not forced by the central government; it was an effort of local people to catch up.

From “dialect complex” to “dialect prestige”

As almost everyone became able to communicate in Standard Japanese, people came to realize the value of dialects as a symbol of their identity and solidarity.

Dialects are now actively used as tourist resources too.

“Dialect cosplay”

Each dialect has its impression

The same person might use multiple dialects to obtain particular effects

Tohoku: rustic, warm, ..
Kyoto: cute, feminine, ..
Osaka: funny, stingy, ..
Kyushu: masculine, ..
Language variation in social class, ethnicity, and age

Social dialects

Dialects are most often defined by geographical areas, but dialects can also be defined by:

- Social class
- Ethnicity

Language can also vary across age.

We will discuss gender later this semester.

Social class

Labov’s experiment

“Where are the women’s shoes?”
“Fourth floor.”
“What did you say?”
“FOURTH FLOOR.”
(At the fourth floor) “Excuse me, what floor is this?”
“Fourth floor.”
Labov’s experiment

He collected data from 264 people in three department stores in NYC (Saks, Macy’s, and S. Klein)

Silent /h/ in West Yorkshire, England

-\textit{ing} and -\textit{in’} in NYC

Hypercorrection


Hypercorrection occurs when someone tries to use a standard or prestigious form and go too far.

“I really likes.." by a speaker by AAVE

カイベツ in Hokkaido

Hypercorrection also occurs when people try to use borrowed words.

デヴュー (debut)、ディアゴスティーニ (deAgostini)、パングラディッシュ (Bangladesh)、マスイーン (machine) etc.

Ethnicity

African American Vernacular English (AAVE)

It’s a girl name Shirley Jones live in Washington. ’most everybody on her street like her, ’cause she a nice girl. Shirley like a boy name Charles. But she keep away from him and Charles don’t hardly say nothing to her neither.
Characteristics of AAVE

Phonology

dis ‘this’, mouf ‘mouth’, bik ‘big’
tes ‘test’
Ca’ol ‘Carol’, inte’ested ‘interested’

Multiple negation

*He didn’t give me no food.* - “He didn’t give me (any) food.” or “He gave me no food.”

Is multiple negation illogical?

cf. *It ain nobody I can’t trust.* - “There is nobody I can’t trust.” (i.e. “I can trust everyone.”)

Multiple negation

AAVE be

*He sick today.*
The coffee cold.
She be late every day.
I see her when I bees on my way to school.

They usually be tired when they come home.

*They be tired right now.*

What does be/bees mean in AAVE?
Age and vernacular speech

Adolescents more often use non-standard, vernacular speech, probably because they have peer pressure not to conform to society's norms.

Middle-aged people are more responsible in the society, and they use fewer vernacular speech.

Retired people use vernacular forms again.

Standard vs. vernacular

Yesterday, I went to the store. I couldn’t find what I wanted. I was frustrated.

Dude, yesterday I went to this store and, man, I couldn’t find the shit I wanted anywhere, man, it sucked!

Reaction paper

Can you think of newest slang words in your language? Give an example and explain what it means.

ガン見, スルー, とりあま, 激おこ, バない, リア充, 普通に, 変くね? etc.