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Dialect Valorization and Language Shift in Northern Japan

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

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by

Edwin Keely Everhart

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Dialect Valorization and Language Shift

in Northern Japan

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Professor Paul V. Kroskrity, Chair

This paper employs the theoretical framework of language ideologies to dialect variation in the Tōhoku region of northern Japan. Based on pilot ethnography in Morioka City, Iwate Prefecture, this paper considers discourses of language endangerment and language shift in view of the distribution of symbolic capital and material capital, as well as local metalinguistic awareness. Covert prestige and overt prestige are theorized in terms of register and semiotic capital. Shame and stigma as tied to local language varieties are analyzed, and metalinguistic practices of dialect activism are discussed in terms of their role in language valorization and revalorization.

The thesis of Edwin Keely Everhart is approved.

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This thesis is dedicated to J. Thomas Rimer, whose stories of Japan first sparked my interest in Japanese language, history, and society, and whose keen insights and sheer joie de vivre have been an example to me ever since.

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Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Many linguists see the distinction between "a language" and "a dialect" as purely political, and not worthy of study. Since the 1970s, some scholars, both in formal and anthropologically-oriented linguistics have discarded both "language" and "dialect" in favor of the more general "language variety" (Hudson 1980:22, 30). Though sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists have called attention to the ideological mediation of language boundaries (Irvine & Gal 2000) and highlighted the connections between the relative valorization of speech and the marginalization of speakers (c.f. Labov 1973, Hill 1985, 1995, Rampton 2003), the social life of dialects have remained curiously unexplored within anthropology. Yet the ideological distinctions between languages and dialects do matter. For this reason I primarily engage with "dialect" as understood and felt by local people, rather than in professional linguistic terms. Local ideological distinctions change the way that ideological processes unfold, including standardization or revitalization. The distinction on the ground between "language" and "dialect" may make the difference between the extinction and the continued existence of any language variety.

This paper considers the relative status of standard and regional varieties of Japanese in Iwate Prefecture in terms of language ideologies (Silverstein 1979, 1985, Irvine 1989:255,

Kroskrity 1998, 2009, 2010) and their consequences for language change and language shift (Kulick 1992, Dorian 1998, Meek 2007, Kroskrity 2012). I argue, first, that differing ideological conceptions of what 'counts' as dialect among speakers in the Iwate prefecture of the Tōhoku region of northeastern Japan is a major factor contributing to the endangerment of local varieties. My pilot ethnographic research concentrated on meta-dialect activities and language ideologies, and in this paper I analyze local language activists' efforts at raising the status of endangered dialects of Japanese. I discuss the limits on these revalorization efforts in terms of asymmetrical distribution of capital, and asymmetrical awareness of dialectal differences, in the context of Iwate's ongoing economic and social marginalization in the country at large. In light of this case study, I argue that dialects warrant greater scholarly attention, especially with regard to ideologically-inflected processes like language endangerment and valorization. Importantly, these processes are not limited to named, standardized national languages. They extend to myriad dialect varieties as well. In her commentary on the politics of language endangerment, Jane Hill (2002) implies that the endangerment of "languages" is only one part of a much wider system of linguistic marginalization, and leaves the door open to more work on dialect:

> "[T]he shift to the exclusive use of world and/or regional languages by [marginalized] populations has generally brought no gain in symbolic capital because the varieties of languages like English, Spanish, and Russian that are spoken in marginalized groups are in turn stigmatized, just as were the tongues that have been abandoned" (Hill 2002:130).

Hill argues that people undergoing language shift are often leaping *out of the frying pan, and into the fire*. If scholars of language endangerment fail to consider processes at the level of dialect, they study the frying pan while ignoring the fire. If we pay attention to dialects, we will realize that the fire of linguistic marginalization is big enough to burn down the whole house.

Ethnographic context of this study

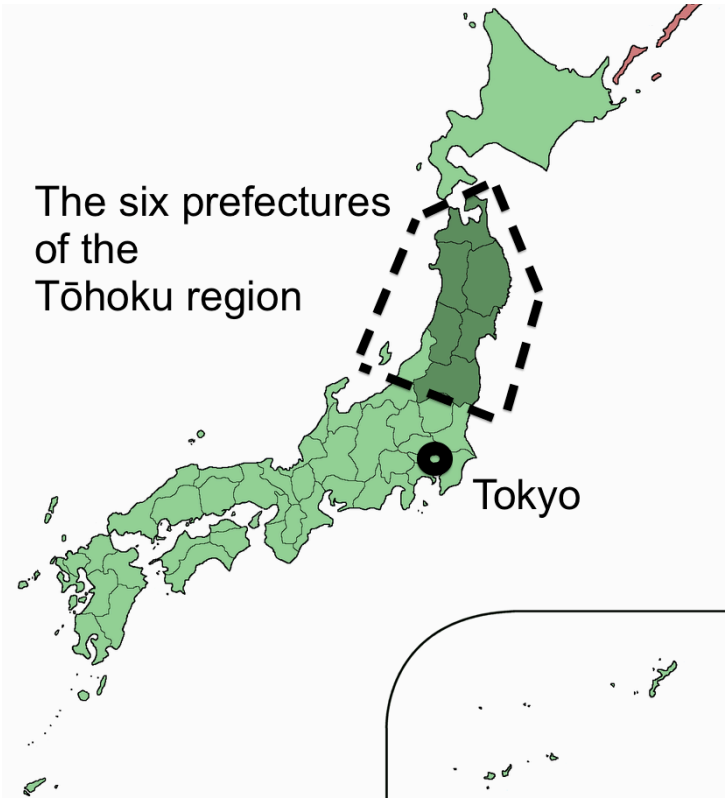

Figure 1: Map of Japan showing the canonical six prefectures of Tōhoku. Public domain image from Wikipedia.

Figure 2: Iwate in Tōhoku. Public domain image from Wikipedia.

Iwate is in the far north of the main Japanese island of Honshū. Historically an agricultural region, the main cities and remaining farmland are strung along the Kitakami river, which runs from north to south through the center of the prefecture. The nearest large city, and the only city in Tōhoku with a population of over one million and a subway system, is Sendai, in neighboring Miyagi Prefecture. Tokyo is over three hours south by bullet train. I conducted the research for this study primarily in Morioka, the capital and largest city with a population of 300,000, with supplementary work in Sendai and the coastal Iwate cities of Ōfunato and Miyako.

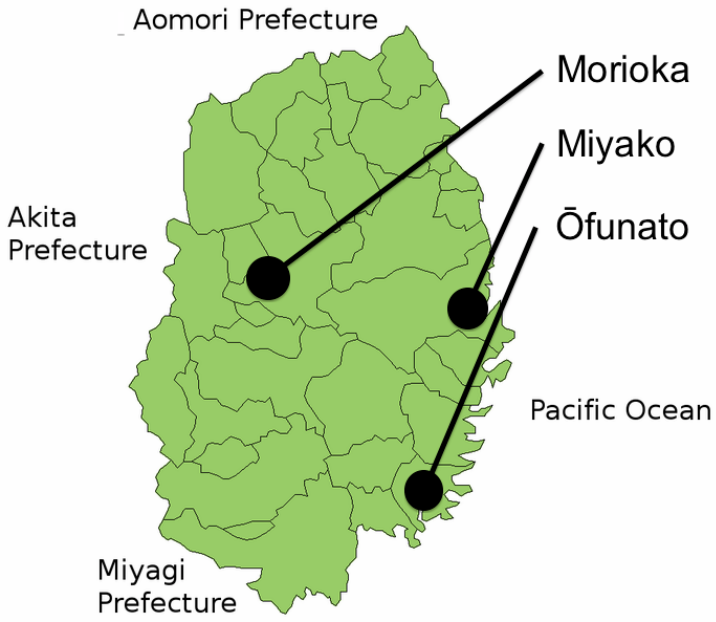

Figure 3: Map of Iwate Prefecture. Subdivisions are municipalities. Public domain image from Wikipedia.

Morioka itself is the former seat of the Nambu feudal clan, which ruled much of present-day Iwate and Aomori prefectures from Kozukata Castle for some 400 years, until government restructuring in 1868 and 1871. It is my experience that the status of "castle town" (*jōkamachi*, literally "town below a castle") confers a certain degree of prestige. In interviews, Morioka residents expressed pride in this heritage, for example claiming that it imbued them with a more sophisticated and refined culture than surrounding towns, or arguing that Morioka, as a castle

town, truly deserves its status as present-day prefectural capital. These discourses are not based solely on some distant memory of feudal glory. Morioka remains a town below a castle, as the castle's imposing foundations of earth and granite remain in place, and still dominate the heart of the city, towering over all but the tallest buildings.

Given its relatively strong economy, population, and administrative status, the presence of a castle is only one of the ways that Morioka is dominant within Iwate Prefecture. But all of Iwate, Morioka included, is marginal from the perspective of Tokyo and the other large cities to Japan's southwest. Iwate is the prefecture with the second-largest geographic area and second-lowest population density (Hokkaido, in the far north, places first in each). Symbolically, Morioka stands in the middle, straddling urban and rural identities. This is part of why I first decided to research language practices in Morioka in the first place: to see what happens at the boundary between the national and the local, where standard and regional dialects meet.

Research methods

This paper is the result of a brief period of pilot research conducted in the summer of 2012. I spent two months in Tōhoku asking people about their experiences of dialect. I tried to talk with people from a broad range of backgrounds, in terms of class, employment, gender, length of time spent in Iwate, and other factors. My central goal was to conduct group interviews with pre-existing groups of people, and introduce topics while allowing the interviewees to carry on a relatively natural conversation. Group interviews were intended to minimize the biases incurred by my own presence, while still permitting me to investigate language ideologies that surface only rarely in more natural interactions. I joined four civic groups (for example, an amateur choir), participating in their meetings, rehearsals, ceremonies, and special events. Through these organizations and through other means I met and discussed issues of dialect with

around a hundred people. Of these, I was able to audio record interviews with a total of fifty participants in twenty separate interviews totaling 24 hours and 28 minutes. With the exception of some study participants, who code-switched back and forth between English and Japanese, all of the interviews and informal discussions were held in Japanese. Transcripts and quotations in this paper have been translated for the Anglophone audience. I use the term "study participant" to refer to people who participated in this study specifically, either in a formal interview or otherwise. "Interviewee" means someone I interviewed myself. I use "speaker" to refer more generally to speakers of Tōhoku dialects, whether or not I have met or interviewed the people in question.

Economic and linguistic history in the Tōhoku region

Understanding contemporary language practices and ideologies in Iwate Prefecture requires situating them in the broader history of the region. Because linguistic value is intimately linked with material value (c.f. Irvine 1989), any discussion of linguistic history should keep political and economic factors in view. In a more rudimentary sense, languages can only exist in a social space, and people will not come together to constitute that social space if there are no opportunities for employment. Some study participants found it important to speak about many centuries of local history, but for the sake of relevance and brevity, I will only outline the past hundred years or so.

In 1905, the Japanese government began universal primary education, complete with a standard dialect that all students were required to learn (Twine 1991). This requirement was toothless, as it was not enforceable: it took some thirty hours to travel from Tokyo to Morioka, and few made the trip. Before the end of the Second World War, most of Japan was still rural; even in 1945, "45% of all Japanese were still farmers" (Bailey 1991:146). Ultimately, it was the

forced mobility of Tohoku residents in the war effort, rather than universal education, that first began the ongoing process of language shift in the region. At the end of the war, surviving soldiers returned home to every corner of the country, bearing some competence in Standard Japanese and the knowledge that they spoke a non-Standard dialect. The physical movement of these speakers semioticized their speech forms as diacritics of place of origin, a process that was happening simultaneously among veterans in the United States (Johnstone 2010:19). Post-war industrialization furthered this process.

After the war Iwate and the rest of Tōhoku began to experience a more enduring cycle of out-migration. With the wartime loss of Japan's colonies as sources of materials and labor, and in the context of rapid economic growth shortly after the war, Japan's rural areas became sources of labor for urban industry. Tokyo grew rapidly, drawing hundreds of thousands of young people from Tōhoku to work in new factories (Sibata 1998:192). Mobility due to employment, along with the expansion of radio and then television broadcasting in Standard Japanese, exposed the Tōhoku region to the full force of language standardization. Tōhoku residents, whether at home or engaged in migratory labor, found themselves in contact with Standard Japanese. They also felt subject to negative judgments for speaking a different variety. These rapid post-war changes in Japan's economy seem to have left a sharp line in the demographics of dialect ability. In Morioka, adults who grew up in the 1950s and later are much less likely to consider themselves competent in Morioka dialect.

Throughout the post-war period, the Tōhoku region continued to see a decline in population, and the economy remained largely agricultural. Agriculture was a solid base of the economy as long as the government maintained favorable trade policies, subsidies, and exchange rates, and the economy in Iwate began to grow in the 1970s. In the 1980s, these arrangements

started to unravel. International trade agreements in the mid-1980s made exchange rates unfavorable to Japanese farmers, and in 1990 the Bank of Japan began to raise interest rates, which made it even more difficult to earn a livelihood through agriculture (Rosenbluth & Thies 2010:90-91). This was a major setback for much of rural Japan, including Iwate, which has continued to lose population throughout the long recession since then. In 2011, the Pacific coast of Tōhoku was struck by a devastating earthquake and tsunami, which has only increased uncertainty about the region's economic future. As summarized by the historical sociologist Oguma Eiji:

> "Amid economic globalization since the 1990s, Tōhoku, as a supplier of primary parts and labor, has faced competition from other parts of Asia. This new trend has accelerated the shrinking and aging of the region's population…. Manufacturers are expected to relocate their Tōhoku plants overseas to prevent their operations from being affected by earthquakes and power shortages. Losing places to live in, threatened with the risk of radiation exposure and having no prospects for employment and safety, Tōhoku residents will leave the region…. The Great East Japan Earthquake… has made it painfully clear that the regional gaps have become so wide in modern Japan that we cannot bring the regions together and generalize them as Nippon [Japan]" (Oguma 2011:1-2).

Oguma's outlook for the future of Tōhoku may be pessimistic; on the other hand, it is possible that the extreme adversity of 2011 disasters somehow improve the status of Tōhoku and its people. I maintain that the situation is yet uncertain, and I will refrain from making predictions about the long-term economic, social, and linguistic effects of the 2011 disasters until I have conducted further research.

Prestige and value

Following Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) notion of the linguistic market, I connect the symbolic capital of local language varieties to the vitality of those language varieties. In studies of dialect, the linguistic market has been considered in terms of "overt" and "covert" prestige (Labov 1966; Trudgill 1972, 1974; Milroy & Margrain 1980). These studies have brought the

notion of prestige into the canon of language scholarship, but they were somewhat limited in scope. All of these studies were conducted in urban and Anglophone settings, and the notion of "prestige" itself is taken for granted but under-theorized. I define "prestige" in terms of symbolic capital, to describe the range of possibilities for using Standard (Silverstein 1996) and identifiably local language.

Many in Iwate believe that the regional language varieties are endangered and the population is shifting to monolingual Standard Japanese. Whether or not language shift is under way depends in large part on how one defines "dialect" in the first place, as will be elaborated below. To the extent that it is occurring, language shift is largely driven by the low status and low symbolic capital of regional speech forms. As I will explain below, the lack of symbolic value of regional speech forms is largely due to indexical associations with speakers who themselves are lacking in symbolic, as well as material, capital. There remain covert contexts in which local speech forms retain their social power. This is especially true in the case of longstanding valorized forms of local identity, e.g. the historically elite role of the castle town of Morioka vis-à-vis other nearby towns; and the limited ways in which discourses of Japanese national identity valorize peripheries like Iwate as iconic of the nostalgic image of an authentic "home village" (Twine 1991, Befu 2001; Bucholtz 2003).

Meanwhile, as noted by Ivy (1995) in the context of changing Japanese culture, and by Duchêne & Heller (2008) in the context of language endangerment, the very disappearance of local forms has made it possible for some parties to re-valorize those forms in public or overt contexts. This public re-valorization is limited in several ways. First, only certain aspects of regional speech are candidates for re-valorization – usually, only particularly expressive or iconic lexical items. I have not been able to discern the motivations behind the judgment that any

given term is particularly expressive, beautiful, or representative; some, like *menkoi* (adorable, lovable), seem to be chosen because their referent is independently popular. Second, only certain parties are able to engage in this kind of activity – typically because they are either able to *earn* capital (material or semiotic) through re-valorization, or because their high social position allows them to *withstand the risks* of associating themselves with regional speech. As in other contexts (c.f. Hill 1998), the positionality of speakers allows some to take advantage of benefits of a way of speaking that are unavailable to others. To the extent that valorization allows local speech forms to confer benefits on anyone at all, valorization has at least had a small positive effect. But those benefits are conferred in a circular manner on the people who already occupy high-status positions.

In a relatively economically weak area like Iwate, these limits prevent most valorization practices from conveying any symbolic benefit on the language of much of the population. There is a risk that such limited valorization further marginalizes speakers of local dialects. These speakers' partial language shift means that they do not use iconic local lexical items. These people are not in a position to profit from, or withstand the losses incurred by, the public use of non-standard, local speech. Nostalgic metalinguistic discourses tend to accentuate the difference between past and present by focusing on the ways in which the dialect is "disappearing" and not on the ways in which it may be still in use. It is convenient for nostalgic valorization practices to argue that few people are truly competent in the dialect, a discourse that makes it even less available as a viable medium of communication (cf. Kulick 1992, 1998). This is a partial valorization. It ultimately serves to further entrench the lowered status of regional speech forms, which contributes to their further endangerment.

Regional speech forms can only be heard in certain contexts, and the narrow range of such contexts may contribute to the sense that dialects are endangered. In my research on dialect in Iwate, few people actually spoke to me in Iwate dialects. Most of the participants in the present study reported dialect as something that others did – they would talk about how "people in this area" use the agreement token *nda*, rather than Standard Japanese *sō*. But "nda" only showed up as quoted speech in these discussions. The only place in Morioka where I reliably heard *nda, nda* in natural speech was at the morning farmers' market, where farmers from outlying villages came to sell produce. This was also the hardest place to get anyone to agree to an interview; the only person working at the farmer's market who was willing to speak at length about dialect was, as it happens, a baker from the city. The second-hardest place to get people to agree to interviews was the civic choir I joined. Despite my nearly two months in the tenor section, none of my fellow choristers agreed to talk even briefly about dialect until my very last day. The farmers and choir members were not wealthy, and their speech bore shibboleths of local dialect that were obvious even to me – the agreement token *nda*, or frequently nasalized velar consonants, or relatively frequent voiced consonants. The rest of the study participants, except for those in their eighties or older, used few or none of these features. In general, people who were happy to be interviewed were also those most likely to claim competence in Standard Japanese. Among the reasons for this overlap is the persistent sense of shame about non-Standard dialect, and Tōhoku dialects in particular. None of the study participants reported ongoing cases of humiliation about dialect, but many older residents talked about having a "dialect inferiority complex" in the more distant past. In narratives about experiences from ten or more years earlier, study participants talked about being laughed at, not being understood, not wanting to open their mouths (literally, "becoming mouthless," *mukuchi ni naru*) lest they reveal

their Tōhoku origins. On a more subtle level, in everyday discourse, non-Standard dialects are conceived as "dirty" (*kitanai*) and in need of "correction."

Variation in Tōhoku Dialects

The internal distinctions among Tōhoku dialects, or dialects within a single prefecture, are little known among outsiders. In the imagination of national media or Tokyo residents, there is typically one Tōhoku dialect, or what we might call a 'one dialect per prefecture' ideology, which represents ignorance or inattention toward internal complexity. Evidence of this ideology is extremely common. For example, a friend from southwestern Japan recently described Morioka speech specifically in a (bilingual) email, but implied that there is a single Tōhoku dialect:

> I'm watching this year's NHK's 朝の連続テレビ小説 …
> *asa no renzoku terebi shōsetsu*
> morning serial television novel
> and it's about Morioka! 皆東北弁しゃべってるよ笑
> *minna Tōhokuben shabetteru yo wara*
> Everyone's talking in Tōhoku dialect lol

Tellingly, in 2012 a nationally televised variety show held a gag contest to see which of Japan's dialects is the cutest and which is the ugliest, and the contest entailed precisely one entry per prefecture (NTV 2012).

As we might expect, Tōhoku residents know that their region is linguistically diverse. Different study participants indicated that Iwate Prefecture alone has four, five, or six dialect regions. Some study participants described linguistic variation within the city of Morioka itself, from one riverbank to the other. There are conventional names for the various dialect regions, but their boundaries are somewhat fluid and overlapping, and a detailed analysis of dialect variation in Iwate is beyond the scope of this paper. Participants in my study claimed that some dialects within Tōhoku are frequently mutually unintelligible. These claims may be rooted in

sociolinguistic realities of linguistic difference, or they may be rooted in language ideologies of social boundary maintenance. Given the sheer difference in linguistic forms, I expect that much of the attested unintelligibility is not driven by ideology. In either case, the historical record attests to the longstanding nature of these barriers. Sibata (2010) quotes a travelogue of a government official from 1783 touring present-day Iwate Prefecture:

> "The local lords usually give each inspector, in addition to his guides, two or three people well-informed about the castle town for the duration of his stay. The lord of Morioka Castle gave us two interpreters in addition because the speech of this part of the Nambu domain is notoriously incomprehensible. But even the interpreters often could not understand what people say here" (Sibata 2010: 184).

Because "dialects" are related varieties and they share many linguistic features, their mutual unintelligibility can be intermittent. In an interaction between speakers with different dialects, intermittently a word or conjugation or pitch accent will be semantically opaque. The degree to which speakers say they can understand others' dialects was related in part to the frequency with which they had come into contact with those dialects. Some study participants described experiences of second-dialect or third-dialect acquisition as adults. Typically they learned another Iwate dialect after starting a new job, or moving to live with their spouse in a new town. But there were other study participants who claimed to be unable to understand certain dialects even after years of frequent exposure. Here there may be ideological motivations.

Japanese Language Ideologies and "Dialect"

In this paper I have been using "dialect," "local speech," and a number of other terms in English. These terms are not a perfect fit with the concept categories available in northern Japan, nor do they fit well with objective (sociolinguistic) realities of language structure and use. Typically in Japanese, speech forms are named by appending the suffix "-*go*" or "-*ben*" at the end of some determining word, most often a place name. National languages are labeled with "-

go," and dialects of Japanese are labeled with "-ben." For example, Spanish is called "*supein-go*," and (the) Morioka dialect is called "*morioka-ben*." The word for "language" in the sense of "what language is that?" is usually *gengo*. There are a number of terms used to talk about dialects. As concept categories, these terms may have some Whorfian effects on speakers' language ideologies. I will engage with these four terms, which were all used to describe identifiably local speech:

namari	*hōgen*	*nigori*	*akusento*
訛り	方言	濁り	アクセント

"Namari" implies a phonologically-centered variation, including pitch contour features. Study participants used this term to describe situations where, participating in a conversation with family or old friends, they noticed their own speech "becoming accented." "Hōgen" implies a lexically-centered variation. This is the word most frequently used to translate "dialect" or "dialects" (Japanese being free from plurals), but by parsing out the Chinese characters that compose "hōgen" it can be literally read as "regional words," which is probably why eliciting hōgen, or even bringing up the topic, tends to lead to the production of word lists. "Akusento" is a loan from the English word "accent," and like "namari" it tends to refer to phonological variation and features, in this case especially to pitch contour features. "Nigori" is a way to speak of voiced consonants, but it can also mean "muddy" or "occluded." Voiced consonants are more frequent in Tōhoku speech than in Standard Japanese, so this term may be iconic of Tōhoku speech for that reason. Given the indeterminacy of the referents "voiced" and "muddy," use of this term may indexically suggest Tōhoku speech is symbolically polluted, perhaps via an

association with the stereotype of the 'dirty' rural agricultural worker. In some group interviews I explicitly asked about stereotypes associated with Tōhoku or Iwate dialects, and several study participants mentioned farm labor, which they described as fitting the three k's of undesirable work: "*kiken, kitanai, kitsui*" or "dangerous, dirty, difficult." The overlapping and conflicting terms for describing dialect (as opposed to terms which would name any particular dialect) demonstrate the rich polysemy of dialect in Tōhoku. There is great variation in what counts as "dialect" in the first place, and what these concepts of "dialect" mean to different people, both in their actual instantiation in communicative interactions, and in their metalinguistic life.

These subjective and diverse definitions of dialect on the ground demand that scholars clearly define how they intend to use the term analytically. Attempts to define dialects as sets of linguistic features are difficult to apply to actual linguistic practice, as so many dialects also function as registers,[1] (Halliday 1978, Agha 2005, Johnstone et al 2006, Johnstone 2010). In Iwate, local dialects have been enregistered as the proper code for storytelling (*mukashibanashi*) in the cities of Tōno and Morioka. Multidialectal speakers can code-switch and deploy particular dialects in particular functional domains, and several study participants described such code-switching practices. But there is no clear line between the different codes in a multidialectal speaker's repertoire. Statistical work on phonological variation tends to produce a diffuse spectrum in terms of the ways in which people actually speak. Sociolinguists often measure total tokens of one speech variety versus another, and some individual or group will be found to use a particular allophone 30.5% of the time, or 69.8% of the time (e.g. Mendoza-Denton 2008:253). Because there is no clear line between different codes, language varieties taken as *dialects* demand different forms of analysis from varieties that are taken as *languages*. Code-switching is harder to track. It is not possible to simply ask people which code they use in what contexts, as

Gal has (Gal 1978:6). There is no obvious evidence for the kind of linguistic diffusion and grammatical borrowing observed by Kroskrity in Arizona Tewa (Kroskrity 1998:110-112). Following Johnstone (2006:79 and elsewhere), I consider "dialect" to be a form of speech which is identified with some place, real or imagined. This definition still leaves the door open to a range of possible interpretations, for example, on the basis of who is doing the identification.

Language Ideologies and the Limits of Awareness

The term "ideology" has been used with diverse connotations. It can be used in a neutral sense to describe ideas held by some party, or pejoratively (Kroskrity 1998:114-115) to describe ideas as politically interested. In the field of language ideologies in particular, it may refer to false consciousness, distortion, rationalization, ideas deployed as tools of power. (Woolard 1998:5-9) Although I consider language ideologies to serve the interests of some party, my primary concern is with language ideologies' effects. "The point is not just to analyze and critique the social roots of linguistic ideologies but to analyze their efficacy, the way they transform the material reality they comment on" (Woolard 1998:11). Language ideologies do not rely exclusively on any metalinguistic awareness, as they may be implicit, but awareness provides a space for metalinguistic commentary and an elaboration of language ideologies within a community. To begin to study language ideologies in any community of practice, (Bourdieu 1977, Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992, Bucholtz 1999) we must establish what kinds of metalinguistic awareness are present in the community. Speakers' awareness of their own and others' language use is always partial (Silverstein 1981) but that partial awareness is where metalinguistic activity can begin to take hold (Silverstein 1985). Metalinguistic awareness means that linguistic ways of expressing difference may be commented on. This explicit discourse may lead to self-conscious change. In a context where speakers are aware of linguistic difference,

these differences may be neutral, or they may be socially evaluative. Recognized differences may be emblematized to diacritics of identity, or enregistered and deployed for particular social purposes. That is to say, recognized linguistic differences can become targets to which social meaning may then become affixed, in diverse ways. Language difference in Tōhoku has been indexed with various overlapping social meanings, and here as in other parts of the world, these social meanings often derive from localness. "Awareness of regional dialects, and the evaluative attitudes that accompany dialect awareness, are often enacted in stylized performances of localness…. [A] particular subset of locally-hearable forms… come to stand in for the variety as a whole" (Johnstone 2010:8).

Metalinguistic Awareness

Differential awareness about linguistic differences derives from the particular contexts in which those differences first became apparent. For example, in instances where Iwate or other Tōhoku speech is unintelligible to outsiders, the level of opacity created by a given difference is likely to contribute to the degree to which it attracts attention, and ongoing metalinguistic awareness. Morphological variation, e.g. in verb endings, is another major signifier of local speech forms, and understandably so. An unfamiliar verb ending in a Japanese language variety might disguise some very important information, such as negation or tense. This possibility for confusion may contribute to the relatively higher level of awareness that seems to exist in terms of these morphological differences. Pitch contours can bear some lexical meaning in Japanese, but a different pitch contour will not throw off the core meaning of an utterance. Totally different lexical items (such as *warasu* instead of *kodomo*, or *beko* instead of *ushi* – "Child" and "cow," respectively) are obviously mutually unintelligible, and demand translation.

In northern Japan, everyone with whom I spoke was aware of some (but probably not all) lexical differences between perceived local and standard varieties of speech, or between different varieties of Iwate speech. My study participants universally described dialect difference at least in terms of lexical items. Even with partial awareness, most speakers in Iwate have some awareness of dialect-level linguistic differences in phonetics, phonology, prosody, morphology, and lexicon. Across my entire body of observations and interviews, study participants gave examples of each type of difference, but awareness varied at each level of difference. Sharp difference in pitch contours appears to be a target of awareness only for Iwate natives who have lived elsewhere. For example, the default pitch contour of an intonational phrase in Standard Japanese is markedly different from that of Morioka speech: Standard Japanese effectively places a raised pitch on the second mora, followed by descending pitch. In Morioka and some other parts of Iwate, the local pitch contour jumps up at the penultimate mora (e.g. ↓mo•↑ri•o•ka vs. ↓mo•ri•↑o•ka, respectively). Pitch contours convey little semantic content, which means they are unlikely to lead to misunderstandings that force speakers' attention toward the differences.

Attention to linguistic difference also depends to some degree on the roles of participants in an interaction. For any given utterance, hearers are more likely to notice dialect shibboleths than speakers. This is not to say that speakers are unaware of the dialect tokens they produce. I observed at least three different speakers in different group sessions who paused and called attention to their own use of telltale Tōhoku voiced consonants, typically after using such a consonant unintentionally. But more typically, dialect shibboleths were used without comment, including by people who claimed to have little competence in anything but Standard Japanese. Even if people are not immediately conscious of the dialect tokens they are producing, situations of heightened attention to speech may influence speakers' choice of linguistic code. As Labov

demonstrated in his classic studies of New York speech, (1966, 1969) carefulness or attention to speech may produce hypercorrection toward the speech variety that is most prestigious. Notions of correctness in this sense can demonstrate implicit rankings of speech varieties. In several discussions and interviews, study participants talked about switching into Standard Japanese using the word "*naosu*," which usually has the evaluative sense of "correct, fix," although it can also convey a neutral value of "adjust, change." Speakers also used more careful and elaborate language in association with Standard Japanese, and shortened forms in association with regional dialects. In the following transcript, Imoto, a broadcaster involved in dialect valorization activities, talks about meta-dialect awareness in terms of the local pitch accents that she finds distinctive. See footnote (2) for an explanation of the transcription conventions used here. For an instance of the verb "naosu" see line 23; for instances in which Standard Japanese is implicitly tied to correctness, see lines 14 and 29.

1. I … but the intonation is the intonation of the place you were born and raised.
   demo intoneeshon wa, umare sodatta tochi no intoneeshon desu yo

2. I So, the words themselves – for example, "tōmorokoshi" is "kimi," isn't it?
   maize (Standard) *maize* (Tōhoku)
   dakara kotoba sono mono wa, ano, tatoeba, toomorokoshi wo kimi to iu wake desuyone

3. I But people now don't know anything but "tōmorokoshi"
   demo ima no hitotachi wa, toomorokoshi shika shiranakute,

4. and they don't know the word "kimi."
   kimi to iu kotoba wo shiranai

5. I Mhm. But, although saying "tōmorokoshi" is Standard Japanese,
   mm. dakedo, sono toomorokoshi to iu no ga hyoujungo da to suru to

6. I these young people's intonation is from around here, so – ↓tōmoro↑koshi
   kono wakai hitotachi wa intoneeshon wa kocchi no mono nano de – ↓tōmoro↑koshi

7. E ↑tōmoro↓koshi – oh, huh.
   ↑tōmoro↓koshi – a, naruhodo na

8. I Not ↑tōmoro↓koshi, ↓tōmoro↑koshi.
↑tōmoro↓koshi janakute ↓tōmoro↑koshi

9. I That is Morioka dialect intonation.
kore ga moriokaben no intoneeshon desu yo ne

10. I So everyone might think they're doing Standard Japanese,
dakara minna jibun ga hyoujungo da to omotteru kamo shirenai

11. but there are a lot of people whose intonation is Morioka dialect.
kedo, intoneeshon wa moriokaben no hito ga ooi desu

12. E Mhm. They don't realize –
mm. kizukanai –

13. I Without realizing it.
kizukanaide

14. E – maybe?
deshou ka

15. I Yes. "↓Yuki ↑futtekita" – "↓yuki ↑futtekita"
it's snowing *it's snowing*
ee. ↓yuki ↑futtekita – ↓yuki ↑futtekita

16. I It's "↓yu↑ki ↓ga futtekita." It should be "↓yu↑ki."
it is snowing *snow*
↓yu↑ki ↓ga futtekita desu yo. ↓yu↑ki deshou

17. I But people here say "↓yuki."
dakedo koko no hitotachi wa ↓yuki tte iu

18. I The accent is different.
akusento ga chigau

19. I But because the word "yuki" is Standard Japanese,
dakedo yuki tte kotoba wa hyoujungo dakara

20. I they mean to be speaking Standard Japanese.
jibun ga hyoujungo de shabetteru tsumori

21. I But the intonation
dakedo intoneeshon wa

22. E The letters –
moji wa, ne,

23. E In terms of the writing –
moji de ieba –

24. I There are a whole lot of young people whose intonation is Morioka dialect.
intoneeshon ga moriokaben tte iu wakai hito ga ippai imasu

25. Intonation doesn't [adjust, correct] very much, does it?
intoneeshon wa nakanaka naosanai n'ka nee

26. E If you don't notice.
kizukanai to.

27. I They don't notice. Um, "↓wa↑karanai" or "↓ki↑zukanai," right?
don't recognize don't notice
kizukanai. ano, ↓wa↑karanai to iu ka ↓ki↑zukanai to iu desho?

28. I But it's "↓wakara↑nai," "↓kizuka↑nai."
dakedo ↓wakara↑nai, ↓kizuka↑nai

[01:04 omitted]

29. E As for the person listening –
kiiteru hito wa,

30. I They recognize it. There are also people who don't recognize it when they hear it.
wakarimasu. kiite mo wakaranai hito ga iru

31. I People who think the intonation here is correct….
kocchi no intoneeshon ga tadashii to omotteru hito –

Because "dialects" are perceived to be more similar than "languages," we might expect speakers to have less awareness of linguistic difference among dialects. But larger-scale differences in languages sometimes go unnoticed in speakers' language ideologies, e.g. as described by Kroskrity (1998). In fact, because dialects are subject to the exact same standardizing pressures – standardization is part of what creates any sense of "dialects" – the minute differences between them are likely to be raised to an even more heightened level of awareness. That is, dialect differences are especially noticeable in that they fail to conform to commonly known standard norms. In Japanese, standardization has gone hand in hand with increases in textual literacy over the last century, and it is possible that the particulars of Japanese orthography have had some effect on what gets noticed as non-standard. Japanese

writing uses a combination of two systems: Chinese characters, which have fixed meanings but context-dependent pronunciations (in Japanese); and a moraic syllabary (derived from cursive forms of Chinese) with fixed pronunciations. This second system, called *kana*, focuses exclusively on pronunciation. It is possible that because meaning and phonetic form can be divorced in Japanese orthography, contexts of standardization like schools may have become sites of increased normative pressure on the basis of pronunciation for its own sake. Because of kana's one-to-one relationship of text to sound, if speech is accented it must be written differently; this means that nonstandard speech is subject to judgment not only on the basis of its aural aesthetics, but also on the basis of its faithfulness to standard written forms. Because of the way it systematically highlights voiced versus voiceless consonants, the kana system provides a way to easily talk about voicing contrasts. Consider one first-person pronoun as an example:[3] *wadaʃi* in Tōhoku, *wataʃi* in Standard Japanese. Written in kana, these appear as わだし and わたし, respectively. The orthographic difference between [da] and [ta], or だ and た, is the small double-line mark on the upper right corner of the character, which signals voicing. This mark is called a "*dakuten*," and participants in my study sometimes talked about local speech in terms of "putting on the *dakuten*." Note that the Tōhoku version is *literally* marked, and symbolically, kana orthography may suggest that voiceless consonants are the default or correct option.

Non-Neutral Awareness

At the level of dialect, awareness of linguistic differences as indexical of social difference are intermittent, and many interviewees provided similar narratives of instances in which speakers were called out for their linguistic variety during a conversation. Often in these narratives, a non-local interlocutor (most often from the capital) finds some lexical or syntactic item opaque, and calls attention to it in order to seek clarification. But just as often, it seems, the

non-local interlocutors draw attention to an item that they *do* understand, whether partially or more completely. These types of noticing represent a pattern that reveals the process in which language difference points to social difference and that indexicality, that is, how linguistic variation becomes naturalized and otherwise ideologized, moves from semantic meaning alone to project multiple levels of social meaning, from real-time and local to potential and vast.

At the same time, these are instances of the two kinds of "noticing" that derives from dialect contact, as identified by Johnstone (2010) and others. "On one level, dialect contact can lead to accommodation, which can lead to dialect leveling. On another, dialect contact can spark the kinds of metapragmatic activities that can lead to ideological differentiation among dialects" (Johnstone 2010:10). Contact with speakers from outside of one's home area (and in practice, mostly with speakers from Tokyo) sometimes demands translation and sometimes merely offers an opportunity for metalinguistic talk. Most of my study participants told a story or two of such contact events in which metalinguistic talk became possible or even necessary. The common outline of such stories involves speaking with people from another place, using some particular word, and finding (to the speaker's surprise) that the listeners do not understand. One study participant described an interaction in which his customer could not understand "*neppasu*" (attach by pressing), and the two were at an impasse until a manager came over to provide the Standard Japanese gloss "*kuttsukeru*." Each of these interactions may mark a particular linguistic form as a target for new social meanings, as the talk that ensues after the noticing of difference often includes attempts to explain that difference. These explanations will never be entirely novel. In actual instances of dialect-explanatory metapragmatic talk, speakers come to the table with some expectations in mind, including conceptions of authentic local identity, gender, language difference, regional stereotypes, and other relevant social dimensions. These ideas are

constantly re-negotiated in everyday life, including through the noticing of dialect difference. For these reasons, the specific indexes of "dialect" are linked with the ways in which difference-noticing occurs. It is not sufficient simply to say that noticing of difference "happens"; the very context of the noticing is key to how it is interpreted. Context will predispose speakers to draw some indexical connections, rather than others. Through the particular contexts of dialect difference being noticed, some indexes (that is, social meanings of dialect) will appear, some will persist, some will change, and some will disappear. This extends to other metapragmatic activity like the production of dialect glossaries, but for now, keeping the contexts of difference-noticing in mind, I will jump ahead to the particular social semiotic values that speech seen as local bears in Morioka.

Awareness, Iconicity, and Indexicality

One common theme in interviews was the notion that Tōhoku speech features are indexical of non-linguistic facts of life in the region. Several interviewees mentioned the impression that the Iwate dialect is partly or wholly caused by speakers' attempts to keep their mouths closed in the cold weather. This is a recognizable interpretation of real phonological features: from the perspective of Standard Japanese, many Tōhoku dialects have merged the high vowels /i/ and /ɯ/, using /ɨ/ in place of both, and there is on the whole more voicing and nasalization of consonants in Tōhoku speech than in Standard forms, all of which may be easily perceived as "keeping the mouth closed" in some sense. This suggestion of "keeping the mouth closed" was generally introduced with laughter; speakers may consider this a serious explanation though couched in self-deprecating humor, or the entire suggestion may be a joke. Other folk rationalizations of dialect difference, including about pace of talk or about the origins of

particular lexical items, certainly seemed sincere, if sometimes offered with the amusement that armchair linguistics seems to offer to so many of us.

Second, in nearly every case, interviewees implied an iconized link between Iwate dialect competence and age. Some said that only people in their seventies or above are able to produce local speech forms. Others, typically younger speakers, gave a more nuanced impression, namely that young people may be said to speak "dialect," but older generations know a "thicker" or "richer" version, which is more distant from Standard Japanese. But the association of greater dialect competence with age is not simply a matter of generational language change. It also means that local-sounding speech indexes old age, so that mimicry of local-sounding speech can be a resource for imitating elderly people. Several study participants referred to a popular account in which telephone scam artists had duped their elderly victims into trusting a stranger with financial information by using the dialect of the victims' home area. The fact that this story (true or not) gained so much currency shows that in the imaginations of many, the elderly live in a world built on local speech.

Both outsiders and locals associate Tōhoku speech and Tōhoku speaking subjects with rural settings and lifeways. From the perspective of an outsider, this is a fairly straightforward index for Tōhoku: the region is known for agricultural production and low population density. Tōhoku speech is linked to farm labor in the national imagination, and it is also an index of working class status. For speakers in Tōhoku, who know that there are major cities in the region, the idea of "authentic local speech" need not be associated exclusively with the rural. It is conceivable that standardization has taken off faster in cities, meaning that non-standard dialects will be heard more among rural speakers. According to some urban Morioka residents, the place to hear "dialect" is in the surrounding small towns and villages – Morioka is not sufficiently rural

to have authentic dialect speakers. But Morioka bears its own complex social semiotics of speech. Dialect activists have recorded and analyzed "the Morioka dialect," including subdivisions by neighborhood (cf. Matsumoto 2001, 2002, Kurosawa 2001, Nakaya 2010, 2011). For these activists, Morioka speech is a sign of sophistication and high culture, drawing on the legacy of a former feudal power center; or on some supposed similarities to the speech of medieval Kyoto, claiming that Morioka dialect is *kyō-kotoba*, "language of the [old] capital." These ideologies explicitly raise the status of Morioka above the status of neighboring towns, which were once subjugated by the feudal lord of Morioka's Kozukata Castle. But from the perspective of Tokyo and national media, Morioka itself is a small town, and the emerging identity of Morioka seems to be as part of rural Tōhoku, rather than an island in it. Tourist marketing for the city sometimes seems torn between the two poles. For example, a circuit bus route planned for visitors is called the "*Morioka toshin junkan basu 'Dendenmushi'"* (Morioka downtown circuit bus 'The Snail'), a name that mixes decidedly urban and decidedly quaint rural themes. The stops on the route are sufficiently impressive for a major city's tourist services – museums, historic sites, shopping districts – but the bus itself is decorated with light-hearted children's drawings of bugs and houses. Depending on one's perspective, Morioka is either a center or a periphery.

Ideology and Prestige

Prestige is a major factor in the life of language, and sometimes a useful way to talk about codes that are preferred in particular contexts. As originally conceived in sociolinguistics, e.g. by Trudgill (1972, 1974) and Milroy & Margrain (1980), a given language variety bears some degree of prestige, which may vary depending on context. In a Japanese context, Ball (2004) describes practices of speakers who use local dialect in prestigious ways, or to express in-

group identity (Ball 2004:360, 375).[4] Use of the right language variety in the right context conveys prestige on the user. For example, in the dense social networks of the neighborhood and family, language features marked as "local" may be preferred; in looser social networks or contexts associated with power, unmarked "standard" forms may be preferred. (To use the wrong variety could suggest that the speaker is arrogant, uncivilized, or some other regrettable attribute, depending on the context.) Labov and Trudgill termed these preferences "covert" and "overt" prestige. In Labov's original formulation, describing English in New York,

> "the socio-economic structure confers prestige on the middle-class pattern associated with the more formal styles. [But] one can't avoid the implication that in New York City we must have an equal and opposing prestige for informal, working-class speech - a covert prestige enforcing this speech pattern. We must assume that people in New York City want to talk as they do, yet this fact is not at all obvious in any overt response that you can draw from interview subjects" (Labov 1966:108).

But although this conception of prestige may capture certain linguistic facts, these are rather limited analytical terms. Importantly, notions of prestige are not apparent or relevant from the perspective of most speakers. I suggest another approach to the notion of prestige, one which derives from language ideologies of speakers. Linguistic difference indexes numerous different meanings, as we have seen in the case of Tōhoku speech varieties. Speakers have in fact made these indexes – in other words, they have agency, a "socioculturally mediated capacity to act," through their use of language (Ahearn 2011:278). They may choose when to deploy which meanings at which times. To the extent that everyone is in command of various registers and genres, this is universally the case. Dialect variation works in the same way. One index of dialect may make it suitable for one situation; another social index of the same language variety may make it suitable to another context. This may lead speakers to emphasize different aspects of dialect, or display dialect competence in different ways, depending on the context. I have not

even attempted to capture the range of different social meanings that may be conveyed by use of Standard Japanese, but these particular meanings will make Standard forms seem appropriate to particular contexts. Particular and appropriate contexts earn prestige for a language and a speaker, and so to be useful, the notion of prestige must also adapt to every context of use. For this reason, I consider prestige in terms of the symbolic capital of language (Bourdieu 1977) – either earned for speakers by their use of a context-appropriate code, or borne by a particular code in a particular context. The labels of "overt" and "covert" prestige describe symbolic economies of prestige, which may be far more complex than a binary relationship; and as semiotic systems, they may be overlapping in actual contexts of use. And because speakers have choices in how to evaluate speech and in how to speak, prestige can be performed.

This means that recognizably local forms of speech can be performed *as prestigious* in contexts where anything other than the standard is marked. By "perform as prestigious," I mean using identifiably local speech in ways that make it the preferred variety. An extremely clear-cut example comes from the announcers at the annual *Sansa* dance parade.[5] Over loudspeakers, the announcers introduced each team and thanked them for their participation, first in Standard Japanese and then in a Morioka dialect form. This use of Morioka dialect was limited to a few words in a context already marked as local and traditional, but the moment demanded dialect. And this annual event is by no means marginal, since the parade occupies Morioka's main thoroughfare for four days. This kind of public use of dialect is notable, because it counts as *dialect activism*[6] in the broadest sense. A narrow definition of dialect activism would only include intentional efforts at status-raising and broadening a dialect's domains of use. I define dialect activism in the broad sense as any prestigious performance of marginalized a dialect in public contexts. Often the products of metalinguistic activity can be transported across contexts,

for example in the form of texts or audiovisual media; this means that much metalinguistic activity can be considered dialect activism. As long as local speech is used as a prestigious variety, activities like writing glossaries of local terms, storytelling in local language, or using dialect in fiction writing can have the effect of raising the status of local speech. In other words, metalinguistic practices need not be explicitly revitalizationist in order to raise a language's status in a broad sense. To the extent that a non-standard code is used as prestigious in contexts where the Standard is normative, those uses serve to valorize the non-standard.

In contexts of endangered languages (rather than dialects), other scholars have studied explicit practices of valorization (e.g. Kroskrity 2009, Loether 2009). In those cases, valorization is more or less explicitly designed to cancel the effects of Standard Language ideologies (Lippi-Green 1997). Lippi-Green and others have described a "Standard Language Ideology" which does double work: it elevates the Standard variety, and stigmatizes all other language forms (Lippi-Green 1997:62). In resisting this ideology, activists for endangered languages systematically decolonize the heritage language and protect it from stigma, while actively using it language in prideful or even privileged ways. To address dialect activism, I necessarily use a much broader definition of valorization practices. Even among the people I consider dialect activists, there is not a consensus as to whether regional dialects should continue to exist, and yet all of the activities I describe do raise the status of local speech, if only implicitly.

Valorization: Case Studies

Here I am concerned with valorization in public contexts, where the audience for metalinguistic activity is large or anonymous, and where interpretations of metalinguistic activity can quickly expand beyond the control of the speaker. Public valorization of local language varieties has the potential to produce a larger effect than smaller-scale or personal valorization,

but this is not the only reason to be primarily concerned with public valorization efforts. Dialect may be used as a prestigious variety in narrower and more familiar contexts, either in the classic sense of "covert prestige" or some other sense. But these kinds of prestigious uses are unlikely to raise the overall status of a language and expand its domains of use. This is a central goal for many language activists – to broaden the functional domains in which the endangered language may be used (Hinton & Hale 2001). In my study, this is not a goal shared by all dialect activists. Some are resigned to the disappearance of local dialect, or partially approving of the loss of a stigmatized speech form. Even the activities of relatively pessimistic language activists serve to raise the status of local language, in that they are using it as prestigious. A definition of language valorization drawn so broadly necessarily captures diverse activities, and diverse motivations. Here I will examine these motivations by sketching the life histories of three of Iwate's notable dialect activists: two Morioka residents whom I am calling Imoto and Oshima, as well as Yamaura Harutsugu, a resident of Ōfunato.

Imoto

Over forty years ago, when she was in high school, Imoto (mentioned above) already wanted to be a news broadcaster. A study participant who claimed to be a classmate remembers her avoiding dialect and using as much Standard Japanese as possible, hoping to earn a job on television. Imoto eventually got that job. A few years later, opportunities started to arise for work involving "dialect" expertise. At this point, according to this same classmate, Imoto began to recast herself as an expert in local language. But she became an expert in a stylized form of the language, inaccessible to her former neighbors. Despite the fact that she now spoke "Morioka dialect" again, this speech was hearable as similar to the distinguished-sounding dialect of Kyoto, the old imperial capital. The following is an excerpt from the group interview session

held at before the rehearsal of the civic choir. Note that "*kirei*" (lines 14 and 19) can mean "clean," "beautiful," or both. There are two speakers, and the alto is Imoto's former classmate:

1. Alto We were classmates in middle school. The same school.
   chuugakkou no doukyuusei na no. onaji gakkou nan' desu.

2. Bass They talk almost exactly the same.
   hotondo issho ni shabetteru n' da ne.

3. Alto She, you know – you see, she became
   kanojo wa ne, anou, hora –

4. a [name of broadcasting company] announcer, so at first
   [X X X X] no anaunsaa ni natta n' de, saisho

5. she never spoke Morioka dialect. Even if she went to the neighborhood,
   zenzen moriokaben wo shabenakatta no. kinjo ni ittemo

6. talked with me, she didn't speak it.
   watashi to iu toki mo, shabenakatta no.

7. At one point, she – ah, um, that actress who passed away,
   de, aru jiki ni, are, anou, joyuu san de, anou nakunatta

8. got old, passed away, what was her name –
   toshi totte nakunatta, namae wa –

9. Bass Nagaoka –
   nagaoka s–

10. Alto Nagaoka Teruko[7] was reciting Miyazawa Kenji's[8] [poetry],
    nagaoka teruko san wa miyazawa kenji no wo hanashi shite,

11. and passing along that tradition [to Imoto], and in order to do that,
    sore wo denshou suru tame ni

12. she [Imoto] instead began to speak Morioka dialect.
    kanojo wa mata gyaku ni moriokaben wo hanasu you ni natta.

13. Bass Ah, that was the reason, huh?
    aaa. soko wa kikkake dattan' desu ka.

14. Alto Mhm. In her case she speaks a [beautiful / clean] Morioka dialect.
    nn. kanojo no baai wa kirei na moriokaben wo hanasu –

15. She went to some pains and studied it. So she has a speaking style
    no ni, benkyou shite doryoku shiteru wa. nagaoka teruko san no you na

16. like Nagaoka Teruko. And we l-l-lay people out here –
hanashikata wo shiteru. watashitachi no you na z – zo – zokuseken no

17. Bass Ordinary people.
ippanjin.

18. Alto In our ordinary – she talked like that through middle school, too.
ippanjin no – kanojo mo chuugakkou made wa ittan' desu yo.

19. Same as us. But now, she only speaks [beautiful / clean] Morioka dialect.
watashitachi to onaji. dakedo mo, ima wa, kirei na moriokaben shika shabenai.

20. Bass A Morioka dialect closer to Kyoto dialect.
kyou-kotoba ni chikai moriokaben wo –

21. Alto Close, yes.
chikai.

Imoto used her broadcasting career and claims at dialect expertise to position herself for numerous roles as an ideal Iwate speaker – serving as announcer for local cultural events, training nationally-known actors in dialect for their movie roles, serving in leadership roles at local cultural institutions, storytelling (*mukashi-banashi*) in various venues, and of course continuing her work as a broadcaster, but with a focus on local programming. In an interview, Imoto expressed a localist ideology about the aesthetic superiority of dialect. For example:[9]

I: And I'm always, you know, expressing the beauty of dialect, or expressing how cultural it is, always talking about that. First of all, the nasal consonants come across clearly. Second, the expressions are wonderfully rich. For example, when your heart is going *doki-doki* [onomatopoetic heart-beating sound], you know, it's quite, ah! You know? At those times, if you were saying it, what would you say?

E: Wouldn't it be "*doki-doki*?"

I: *Doki-doki*, almost always, that's it. People around here go *hakka-hakka*. And so, isn't *hakka-hakka* a little more *doki-doki*, than *doki-doki*? And that level of, sort of, richness, is extremely high.

Oshima

Oshima is retired from a successful career as a professional artist and arts equipment store owner in central Morioka. In his early life, he says, people in Morioka found Standard

Japanese so strange that they laughed at speakers visiting from Tokyo. Toward the end of the Second World War, Oshima was drafted and served two years in military service, but without traveling to overseas combat zones. That experience exposed him to the fact that he spoke a dialect, and convinced him that the standard language should be promoted more forcefully.

> I came back from Tokyo to Morioka, I came back to Morioka and I went to talk to that group, I took my opinion -- my opinion was that before everyone would listen to us, they'd laugh; they'd say we talked funny and laugh. I said we should try to stop using Morioka – Morioka dialect as much as possible, I said that to everyone a lot. And in front of everyone, or, when there was a chance to go and say your opinion in front of everyone, I'd say that we had to use Standard Japanese, or talk in a way that would get across to the whole country. I went around at full blast, telling everyone. And the people who listened to me told me they were very grateful.

Like other promoters of Standard Japanese, Oshima eventually found that dialects were simply not being spoken anymore by younger generations – certainly not in the same way. In reaction to this and other perceived social changes, Oshima wrote and published a sort of memoir: a series of stories from his pre-war youth, written in Standard Japanese but with partial in-line dialect translations. Aware that text alone would not capture the distinctive dialect features he wanted to describe, Oshima recorded an audio CD to accompany the book. The book was fairly popular locally, and Oshima is well-known in town because of it. At some point he also participated in a sort of local dialect club, an association in which older Morioka residents gathered to enjoy practicing the language, and which may have served some role in promoting its symbolic value in the general public. Oshima claims that younger generations no longer speak this dialect, which he does not consider regrettable:

> Well, I don't necessarily think of it as unfortunate that the Morioka dialect will disappear. I don't think so. I think it can't be helped. That's how I think, but I just feel like I want to leave behind, um, that in the past, this is how we talked. But I don't want to hold back [the change]. So, in ten or twenty years, Morioka dialect will totally disappear, I think.

Like Imoto, he expresses an ideology of the value of local local language in aesthetic terms, but he also values dialect for moral and ethical reasons, linking dialect to a nostalgic view of the past. In the following excerpt, Oshima contrasts the past and the present, describing the altruism of the pre-war period as something that has disappeared along with Morioka dialect.

> And another reason for writing at that time, not only that – more than trying to write down Morioka dialect, and all that – the way of life at the time, too, you know, also the way of life at that time, I wanted to convey. As for that – compared to, ah, the present situation, those days were far poorer. Mhm. It was a very poor, impoverished, ah, world, but, however, there was enough kindness to make up for that poverty. Mutual assistance all those things were, umm, compared to now they were far stronger. You might say group awareness, or going and helping. Well, that sort of awareness was extremely strong. Now, proportionally, that, um, sense of cooperation and charity, compared to that time, seems to have fallen off a little bit, that thought was a reason for me to write.

Like the nostalgic Mexicano speakers described by Hill (1998), Oshima, Imoto, and other dialect activists regret the social changes that have accompanied language shift in the last half-century. They do not necessarily regret the language shift itself. Having suffered from the negative indexes of local speech, some would be happy to watch the dialect disappear, and the stigma with it. A few dialect activists have drawn a distinction between the dialect and the stigma, and they explicitly argue that the stigma itself is what should disappear. Egawa, a retired white-collar professional and author of some popular metalinguistic texts, expressed this sentiment clearly:

> [Schools should] take up the issue of dialects, and the fact that what we call "dialects" have been used in every place, and through the lives of people the dialects have lived. For that reason, dialects are all good – good speech, so the various dialects should be honored and cared for.

Yamaura

By far the best-known example of the anti-stigma perspective is a language activist from the Kesen region, Yamaura Harutsugu. Kesen is the coastal region of northern Miyagi and

southern Iwate prefectures, and it constitutes a dialect region rather distinct from the surrounding areas. Yamaura grew up in this relatively rural region, but had an especially prestigious career in medicine and medical research elsewhere, mostly in Sendai (the largest city in Tōhoku). Some thirty years ago, he began to involve himself with the Kesen language variety, starting with linguistic analyses. From the beginning, Yamaura called it a language, not a dialect (*Keseŋ-ǧo,* rather than *Kesem-ben*). In 1986 he published *Keseŋ-ǧo Nyūmon* (An Introduction to the Kesen Language), a surprisingly rigorous documentation of the language, which could probably have earned him a Master's degree in linguistics. At the time, there was a mixed reaction in the Kesen region, and Yamaura explicitly links this reaction to shame feelings of inferiority. (Again, short agreement tokens between turns of the same speaker have been omitted.)

Y: So, in Kesen, what happened? The people of Kesen were very pleased about it. And, they were glad – until then, they'd had an inferiority complex about their own language. [In English] it's "*inferiority complex*," isn't it? So, eh, they thought it was extremely embarrassing. Um, as proof of that – I received a number of letters and phone calls in protest. Uh, one letter, I still have it, you know, but, it said this: "Dialect is our shame. It is the most humiliating shame. I ask that you stop going on television, etc, speaking that Kesen dialect. It's exactly like an idiotic woman –" Idiotic (*hakuchi*), that's "*idiot*," you know. "It's like an idiotic woman," ah, "streaking (*sutorīkingu*)."

Y: Hmm. It was that sort of feeling. Yes, mhm. A letter like that came. And, quite a lot of phone calls came in. So, I got angry. I said, "It's best to stop thinking such foolish things. We have our own pride."

Y: "We must not abandon our own pride," I said.

E: That's right.

Y: I went on saying this. So, in time, because of that, those voices all went away. But for quite a while there were a lot of expressions of opposition.

Following the 1986 publication, Yamaura has produced an extremely broad range of materials using Kesen variety: a series of lectures on brain health, Kesen language textbooks for

school use, poetry, translations of the Christian gospels (from the Greek), books on local history and prehistory, and a series of plays:

> I put together that sort of a drama. And it was a hit. It was a fantastic hit…. Everyone crying their eyes out. Until then, people hadn't seen a play in Kesen language. From time to time they'd seen a play in the language of Tokyo, but that's of course another way of speaking, and it doesn't enter into their own language. But, in the Kesen language we feel happiness, anger, sadness. And that got through perfectly – between the stage and the people there was no emotional barrier. So, we cry, everyone cries. We laugh, everyone laughs. That was wonderful. And we did that play in Kamaishi, then in the Sanriku region, and another two times here, and in total we got several thousand people to see it. And they all understood very well that drama in Kesen language is really wonderful. And so they told me, make more, make more! And I made a whole lot of them. I put together quite a lot of dramas. And then… we decided to make a stage. At our largest we had about forty people, you know. So, the young people gathered up, and we built a stage. Our last big performance was now about ten years ago, I suppose. We did it in Morioka.

Although Yamaura considers Kesen speech to be a language, rather than a dialect, this does not disqualify his activities as dialect activism. Yamaura himself recognizes that the distinction between "language" and "dialect" is a political one, and he has chosen the label of "language" for political reasons. Despite some successes, his label has not caught on very widely. No other study participants called it "Kesen language" by default, preferring "Kesen dialect"; this was true among sociolinguists as well as the general public. But Yamaura's claim about the status of Kesen speech seemed to give context to his efforts. Especially during the most active period of his dialect activism, while the local economy was still strong enough to support ambitious young people, Yamaura sought to expand the domains of use of the Kesen variety as much as possible, extending it far beyond the home and into the public sphere.

Yamaura's motivations are also notably different from those of other dialect activists. He has certainly profited in terms of material and symbolic capital from his language activism, but he has also burnt through a significant chunk of capital to carry it out, in terms of his own time

and money. It seems that he has deployed his resources to valorize the Kesen variety for ideological reasons.[10]

Yamaura's activities have also tapped into, and may have been inspired by, an alternative nationalist discourse in Tōhoku. An early example of this dates from 1981, when acclaimed novelist Inoue Hisashi published "Kirikiri-jin," a lengthy work of political fiction in which a slice of Tōhoku around the Kitakami river declares itself independent. This novel was well-received, and widely read in Tōhoku. Yamaura's works sometimes refer to "the country of Kesen" in strikingly similar terms, imagining perhaps an independent country. Inoue writes of the economic independence of the new country of Kirikiri, which produces a surplus of agricultural goods, unlike Japan. Yamaura and others have also made less overtly political claims of independence, arguing that the people of Tōhoku are descended from the Emishi ethnic group and/or southern Ainu peoples, and are therefore not ethnically Japanese. Yamaura has a historical novel in the works, set some 1,200 years in the past, in which "we" (the Emishi) won against the Japanese invaders. The discourse of Emishi identity is popular in Tōhoku, but stories of independence, however fascinating, seem limited to the imaginations of elites.

The Limits of Valorization

Public metapragmatic activities like the cases described above exist as a consequence of their social context. The motivations of dialect activists in Iwate (and probably elsewhere), and the responses from their publics, help to determine the extent and limitations of their results. For example, no matter their goals or methods, dialect activists broadly tend to be elites, a conclusion shared by local sociolinguists in Iwate. In this case I use the term "elite" to refer to people with unusually high amounts of economic and symbolic capital. In terms of economic capital, they can afford to retire from work (whether or not they have, in fact, retired). The ability to retire is

common in Japan, and this remains true even in a relatively poor region undergoing a long economic decline, particularly if we bear in mind that many of the elder dialect activists made their careers in the booming decades between 1960 and 1990. The fact that so many people are able to retire may help explain the apparent high density of dialect activism and publications about dialect, all of which fits into the popular pattern of amateur local scholarship in Japan on topics ranging from archaeology to dance.

Dialect activists tend to start out with a high level of economic capital, but even more dependably, they are able to earn further capital through their metalinguistic activity. Certain people have the capital to use dialect in public, and others do not. The distinction has to do with specific types of capital, and specific identities. The relevant types of capital seem to include: high regard in the community, high-status work, a direct or indirect association with Standard Japanese, free time, and a means of arranging for a sufficiently large audience. It is worth noting that dialect activists, in my experience, do not have stereotypical local identities (for more on stereotypical local identities, see Johnstone 2010:22). In other words, they were highly educated, they were not rural, and they were not farm workers; they break with the national stereotypes of Tōhoku residents. Because these dialect activists do not bear non-linguistic associations with Tōhoku identity, their use of Tōhoku dialects puts them at lower risk of being viewed according to narrow stereotypes. Their partial freedom from stereotypes is one of the factors that permits them to use local speech forms to diverse ends, and in diverse contexts. Through the publication opportunities deriving from amateur and semi-professional linguistics, through storytelling, through consultations for media portrayals of local speech, among other venues, dialect activists are positioned to turn a profit from their claims of expertise in local speech forms. In other words, they are in possession of semiotic resources, or non-economic capital, that creates

opportunities to access other resources. Possession of such symbolic capital is another part of what makes these activists elite. This capital comes in diverse forms: high-status employment, e.g. as a teacher, doctor, or broadcaster; a strong reputation in the community; age-mate friends or other willing audiences for amateur productions; non-traditional religion, especially Catholicism; belief that they are fully fluent in Standard Japanese (accurate or not). I find temporal capital to be particularly important, in the form of a malleable schedule, or plenty of free time. Temporal capital accrues heavily to those men who benefit from their wives' work to maintain the household. Retirement also opens up a great deal of free time, and it also frees the potential activist from the need to pursue practical economic activities. Often the dialect activists' life histories support claims for authentic localness, mainly in terms of geography (e.g. the neighborhood where they spent their childhood years). Each of these features serves as a resource to permit relatively public dialect activism. High status, or a strong personal reputation, give the would-be dialect documentarian a surplus of semiotic capital (Bourdieu 1977) – capital to burn. High-status people are free to associate themselves with otherwise low-status speech forms, and in fact through their metapragmatic activities they enregister "dialect" to a new context in which it conveys high prestige. Only people with certain forms of symbolic capital can use dialect in this high-prestige context. The production of high-prestige local speech does not automatically extend higher prestige to all speakers. Other symbolic resources, like minority religion status, free time, and willing audiences for amateur production, serve to spur on dialect activism. Some Catholics and other Christians, for example, already see themselves as outside of the majority Japanese cultural order. Having already found themselves in violation of certain norms, some have fewer qualms about breaking social boundaries in general, including in the matter of dialect.

It is important to note that these qualifications do not necessarily apply to all dialect-related activities. A much broader array of speakers with less capital may engage in discourses and practices surrounding dialect, but in more private settings or for more private reasons. For example, some study local speech out of a sense of personal longing due to perceived language shift within the family or the self. This sort of hobby of identity is similar to practices of heritage language learning in other contexts, including heritage language learning among diasporic populations (Avineri 2012). I expect that this activity somehow figures in the social performances of these people, but their public display does not involve the use of local speech in expanded contexts. Private dialect hobbyists typically claim to have little native competence in dialect, at least in their present stage of life. Lacking either excess capital to fritter away, or the proper positionalities to profitably deploy dialect in public, these hobbyists' activities stay under wraps and are unable to affect the overall standing of local speech forms in the community.

In this context, metalinguistic activity (of whatever sort) by public dialect activists often ends up serving the activists themselves. By setting themselves up as experts and profiting from that reputation, these people are encouraged to maximize their gains by diminishing the expertise of others. In other words, they benefit by rejecting the attempts of others to use marked local speech; they also have an incentive to exaggerate the threat to the local speech forms, and to construe the boundaries of "proper" dialect as narrowly as possible. Oshima, for example, says he believes that the Morioka dialect will disappear within two decades. But I spoke with twenty-year-old college students who consider themselves competent dialect speakers. One student at Iwate University explicitly rejects evaluations of dialect skill like the evaluations made by Oshima, due to their othering effects:

> I appreciate them using [dialect], but you know, don't force it. That's why that IBC newscaster, he's always just naturally speaking with that accent. So when he

> doesn't try to correct it, that's why it's accepted, because it's natural…. And, well, it's no good to be thought of as "being good at dialect." To think, "hey, you're good at dialect." Of course, if a Japanese person goes into the English-speaking world, if you're told "your English is good, huh," that sort of creates a barrier. If you're just talking so normally that nobody would comment on how good you are, nobody considering how good or whatever you are, can't we just have conversations like that? Once that sensation of "hey, you're good, for a Japanese person" comes up, then a barrier appears. And I think it's the same with dialect – forcing it out, "hey, you're using dialect well" – it's just obnoxious.

Beyond rejecting any evaluation of dialect skill, these comments distinguish two ways of using local dialect in the public sphere: "forced" and "natural." Many of the dialect activism activities I describe might fall into the former category, as they are planned and highly intentional. But there are some contexts where local dialects are unselfconsciously used in public as prestigious, as in the example of the unnamed IBC newscaster. This form of dialect activism is probably more effective at raising the status of the dialect, as it does not alienate speakers who are turned off by obvious mimicry of dialect. But this "natural" style of dialect activism is diffuse in its effects. Even in the few cases in which activists explicitly attempt to increase others' dialect competence, new speakers (if they can even be said to exist) are not then recognized as experts. To the extent that dialect activists recognize competent speakers besides themselves, they claim that these speakers are all very elderly. Dialect activism and the discourse of dialect endangerment create a sense that any competent speakers will be elderly. As in other circumstances, for example the Kaska language in the Yukon Territory (Meek 2007), the expectation that competent speakers must all be elderly prevents revitalization, in that it prevents children from feeling motivated to learn the language. And as in numerous other circumstances of language endangerment (e.g. Meek 2007, 2009; Loether 2009, Reynolds 2009), activists' narrow focus on supposedly "pure" language of the elders fails to recognize attempts to use the language by members of younger generations. Unlike these other cases of language shift, variation within Tōhoku Japanese is not a

matter of two distinct codes of which a speaker might use either, both, or none. The range of linguistic forms involved is much narrower, the differences are slighter, and the varieties are, by and large, mutually intelligible. It is possible that some speakers intend to express a dual or bivalent (Woolard 1998b) identity associated with both Standard Japanese and local dialect. I suspect that many speakers who lack competence in the valorized "proper" dialect forms are still bearers of dialect shibboleths that make them targets for the same kind of dialect-targeting discrimination that destroyed the "proper" forms in the first place.[11] These speakers may not "know the word in dialect for everything," but their speech still marks their geographical origins – a voiced consonant here, a rising intonation there. Huge numbers of people in Iwate and the rest of Tōhoku bear these shibboleths in their speech, but most dialect revalorization activities do nothing to help raise their status. Some unvalorized emblems of locality in speech have persisted through language shift and leveling, and they are frequent in the speech of the young people of the region. This implies that marginalization on the basis of language difference may continue unabated into the future, as valorization activities focus only on symbols that are already perceived as disappearing.

Although dialect activism may not improve the lot of most Iwate residents, they do not find it merely irrelevant. The topic of dialect revalorization per se may or may not have intimate personal meaning, but language variation is a part of everyone's lives, and the topic elicits strong reactions on that basis. Here I will describe the main themes of metapragmatic discourse.

One such theme is the hegemonic view, totally rejecting dialect. Several study participants reported others' extremely negative reactions to dialect activism. I never met anyone in Iwate who expressed such sentiments. This may be because the discourse of "disappearing" dialects makes them seem less of a threat. It may also be because the numbers of those older

residents who most strongly felt the dialect-based discrimination are dwindling. As mentioned above, older study participants talked about experiences of being shamed for their dialect and developing a "dialect inferiority complex." It is possible that those shaming activities are no longer happening. On the other hand, some potential interviewees may have avoided talking with me in part because of their negative feelings toward dialect. Perhaps speakers did not want to disappoint the foreign researcher who introduces the topic of "dialect." I do not yet know for sure why some people refused to speak with me about local language, but I suspect that some of them did have feelings of humiliation and shame toward their way of speaking. Humiliation may underlie the language changes in Tōhoku, as it seems to underlie so many social and cultural changes (Robbins 2005:12-16), but at present my data are not sufficient to carry on a lengthy discussion of the topic. A comprehensive engagement with this topic will require the collection of new data to address these concerns.

Probably the most common reaction to the topic of "dialect" was one of amusement in some form. While visiting Ōfunato, the hometown of Yamaura Harutsugu, I struck up a conversation with the staff of a ramen shop. One said he knew Yamaura through his family. I showed them a copy of Yamaura's *Kesen-go Nyūmon* (An Introduction to the Kesen Language), wondering what they would think of the radical, nearly separatist politics of the preface. For some reason or another, they were nonplussed, and they turned to the body of the text in search of examples of funny local speech. On another occasion, a member of the civic choir I joined handed me a page with three printed stories about dialect. Each was a humorous anecdote about misunderstandings created by dialect difference. Local speech and local speakers were the butt of each joke. I encountered numerous other instances in which "dialect" was conceived as "funny local words." Many expressed a hobbyist's amusement with nonstandard linguistic forms. People

who considered themselves speakers of a local variety, especially people in their seventies and older, used the conversational topic of "dialect" to demonstrate skill. Perhaps due to the influence of the discourse of dialect endangerment, or due to ideas about sociolinguistic research, when I introduced my research topic the first reaction was often to produce a word list. Speakers listed examples of local speech, asking me if I had heard *this* one before, or *that* one. On multiple occasions they returned to listing words even after I had made it clear that my primary interest was not in documenting linguistic features.

Another theme of response to the topic of dialect consisted of approbation – for local speech, and for dialect activism of various forms. Dialect activists often argued that the speech of Tōhoku or Iwate is inherently more emotionally expressive than Standard Japanese, and as evidence they would refer to lexical or syntactic items that they argued were unique to the local variety. Two popular examples in this vein were *izui* (itchy or prickling on the skin) and *shibareru* (to be extremely cold [weather]). Many interviewees claimed that local speech forms were more expressive *for them personally*, as they felt more comfortable speaking "dialect" with their family at home than speaking Standard Japanese. What these speakers considered to count as "dialect," and what they considered to be "Standard Japanese," is less clear; but the ideological framework they display is quite clear. Dialect is something that these speakers associate with their "authentic" identities, and they use the idea of local-versus-standard speech to articulate that authentic identity. Speakers who praised dialect in various ways were also likely to praise dialect activism as a morally worthy endeavor, and to express a measure of sadness over the disappearance of dialects. In my experience all speakers who expressed sadness over the perceived language shift were (or seemed to believe they were) competent speakers of Standard Japanese. I must emphasize that this is *perceived* language shift, as a significant fraction of study

participants claim to use local dialect in private contexts, and many speakers are effectively practicing a successful bidialectal adaptation.

Conclusion

Dialects are socially different from languages, and their social lives will therefore be necessarily different. Partial difference and partial intelligibility across dialect boundaries lead to asymmetrical efforts at valorization and revitalization. In Tōhoku, speakers' efforts at valorization tend to focus narrowly on iconic lexical items, and this asymmetry does not serve to elevate the status of speakers who do not bear these lexical items. This means that some identifiably local speech (e.g. via phonology) goes unvalorized. This is an ironic lacuna, in that undesirable indexes of the local were what drove the local dialect so close to extinction in the first place. The asymmetry of valorization efforts is paralleled by asymmetrical access to the kinds of capital required to engage in dialect activism in the first place.

As I outlined in describing my research methods, this is only a preliminary study, conducted over the course of a single summer, and probably full of the accidental biases of a first take on a new topic. There are many questions yet unanswered. Asymmetrical or partial revitalization is also driven to some extent by speakers' ambivalence in the context of language shift. Future research should consider the degree to which this ambivalence demonstrates the power of the Standard Language ideology. To the extent that people engage in dialect activism, they do so largely as an individual effort; dialect revalorization has not become a broad-based cultural movement. For this reason it will be important in future studies to examine the limited agency of the dialect activists, as Kroskrity (2009) has done in the case of a Western Mono language activist. Future research should consider in more depth the perspectives of day-to-day users of identifiably local language, especially people who occupy positions stereotypically

associated with Tōhoku speech. The question of ongoing humiliation and "dialect inferiority complexes" must be addressed through narratives not only of the distant past, but of the recent past and the present. The future of the "endangered dialects" of Iwate is unclear, and this also deserves further investigation. More research should be carried out to track the developments of Iwate dialects over time, especially in the tsunami-damaged coastal areas, and this research should carefully note how the future is locally imagined, including the future of local language.

Footnotes

1 Agha (2005) defines registers as "a social regularity of recognition whereby linguistic (and accompanying nonlinguistic) signs come to be recognized as indexing pragmatic features of interpersonal role (persona) and relationship" (Agha 2005:57). Halliday (1978) describes the overlap between dialect and register in the following terms:

> "the two kinds of language variety, register and dialect, are closely interconnected. The structure of society determines who, in terms of various social hierarchies of class, generation, age, sex, provenance, and so on, will have access to which aspects of the social process – and hence, to which registers...This means, in turn, that a particular register tends to have a particular dialect associated with it: the registers of bureaucracy, for example, demand the 'standard' (national) dialect, whereas fishing and farming demand rural (local) varieties. Hence the dialect comes to symbolize the register....In this way, in a typical hierarchical social structure, dialect comes to be the means by which a member gains, or is denied, access to certain registers" (Halliday 1978:186).

2 "E" stands for Everhart.

Given that there are several options for representing Japanese speech in Latin characters, I have chosen to use Hepburn romanization, which I feel is more accurate than other romanization schemes, and more accessible than the International Phonetic Alphabet, especially to Japan scholars.

To simplify the transcript, I have deleted short agreement tokens between consecutive utterances of the same speaker. These tokens function like the English "uh-huh," but they appear very frequently in Japanese. For example, in the first transcript of this paper, I produced a short agreement token between lines 1 and 2, and Imoto produced an agreement token between lines 21 and 22.

Small arrows (↑, ↓) mark the relevant intonational changes. This is not a standard or exhaustive style of intonational transcription, but the important information in the context of this paper is simply that there are different intonational contours of speech. I intend to produce a more elaborated analysis of pitch accent distinctions in future work.

3 In this example, I use the International Phonetic Alphabet for maximum clarity.

4 Ball conducted his study in Kyoto, a very different prefecture from Iwate. My research questions are also different from his, in that they entail questions of endangerment and valorization.

5 The *Sansa* dance is local to Morioka specifically, and every August, tens of thousands of taiko drummers and dancers perform varieties of the *Sansa* in a four-day festival downtown. Universities, companies, the national defense forces and other organizations fielded dance teams, all clad in colorful summer wear (*yukata*). During my research period in 2012, I joined a dance team and participated in the festival.

6 There are, to my knowledge, no precedents for the use of this term. A Google® internet search on 30 May 2013 for "dialect activism" returned only twenty results, total, of which fewer than five were actual instances of activism *about* dialect. Most results did not associate the terms other than by proximity, e.g. entries like "… dialect, activism…." Of the few relevant results, one was part of a document that I wrote myself.

7 Nagaoka Teruko (1908 – 2010) was a nationally known actress from Morioka.

8 Miyazawa Kenji (1896 – 1933) was a poet and author of children's literature from Iwate who has become a beloved local symbol.

9 From this point on, the relevant analysis is at a level of the narrative, so I present transcripts as blocks of translated English. Except for three study participants who sometimes code-switched into English, all of the data for this study were originally in some variety of Japanese.

10 Yamaura is a committed Catholic layman, and a major figure in the Tōhoku Catholic community. I find, based on observations and their own self-descriptions, that Catholics and other Christians in Japan often look on society with a critical eye. For example, Amnesty International's Japan section is dominated by Christians, especially Catholics. As a small minority (approximately 1% of the country) with a radically different metaphysical outlook from the majority, and regular religious meetings in which social and ethical themes are brought to the fore, Christians may be predisposed to develop the kind of counter-hegemonic political identity that is largely lacking from Japanese civil society. This hypothesis is not mine, but that of a Christian study participant from Morioka. Catholics in particular have the option of looking to an alternative figure of ultimate authority – not the Emperor in Tokyo, representing the nation; but the Pope in Rome, representing a universalist political paradigm. Yamaura, for his part, has submitted his Kesen-language gospel translations to the Vatican for approval as official Church documents.

11 It will be impossible to collect ethnographic examples of the subjective experience of discrimination until I have conducted more exhaustive fieldwork.

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