

Dialects of modern Japanese

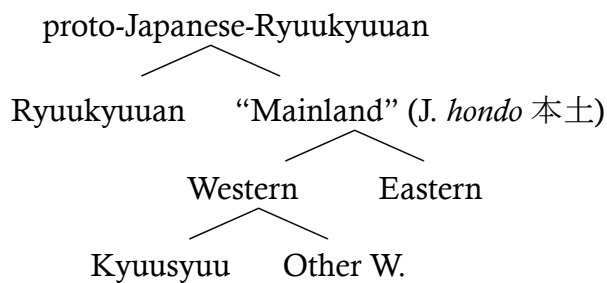
I. What is a dialect?

Everybody speaks a dialect (actually, one or more)

- Which variety (dialect) of a language becomes (the basis for) the “standard language” is a matter of sociology/political history/etc., not linguistics

(1) “Standard Japanese” — e.g., what NHK Broadcasting would like you to sound like — is based mostly on the Tokyo-area dialect (Eastern), but a few features were carryovers from Kansai-area dialects (Western)

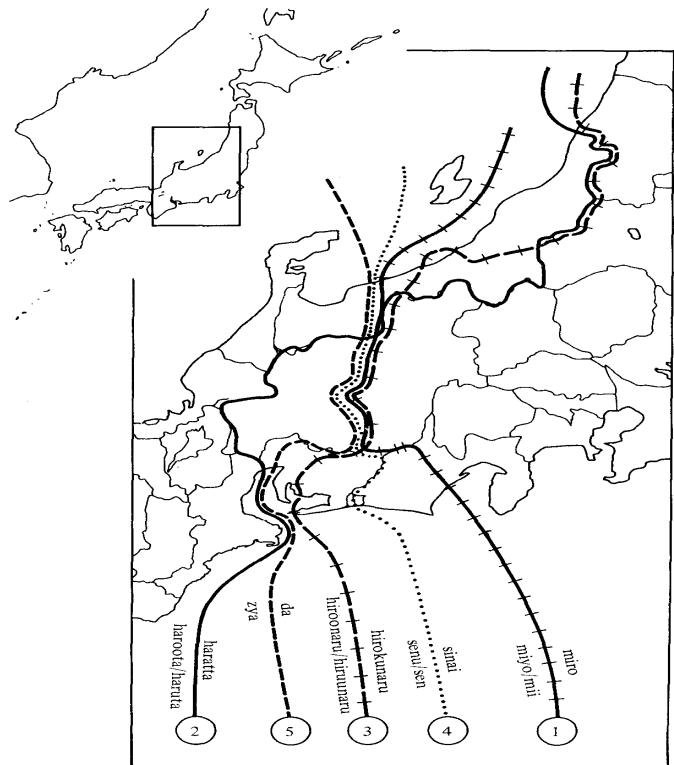
(2) Relationships among modern dialects



II. What kinds of features distinguish dialects?

- See online dialect maps and resources

- (3) Lexical differences
- (4) Phonological differences
- (5) Morphological differences
- (6) Syntactic differences



Map 6 Bundle of isoglosses separating the Western dialects and the Eastern dialects