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The Future of Tōhokuben

A sociolinguistic attitude study

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Abstract

This essay investigates the attitudes and thoughts amongst Japanese people regarding the dialects in the Tōhoku region of Japan. It aims to discover if Japanese people do think the dialect is going extinct, something which research seems to suggest. It presents a background section explaining the history of language standardization in Japan, the history of the Tōhoku region in regard to this standardization, features of the dialects in Tōhoku, as well as the disaster in 2011 which greatly affected parts of the region, something which could be a contributing factor to the way Japanese people think in regards to the extinction of the dialect.

A survey was conducted asking 111 Japanese people about this, which yielded answers correlating with the research conducted regarding the extinction of the dialects in Tōhoku. The essay reached the conclusion that Japanese people do hold the kind of attitudes towards the dialects in Tōhoku that its stereotypes and stigma contain, and also that Japanese people do believe that the dialects are going extinct. Thoughts about the extinction of the dialects in Tōhoku differed depending on age spans and geographical location, but not much depending on gender.

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Conventions

Romanization

This essay will use the modified Hepburn system when writing Japanese words. Japanese words will be written in italics, with an exception to common Japanese words in English, such as Tokyo.

Other conventions

The *Tōhoku* region encompasses a variety of different dialects, all which will be referred to as *Tōhokuben* or TB. For this essay, TB will be used following the first use of *Tōhokuben*.

Keywords

Japanese, Tōhoku, Tōhokuben, dialect, attitude, standardization, disaster, tsunami, 2011, extinction, opinions, future.

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1. Introduction

Tōhokuben has been under threat of disappearing for a long time prior to the earthquake and tsunami in 2011. But following said disaster, the situation for many local communities have become increasingly dire. Even before the disaster (and continuing afterwards), the younger generations in Tōhoku move out to larger cities in favor of a better life, and thus stop speaking their local dialect, if they even spoke it in the first place. In addition to this, people of the younger generation do not even bother learning or speaking their dialect in favor of Standard Japanese, and with the disaster in 2011 affecting the local communities hard, the dialect speakers have had it even tougher.

Due to TB being in such a vulnerable situation as it is now, the goal of this essay was to investigate,

- Whether Japanese people from Tōhoku and other parts of Japan think TB is becoming extinct or not, and their reasons why.
- Attitudes about TB, and why they have those attitudes.

2. Background

The purpose of this section is to first present previous research which heavily influenced this essay, to define what this essay refers to when mentioning “dialect”, to discuss the history of standardizing the Japanese language in relation to Tōhoku, lay forth the relevant history which has impacted the region due to its dialect, to explain the features of TB and how the features contribute to TB’s stigma, and also to describe the damage the disaster in 2011 did to the region, which is relevant to the study since it could potentially be a factor contributing to the dialect disappearing.

2.1. Previous research

Previous research about the Tōhoku region and its dialect is plentiful, many of which is used in this background section. A particular source which led to the inspiration of this essay was Everheart’s dissertation, *Speaking with an Accent in Northern Japan: Discrimination and Dialect Ideologies* (2018). His research covers the situation of TB quite extensively, with much help from intimate dialogue with participants who could explain how it is like being a speaker of TB. His research also covers the past and current history of local language activism in the region.

Further research which heavily inspired this essay was Miyake’s work *A dialect in the face of the standard: A Japanese case study* (1995) and *Prestige and stigmatization of a Japanese Dialect* (1997). These two works both cover in depth research about TB, and the latter also discussing prestige and stigmatization of dialects, relevant for the situation surrounding TB.

2.2. Defining Dialect

Before going into further detail about TB, it is important to define what this essay refers to as a “dialect”. The *Oxford Student’s Dictionary* (2012) defines dialect as “the words and pronunciations that are used in a particular area and differ from what is regarded as standard in the language as a whole”. Henceforth, this essay will refer to this definition when talking about dialect.

2.3. Standardizing Japanese

Prior to moving the government power to Tokyo, or *Edo* during the Meiji Restoration (1867), the dialect spoken in Kyoto was the true “colloquial” dialect spoken by nobles. Change was slow, but around the Meiji Restoration the landscape began to change. As *Edo* grew in

economic and political power, so did its dialect – it effectively became the lingua franca of Japanese dialect speakers (Shibatani 1990:185-186).

One of the many goals of the Meiji government was to spread the *Edo* dialect under a concept called ‘Standard language’. At this time in Japanese history, great efforts of modernizing and joining the West were made and creating a ‘Standard language’ was one such effort. Thus, Japanese textbooks for school were made based on the *Edo* dialect as the standard, but this also brought forth consequences for those speaking a dialect. Many dialect speakers fostered an inferiority complex because of their dialect due to the new changes, and further devastating incidents include a ‘dialect tag’ placed on children who spoke in a dialect (Shibatani 1990:186). There are even recorded episodes during the 1960s where people committed suicide due to not being able to speak Standard Japanese, further painting a picture of how severe the standardization process of the language in Japan was through its modernization process (Miyake 1997:1).

The spread of Standard Japanese also came through modernization of the Tōhoku region. Faster and better roads, radio, and TV all brought with it Standard Japanese quicker. Furthermore, it did not help that the local institutions, infrastructure, and public sentiment were in support for standardizing – local language was seen as uneducated, spoken by poor people, backwards, among other conceptions. This in turn is what made individuals who moved from Tōhoku to cities like Tokyo switch to Standard Japanese, so that they would not be ridiculed for their dialect (Everheart 2018:4).

2.4. The History of Tōhoku

Tōhoku is a region in the north-east of Japan, which is also the meaning of Tōhoku (its Kanji characters meaning “east” and “north”). Even though the region is close to one-fifth of the landmass in Japan, less than one-tenth of the population inhabits it (Encyclopædia Britannica. 2016. Accessed April 16, 2019).

The Tōhoku region has throughout history been a frontier of different kinds for the Japanese state. Some of these frontiers include territorial, cultural, and economic. Due to the state’s effort of modernizing Japan during the Meiji period at the turn of the 20th century, the various institutions in charge of modernizing Japan marked Tōhoku “as a backwater in a way that is still recognizable today” (Long 2011, cited by Everheart 2018:1).

The region has also been portrayed in history as both a place of warmth, but especially as a place of backwardness and rurality. This has continually been enforced by the heavily centralized media structure in Japan (the biggest media outlets are all based in Tokyo). When

coverage about e.g. Tōhoku is made, their coverage contains a biased viewpoint of (and from) the capital, effectively categorizing those outside as “others”. This means that stereotypes and views of Tōhoku have been enforced by the media (Ito 2010:193-194).

Furthermore, after the Second World War, Japan had lost its colonies and was therefore forced to rely on domestic production for its industry, making Tōhoku a region used for resource extraction. The people in the region also effectively became resources themselves for the factories in the urban Kantō region and in other places (Everheart 2018:1).

Other uses of the Tōhoku region includes it being used as a place to store nuclear power plants far away out of trouble, making it a region, or zone rather, that could be sacrificed in the event of something going wrong with the power plants (Everheart 2018:1). Of course, such an event has occurred in recent history, which Everheart (2018:1-2) claims demonstrate the inequality of regions in Japan’s state and economy, with the region’s citizens also being discriminated towards through these policies.

The perception of Tōhoku being a backwards region can also be extracted from its history. Poverty, average income (lowest in the country outside of Okinawa), poor education, scarcity of modern industry, and its heavy reliance on rice farming are all things which also help create a negative image of TB. Appearances on mass media further fuel perceptions and enforces its low status, such as a popular TV soap opera during the 1980s (Miyake 1995:219-220).

2.5. Features of Tōhokuben

TB is considered by some as the dialect furthest away from Standard Japanese, although this mostly refers to people’s attitude towards the dialect (Miyake 1995:218). In the following paragraphs below, TB’s features will be presented.

The first feature of TB is “Voicing of postvocalic voiceless stops and affricates. Stops and affricates are voiced following vowels...”. The voicing can take place across a word boundary and across a morpheme boundary, depending on the rate of speech (Miyake 1995:218, 1997:2).

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| (1) D: Udzu-do | kaedde-guru. |
| S: Ūtsu-to | kâette-kuru. |
| Hit-if | return-come |
| ‘If (you) hit (it), | (it) comes back.’ (Cited from Miyake 1995:218, his glossing) ¹ . |

¹ ‘D’ refers to dialect (TB), and ‘S’ refers to Standard Japanese (Miyake 1995:218).

The second feature of the dialect, especially in the southeastern part of Tōhoku, is the absence of a pitch accent, a feature otherwise usually very common in Japanese. A common example of this includes the Japanese word for ‘chopsticks’ and ‘bridge’, “The standard language contrasts between *hāshi* ‘chopsticks’ and *hashi* ‘bridge’... are neutralized in this area” (Miyake 1995:218, 1997:2).

The third feature of Tōhokuben, in the eastern coastal area, is the lengthening of the final mora in a phrase, also called ‘Phrase-final high-low intonation’. This means “beginning with a higher pitch than the preceding words and then dropping to and holding a midlevel” (Miyake 1995:218).

(2) Kinō	uji-sa	kaeddarā
Kinoo	ichi-e	kāettara
yesterday	home-to	return-when

‘when (I) got home yesterday...’ (Cited from Miyake 1995:218, his glossing).

The fourth feature is what has given the nickname of *Zūzūben* for TB. As Miyake puts it, “Merger of *i* and *u*. *i* /i/ and *u* /u/ merge as *u* /ki/. Furthermore, *shi* /ʃi/, *su* /su/, and *shu* /ʃu/, *zi* /dzi/, *zu* /dzu/ merge as *su* /si/ and *zu* /dzi/ respectively, yielding many homonyms” (Miyake 1995:218). Words like ‘surgical operation’, ‘seven o’clock’, and ‘historical fact’ are all pronounced the same way – “*suzuzu*”. It is especially these last mergers responsible for giving the nickname *Zūzūben* for TB (Miyake 1995:218).

The fifth feature includes using the particle *be* as a tag-particle in TB. The function of said particle is to express guessing and intention, but some subdialects only use one of these functions (Miyake 1995:218, 1997:3). “Dialect is to express intention supposition” (Fuoue 1985). This tag-particle has been treated as the symbol of ‘country-ness’ by the mass media. This is the reason why a hillbilly-like Japanese person is often pejoratively referred to as *inakappe* ‘country-ppe’” (Miyake 1997:3).

(3) Nda	be. (Tōhoku Dialect)
Soo	deshoo (Standard Japanese)

So isn't it.
 'It is so, isn't it? (Cited from Miyake 1997:3, his glossing).

- (4) Hayagu teema kangae-ppe (Tōhoku Dialect)
 Hâyaku teema kangae-yoo. (Standard Japanese)
 quick theme let's think
 'Let's think of theme quick.' (Cited from Miyake 1997:3, his glossing).

Furthermore, the sixth feature of TB is how there is relatively little difference between male and female speech. In contrast to Standard Japanese's large differences between how men and women speak, TB does not have these differences, which in turn gives the impression of the dialect being backwards. First person pronouns, such as *ore* (I), are exclusively used by men in Standard Japanese but not by speakers of TB. Men and women will also use the TB equivalent of *ora* (I) (Miyake 1995:219, 1997:3-4).

- (5) Ore yo, kinna kaze hide yo, (Tōhoku dialect, male and female)
 Ore yo, kinoo kaze hiite yo, (Standard Japanese, male)
 I yesterday cold. catch
 'Yesterday, I caught cold' (Cited from Miyake 1995:219, his glossing).

These features can cause TB to sound, as Miyake puts it, “dark” or “dismal” as well as “heavy”. When speakers of Standard Japanese hear this, it causes them to generally have a negative attitude to TB and its speakers (Miyake 1995:219). However, TB is not something of a completely lower status – there is prestige among the various dialects spoken in Tōhoku. Miyake (1995:219) brings forth an excellent example of a middle school student who moved to another region in Tōhoku and was unable to speak the local dialect there. The student was victim to verbal and physical bullying, which tragically ended in the death of the student.

Other ways TB is portrayed as a backwards dialect can be seen in the Japanese translation of *Gone with the Wind* (*GWTW*) where the minority characters use non-standard Japanese. Instead, they use Japanese strongly resembling TB, with the purpose being to reinforce the linguistic inferiority of the minorities in the work. However, not only does this create an image of the minorities in the text, but also the speakers of TB (Hiramoto 2009:249).

2.6. Disaster of 2011

Certain regions of Tōhoku has always been under the threat of severe natural disasters, such as powerful earthquakes and immense tidal waves. These natural disasters are caused by two

tectonic plates situated just outside the Sanriku coast in Tōhoku, where there also are a lot of bays situated (Amiso M. and Pratt, 2012).

The tsunami which then struck Tōhoku in 2011 was caused by an offshore Magnitude 9.0 on the Richter scale earthquake in the Pacific Ocean – its effect causing immense damage to coastal communities in prefectures such as Fukushima, Iwate, and Miyagi (Koshimura et al. 2014:560) (Alexoudi et al. 2012:1). In total, the affected area was reported as large as 561km², and in Iwate prefecture the maximum reported run-up height reached was up to 40m (Koshimura et al. 2014:560). After the tsunami, approximately 82,000 local residents lost their housing and were moved to shelters, temporary houses, and rental housing. Recovery is still undergoing, and a lot of the damage caused was due to structural vulnerability in the region (Koshimura et al. 2014:560-561).

Due to the tsunami causing such havoc in Tōhoku, the local residents had to be evacuated, and were thus placed in the previously mentioned areas. These areas exist in Tōhoku, but also in other parts of Japan. The effect of this has been harsh for speakers of various TB dialects, with some dialects under the threat of becoming extinct. This has already been the case prior to the tsunami, but it has become even more evidently so after the disaster, due to small, isolated communities disappearing in the death tolls, or that the evacuated locals switching to Standard Japanese to avoid stigma or not being understood in their new areas. The situation for TB is tough, as The Japan Times puts it: “Elderly people account for a large share of those who have returned home after the lifting of government evacuation advisories. They tend to live in isolation and have fewer opportunities to speak in their dialects”, and a dialect researcher The Japan Times interviewed said: “Three-generation families were not rare previously, but evacuations after the nuclear accident split up many families and destroyed communities” (The Japan Times, 2018. Accessed 12 April, 2019).□

2.6.1. Evacuation

It is estimated that around 300,000 people were forced to evacuate from their homes following the earthquake and subsequent tsunami, with the death toll of people missing reaching around 20,000 people. Where the earthquake heavily affected the area, locals were forced to permanently leave their homes which in turn will cause Tōhoku to depopulate (Japan For Sustainability. 2014. Accessed 12 April, 2019).

2.6.2. Depopulation

Since the postwar era, areas far away from the nation’s political, economic, and cultural center of Tokyo have experienced major issues regarding depopulation. Tōhoku is one such

region. The effects of this depopulation have been documented by various ethnographers, highlighting the effects such as scarcity of young people, lack of decent jobs, large number of senior citizens, and more (Traphagan and Knight, 2003:89).

As well as depopulation already taking place since the postwar era, speaking in dialects also has the potential to make the speaker stressed, and thus they prefer to switch to Standard Japanese. This is especially the case for speakers of TB, and since many young people move out to the larger cities, such as Tokyo, the result is fewer and fewer people are speaking the local TB dialects (Japan For Sustainability. 2014. Accessed 12 April, 2019).

3. Survey

In the following section, I will explain my chosen method of research to investigate the opinions of Japanese people regarding my topic, explain certain word choices in the survey, provide information about the respondents, and discuss the results which were central in answering this essay's questions – “Whether Japanese people from Tōhoku and other parts of Japan think TB is becoming extinct or not, and their reasons why” and “Attitudes about TB, and why they have those attitudes”.

3.1. Methodology

The chosen method of research was a survey conducted through Google Forms. For this reason, a few key points need to be addressed. While it would have been preferable to limit each respondent to one response, this option could unfortunately not be chosen due to it effectively limiting the number of respondents, because Google Forms only allows this setting to be turned on if the participant has signed into their Google account. In the hopes of not excluding people without a Google account, this setting was turned off. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that there could be multiple responses from the same person, regardless of the obligation to only answer once. To ensure that there were not multiple answers from the same person, each answer was reviewed manually to ensure that there were not any duplicated responses. As well as this, checking all the responses for unserious or illegitimate responses was also conducted.

The survey included a total of 27 questions, where 7 questions were optional, or follow-up questions, depending on what the respondent answered. Some of these optional questions were intended for speakers of TB, but non-speakers of TB may also have answered these questions due to misunderstanding, or not reading the questions carefully enough. As previously mentioned, checking each response to make sure it was relevant was carried out. The purpose of some of the optional questions was to allow the respondents to further elaborate on their answers, but also to provide more insight on their particular opinions and attitudes. The survey therefore contained mostly quantitative, but also qualitative questions. Furthermore, both fixed choice questions and free-text questions were asked.

One of the key interests of this study was to see if respondents from the Tōhoku region answered differently from those outside of it. Thus, it was crucial to distribute the survey among respondents in said region. This was accomplished by mailing the survey link to a professor at a Tōhoku University, who in turn distributed it amongst students there. Furthermore, a post in a Facebook group was made to see if there were any Swedish people in

Japan that could potentially distribute the link amongst Japanese people from Tōhoku. This got me in touch with a Swedish person working in Tome, Miyagi who did his best to distribute my survey amongst his co-workers. Apart from the above methods mentioned, spreading the survey as much as possible on social media (e.g. groups on Facebook), and with the help of friends, who shared the survey on their social media as well, was conducted.

3.2. Word Choices

The various dialects in Tōhoku was simply referred to as TB so the respondents could understand the survey touched upon the region's various dialects in general.

For question 8 in part 3 (see appendix A), rather than having exact ages, age groups were more appropriate so it would be easier for the respondents to categorize whichever group they believed spoke TB the most. This also made it easier to process the age group data after the survey was completed.

In part 4.5 and part 5 (see appendix A), simple words that could describe how TB and Standard Japanese sounds were used so it would be easy to see what type of perceptions the respondents had of both ways of speaking.

In part 9, question 25 (see appendix A), the words “pessimistic” and “optimistic” were used to describe how respondents who had given a particular answer in the previous question felt about that situation. The purpose was to investigate how they felt towards TB disappearing – optimistic or pessimistic. These words ultimately held an emotional aspect, which would more accurately portray how the respondents felt about the previous question.

3.3. Respondents

The survey was distributed using Google Forms, and resulted in a total of 111 responses. Help from my professor at Lund University to spread it to Tōhoku University yielded great results. As well as this, like previously mentioned, contact with a Swedish individual who lives in Tōhoku who also spread the survey amongst his co-workers was established. In total, 37 out of 111 replies were from Tōhoku individuals.

Non-Tōhoku individuals was also a group of interest, which lead to spreading the survey in any way possible. Non-Tōhoku individuals were interesting since it would give the possibility to compare the responses from Tōhoku people with those who are not and see if there are any differences. Posts on personal social media (e.g. groups on Facebook containing mostly Japanese people) and requesting friends to spread the survey amongst their social networks proved to be very successful. As a result, 111 responses were recorded.

Table 1: Respondent’s age – Information about the respondents

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
<i>Age</i>	
18-29	91 replies (81.98%)
30-46	14 replies (12.61%)
50+	6 replies (5.40%)
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	39 replies (35.13%)
Female	72 replies (64.86%)
<i>Home Region</i>	
東北 (Tōhoku)	37 replies (33.3%)
関東 (Kantō)	50 replies (45%)
北陸 (Hokuriku)	1 reply (0.9%)
中部 (Chūbu)	10 replies (9%)
関西 (Kansai)	6 replies (5.40%)
中国 (Chūgoku)	1 reply (0.9%)
四国 (Shikoku)	1 reply (0.9%)
九州 (Kyūshū)	5 replies (4.5%)

The largest sample group were respondents in the age span 18-29. While it would have been preferable to have a similar number of respondents in the other age spans as well, this survey investigated whether Japanese people think TB is going extinct or not, and thus younger people’s answers are the most interesting in the sense that they are part of the future generations.

More than half of the respondents were women. This was probably due to some of the friends who were asked to distribute the survey were women, and thus they relayed it to their female friends.

The questions asked regarding their home region above served the purpose to see which respondents were from Tōhoku or not fairly quickly. However, some respondents could still speak TB even if Tōhoku is not their home region. Thus, it is important to keep that in mind when looking at the upcoming results.

3.4. Results

In this section, the results from the survey will be presented, and I will go through them and their answers. I have chosen to focus on presenting the questions that I deem central to answering the purpose of this essay – “Whether Japanese people from Tōhoku and other parts of Japan think TB is becoming extinct or not, and their reasons why” and “Attitudes about TB, and why they have those attitudes”. The remaining results (their tables) have been placed in appendix B. Furthermore, I will summarize how the respective age groups, genders, and geographical locations (three variable groups) all answered in questions 9a – 9d, 10a – 10b, 12a – 12b, and 13a – 13b. A general discussion about the results will follow in the 4. **Discussion** section.

For questions 5, 8b, 8d, 9b, 9d, 10b, 13a, and 13b, the groups of answers which the respondents gave have been constructed from personal interpretation of all the given answers due to some of the answers effectively resembling one another in some way. In other words, each respondent’s answer has been included in one of the groups contained in the tables. Furthermore, some of these tables deal with the total number of relevant respondents due to some answers being insufficient or irrelevant to the analysis of the results.

3.4.1. Question 4

Which age groups speaks TB the most, do you think?

Table 5: Which age group speaks TB the most, according to the respondents.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
Older people	104 replies (93.69%)
Middle age people	7 replies (6.3%)
Younger people	0 replies (0%)

As expected, the vast majority of respondents think that the older generations speak TB the most. This then confirms the stereotypes of TB being a dialect spoken primarily by the older generations.

3.4.2. Question 5

What image of TB speaking people do you have?

Table 6: What various types of images the respondents have of speakers of TB.

Total number of respondents:	108 respondents
Warm image	10 replies (9.25%)
Countryside	18 replies (16.66%)
Calm, gentle, easy going	25 replies (23.14%)
Elderly person	6 replies (5.55%)
Love for local area	7 replies (6.48%)
Difficult to understand, unclear, strongly accented	18 replies (16.66%)
Someone from Tōhoku, lived there for a long time	7 replies (6.48%)
No particular image, no answer	13 replies (12.03%)
<i>Other</i>	
Individual	1 reply (0.92%)
Age dependent	1 reply (0.92%)
Use few words	1 reply (0.92%)

The answers to this question were all reviewed and revealed that 108 responses were valid. On this question, the respondents could elaborate on their image of a speaker of TB. As previously discussed in the background, quite a few responses are those of the “countryside”, “elderly person”, and “difficult to understand”. There does not seem to be a negative image of TB speakers, but stereotypes mentioned in the **2. Background** section remain.

3.4.3. Question 6a

Have you ever heard TB?

Table 7: If the respondents have heard TB or not.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
Yes	103 replies (92.79%)
No	8 replies (7.2%)

The results from this question indicate that the majority of respondents have heard TB. These 103 respondents were thus directed to question 5b, while the other 8 skipped to question 7.

3.4.4. Question 6b – Question 7

Following are the results from questions 6b through question 7. These questions asked various characteristics about TB and Standard Japanese.

The characteristic which differ the most between TB and Standard Japanese is undoubtedly how easy it is to understand. When comparing the results in Table 8.1, the notions and stereotypes that TB is hard to understand, or some kind of countryside dialect is confirmed. This could further be emphasized when looking at table 8.2, where the respondents could answer how smart each respective way of speaking sounds. Apart from these two characteristics, there is no major difference between the two in the other tables. Smaller differences can be observed in table 8.3 asking how funny each respective way of speaking sounds, and how kind the way of speaking sounds in table 8.4. TB clearly sounds funnier to the respondents compared to Standard Japanese, a result which TB’s various stereotypes and stigma could contribute to. When it comes to comparing how kind they both sound, it is interesting to see how TB is deemed kinder than its Standard Japanese counterpart. One could speculate that due to its originality when compared to the way Japanese is spoken in for example, Tokyo, TB sounds more gentle, easy going, and calm (as in Question 5, table 6 which talked about the various images of TB speakers the respondents held) due to its dialectal features.

Table 8.1: How easy TB and Standard Japanese is to understand.

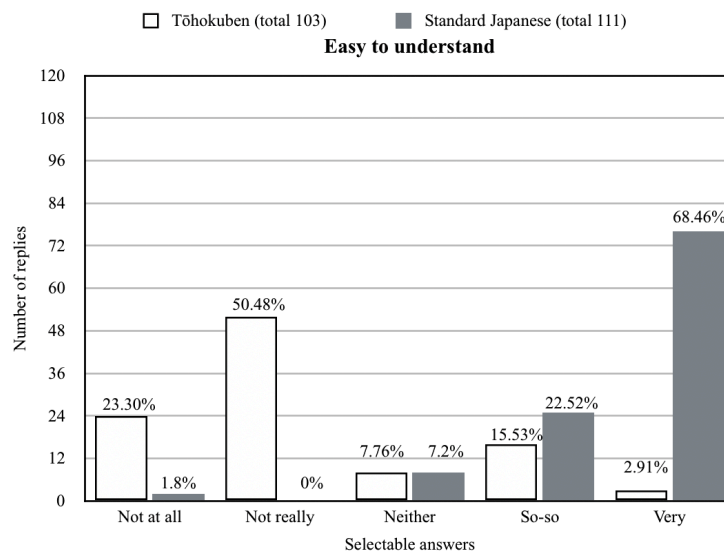


Table 8.2: How smart TB and Standard Japanese sound.

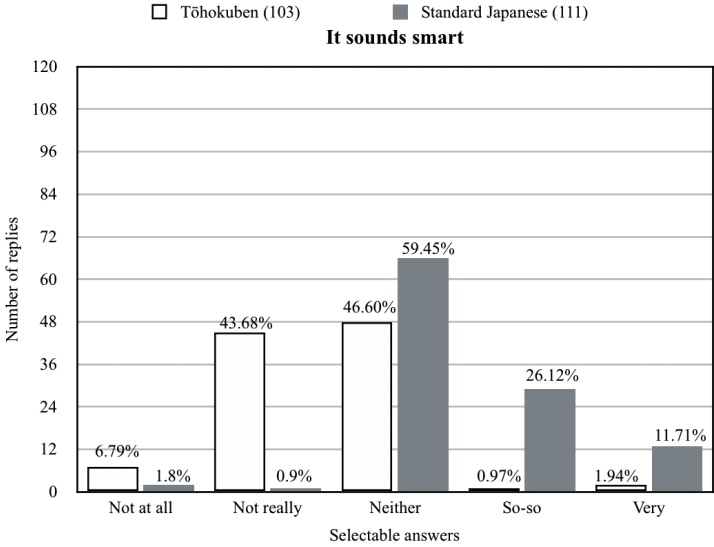


Table 8.3: How funny TB and Standard Japanese sound.

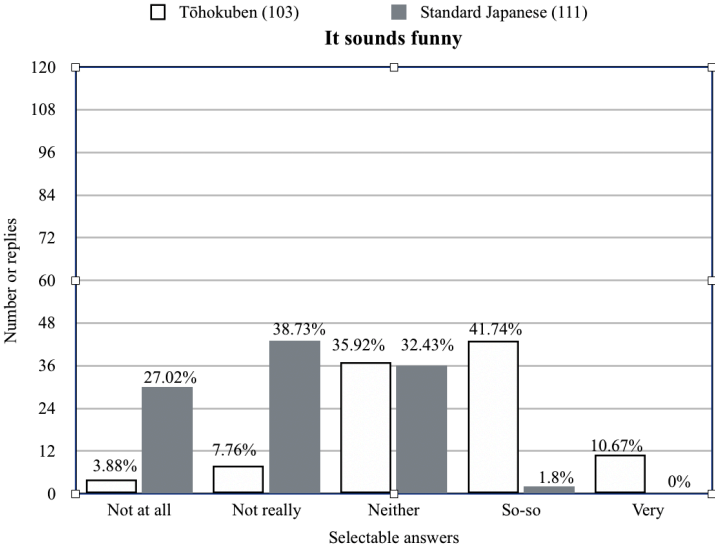


Table 8.4: How kind TB and Standard Japanese sound.

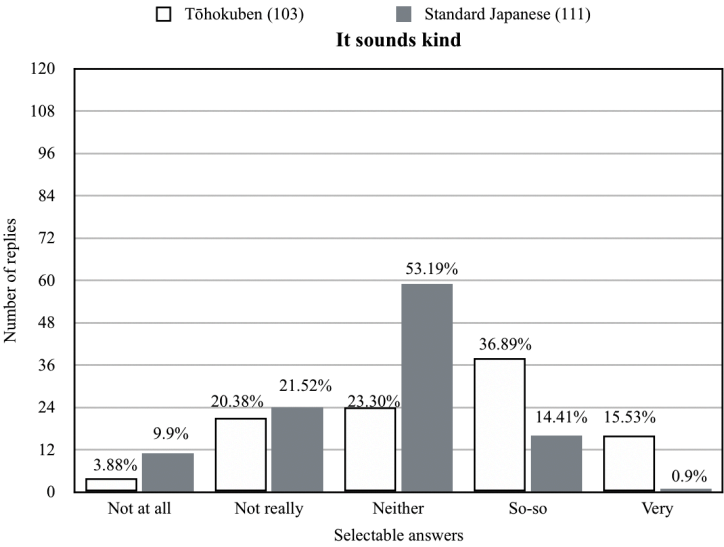
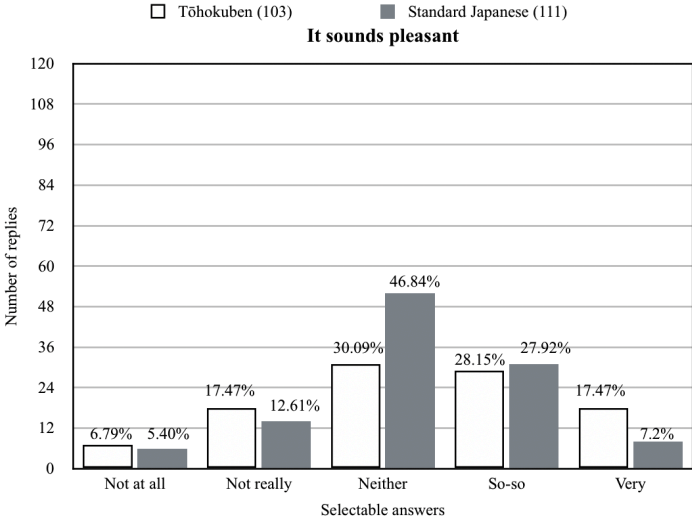


Table 8.5: How pleasant TB and Standard Japanese sound.



3.4.5. Question 9a

What is the impression towards TB amongst people in Tōhoku, do you think?

Table 11.1: The impression towards TB in Tōhoku.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
Good	35 replies (31.53%)
Neither good nor bad	55 replies (49.54%)
Bad	8 replies (7.2%)
Do not know	13 replies (11.71%)

This table presents the impression towards TB in Tōhoku, while table 11.2 (question 9b) in the section below elaborates on their reasons why.

3.4.5.1. Age Spans

In the age span 18-29, most the majority of respondents thought the impressions towards TB in the region was “neither good nor bad” or “good”. As for why they thought so, the most common response was that “it is the normal way of speaking or way of life there”.

The age span 30-46 answered similarly, with the reasons given also being virtually the same as the younger age span.

The age span 50-64 thought the impression of TB in the region itself was “good”, and when looking at the reasons why, it does not differ much from what the other age spans answered.

It would appear then that the overall impression towards TB in the region itself, according to the respondents, does not differ depending on age.

3.4.5.2. Gender

Looking at gender, women answered that the impression is either “good”, or “neither good nor bad”. Taking a look then at the reasons given why, it becomes clear that women thought that “it is just the normal way of speaking”, or “normal way of life there”.

Men answered very much the same regarding what they thought the impression towards TB is like in the region. As for reasons why, it was mostly the same as women. However, a few men also answered that they thought people in the region held thoughts of “protecting their dialect, the dialect being the individuality of the region”, an answer observable in table 11.2.

It would appear then that male respondents thought people in the region are perhaps prouder of their dialect and would like to protect it? Apart from this, there were not many differences between the gender's responses.

3.4.5.3. Geographical Location

The respondents from Tōhoku themselves thought that the impression towards TB in the region was “good”, or “neither good nor bad”. Looking then at the reasons why, the majority of answers are those saying that “it is the normal way of life or speaking there”.

Those outside of Tōhoku answered slightly different, with some respondents thinking that the impression towards TB in the region was bad. The reasons why they thought the impression was “bad” was due to TB “not being spoken so much in the region, or unlike people in e.g. the *Kansai* region, many people do not like their dialect”. Apart from these answers, people outside Tōhoku thought that the impression towards TB was “good”, or “neither good nor bad”, and when explaining why they thought so, they wrote that “it is the normal way of life, or normal way of speaking there”.

Looking then at geographical location, there is basically no difference in answers from people in Tōhoku or not. The only small difference being non-Tōhoku people thinking that some may hold a negative view towards TB due to it not being spoken as much as e.g. dialects in the *Kansai* region, which could be due to incidents where TB speaking people they have met did not speak TB for various reasons (perhaps those mentioned in the background section).

3.4.6. Question 9b

Why do you think so?

Table 11.2: Why the respondents thought the impression towards TB was that way inside Tōhoku.

Total number of relevant respondents:	86 respondents
Familiarity, “standard language” in Tōhoku	47 replies (54.65%)
Sense of pride, want to preserve it	9 replies (10.46%)
Inferiority complex	9 replies (10.46%)
Individuality	5 replies (5.81%)
Do not care, not a nice dialect	6 replies (6.97%)
<i>Other</i>	
For elderly it is normal, but not for younger people.	1 reply (1.16%)
Those without a dialect also long for one	1 reply (1.16%)
No impression	8 reply (9.30%)

3.4.7. Question 9c

What is the impression towards TB amongst people outside Tōhoku, do you think?

Table 11.3: The impression towards TB outside Tōhoku.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
Good	18 replies (16.21%)
Neither good nor bad	50 replies (45.05%)
Bad	26 replies (23.42%)
Do not know	17 replies (15.31%)

This table presents the impression towards TB outside Tōhoku, while table 11.4 (question 9d) in the section below elaborates on their reasons why.

Looking at the results from this table, we can see something different from the answers in table 11.1 above. The responses are more spread out, but there seems to be an opinion that the impression towards TB outside the region is fairly neutral, if not somewhat bad.

3.4.7.1. Age Spans

Looking at the age span 18-29, the results differ from the results in question 9a. Quite a lot more respondents thought that the impression of TB **outside** the region amongst people was “bad”, or “countryside like”. The majority of responses were “neither good nor bad”. Looking then at why respondents answered this way, a common trend of answers was that “it is difficult to understand”. The background section of this essay talked about the features of TB and the stigma surrounding TB, something which appears to be confirmed in this question in regard to what non-Tōhoku people have of an impression of the dialect. This could then predict the usage of TB in the future, e.g. if speakers of the dialect are continuously seen as speaking a “countryside” dialect, they may continue to stop speaking it in favor of Standard Japanese, which does not hold the stigma and impressions TB does?

The age span 30-46 also answered differently from the previous question, with a majority answering “bad” when asked about how they think the impression of TB amongst people **outside** the region is. Just as the younger age span answered on this question, most answered that it was “difficult to understand” or “countryside like”.

The age span 50-64 answered differently from the other two age spans. The majority answered, “neither good nor bad”, and when asked to explain why, the answers were quite divided. The reasons why include “it depends on the person” and “difficult to understand”. Comparing these answers to how the age span 50-64 answered in the previous question and we notice more of a difference. The older generation seem to be unsure about what type of impression they think non-Tōhoku people have.

A difference between how the age spans answered can be seen in the reasons why they answered a certain way. The younger age span who answered that the impression of TB **outside** the region was good all gave reasons such as “dialects are cute”, “they like dialects”, and “it is warm”. These responses were quite surprising, as I would not imagine TB holding such impressions outside the region. However, if non-Tōhoku people were to hold some of these impressions, could it lead to the dialect becoming popular amongst younger generations due to “cuteness” or it being a “popular” trend amongst younger people?

3.4.7.2. Gender

The way women answered shows a quite even distribution of responses. However, in contrast to how women answered in question 9a, a lot more answered “bad” on this question. Like in the age span section for this question, the reasons for why all included “it is difficult to understand” and “countryside like”.

As for men, most of them answered “neither good nor bad”, but there were more answers for “bad” compared to how men answered in the previous question 9a. Like women, the reasons given why they answered this way included “it is difficult to understand” and similarly. The way men and women responded to this question does not seem to differ then.

In terms of the “cuteness” responses when looking at the differences between how the genders replied, women were more likely to answer this if they had put in the impression amongst people **outside** the region was “good”.

3.4.7.3. Geographical Location

More people from Tōhoku answered that the impression amongst people **outside** the region towards TB was bad compared to how they answered in question 9a. Similarly to how the different age spans and genders replies when asked why they thought so, the people from Tōhoku responded with “it is difficult to understand” and “countryside like” dialect. These answers then seem to indicate that people in Tōhoku are aware of the stigma and stereotypes of TB, and they seem to think that this is also the impression people outside the region hold. However, looking at those who answered that the impression was “good”, the answers are those of “it is cute” and “they like dialects”.

As for non-Tōhoku people, the absolute majority think that the impression outside the region is “neither good nor bad”, but there are also a lot of answers for “bad”. The few answers for “good” again contain those of “it is cute” and “they like dialects”.

Comparing how these two groups then responded is quite interesting. While people from Tōhoku seem to think that there is a negative impression of the TB, but also a good one, the non-Tōhoku people seem to be more pessimistic than Tōhoku people themselves. If they are not pessimistic, they replied with answers similar to “it depends on the individual”. This leads me to believe that the people outside Tōhoku are more worried about the dialect, or more likely to think that its future is dark. A reason for this could be because of their outside perspective, something given to them by the heavily centralized media from Tokyo?

3.4.8. Question 9d

Why do you think so?

Table 11.4: Why the respondents thought the impression towards TB was that way outside Tōhoku.

Total number of relevant respondents:	106 respondents
Difficult to understand/communicate, countryside	45 replies (42.45%)
Depends on interest, not much thought given	13 replies (12.26%)
Limited knowledge about it	13 replies (12.26%)
Depends on the individual/region/age	19 replies (17.92%)
Dialects are cute/warm/rare	16 replies (15.09%)

3.4.9. Question 10a

What do you think about TB's future?

Table 12.1: What the respondents think about TB's future.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
There is still hope	5 replies (4.5%)
There is still a little hope	14 replies (12.61%)
Do not know	26 replies (23.42%)
Worried	55 replies (49.54%)
Very worried	11 replies (9.9%)

3.4.9.1. Age Spans

The majority of responses in the age span 18-29 are either “worried” or “very worried” about TB’s future. When asked why they answered this, the only answer was that “speakers of TB are decreasing”, “urbanization limiting its use”, and “depopulation of the region”. There were a few respondents who answered, “there is still hope”, and their reason for picking that answer was due to “some people still speaking TB” or “there is awareness of the situation”.

For the ages 30-46, it was fairly evenly distributed compared to the younger age span. Those who were worried answered similarly to what the younger age span did, but those who answered, “there is still hope” had replies such as “there are interesting words” and “it will not go away”. This is obviously quite different from the younger age span’s answers, perhaps

indicating a different attitude towards the situation surrounding TB. Perhaps the younger generations which are now growing up are realizing that they will not be able to experience Tōhoku's various dialects like the older generations could, and therefore are more worried about its future?

The age span 50-64, albeit a small group, were mostly worried about TB's future. Since most speakers of TB tend to be of the older generations, it comes as no surprise that when asked to explain why they felt this way, their answers consisted of "speakers of TB are decreasing", as well as "younger people are not speaking TB". Those who said that "there is still hope" gave interesting answers such as "the trend to value the uniqueness of regions will increase" indicate similar thoughts that the age span 18-29 mentioned.

What can then be said about TB's future in regards to age spans is that the youngest ages and the oldest ages are the most concerned, but also those who hold the most creative opinions if they hold hope (in contrast to the reasons given by the age span 30-46 in regards to "there is still hope").

3.4.9.2. Gender

The majority of women that answered these questions were worried about TB's future. The reasons given were that "younger speakers do not speak TB anymore", "Standard Japanese is more convenient", and "speakers of TB are decreasing". A number of women did answer that they hold hope for the future, with similar reasons as those mentioned in the age spans section.

As for men, it follows a similar pattern to women – most are worried about TB's future, and the reasons being "speakers are decreasing", "younger people do not speak it", and "Standard Japanese is more convenient". Men also held some hope for the future, but their reasons differ somewhat from that of their female counterpart. Men who answered "there is still hope" seem to think that nothing will happen, that is to say, TB will not disappear. It could be the case that men are oblivious to TB's situation, or simply do not care enough to think the situation is as it is for TB – tough.

3.4.9.3. Geographical Location

The respondents from Tōhoku are mostly worried about TB's future, with previously mentioned reasons as to why recurring. There are answers that say, "there is hope", and when looking into why, we see answers basically saying, "it is still being used", "it will continue being used", and "there will be those who cherish local uniqueness".

Looking at answers from non-Tōhoku people, the majority here is also worried about TB’s future. We can see the same type of answers here. Taking a look at the few answers saying, “there is hope”, we can see a little difference from the answers from Tōhoku people. Non-Tōhoku people wrote that “awareness around the dialect is increasing”, which is different from Tōhoku people’s answers. This seems to entail that while both groups (geographical) roughly feel the same about TB’s future, albeit with different reasons concerning those people who are hopeful about it.

3.4.10. Question 10b

Why do you think so?

Table 12.2: Why the respondents hold such a thought about TB’s future.

Total number or relevant respondents:	105 respondents
Speakers of TB are decreasing/depoulation	77 replies (73.33%)
Sometimes used, dialectal awareness	17 replies (16.19%)
Limited knowledge about the current situation	11 replies (10.47%)

3.4.11. Question 12a

What do you think the current state of TB is?

Table 14: What state TB is in.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
Still widely used	11 replies (9.9%)
Used sometimes	13 replies (11.71%)
Disappearing a little	55 replies (49.54%)
Disappearing	13 replies (11.71%)
Cannot tell	19 replies (17.11%)

The majority of responses from this question indicate that the respondents think TB is “disappearing a little”, with an additional 11.71% thinking it is “disappearing”. This means that more than half of the people who answered this survey believe the state of TB to be one of disappearing. Almost 20% could not tell what the state is, and even though there was also

around 20% who answered that it is “used sometimes” or “still widely used”, the data is clear – most respondents think that TB is disappearing.

3.4.11.1. Age Spans

The majority of respondents in the age span 18-29 thinks TB is “disappearing” or “disappearing a little. There are a few answers for “used sometimes” and “widely used”, but it is clear that the younger respondents think TB is disappearing.

As for the age span 30-46, there are two groups of answers – those who think it is “disappearing”, and those who think “it is still widely used”. The interesting part about this group is that there is not a large difference between how many respondents thought it is either disappearing or being used. We can therefore see a clear difference in this age span group and the younger one, where the younger group seems more certain in the disappearance of TB.

The age span 50-64 thought more or less similarly to the youngest age span.

It would appear then that the biggest difference in terms of age when discussing the current state of TB is that of the “middle aged” individuals. Perhaps the groups who still speak TB (the older individuals) and the groups which are growing up in a society where TB is not what it once was (the young individuals) are the most afflicted groups, in terms of standardization, and because of that are more likely to answer that TB is “disappearing”?

3.4.11.2. Gender

When looking at the two genders, the majority of women thought TB is “disappearing” or “disappearing a little”. There is a respectable amount who answered, “it is still used” or “it is still widely used”.

Looking then at how men answered, the absolute majority think TB is “disappearing” or “disappearing a little. Quite few thought “it is still being used”, which differs from how women answered. As well as this difference, men’s answers are different from in question 10a & 10b, which talked about TB’s future. It is interesting how some of them held a negative view of TB’s future, but in this question, are almost all in agreement that TB is “disappearing”.

3.4.11.3. Geographical Location

There is a large group of respondents from Tōhoku that think TB is “disappearing” or “disappearing a little”, and also a respectable group who believe “it is still being used” or “it is still widely being used”.

As for non-Tōhoku people, the majority believe it is “disappearing” or “disappearing a little”. There are also answers for “it is still being used” or “it still widely being used”, but perhaps the most interesting difference is that there are many answers for “cannot tell”.

This would then indicate that while both people from Tōhoku and non-Tōhoku people generally think TB is disappearing, there is a group amongst non-Tōhoku people unsure about the current situation. The cause of this could potentially be due to them not having a close connection to TB, and thus being unsure about the current state?

3.4.12. Question 12b

If you think it is disappearing/disappearing a little, how does that make you feel?

Table 15: How the respondents feel about TB disappearing.

Total number of respondents (reliable):	68 respondents
Meaning of numbers below:	5 = Very Optimistic, 1 = Very Pessimistic
1	16 replies (23.52%)
2	34 replies (50%)
3	17 replies (25%)
4	1 reply (5.88%)
5	0 replies (0%)

Before reflecting upon these results, I must raise an important point about this question. The target audience was those who thought TB is “disappearing/disappearing a little”. Also, this question dealt with asking the respondents how they felt about TB disappearing, that is to say if they felt optimistic or pessimistic about that. However, some people who did not answer “disappearing/disappearing a little” still answered this question. After checking which answers were legitimate answers from those who answered “disappearing/disappearing a little”, a total of 68 respondents were left.

3.4.13. Question 13a

How do you think the lives of people who were evacuated from the Fukushima disaster are now?

Table 16.1: How the respondents think evacuated people's lives are now.

Total number of relevant respondents:	105 respondents
Depends on the individual	20 replies (19.04%)
It is tough/not returned home	71 replies (67.61%)
Slowly improving	14 replies (13.33%)

Many respondents indicate that the people who evacuated the areas around Fukushima are “still struggling”, with “many unable to return home”, or “being forced to permanently live somewhere else forever”. The second largest group, however, said that it “depended on the individual”, an answer which was unexpected.

3.4.14. Question 13b

Due to the evacuation, how do you think the evacuated people's dialects were affected?

Table 16.2: How the respondents think the evacuation affected evacuated people's dialect.

Total number of relevant respondents:	98 respondents
Switch to Standard Japanese/usage decreasing	59 replies (60.20%)
No change	30 replies (30.61%)
Depends on individual	8 replies (8.16%)
Discriminated against	1 reply (1.02%)

As predicted, most respondents are under the impression that the evacuation affected speakers negatively, that being the dialect being spoken less, usage decreasing, or being replaced by Standard Japanese. The most interesting aspect of this question were the 30 replies saying that the disaster did not really affect the dialect's usage. Common trends of answers in this group of replies were that speakers of TB would not switch, or that since they probably were in communities of evacuated people who also spoke TB.

3.4.14.1. Age Spans

For the ages 18-29, the majority of respondents believe that the disaster affected the evacuated people's dialect negatively, that being "it has made their dialect decrease in usage". There is a respectable amount of answers for "it has not affected their dialect", and a few answers effectively saying, "it depends on the individual".

Taking a look at the age span 30-46, we can see somewhat similar results to the younger ages.

The age answers from the age span 50-64 are different though. They are almost entirely consisting of "it has made their dialect decrease in usage".

Looking then at how the ages responded, we can see that overall, all groups believe that the disaster affected the usage of TB negatively. Some of the younger people, however, also believe that it had no effect at all on the usage of speaker's dialect. Younger ages in previous questions answered that there is "awareness" around TB, and perhaps this could also be the case for this question – because of the "awareness" regarding TB, and this disaster that happened, the process of protecting the dialect might be undertaken to a higher degree?

3.4.14.2. Gender

When looking at how the two genders responded, their answers are very much similar. The majority of answers believe the disaster affected the evacuated people's dialect negatively, with the second largest group not thinking it had an effect on their dialect. The answers therefore do not differ much depending on gender.

3.4.14.3. Geographical Location

The respondents from Tōhoku did answer that the disaster affected speaker's dialect negatively, but quite a few responded with that it did not. What is more interesting is how non-Tōhoku people are mostly under the impression that it affected the speaker's dialect negatively, with fewer people thinking that it did not affect their dialect. It would seem then that Tōhoku individuals themselves do not believe such an event as the 2011 disaster would affect the dialect spoken in the region. It could also indicate that they have more hope and knowledge about how the situation for evacuated people is, seeing as they are possibly closer and more up to date on the current state compared to non-Tōhoku individuals.

Non-Tōhoku individuals could also foster a slightly different view from reality due to Japanese media, like previously talked about, being centralized in Tokyo and holding that

viewpoint when reporting. In any case, we can clearly see that respondents' answers differ depending on their geographical location.

4. Discussion

The results from the survey indicate that the respondents think TB is going extinct, with reasons why presented in research conducted about said topic (presented in the **2. Background** section) again repeated when asked Japanese people what they think and why. The interesting aspect of this is that non-Tōhoku people were more likely to answer that the future for TB is negative, even though they most likely have less knowledge about the situation compared to their Tōhoku people counterpart. This could be due to the media coverage of the situation, following the structure of the media mentioned in the **2. Background** section. People not from Tōhoku who would learn about the situation from the Tokyo-centralized media, a perspective which could very well exaggerate or understate the situation, would then have a different view compared to the people who are more directly in contact with the development of TB.

The majority of respondents in this survey were that of the younger generations, so it is still unclear how extensively the middle age and older generations think when asked about TB's future and extinction. What can be said following these results is that the majority of the younger generations believe TB is going extinct, with their reasons for why containing, at least partly, the various attitudes held around TB. These are then in turn the negative attitudes (stereotypes and stigmas) and are also those attitudes which research indicate is a contributing factor leading the dialects in Tōhoku towards extinction. Why the younger generations responded in this manner could be due to personal experience. The younger generations are the ones unlikely to continue speaking their dialect (if they possessed one) in favor of switching to Standard Japanese due to its position as a lingua franca in Japan. However, they are also likely to be worried about this unfolding of events, and even consider that speakers of TB should continue speaking it and protect it.

In regard to the comparison between TB and Standard Japanese, the attitudes surrounding TB are most evident in the graphs comparing the two in tables 8.1, 8.2, and 8.4. Perhaps the most interesting discovery presented after comparing the two is how plain Standard Japanese is viewed, that is to say that there is nothing special about it. Respondents did give answers indicating a form of jealousy or admiration of dialects in the questions that followed, something which could be a result of the large focus of making the Japanese spoken in Tokyo (considered Standard Japanese) throughout history and even currently. By making a particular way of speaking the standard, that can in turn lead it to losing its defining and

interesting features, and perhaps even creating dislike towards it from those who do not speak it.

Additionally, the disaster of 2011 in Fukushima was something deemed a factor in leading to the extinction of TB, although there were answers also indicating the opposite. Here again we can observe that the respondents' answers correlate with that of the research. However, like mentioned, there were those answers which suggested otherwise. These were the answers that said that the disaster and displacement of inhabitants in Fukushima had no effect on their usage of dialect. One could speculate on this answer being given is due to knowledge of the situation not well known to those not directly or closely affected. What I am suggesting is that although research and the overall opinion suggest that the disaster had adverse consequences on the dialects spoken and its speakers, perhaps the situation is not as severe as actually perceived and portrayed by the media.

5. Conclusion & Summary

To summarize the results from the survey, the majority of respondents held attitudes and opinions regarding TB and individuals from Tōhoku which corresponded with what was presented in the background section. The general consensus seems to be that the respondents hold a negative view of TB's future, and when asked about how things are currently, most are pessimistic. Although this is the case, the respondents would like speakers of TB to continue to speak their dialects, with non-Tōhoku respondents giving interesting answers when asked about their impressions of TB.

The respondents' answers do not seem to differ much depending on their gender, but their age spans and geographical location played a role in their answers. Younger respondents and older respondents seem to be more concerned about TB going extinct than their "middle age" counterpart. Why this is the case I have speculated about in the above section, but it is not a certainty. The younger age span and the older are therefore more likely to believe TB is going extinct, and their reasons why correspond well with research of the dialect presented in the background.

Geographical location also played a large role in the respondents' answers. While both Tōhoku respondents and non-Tōhoku respondents were in agreement that TB is going extinct, the latter seem more pessimistic about it than Tōhoku people themselves. I speculated on this being because of their limited connection about TB, which could very much be a contributing factor to them being more pessimistic than the people from Tōhoku.

To conclude this essay, Japanese people do think TB is going extinct, with certain groups (depending on geographical location) being more pessimistic about it than others. As for the attitude towards TB, the stereotypes and stigma presented in the background are also confirmed when asked about things concerning respondents view of speakers of TB and the dialect itself.

5.1. Further research

Further research after this essay would be the various impressions Tōhoku people and non-Tōhoku people have towards the dialect. It would be interesting to see why certain people believe dialects are "cute" or "trendy". Other interesting research to consider would be how non-Tōhoku people shape their opinions and impression of TB on what is going on in the region (something which I speculated on).

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Appendix A: Survey (in Japanese)

Section 1 of 13



東北弁についての調査です。

東北弁についての調査をしています。あなたの答えは匿名で保存されます。
このアンケートは、10分ぐらいかかります。
1回だけ答えてください。

私の名前はカール・レイスマークです。スウェーデンのルンド大学で日本語を勉強しています。そして、今言語学の卒論を書いていますので、調査をしています。調査の興味は東北弁について日本人の方々の意識調査です。皆様のご協力をお願いします。

よろしくお願いいたします。

カール・レイスマーク

Section 2 of 13



パート1

* 箇所は記入が必要です。

年齢

*

Short answer text

性別



*

男性

女性

ご出身はどちらの地方ですか。

*

Short answer text

ご出身が東北ではない方に質問です。東北に行ったことがありますか。

- はい
- いいえ

下の写真は何でしょうか。そして、何色でしょうか。*

Short answer text

写真



Section 3 of 13

パート 2

東北弁を話さない方はこの質問にお答えにならなくて結構です。

どんな時に東北弁を話していますか。(1つ以上選んでもいいです。)

- 家で (例えば、家族と)
- 友達と
- 職場で (例えば、同僚と、上司と)
- 地元の役所の人と
- まったく話さない

パート 3

Description (optional)

東北出身の友達がありますか。 ⋮ *

- はい
- いいえ

どの世代が一番東北弁をよく話していると思いますか *

- 若者
- 中年
- お年寄り

東北弁を話す人に対してどのようなイメージがありますか。 *

Short answer text
.....

Section 5 of 13 × ⋮

パート 4

Description (optional)

東北弁を聞いたことがありますか。 ⋮ *

- はい
- いいえ

パート 4.5

Description (optional)

東北弁はどのように聞こえますか。 ⋮ *

	まったく	あまり	どちらでもない	まあまあ	とても
分かりやすい	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
頭が良さそう	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
面白い	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
優しい	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
心地よい	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

パート 5

Description (optional)

標準語はどのように聞こえますか。 *

	まったく	あまり	どちらでもない	まあまあ	とても
分かりやすい	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
頭が良さそう	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
面白い	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
優しい	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
心地よい	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

パート 6

東北弁を話さない方はこの質問にお答えにならなくて結構です。

東北弁の中で、一番分かりやすい方言はどれだと思いますか。

Short answer text

なぜそう思いますか。

Long answer text

東北弁の中で、一番難しい方言はどれだと思いますか。

Short answer text

なぜそう思いますか。

Long answer text

Section 9 of 13



パート 7

Description (optional)

東北にいる人たちの東北弁に対する印象はどうだと思いますか。 *

- いい
- よくも悪くもない
- 悪い
- 分からない

なぜそう思いますか。 *

Long answer text

東北にいない人たちの東北弁に対する印象はどうだと思いますか。 *

- いい
- よくも悪くもない
- 悪い
- 分からない

なぜそう思いますか。 ⋮ *

Long answer text

Section 10 of 13

パート 8

Description (optional)

東北弁の未来についてどう思いますか。 ⋮ *

- 希望がある
- まあまあ希望がある
- 心配
- とても心配
- 分からない

なぜそう感じますか。 *

Long answer text

パート 9

Description (optional)

東北弁を話す人はどうすべきだと思いますか。 *

- 標準語に切り替える
- 東北弁を話し続ける
- 分からない
- どちらでもない

東北弁の現状はどうだと思いますか。 *

消えつつある 少し消えつつある 何とも言えない 時々使われている まだ広く使われ...

現状

消えつつあるか少し消えつつあるとしたら、そのことについてどう感じますか。

1 2 3 4 5

悲観的

希望的

パート 10

福島の事故の後、住民たちは突然避難しなければならなくなりました。

避難した人の生活は、今現在、どうなっていると思いますか。 *

Long answer text

そのために、その人たちの方言はどうなったと思いますか。 *

Long answer text

答えてくださってありがとうございました！



Description (optional)

Appendix B: Results (tables)

Question 1

Have you ever visited Tōhoku?

Table 2: If people not from Tōhoku had visited the region or not.

Total number of respondents:	76 respondents
Has visited there	57 replies (75%)
Has not visited there	19 replies (25%)

Question 2

When do you speak TB?

Table 3: When speakers of TB speak the dialect.

Total number of respondents:	51 respondents
Never speak it	17 replies (33.33%)
At home (E.g. with family)	29 replies (56.86%)
With friends	25 replies (49.01%)
At work (E.g. with co-workers)	12 replies (23.52%)
With people at the local office (E.g. government office)	8 replies (15.68%)

Question 3

Do you have any friends from Tōhoku?

Table 4: If respondents have friends from Tōhoku or not.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
Yes	93 replies (83.78%)
No	18 replies (16.21%)

Question 8a

Which TB is the easiest to understand?

Table 9.1: Which TB dialect is the easiest to understand.

Total number of respondents (reliable):	30 respondents
Nanbuben	4 replies (13.33%)
Akitaben	5 replies (16.66%)
Sendaiben	8 replies (26.66%)
Miyagiben	4 replies (13.33%)
Fukushimaben	6 replies (20%)
Iwakiben	2 replies (6.66%)
Aizuben	1 reply (3.33%)

Question 8b

Why do you think so?

Table 9.2: Why the respondents answered the way they did.

Total number of relevant respondents:	29 respondents
Because it is my own dialect, most familiar	13 replies (44.82%)
Close to Standard Japanese/Kantō region	9 replies (31.03%)
Easier than other dialects	7 replies (24.13%)

Question 8c

Which TB dialect is the hardest to understand?

Table 10.1: Which dialect is the hardest to understand.

Total number of respondents (reliable):	38 respondents
Aomoriben	6 replies (15.78%)
Tsugaruben	30 replies (78.84%)
Hachinoeben	1 reply (2.63%)
Akitaben	1 reply (2.63%)

Question 8d

Why do you think so?

Table 10.2: Why the respondents answered the way they did.

Total amount of relevant respondents:	30 respondents
Strong dialect, cannot understand	14 replies (46.66%)
Unique (to the point of it sounding very different), unusual vocabulary	11 replies (36.66%)
Far from Standard Japanese	5 replies (16.66%)

Question 11

What do you think speakers of TB should do?

Table 13: What the respondents think speakers of TB should do.

Total number of respondents:	111 respondents
Switch to Standard Japanese	4 replies (3.6%)
Continue speaking TB	54 replies (48.64%)
They can do “whatever”	46 replies (41.44%)
Do not know	7 replies (6.3%)