Pronoun Usage of Japanese Plantation Immigrants in Hawai'i

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Abstract
A large number of Japanese immigrants arrived in Hawai'i to work on sugar plantations after the Meiji Restoration, with Chûgoku dialect speakers from Hiroshima and Yamaguchi being both the largest group and the earliest arrivals. There were also Tôhoku dialect speakers from Fukushima and northern Niigata, but they arrived later and were a small minority compared to the Chûgoku dialect speakers. This study reports on language change among these Tôhoku speakers, focusing on pronoun usage. The data, which come from oral history recordings made by first-generation Japanese immigrants when they were elderly, show that the Tôhoku dialect speakers' pronoun usage was influenced by the Chûgoku dialect.*

Key words: Hawai'i, immigrants, pronouns, dialect contact, oral history data

1. Second dialect acquisition

Second dialect acquisition (SDA) is an analytical approach to dialect contact situations. In this paper, we discuss the process of SDA among Japanese plantation immigrants in Hawai'i[1] based on existing oral history records. Our data concern the SDA of a group of adult immigrants from Fukushima and Niigata prefectures after their settlement. It is well established in SDA studies that speakers' age is an important variable. Chambers (1992), in his groundbreaking work on SDA, suggests some principles based on his findings in a dialect contact situation involving Canadian English speakers in England. He observed SDA processes in six Canadian youths who moved to Oxfordshire in southern England in 1983 and 1984. The subjects were interviewed in 1985, when they were aged nine, 13, 13, 14, 15, and 17. Chambers recorded both pronunciation variants and lexical variants in the subjects' speech, and concluded that lexical variants had been acquired more successfully than pronunciation variants by the younger speakers (the nine-year-old and one of the 13-year-olds). The same pattern of SDA has been reported by other scholars.

   Japanese SDA studies are still relatively scarce, but the available reports mention the age

[1] The word *Hawai'i* is ordinarily spelled *Hawai'i* in this paper, but it is spelled *Hawaii* when this is how it appeared in the original sources.

factor. For example, there are reports based on the data collected by the National Language Research Institute (the former title of the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL)) from children evacuated to their parents' hometowns in the Tôhoku dialect region, mostly in Fukushima.[2] The evacuation took place at the start of WWII, and the data were collected in subsequent years. Sibata (1958: 170) reports that those children who moved to the Tôhoku dialect region before the age of six or seven acquired Tôhoku dialect pitch-accent patterns almost perfectly over the course of five or six years. In contrast, children who moved to the same region at 14 years of age or older showed no significant adoption of Tôhoku dialect pitch-accent patterns. Based on the pronunciation of about 500 of these children, from elementary to junior high school ages (between six and 15), who were surveyed for the NINJAL project, Kitaura (1952) writes that the children's phonological acquisition was also influenced by their parents' places of origin. All the children were born and raised in Tôkyô or Yokohama, and their native dialect was Standard Japanese when they were evacuated to the Tôhoku dialect region of Shirakawa in Fukushima. Children whose parents were both originally from Shirakawa acquired the Tôhoku dialect phonology the best, followed by those whose mothers only were from that area. Those who acquired the least Tôhoku dialect phonology were the ones whose fathers only were from Shirakawa.

In general, reports on SDA (e.g., Chambers 1988, 1992, 1995; Kerswill 1994; Siegel 2003, 2010; Trudgill 1986) demonstrate that older speakers show more limited ability to acquire a new dialect than younger speakers do (particularly with respect to the acquisition of phonological features). In his recent monograph on SDA, Siegel (2010) reviews such findings on the relationship between age of exposure to a new dialect and the degree of acquisition. He examined 18 cases of SDA reported by various scholars:

> Those who began acquisition at a younger age, especially 13 years or younger, had the highest averages of percentage of use of D2 [second dialect] variants, and the greatest proportions of individuals who reached native-like usage overall or in particular variables (based on 90 per cent or greater use of the D2 variant or on the judgment of the author(s) of the study). (Siegel 2010: 84)

Another generalization in the SDA literature suggests that the salience of features influences rates of acquisition. It has been reported that salient phonological features, e.g., salient sounds (simple features), are learned faster than non-salient ones (complex features). However, it is important to keep in mind that this claim can be problematic, since each SDA situation shows considerable degrees of variation within a set of features. In other words, the speed of SDA cannot be straightforwardly reduced to a simple principle of 'salient' being quicker and 'non-salient' slower. At the same time, comparing phonological and lexical features, Chambers claims that "lexical replacements are acquired faster than pronunciation and phonological variants" (see Chambers 1992: 677) regardless of age. In this paper, we will discuss the SDA of certain lexical items (personal pronouns) among adult immigrants in a dialect contact situation.

Examples given by Chambers (1992) on interdialectal lexical changes include replacements of Canadian English vocabulary by Southern British terms, such as *bus* > *coach*, *garbage can* >

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[2] The data is available at the following website (The National Language Research Institute 1951): http://db3.ninjal.ac.jp/publication_db/item.php?id=100170002

dustbin, and *purse > (hand)bag*. Lexical items are salient linguistic features that are easily 'noticed' by speakers. According to Trudgill's (2004) notion of linguistic accommodation, "which features speakers accommodate to in the speech of others can be accounted for by *salience*," and thus, "[i] n general, it is salient features…which are accommodated to" by speakers in an SDA situation (Trudgill 2004: 93, italics original). While salient features are easily accommodated to, they can also create stigmatized forms due to their saliency. On this, Trudgill (2004: 153–154) comments that "one of the features that may produce salience is the fact that 'greater awareness attaches to forms which are overtly stigmatized'." In this paper, we report on the SDA of one of the most salient features in the Japanese language, namely, the personal pronouns. Some grammatical categories that are typically expressed by morphological features in Indo-European languages are lexical in Japanese, and the personal pronouns are the prototypical examples.

2. Japanese in Hawai'i

Most of the first-generation Japanese immigrants who left their hometowns to become plantation laborers in Hawai'i were uneducated farmers and fishermen from rural areas who were monolingual in their regional dialect. Although there were some difficulties in communication among different Japanese dialect speakers, their dialects were mutually intelligible for the most part. Reinecke (1988 [1969]) made a number of linguistic observations on Japanese in his thesis on linguistic diversity in Hawai'i, originally submitted in 1935. According to his report, in 1910, among Japanese who were 10 years or older, 49,750 (79.0%) were monolingual (Reinecke 1988 [1969]: 124). The number declined to 41,730 (54.2%) in 1920, and to 28,150 (29.8%) in 1930. The second generation's good command of English, however, did not contribute to the reduction of the use of the Japanese language in Hawai'i. This was due to the strong preference among Japanese immigrants to marry only Japanese partners, including picture brides. Japanese men in Hawai'i outnumbered women by a ratio of four to one prior to 1900 (Clarke 1994: 18; Hawaii Hochisha 2001: 53; Hiroshima City 2002: 1), and consequently, many of them arranged to bring picture brides from their hometowns, especially between 1908 and 1923 (Hawaii Hochisha 2001: 61; Odo 1998: 109). This practice contributed to maintaining the Japanese dialects brought into Hawai'i during the sugar plantation period. The largest immigrant group by Japanese dialect region was Chûgoku dialect speakers from Hiroshima and Yamaguchi prefectures, followed by the Kyûshû group from Kumamoto and Fukuoka, the Okinawa group, and the Tôhoku dialect speakers from Niigata and Fukushima.

Table 1　Japanese speakers' populations in Hawai'i in 1929 and 1960 (from Nagara (1972))

Dialect Region	Prefecture	1929	1960
Chûgoku	Hiroshima	30534 (26.2%)	4715 (24.1%)
	Yamaguchi	25878 (22.2%)	3918 (20.0%)
Kyûshû	Kumamoto	19551 (16.8%)	2655 (13.6%)
	Fukuoka	7563 (6.5%)	1080 (5.5%)
Okinawa	Okinawa	16536 (14.2%)	2873 (14.7%)
Tôhoku	Niigata	5036 (4.3%)	880 (4.5%)
	Fukushima	4936 (4.2%)	776 (4.0%)

All of the immigrants except for those from the Tôhoku region came from western Japanese dialect regions.

The exclusivity of the Japanese community in Hawai'i was reported in a mainstream newspaper at the time: "The Japanese men marry only Japanese women, and their children are habitually registered as Japanese with officials of their own government" (Carter 1921: 275). Most Japanese immigrants had strong cultural ties with Japan, and hoped that they or their children would someday return to Japan. The newspaper article also notes that "A large proportion of them are sent back to Japan for part of their education. The younger children attend both the public schools of Hawai'i and private Japanese schools" (Carter 1921: 275). Reinecke, recognizing the Japanese immigrants' strong attachment to their native language and cultural identity, writes, "The Japanese language, at least as a spoken tongue, will probably be one of the last, if not the very last, to be displaced by English" (Reinecke 1988 [1969]: 130–131). Consequently, prior to WWII, the Japanese language was used regularly at home by many *issei* 'first-generation' immigrants and their children (Hawaii Hochisha 2001: 66–67). In short, the Japanese immigrants actively maintained a tight-knit community through their cultural practices, including language use, until the onset of WWII, resulting in close interactions among immigrants of different dialects.

Mufwene's (2001) 'Founder Principle' states that the first settlers in a new community create the basis for the language that is used by subsequent settlers. It follows that the order of arrival of the early settlers is an important factor in the formation of a contact language. In the case of the Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i, Chûgoku immigrants not only outnumbered other immigrant groups, but were also the first settlers. The Tôhoku immigrants, on the other hand, were a minority group who arrived much later, and as a result, were exposed more to the Chûgoku dialect than to Standard Japanese in social interactions. An important observation from the oral history data is that a number of Tôhoku immigrants mentioned dialect discrimination by non-Tôhoku immigrants (mainly Chûgoku immigrants). Some also discussed their conscious efforts to alter their original dialect in order to assimilate with the non-Tôhoku immigrants. Several detailed reports of dialect discrimination against Tôhoku immigrants are also noted by Yukiko Kimura, a sociologist specializing in Japanese immigration, in her monograph *Issei: Japanese Immigrants in Hawaii* (1988). In addition, Siegel (2003: 197) states that "[w]hile SDA most often refers to acquisition of the standard dialect, there are also instances when a non-standardized regional or social dialect is the target." This point is particularly pertinent to our discussion of a non-standard regional Japanese dialect, namely, the Chûgoku dialect, being acquired by the Tôhoku immigrants. Although Standard Japanese eventually influenced the general language use of all Japanese immigrant groups in Hawai'i through media, education, or business, Chûgoku dialect was originally the dominant Japanese language.

3. Data and methods

For this study, we investigated data that were originally collected under the direction of Professor Edward Smith at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Consequently, we refer to this corpus as the Smith Project Data (SPD). The SPD were recorded by students taking advanced Japanese language courses taught by Professor Smith between 1973 and 1982. The recordings are mostly interviews between *issei* 'first-generation' speakers and advanced Japanese language students. Most of the students were ethnic Japanese who recorded their own grandparents, or their

grandparents' siblings or friends, in the Japanese language. This means that the SPD data were collected by individuals who had good rapport with the *issei* speakers. Although the students used mostly Standard Japanese (the form of Japanese they learned in school) when talking to the interviewees, this does not seem to have influenced the interviewees' use of Japanese dialects. The data were recorded in various forms, including written reports, reel-to-reel tapes, and cassette tapes. For quality control and preservation purposes, these data were converted to digital format before analysis, and the transcription and coding were conducted as part of a larger study of Japanese dialect contact in Hawai'i (see Hiramoto 2006). The data used for this paper, consisting of audio recordings collected between 1973 and 1982 from 11 Tôhoku speakers and nine Chûgoku speakers, represent only a subset of the SPD participants.[3] The length of the recording for each speaker ranges from 15 to 40 minutes.

One of the most noticeable SDA phenomena in the data is a replacement of the Tôhoku dialect first-person pronoun *ore/ora* among the Tôhoku immigrants. The first-person pronouns these speakers produced are almost all the Chûgoku dialect and Standard Japanese first-person pronouns, *washi* and *watashi*. A number of the speakers frequently pronounced theses non-Tôhoku forms with Tôhoku dialect phonology, e.g., *wasu* (for the Chûgoku pronoun *washi*) and *wadasu/ wadashi/watasu* (for the Standard Japanese pronoun *watashi*). This phonological transfer suggests that the Tôhoku immigrants' SDA consisted of lexical items (personal pronouns) but not non-Tôhoku phonology (see Hiramoto 2010 and Hiramoto in press for detailed SDA explanations of phonological vs. morphological/lexical features in the SPD). These data support Chambers's (1992: 677) claim that lexical replacements are acquired more easily than pronunciation and phonological variants.

4. Discussion

Both first-person and second-person pronouns were quantified for our analysis of the SPD. The following first-person singular pronouns occurred: *watashi* (Standard Japanese default form), *washi* (Chûgoku dialect default form), *atashi* (Standard Japanese feminine casual form), *ore/ora* (Tôhoku dialect default form), *uchi* (Chûgoku dialect feminine casual form), and *mî* (English loanword). The plural forms had the *-ra* suffix: *watashira* (Standard), *washira* (Chûgoku), *atashira* (Standard feminine casual), *uchira* (Chûgoku feminine casual), and *mîra* (English). Tôhoku dialect *ore* and *ora* were not found in plural forms in the data. As for second-person pronouns, the following singular forms occurred: *anata* (Standard default), *anta* (Standard casual), *omae* (Standard vulgar), and *yû* (English). The plural forms were: *anatara* (Standard default), *antara* (Standard casual), *omaera* (Standard vulgar), and *yûra* (English).

Japanese frequently drops pronouns, especially in colloquial speech, and thus the total numbers of tokens are somewhat small, especially for the second-person pronouns. Japanese shows a strong sensitivity to politeness, and speakers are expected to account for a variety of social distinctions linguistically. Potentially relevant social distinctions for interlocutors include age, kinship, social rank, and intimacy, among others. One of the most important strategies for

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[3] The following criteria were used for selecting the speakers from the SPD: all conversations and monologues were casual; speakers hailed from a common rural farming environment and had minimum education; none had moved back to Japan for an extended period of time after their immigration; all speakers had been married to other *issei* of the same dialect region; and conversation topics were limited to the speakers' memories of immigration and plantation life, visits to Japan, and their family members.

being polite is to avoid addressing people directly, especially with second-person pronouns (see Helmbrecht 2011). Because of this tendency to avoid second-person pronouns, the tokens in this category were scarce, and they included non-Standard dialect forms.

Tables 2 and 3 show the figures for first- and second-person pronouns in the subset of the SPD that we used. Singular and plural forms are combined in the tables and are labeled 'x group' according to the singular form. For example, the '*watashi* group' combines the occurrences of *watashi* and *watashira*. Numbers in parenthesis denote raw token counts.[4]

Table 2   First-person pronouns used by Tôhoku and Chûgoku immigrants in SPD

	watashi group (Standard)	*washi* group (Chûgoku)	*ora/ore* (Tôhoku)	*uchi* group (Chûgoku /fem.)	*mî* group (English)	others	Total
Tôhoku (n=11)	51.0% (130)	37.6% (96)	3.9% (10)	0.0% (0)	7.1% (18)	0.4% (1)	100% (255)
Chûgoku (n=8)	61.0% (130)	30.5% (65)	0.0% (0)	3.3% (7)	3.8% (8)	1.4% (3)	100% (213)

The first-person pronoun data in Table 2 show that both Tôhoku and Chûgoku dialect speakers used the Standard form *watashi* the most, followed by the Chûgoku dialect form *washi*. Data from control group speakers in Japan show that non-immigrant Tôhoku and Chûgoku dialect speakers also adopted the standard form *watashi* at high rates due to a general trend toward language standardization. Table 2 also shows that Tôhoku immigrants replaced their original dialectal forms *ore* and *ora* at a very high rate. The fact that Chûgoku speakers never used these Tôhoku forms, and the fact that the Tôhoku speakers themselves used them infrequently, suggest an influence of Chûgoku dialect on Tôhoku immigrants. These patterns suggest that the SDA of Tôhoku speakers in Hawai'i proceeded in response to the specific post-immigration linguistic ecology of their situation.

Table 3   Second-person pronouns used by Tôhoku and Chûgoku immigrants in SPD

	anata group (default)	*anta* group (casual)	*omae* group (vulgar)	*yû* group (English)	Total
Tôhoku (n=11)	35.5% (11)	58.1% (18)	3.2% (1)	3.2% (1)	100% (31)
Chûgoku (n=8)	56.3% (18)	31.2% (10)	3.1% (1)	9.4% (3)	100% (32)

Table 3 displays the second-person pronoun usages.[5] The total numbers for second-person pronoun are much smaller than for first-person pronouns. This was expected because of the language-specific pronoun avoidance tendency. Because the numbers are so small, it is difficult to generalize, but the occurrences of the English loanword *yû* are noteworthy. English-based *mî*

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[4] The tokens used in quoted speech are excluded from the tables.

[5] Although the second person pronoun was used most often as a vocative (75.8% [97 times] in the Tôhoku data and 37.3% [19 times] in the Chûgoku data), these numbers are excluded from Table 2, since vocative forms do not function as pronouns grammatically.

also occurred in the first-person pronoun, indicating the flexibility of the Japanese language with respect to pronoun borrowing.

Another characteristic that shows SDA of the Chûgoku dialect by Tôhoku speakers is the use of the plural *-ra* suffix. In Chûgoku dialect, this suffix may be used for non-plural reference for pragmatic reasons. That is, the plural suffix can convey meanings similar to the discourse marker *nanka* 'things like~/something like~'. Consequently, at least superficially, a pronoun marked with *-ra* in Chûgoku dialect is ambiguous with respect to the singular/plural distinction.[6] The following example shows an actual usage of a pronoun with a plural form but a singular meaning.

(1)　Kayo (age 77, Hiroshima, female, recorded in 1975)
　　　*Sorejakara ano **watashira** ano kochira e kuru tokiniwa, za, ano futon kaimashita ano ue e.*
　　　'So, when **I** came here, zz, ah, (I) bought a futon, on top of that.'

Here the speaker describes her own experience of traveling from Japan to Hawai'i, and yet she uses the plural form *watashira* instead of its singular counterpart *watashi* to refer to herself. This kind of pronoun use is actually quite common in colloquial Chûgoku dialect speech. In the following example, another female Chûgoku dialect speaker attaches the *-ra* suffix to the English loanword *mî*, but she is clearly using this pronoun to refer only to herself.

(2)　Teruyo (age 60, Yamaguchi, female, recorded in 1982)
　　　*… hoijake, **mîra** ga indatoki demo, mo, no, gingamî tsutsunde frîzâ-e iretoite, **washi** ni matsutake meshî taite kurete…*
　　　'… so, when **I** returned, already, ya, it was kept it in a fridge wrapped in a piece of aluminum foil, and (they cooked) **me** the mushroom rice…'

The speaker is explaining her own experience of visiting her family in her hometown in Yamaguchi. The first-person plural form *mîra* is followed by the Chûgoku singular form *washi*, showing clearly that the plural form *mîra* is used with singular reference.[7]

In the SPD, the use of the *-ra* suffix for non-plural reference was also seen in the speech of the Tôhoku dialect speakers, even this usage does not occur in the original Tôhoku dialect, where the *-ra* suffix is only used to mark the plural. In Example 3, a female speaker remembers a difficult working environment in a sugarcane plantation field. She uses the Chûgoku plural form *washira*, but this pronoun refers only to her.

(3)　Ima (age 72, Niigata, female, recorded in 1975)
　　　*Jiyû na kodo sude are dakara, **washira** wa antâ aisu, aa, sungodo itte aisu kuidai omottemo….*
　　　'(They) can behave as they like (nowadays), but, **I** longed for ice cubes, you know, ah, (I) wanted to eat ice cubes badly at work…'

In Example 4, a male Fukushima speaker tells a story about his interaction with other Japanese immigrants en route from Japan to Hawai'i. On the boat, after finding out that the speaker was from a mountainous region, those who were from the coastal areas teased him for his (assumed)

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[6]　At the same time, such differences are not confusing for interlocutors because whether the *-ra* suffix is used to mark a singular or a plural pronoun becomes obvious in speech contexts. This is also a well-known characteristics of the Japanese language in general.

[7]　A mixing of pronouns is not a rare phenomenon in Japanese conversation.

limited knowledge of fish. This speaker, too, uses the English loanword forms followed by *-ra* (i.e., *yûra*[8] and *mîra*) in singular meanings.

(4)   Tsuneo (age 80s, Fukushima, male, recorded in 1975)
        … *'kazuobusu wa dokkara mizu o nonde igi o sutoru-tte*, **yûra** *dokkara mizu nondette shiran darô'-itte*, **mîra** *kamawaredan dayo.*
        '… (he said) "**you** don't know from where katsuo-bushi (dried fish stick) drinks water and breathes" and teased **me**.'

Examples 3 and 4 show the SDA by Tôhoku dialect speakers of the Chûgoku use of the *-ra* suffix. Table 4 shows the number of occurrences of the *-ra* suffix for singular meaning in the subset of the SPD that we analyzed.

Table 4   Pronouns with *-ra* suffix for non-plural (pragmatic) meaning in SPD

	first-person pron. with *-ra* suffix as non-plural form	second-person pron. with *-ra* suffix as non-plural form	Total
Tôhoku (n=11)	57	6	63
Chûgoku (n=8)	57	4	61

The numbers in Table 4 suggest that the Tôhoku dialect speakers used the *-ra* suffix to mark a singular (non-plural) reference as frequently as the Chûgoku dialect speakers did, despite the fact that the *-ra* suffix is not traditionally used this way in Tôhoku dialect.

In summary, we can conclude from the data observed thus far that the direction of SDA was from Chûgoku dialect to Tôhoku dialect. It was the Tôhoku dialect speakers who adopted the Chûgoku dialect singular pronoun form *washi* and not vice versa. Additionally, Tôhoku dialect speakers also acquired the Chûgoku dialect feature of using the plural *-ra* suffix with non-plural reference to convey pragmatic meanings.

5. Conclusion

This study has examined changes in Tôhoku dialect speakers' use of personal pronouns that took place after they immigrated to Hawai'i. All the quantitative data used in this paper is from speakers who moved to Hawai'i as sugar plantation laborers (including some picture brides). Under their initial labor contracts, the Japanese immigrants lived in separate camps at their work locations, apart from immigrants of other ethnicities. This contributed to the establishment of a closed Japanese community composed of people from different regions of Japan. From the beginning, Chûgoku dialect speakers were the dominant immigrant group, and their dialect became influential among Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i. On the other hand, the Tôhoku dialect was stigmatized among Japanese immigrants. The SPD suggest that adult Tôhoku plantation workers changed their original dialectal forms under social pressure in the newly established Japanese community in Hawai'i.

Pronouns are particularly salient features of Japanese regional dialects. In an environment involving intensive dialect contact, salient Tôhoku dialect features such as the first-person

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[8] This *yûra* is excluded from Table 2, since tokens in quotations were not counted (see note 4).

pronouns *ore* and *ora* were replaced with the Chûgoku dialect form *washi*, the Standard form *watashi*, or the English loanword *mî*. In addition, Tôhoku dialect speakers acquired another Chûgoku dialect feature related to pronouns, namely, use of the plural suffix *-ra* to mark a singular reference. Our findings support Chambers's (1992) principle of SDA that lexical replacements are acquired faster than pronunciation and phonological variants. That is, the Tôhoku dialect speakers recorded in the SPD replaced their original pronouns *ore* and *ora* at a very high rate with non-Tôhoku forms while still showing the traces of Tôhoku phonology in those non-Tôhoku forms. The data also provide strong support for the Founder Principle, i.e., that the arrival order of speakers in a new community influences dialect change.

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ハワイ日系移民の口語にみられる人称詞表現についての論考

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要旨
　本稿はオーラルヒストリー・データとしてハワイ大学マノア校に録音保存されていた資料を活用し，ハワイ日系移民コミュニティにおける方言接触の様相を人称詞の使用状況に着目して考察する。録音資料はおおむね明治中期から後期頃に，主にサトウキビ畑労働者として日本各地からハワイに移住した移民一世の男女の談話文（年をとってからのインタビューで採録）で構成されている。資料中の東北方言域出身者（福島・新潟両県。後発の移民で少数派）と中国方言域出身者（広島・山口両県。最初期の移民で多数派）の日本語表現を分析したところ，東北方言域出身者にも「ワシ，ワシら」など中国方言の人称詞使用のありかたが広まっていることが明らかになった。また，東北・中国の出身地を問わず，日系人の間では英語の借用語「ミー，ユー」が多用されていることも認められた。

キーワード：ハワイ，移民，人称詞，方言接触，オーラルヒストリー・データ