A Sociolinguistic Survey of Koreans in China:
‘Language Socialization’ of Koreans in China

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Koreans in China (Chaoxianzu) are descendants of Korean immigrants and one of the 56 ethnicities officially recognized by the Chinese government. It is generally said that they can use not only Chinese language but also Korean one, and it is thought that they have different language use and awareness from Han Chinese. But it doesn’t mean that all of Korean in China have the same language use and awareness. There seem to be some diversities of language use and awareness even among Koreans in China. This study tried to clarify the diversity of the language use and awareness of Korean Chinese by means of sociolinguistic methods.

As a result of the questionnaire survey conducted in three different regions (Yanji, Tonghua and Dalian) and the statistical analysis, it was clarified that there were diversities caused by the difference of not only regions but also genders in the language use and awareness of Koreans in China. As for the difference of the regions, Yanji Koreans tend to use Korean language more than Tonghua and Dalian ones. Also, the difference of genders was clarified, that females tended to use Korean language more than males. The medium of instruction, the background of admission and the thought and behavior can be taken for the reason why these differences arose. And this study tried to explain these diversities uniformly by applying the sociological theoretical constructs ‘socialization’. Socialization means the process that one develops oneself and acquires the style of behavior appropriate to the society (group) through the interaction between one and others (Miyajima eds. 2003). In this case, the society means the Han Chinese one. Koreans in China are requested of fitting into the Han Chinese society. The research of language socialization integrates discourse and ethnographic methods to capture the social structurings and cultural interpretations of semiotic forms, practices, and ideologies that inform novices’ practical engagement. (Duranti et al. eds. 2014). Not only this diachronic and microsocial one but also synchronic, macrosocial one like this study can be regarded as ‘language socialization’. And it shows clearly the power relationship with Korean, immigrant language and Chinese, host language.

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