

Language and masculinity: the role of Osaka dialect in contemporary ideals of fatherhood

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Abstract

The unexpected use of Osaka dialect in the 2013 film Like Father, Like Son directed by Hirokazu Kore'eda, presents an opportunity to scrutinise its role in indexing masculinity, class and fatherhood. The film depicts two styles of fatherhood: one, a cool and disconnected father representing the archetypal upper-middle class but absent salaryman patriarch; the other, a warm and emotionally connected father representing a new kind of patriarch who is engaged in child rearing. These contrasting styles are indexed linguistically through standard Japanese and Osaka dialect respectively. Extending the framework of a sociolinguistics of the periphery to a case of internal language variation, the mobility of Osaka dialect is highlighted. Specifically, through the process of translocalisation, the enregistered indices of Osaka dialect mediate the creation of a new social type: the caring and connected father.

KEYWORDS: MASCULINITY; FATHERHOOD; INTERNAL GLOBALISATION; REGIONAL DIALECT; JAPAN

Introduction

The 2013 film *Soshite Chichi ni Naru* (English title: *Like Father, Like Son*), directed by Hirokazu Kore'eda, takes place in eastern Japan, and follows the story of two boys who, after being switched at birth, are being reunited with their biological families. The main protagonists of the film are the two

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fathers, one a businessman and the other a shopkeeper, who must come to terms with losing one son and gaining another. The two fathers offer a window into the ways in which masculinity, class and fatherhood are being reimagined and reworked in contemporary Japan.

This paper examines the portrayal of contemporary Japanese fatherhood in *Like Father, Like Son*. Attention is given to the linguistic practices of the two fathers with particular foci on stereotypically masculine language features and the creative uses of Osaka dialect (hereafter OD) in juxtaposition to standard Japanese (hereafter SJ). I argue that the meanings identified with OD are being moved from associations with geographic region to a particular kind of masculine personhood associated with warmth, rapport and connectedness; in doing so, SJ is reinforced as formal, distant and disconnected. Specifically, the use of stereotypically gendered first- and second-person pronouns, sentence final forms, and dialect is highlighted in order to uncover the ways that these linguistic forms coalesce to create two contrasting fathers. The contrast is stark: the businessman is portrayed as highly regimented and demanding. The shopkeeper is portrayed as a hands-on father who is relaxed and playful.

The film demonstrates a view of sociolinguistic variation within Japan from the periphery of a regional dialect. Tracing the movement of language across global times and spaces has provided critical insights into how urban centres are rich sources of sociolinguistic inquiries (cf. Blommaert 2010; Pennycook 2007). Recently, there has been a call to investigate the peripheries for sociolinguistic phenomenon (Pietikäinen, Kelly-Holmes, Jaffe and Coupland 2016), including an investigation of peripheral languages. Here I extend the framework of a 'sociolinguistics of the periphery' (Pietikäinen et al. 2016) to a case of internal language variation.

Osaka dialect is commodified in the film as the voice of a connected and caring father not as marker of regional belonging (SturtzSreetharan 2017b). This peripheral voice and affectionate father is in direct contrast to the SJ speaking distant father. As Pietikäinen et al. (2016:ix) note, 'peripheries and centres are mutually constitutive: that is, they are discursively constructed in opposition to one another'. *Like Father, Like Son* showcases two kinds of peripheries: one related to a style of fatherhood, the other to language. Specifically, a cool and distant authoritarian businessman father who speaks SJ and a warm and connected self-employed father who speaks OD. The film presents a locality and periphery (Blommaert 2010) that are in flux. Typically, investigations of peripheral languages are concerned with the movement of peoples and (pieces of) their linguistic repertoires (Jaffe and Oliva 2013; Kelly-Homes 2013); but in this instance, the focus is on the mobility of the language itself through media, electronic contacts and pop culture within

Japan (Blommaert 2009; Blommaert and Dong 2013; Pennycook 2007) which provides unexpected resources for the creation of a new social type, a caring and connected father. It is not the stability of language and social types that this film emphasises but instead the creativity, mobility and change of the normative Japanese father as indexed through his use of dialect. Indeed, the film exquisitely demonstrates the ways in which established meanings and indexicalities associated with particular language uses can change when they are re-entextualised across different spaces and contexts.

Ideas of centre and periphery are instructive here in order to demonstrate the way in which the film provides its audiences with two versions of a 'Japanese father'. The voices of these fathers are distinct in that the businessman speaks SJ exclusively while the shopkeeper uses a mixture of OD¹ and SJ. Both fathers use stereotypically masculine language forms, including sentence final forms and personal pronouns. Central to this paper, however, is the use of OD by the shopkeeper – who is neither from Osaka nor living in Osaka – versus SJ by the businessman. Through translocalisation (Blommaert 2010), the enregistered meanings of OD are lifted out of their regionally associated geographical spaces and placed onto one of the fathers, creating a new social persona: a caring and connected father. The use of dialect in juxtaposition to the use of standard language creates three effects for the shopkeeper father: he sounds more informal and more intimate; he is heard as less urban/modern and more rural/traditional; finally, he is aurally associated with lower social status and less refinement (this effect is augmented by visual cues as well). Together, these effects serve to transform OD beyond its regional boundaries and beyond its heretofore enregistered indices, as discussed later. Ultimately, two distinct styles of fatherhood are achieved: a formal and disconnected father on one hand, and an informal connected father on the other.

Sociohistorical context and commodification of Osaka dialect

A brief explanation of the socio-historical context of OD is warranted. Located in western Japan in close proximity to the old Japanese capital city of Kyoto (up until 1868), Osaka enjoys high cultural value; during the modern period (1868–1912), Osaka became peripheral to the new capital, Tokyo. During language unification (Inoue 2006) many regional dialects were assimilated toward SJ, resulting in negative value accruing to non-standard language forms. Indeed, Inoue (2009) notes that prior to the 1980s, OD was mainly associated with the garish and gaudy style of merchants. However, over time this negative value shifted (see Inoue 2011 for a discussion of this as a national trend); this was due in part to a strong local

identity and pride associated with OD (see Peng and Long 1993; Satō 2000; Onoe, Kasai and Wakaichi 2000). Further positive values have accrued including associations of informality and intimacy (Peng and Long 1993) and desirability (Shibamoto Smith and Occhi 2009). OD has been associated with being '*omoroï*' (>*omoshiroi* 'funny/interesting') and has gained popularity as a desirable speaking style throughout Japan (Tomosada 1995; Tomosada and Jin'nouchi 2004). OD has been the site of ongoing (re)enregisterments over time in multiple ways (Agha 2003).²

The shift from a negative value of OD to a more positive one is mirrored in the history of the commodification of OD which began early in the twentieth century and continues today through a strong presence in the entertainment industry (Koyano 2004). While older media representations show OD speakers as cheap merchants, over time these have become increasingly positive, associating OD with laughter, gutsiness and fun (Kinsui 2003:99). OD speaking televisual entertainers exposed the Japanese nation to an image of OD that was fun, entertaining and light-hearted. These instances of commodification occur through ongoing deployment of semiotic partials (Agha 2007); over time, the semiotic partials have shifted, excluding some bits, including others, creating multilayered indices which co-exist (Agha 2011). The OD that is televisually heard around the nation is neither locally accurate nor nationally representative and yet it indexes Osaka – its enregistered characteristics and language.

These indices become audible when juxtapositioned to SJ. I suggest that this film extends these enregistered meanings beyond their regional affiliation to underscore the gap between Tokyo as a central locality associated with modernity and everywhere else. The signs attached to OD were lifted from their spatial location (Osaka) and transported to the shopkeeper father, imbuing him with symbols of laid-back, emotional availability. The newly enregistered meanings include indices of intimacy, traditional Japan (rather than a modern urban Japan), affect and playfulness; that is, OD was selected as the site for a layering (or laminating effect; Agha 2011) of affective fatherhood. Its mixture of existing indexicalities which include masculinity, intimacy and informality make it a prime location for producing affective fatherhood – a style of fatherhood that embraces hands-on participation in child rearing, engaging in play with children and general rapport within the family. This kind of fatherhood is not associated with the salaryman father who is represented as a strict, stiff and absentee father. Crucially, this kind of fatherhood is also not associated with actual traditional styles of fatherhood; the addition of playfulness and hands-on caregiving make the affectionate fatherhood a new type.

The national exposure to OD has only increased over time allowing for the signs 'attached to one place' to be transformed into 'those of other places where they can be reinterpreted' (Blommaert 2010:79). In linking OD with affect and intimacy, it simultaneously (re)enregisters SJ as aloof, distancing and rational. It underscores a static and authoritarian centre (Tokyo/SJ) in stark contrast to a dynamic and intimate periphery (not-Tokyo/OD). The unexpected use of OD by one of the main protagonists demonstrates an instance of scaling up OD from that of regional associations to something larger – a new style of personhood, specifically affective fatherhood.

This paper touches on some of the different ideals of fatherhood including its concomitant masculine norms, and the social meaning of dialect; clearly more work tying these key strands of inquiry together are needed. In this paper, I focus more narrowly on how media representations draw on *language* differences to highlight particular characteristics of social *personae*, here the relationship of ideals of fatherhoods to masculinities.

Background to the film

Like Father, Like Son tells the story of two families whose infant sons were switched at birth; when the film opens, the hospital contacts each family to arrange for each boy to be returned to his biological family. The film revolves around the contrasting family styles, focusing particularly on a connected versus disconnected style of fatherhood. In particular, the relationship each father has to his current son is highlighted; then the focus shifts to the relationship each begins to build with his biological son. Of note to this paper, the film takes place in the Eastern region (Tokyo) of Japan; some of the film is set in the neighbouring prefecture of Gunma. Neither of these regional settings are normatively associated with OD.

The two fathers

The businessman

Ryota Nonomiya is a company man who leaves for work early in the morning, returns home late at night and works on the weekends. Ryota is married to Midori, who spends her days taking their son (Keita) to extra-curricular tutoring, piano lessons and other life-enriching activities; she is a stereotypical wife of a traditional white-collared worker. The family is quiet, formal and stoic. They live in a high-rise condominium with a view of the famous *Sky Tree* tower in Tokyo. The home is uncluttered and tidy, adorned with Western-style interior and furniture. Likewise, Ryota and his family always appear well-coifed and smartly dressed; they are decidedly upper middle class. Ryota and his family speak SJ exclusively. Ryota is an

absent father who rarely shows affection or emotional warmth to his son; rather, his stiff upper lip is always and already deployed to rationalise his actions and justify his means. These rationalisations and justifications are heard not only through the content of his utterances, but through his use of SJ.

The shopkeeper

Yudai Saiki owns and operates an electrical shop which is located next to his home in Maebashi, about an hour drive from Tokyo. He owns and operates an 'at home' business that allows the blurring of traditional boundaries between 'work' and 'home' due to the close proximity of the two spaces. He is frequently shown playing with his children – flying kites or fixing electronic toys. There are five in the family, Yudai and his wife, Yukari, as well as three children (including Ryusei); Yukari's father also lives with them. The family is boisterous, chaotic, seemingly rough and unrefined. They are usually depicted doing things together including bathing, eating and sleeping. The house is a typical Japanese style house with tatami floors and sliding doors to separate rooms. The home appears dishevelled but lived-in, with cluttered and cramped rooms. Likewise, Yudai often appears with tousled hair, wearing trousers, a plaid flannel shirt and a vest; he drives a light-weight mini-van that has 'Saiki's Electricity' printed on the side. Yudai's wife, Yukari, works part time at a *bento* (lunchbox) making shop. They are decidedly lower middle class.³ Yudai interacts with the family in an engaged, emotional manner. While Yudai resides far from the typical boundaries of OD, he inexplicably uses a combination of OD and SJ. No backstory is provided – geographical or otherwise – for his use of dialect. With the exception of Ryusei, the rest of the family uses SJ exclusively.

In many ways, Yudai presents a contradictory figure: he is present within the home due to his career; his home has many markers of traditional Japanese homes as described above; and, he is a hands-on caring father who engages in frequent play with his children. He is decidedly not authoritarian, strict, or stern. His incongruous character evokes thoughts of the 'traditional' father while embodying the 'new' caregiving father unproblematically.

Japanese men and fathers

The scholarship on Japanese masculinity and fatherhood is growing. Nonetheless, popular media, including film, manga and mainstream news outlets have narrowed the range of available variation vis-à-vis fatherhood that lives in the public imagination.

The literature on fatherhood is robust including investigations of historical fathers (Ishii-Kuntz 2013; Fuess 1997, 2005) and contemporary fathers (Oyama 2014; Shwalb and Nakazawa 2013). Scholarship investigating changing ideals in masculinity is also increasing. Day laborers (Gill 2003), blue collar workers (Roberson 1998), critiques of hegemonic masculine ideals (Dasgupta 2013; Roberson 2003), male beauty ideals (Miller 2006), and men's work–life balance (North 2009) are all topics that have contributed to greater understandings of Japanese men and masculinities. Frühstück and Walthall (2011) demonstrate that a static notion of Japanese men is not only problematic but incorrect. This scholarship simultaneously exposes the high variability of Japanese men's lived experiences while underscoring the staying power of the unrepentantly stubborn hegemonic ideal of the white collared salaryman who is an absent father. The film juxtaposes this enduring archetype of the stereotypical (absent) Japanese father with a connected, caring and present father.

This paper is specifically concerned with the representation of embodied speakers. There is a growing body of literature of how men are represented in media (cf. Hiramoto 2009, 2013; Morohashi 2005; Ota 2011; Saladin 2015; Tanaka 2003), including those cases investigating represented speech in Japanese media contexts, specifically representations of language, gender and non-standard language. Some of these studies include Hiramoto's look at how desirable/undesirable characters in a popular *anime* speak with regard to gendered language forms. She finds that desirable characters are represented with 'ideal normativity, both *visually* and *linguistically*' (Hiramoto 2013:74, emphasis mine).

Most relevant to the current inquiry, scholars have found that in investigations of gendered language and dialect in Japanese televisual morning dramas, linguistic femininity and heterosexual desirability is best expressed in SJ, regardless of the character's location (Shibamoto Smith and Occhi 2009). In contrast, linguistic masculinity and heterosexual desirability is best expressed in a regional dialect. In point of fact, dialect speaking men who are not salarymen are desirable. Indeed, male characters who speak in OD are decidedly hip, modern and cool – even if they aren't from the Osaka region (Occhi, SturtzSreetharan and Shibamoto Smith 2010).⁴ Since modernity, the semiotic field of OD has shifted and changed. Enregistered indices are not static; as Agha states 'the metasemiotic practices that imbue objects with sign-values do not necessarily efface sign-values that objects already have' (Agha 2011:26). Indeed, many indices can occur concurrently demonstrating a 'laminating effect' of multiply enregistered meanings all at once (Agha 2011:26).

Gendered language and dialect

The Japanese language is considered to have a ‘women’s’ and a ‘men’s’ language (cf. Kindaichi 1942; Shibamoto 1985). While many empirical studies have questioned the extent to which this is a sociolinguistic versus an ideological fact, it is the case that sex differences in Japanese are maintained discursively; more critically, media representations of spoken Japanese (dramas, anime, manga, textbooks) consistently portray male and female heteronormative/homosexual characters as using highly stereotypical feminine or masculine linguistic features (cf. Mizumoto 2015; Hiramoto 2013; Okamoto and Shibamoto Smith 2008; Kinsui, Tanaka and Okamuro 2014).

Japanese also exhibits language difference due to regional dialects. SJ is based on a Tokyo (middle class) language variety that was instituted after 1868 (Inoue 2006; Sakai 1992). OD has its own gendered linguistic features which are noted in the Tables below. Table 1, shows stereotypically gendered sentence final forms; Tables 2a and 2b depict pronominal forms; and, Table 3 depicts stereotypically masculine forms and OD forms as they differ from standard Japanese.

Table 1: Stereotypically masculine and neutral sentence final forms from standard Japanese and Osaka dialect.

Adapted from SturtzSreetharan (2004a); Hiramoto (2013)

	Masculine	Neutral
OD	ke, ga na, kai	de, nen/ten, shi, dene, na, wa↓, na, yan
SJ	zo, ze, Q no ka↑ (da) yo, kai, ka na, mon na, vb/adj + yo na, vb/adj + yo, jan	Vb/adj + yo ne, Vb/adj + ne wa↓, Q no↑

Japanese sentence final forms allow a speaker to mark his or her attitude toward an utterance. This marking of attitude indexes (indirectly) specific stances, including gender (Ochs 1992). Some of the most imposing sentence final particles are *zo*, *ze* and *(da)yo*, indexing insistence, aggression, hierarchy (over one’s interlocutor) and authority. While SturtzSreetharan’s work on naturally occurring informal all male conversations has shown that use of these insistent strongly masculine SFPs are infrequent at best (either in SJ or OD) (SturtzSreetharan 2004a, 2004b), they do remain one of the most pragmatically salient features of so-called Japanese men’s language. Likewise, as Tables 2 and 3 (below) demonstrate, first- and second-person pronouns are another strategic site for crafting stereotypical gender and hierarchy in speech. Japanese pronouns are divided according to sex of speaker as well as the situational context of the speaking event (e.g. status

of interlocutors); Tables 2 and 3 represent only those that are thought to apply to heteronormative men.

Table 2: Male/masculine first person pronouns.

	Context		
	Formal ←		→ Informal
Men	watakushi watashi wareware (pl.)	boku	ore

Table 3: Male/masculine second person pronouns.

	Context		
	Formal ←		→ Informal
Men	otaku anata	otakusan anta kimi	omae

Pronouns in Japanese are typically dispreferred; second-person pronouns in particular are described as highly dispreferred given that they immediately position a speaker and interlocutor according to rank/hierarchy (Niyekawa 1992). Indeed, pronouns can easily underscore the self or other for contrastive reasons and/or draw strong attention to a particular interlocutor to achieve ends beyond the semantico-referential; this is particularly true for second person pronouns (e.g. SturtzSreetharan 2009, 2015, 2017a).

Osaka dialect exhibits differences from SJ at all levels, including pitch accent;⁵ Table 4 notes some of the most common differences and those which are found in the film.

Table 4: Standard Japanese, stereotypically masculine and Osaka dialect forms.

Standard Japanese	Stereotypically masculine	Osaka dialect
<i>taberu</i> 'to eat'	<i>ku(u)</i>	
<i>jōzu</i> 'good/well'		<i>umai/umē</i>
<i>onaka suita</i> 'I'm hungry'	<i>hara hetta</i>	
<i>hijō ni</i> 'extremely, excessively'	<i>(meccha)</i>	<i>meccha</i>
<i>da</i> copula; including forms <i>dakara</i> , <i>darō</i>		<i>ya, yakara, yarō</i>
<i>nai</i> negation		<i>hen/hin</i>
<i>chigau</i> 'wrong'		<i>chau</i>
<i>omoshiroi</i> 'funny'		<i>omoroī</i>
<i>ii (yoi)</i> 'good/fine'		<i>ee</i>
<i>baka</i> 'fool'		<i>aho</i>

The next section demonstrates the ways in which the traditional white collar salaryman father (Ryota) is voiced which indexes his character type. SJ-Speaking Ryota's linguistic style is stereotypically masculine and formal/distancing which matches his absentee parenting style. Similarly, the OD-speaking electrician's parenting style is one in which he not only helps with children, he takes a direct role in their rearing.

The data

Ryota the businessman

As Tables 5–7 demonstrate, Ryota's linguistic practices exhibit proportionally more stereotypically (strongly) masculine features than Yudai's do.⁶ This is partly due, no doubt, to the fact that Ryota is the central character in the film, the one who ultimately undergoes transformation, and therefore has slightly more than double Yudai's number of lines (312 versus 173). Tables 5–7 show the total number of stereotypically masculine sentence final forms and first and second person pronouns used by Ryota and Yudai throughout the entire film.

Table 5: Total instances of sentence final particles by Ryota and Yudai.

	Stereotypically masculine SFPs	Total SFPs	Percentage
Ryota	59	88	67%
Yudai	17	44	39%

Table 6: Instances of masculine sentence final forms by Ryota and Yudai.

	<i>zo</i>	<i>Q no ka</i> ↑	<i>da yo (ne/na)</i>	<i>Verb/Adj + yo(na)</i>	<i>kana</i>
Ryota	6/59 (10%)	5/59 (8%)	15/59 (25%)	29/59 (49%)	3/59 (5%)
Yudai	2/17 (12%)	0/17 (0%)	6/17 (35%)	8/17 (47%)	1/17 (6%)

Table 7: Use of first (1PP) and second (2PP) person pronouns by Ryota and Yudai.

	<i>Ore</i> (1PP)	<i>Boku</i> (1PP)	<i>Anta</i> (2PP)	<i>Omae</i> (2PP)	<i>Koitsu</i> ⁷ (3PP)
Ryota	8/18 (44%)	10/18 (56%)	1/5 (20%)	3/5 (60%)	1/5 (20%)
Yudai	9/9 (100%)	0/9 (0%)	0/5 (0)	1/5 (20%)	4/5 (80%)

Rather than focusing only on quantitative instances of masculine linguistic features, the ways in which each father is represented as speaking is key. Ryota is represented as the ideological archetypical white collared

worker: his language exudes authority, insistence and preoccupation. His use of SJ stereotypically strong masculine sentence final particles and pronouns index him as distant and cold, especially when juxtaposed to his protagonist's linguistic style of intimacy and closeness as indexed through OD. Ryota's language use underscores his behaviour: he is focused on his career, comes home late most nights, works weekends and keeps up with his son's activities by asking his wife for details. The style of his interactions indicates distance and formality rather than closeness and solidarity.

The examples below, demonstrate Ryota's use of masculine sentence final forms. In these examples, he is talking to his current son Keita (Example 1), his wife, Midori (Example 2) and Keita again (Example 3). Stereotypically masculine sentence final particles are **bolded**; masculine pronouns are underlined.

Example 1

Chapter 8: 'Play Better': Ryota is talking to Keita about his move to Yudai's home.

214: Mukō no ouchi ni ittara, ojisan to obasan o papa to mama tte yobun da **zo**.

215: Sabishikutemo, naitari denwa shite kitari shicha dame da.

214:⁸ When you move into their house, you'**ll have** to call that 'uncle' and 'aunt' 'papa' and mama'.

215: Even if you're sad or crying, you can't call us.

Example 2

Chapter 1 'Opening Credits': Upon returning to find that Keita had not practiced the piano that day, Ryota utters the following to Midori.

21: Omae ga son nan de dō surun **da yo**? (To Midori)

22: piano wa ichinichi yasumu to nā

21: You've got to be disciplined!

22: If [he] takes one day off ...

Example 3

Chapter 8 'Play Better': During a piano recital in which the other performers' piano skills were far better than Keita's, Ryota utters the following.

197: Keita kuyashiku nai **no ka**?

198: motto jōzu ni hikitai to omowanain dattara, tsuzuketemo imi nai **zo**.

197: Keita, how can you stand it?!

198: If you don't have the will to play better, you should **quit**!

In Example 1:214–215, Ryota is talking with his son Keita, trying to explain why he must go and live with Yudai's family; Ryota delivers the message with strong masculine forms. This may be to underscore the seriousness of

what he is saying, lending authority to his words so that Keita understands that things are changing. The content is distressing on its own; its straight and matter of fact delivery connotes distance and coldness; it is direct and non-negotiable. Moreover, its reliance on logic and rational explanations rather than acknowledging any emotion deserves noting. Ryota is focused on preparing Keita for how to behave and act in his new environment; he is not focused on shared grief or the impending loss of his son. Keita is not to cry or telephone home. In this example, we see stereotypical SJ masculine forms being deployed for a distancing and formal effect.

Examples 2 and 3 capture two different situations that provide insight into Ryota's fathering style which demands discipline and constant vigilance. In Example 2:21–22, Ryota is speaking to Midori. He arrives home and asks if Keita has practiced the piano; Midori replies that due to an exam earlier in the day, Keita was taking the day off. Ryota uses the highly insistent verbal form *da yo* (plain copula + SFP) to state that Midori must be more disciplined. Ryota's use of *da yo* suggests parental authority and underscores his disappointment. In the subsequent example (3:197–198), the piano becomes an issue again; but this time, the addressee is Keita. While attending Keita's piano recital, several children who play after Keita do much better with more difficult piano pieces. Ryota asks Keita how he can 'stand' being so poor at piano. He asks the question using a strongly stereotypically masculine question form of *no ka* which highlights the rhetorical nature of his demanding question. He follows this by suggesting that without the desire to play better, Keita should just quit. He states this forcefully; Ryota uses the strongly masculine sentence final particle *zo* to highlight his insistence. Again, in this instance, I suggest that Ryota is using masculine forms to create a stern, strict and distant style of fatherhood.

The following examples demonstrate Ryota's use of first person pronouns. As Table 7 indicates, he uses both highly informal *ore* and somewhat formal *boku* the majority of the time. He is speaking with a former classmate (who is now Ryota's attorney) in Example 4 and with his boss in Example 5.

Example 4

Chapter 10 'Our Secret': Ryota discusses the pending legal case with his attorney.

261: Kattenai **yo**, ore wa.

262: Sō iu koto ja nain **da yo**. Ore ga itteru no wa.

261: I am not winning.

262: That's **not** what I'm talking about.

Example 5

Chapter 10 'Our Secret': Ryota is talking with his boss who has just informed him that he is to be transferred.

242: Nande boku nan desu ka?

245: Boku wa uttaerareteru wake janai n desu kara.

242: Why me?

243: It's not like I'm the one being sued.

In these two examples, we see textbook cases of 1PP and 2PP. When speaking with a peer or friend, Ryota uses informal *ore*; but, when speaking with his boss, Ryota uses more formal *boku*. Ryota's eighteen instances of 1PP are split between *ore* and *boku* depending on the interlocutor. Moreover, insistent sentence final forms co-occur with masculine personal pronouns (see Example 2:21 and Example 4:262) just as one would expect. It is worth noting that all but two of his instances of *boku* are accompanied by the distal form (*desu/masu*) which shows his attention to formality, requiring a shift in politeness. The use of *boku* occurs with both his boss and his wife. He only has three instances of masculine 2PP *omae*; he uses this form with his son and with his wife (e.g. Example 2:21). Ryota's linguistic style is appropriately formal, clearly in tune with status differences, and cognisant of his own position vis-à-vis others.

As the above examples demonstrate, Ryota uses various linguistic features that are associated with a masculine as well as status-conscious speaking style. Of his fifty-nine instances of masculine sentence final forms, he uses the moderately insistent form *yo* the most frequently. Ryota's linguistic features can be understood as masculine but not solely masculine; indeed, Ryota speaks in discursive juxtaposition to Yudai, his OD speaking protagonist. Thus, Ryota's use of status-conscious, masculine SJ is always heard in distinct opposition to the intimacy and informality that OD conveys. Ryota's linguistic practices produce a distancing effect as they focus not on solidarity but on authority. Ryota's infrequent use of softer intimate forms of language underscores his formal and distant style of fathering.

Yudai the Shopkeeper

Yudai uses fewer stereotypically masculine sentence final forms or pronouns overall (both SJ and OD); seventeen compared to Ryota's fifty-nine. His nine instances of first person pronouns are exclusively *ore*. Using *ore* exclusively suggests that he interacts with interlocutors as peers at best and that he aims for intimacy with interlocutors, regardless of their social standing vis-à-vis himself. Yudai's language throughout the film is a com-

bination of both SJ and OD. Yudai's scenes (and thus his speaking lines) can be categorised across two broad contexts: talking to his family and talking to Ryota and his family.⁹ Mainly, Yudai uses OD alongside highly informal SJ linguistic practices that include stereotypical masculine styles of speaking. His use of these forms of language do not fall neatly into particular contextual domains but rather are scattered throughout and across his interactions. The pieces of OD that Yudai uses are those that are pragmatically salient (Errington 1985); and, yet, they are merely semiotic partials of any locatable *real* OD (Agha 2007). They include the pieces of the dialect which are commonly heard in entertainment media (see SturtzSreetharan 2017b). They include the forms noted in Table 4 (above).

While Yudai's use of masculine sentence final forms or pronouns may be infrequent compared to Ryota, his use of OD crafts an image of someone who is simultaneously coarse in his speech and friendly, intimate, and masculine¹⁰ due to its enregisterments with humour, hipness, informality and intimacy (cf. Occhi, SturtzSreetharan and Shibamoto Smith 2010). Yudai makes use of stereotypically masculine forms of speech (Table 4); these include lexicon that are either phonologically reduced (*umai* 'delicious' becomes *ume*;) or dispreferred, such as the use of *kū* 'to eat' rather than the more polite *taberu*. He also uses highly informal phrases such as *hara hetta* 'I'm hungry' rather than the more typical '*onaka suita*'. In short, Yudai's linguistic practices rely on dialectal forms and highly informal SJ forms, indexing solidarity and friendliness.

The examples below demonstrate Yudai's use of masculine sentence final forms and various OD forms. They illustrate Yudai's uses of masculine SJ sentence final forms (*zo* and *yo*) as well as OD verb forms *~hin* and *ya*. OD forms are represented with ALL CAPS. Stereotypically masculine lexical forms appear with double underline; stereotypically masculine sentence final particles are **bolded**; masculine pronouns are underlined.

Example 6

Chapter 5 'Ring the Bell': Yudai is bragging to his wife and Midori (Ryota's wife) regarding his work ethic.

- 80: ore wa na,
 81: ashita dekiru koto wa kyō shīHIN no
 82: sore ga mottō YA.
 80: As for me.
 81: PUT OFF to tomorrow whatever you can
 82: that's my motto.

Example 7

Chapter 6 ‘Good Looking’: Yudai is talking to Ryota about child rearing.

129: *chichi oya KATE, torikae no kikan shigoto YARO.* (Said to Ryota.)

129: But no one CAN TAKE your place as your son’s father. (Said to Ryota)

In Example 6:80–82, Yudai is speaking to Ryota’s wife (Midori) about his life philosophy; Ryota is absent when Midori picks up Keita from Yudai’s house. When learning that Ryota is at work, Yudai delivers his motto of ‘putting off until tomorrow’ whatever is possible; this motto serves to draw a strong distinction between Ryota and Yudai. Yudai uses OD to execute his motto; relying on the negative *~hin* to further mark his relaxed stance. In Example 7:129, both families are at an indoor play park having lunch. After eating, Yudai joins the children in play, rolling around in a human-hamster ball. Panting, Yudai asks Ryota to switch with him and go play with the kids. Ryota refuses. Following this interaction, Yudai exhorts Ryota to spend less time at work and more time with his son; Ryota counters this by noting that he is needed at work. Yudai persists stating that time is of utmost importance to children and that no one but Ryota can be a father to his son. As the example notes, this utterance is replete with OD forms, including the potential form *yaro* which functions like a tag question, begging for agreement.

In the following examples (Examples 8 and 9), the use of rougher, stereotypically masculine language is used by Yudai. These examples serve to demonstrate Yudai’s language as consistently informal, masculine and casual; he rarely shifts his linguistic practice based on situation.

Example 8

Chapter 3 ‘Bad Energy’ Yudai is talking to Ryota about the children.

33: *Meccha kutteru.* (Said to Ryota about Yudai’s own children).

33: (They) eat a shit load.

In Example 8:33, Yudai uses the prescriptively vulgar form of the verb ‘to eat’ (*kū* vs *taberu*). Combined with the OD lexical item of *meccha* (‘very’ or ‘extremely’), the phrase comes across as quite casual and coarse. In Example 9, Yudai’s use of highly intimate and thus somewhat coarse language in a public (non-intimate) setting demonstrates, again, his lack of concern for using linguistic forms that do not match the context.

Example 9

Chapter 2 ‘Blood Tests’ and Chapter 6 ‘Good Looking’: Yudai and his wife are rushing into the hospital-arranged meetings with Ryota and Midori.

- 3: omataseshiteshimatte.
 4: iyā, **koitsu** ga degake ni sono setā wa dōnan datte.
 3: (We've) kept you waiting.
 4: Uh, **she** started telling me my sweater was wrong right before we left.
 144: degakeni mata natte, **koitsu** ga airon ga dōtara kōtara
 144: **She** started ironing just before we left.

Example 9 takes place in the first meeting between the two families. Yudai's use of the polite and highly formulaic 'we've kept you waiting' in 9:3 is a nod to the context; nonetheless, this phrase appears in its plain rather than distal form. Immediately following, Yudai uses *koitsu* as a term of reference for his wife (rendered as a third person pronoun in English). *Koitsu* is considered highly informal and intimate, and, thus, rude when used in a public setting – especially at a formal first encounter among hospital administrators. He uses this term of reference again, in a similar situation, at a meeting among Ryota and hospital administrators; indeed, Yudai uses it four times in the film, each in reference to his wife. Example 9:4 takes place early in the film as part of the audience's introduction to Yudai and Yukari foreshadowing his informal character.

It is not unusual for Yudai to use linguistic features which are considered dialect, slang and/or rough. These features overlap with language ideology that surrounds both gender and class ideologies. The looser, informal linguistic style used by Yudai accompanies his behaviour – he is often home, interacting with his children in various ways. He is an informal hands-on father with a close relationship with his children. Ryota rarely uses these kinds of linguistic features; and he never uses dialect. His actions accompany this linguistic style – he is rarely home, intimate interactions with his son or wife are infrequent at best; he is a formal, hands-off father with a distant relationship with his son.

Discussion

The film *Like Father, Like Son* capitalises on juxtaposing two different variants of fatherhood and masculinity to its audience; the contrast is made audible through the (further) juxtaposing of SJ and OD. Ryota is the normative but caricatured salaryman dad who works from dawn until long after dusk; his son has access to elite schooling, music lessons and entrance test preparatory lessons. However, he is juxtaposed to Yudai. Yudai runs an at-home business (electrical shop); he gives hands-on care to his three children; he takes them kite flying and fishing; he sits outside in the yard with them and looks at the sky, planning fireworks and watermelon eating parties; Yudai is never shown criticising his children. Yudai clearly provides for his children but he provides time over money. If Ryota is the caricature

of the white-collar salaryman father (best known in the 1980s and 1990s), it must be asked if Yudai is a perversion of the nostalgia-ridden old middle class (cf. Vogel 1971). A perversion because rather than a silent authoritarian father, Yudai is a highly interactional, hands-on caring father.¹¹ Yudai is fun, full of warmth, and connected to his children. Critically, Yudai is voiced with OD.

While the men's linguistic practices in this film are representations only, they manage to achieve enough authenticity to convince viewers of the characters and relationship (see Richardson 2010). They interact in ways that mirror the audience's ideas of what 'real life' is like; or, what it should or *could* be like. It suggests that the hegemonic normative father figure is in need of remediation in various ways. Ryota and what he represents – white collared salarymen fathers – is under the microscope in this film. He is a vision of a particular kind of 'normative father' in many ways, but in sore need of 'fixing'. Yudai's actions represent the relaxed, hands-on father that is socially anticipated but his lower middle class lifestyle is difficult to desire. In an era of ever decreasing birth rates, surveys note that fathers (men) must do more to help women with children and domestic chores.¹² Yudai is a picture of what that might look like. He doesn't wear a suit; he doesn't send his children to elite private schools; he doesn't harp on them about their table manners – all things that Ryota does do. He gives of himself – his time and energy to raising them. And, he does so in the voice of OD.

Additionally, Yudai is a care-giving father but he is not the *ikumen* that Oyama (2014) describes. Oyama suggests that the contemporary child-rearing father, the *ikumen*, is someone who displays some stereotypical Western characteristics such as chivalry or attention to domestic sphere (Oyama 2014). However, Yudai is not a Westernised father;¹³ nor is he an *ikumen*. *Ikumen* are urban professionals who are well-coiffed, fashionable and stylish; they use brand-name strollers to transport their babies around in public. Moreover, the child-care that an *ikumen* provides to his children should be at the expense of his career/work not something integrated into his work life. In contrast, Yudai is not fashionable, not urban and not well-coiffed; he does, however, actively engage in child-rearing. In fact, what is perhaps most remarkable is just how uncontemporary Yudai is. Yudai has eschewed the salaryman life to be a shopkeeper; and, rather than being a stern authoritative father, he is outward emoting and caregiving. Yudai engages with emotion – joy, eagerness and grief – all swirling around what he is losing and gaining (two different sons). Yudai simultaneously represents a peripheral masculine type while also representing a hands-on fatherhood that is socially desired. His use of OD, indexing informality and coarseness allows him to appear masculine; that is to say, *if* Yudai's

character acted and behaved in the exact same way but was voiced in SJ, his masculinity and desirability would be in question. Voicing Yudai in OD allows Yudai to be a peripheral masculine father figure while maintaining desirability and appeal.

The film complicates the taken-for-granted concepts of fatherhood, masculine ideals and family; in doing so, the Japanese fatherhoods presented in the film bring into discussion issues of class, nationhood and gender. The connected and caring Japanese father and his family, as constructed here, is not necessarily an urban, businessman ideal. The heretofore hegemonic masculine figure, the salaryman, is being repositioned and renegotiated. Masculinity tied to business suits, SJ, white-collared careers and professional housewives is directly called into question by the peripheral father, shopkeeper, Yudai. By highlighting the emotional rapport and connections that Yudai forges with both Ryusei and Keita, the movie positively values the informal, warm style of fatherhood and devalues the disconnected, formal, coolness of Ryota's style. Yudai's fathering style is reinforced through his use of OD, serving to support these positive valences through its highly casual, friendly, but somewhat coarse indices.

The film presents a chance to consider the sociolinguistics of a peripheral language by investigating how internal language variation, in the form of OD, is deployed in the construction of a new social type – the connected father. As noted earlier, Blommaert's idea of locality and periphery shed light on the ways in which Tokyo and the businessman father represent the hegemonic centre of normative fatherhood. The shopkeeper, then, is the periphery representing a new style of connected fatherhood. OD serves as an instance of 'translocalisation'. That is, the enregistered meanings of OD (urban and modern) are 'imported into a local system of meaningfulness, where they are changed and [re]interpreted' (Blommaert 2010:79). It is worth considering that no other regional dialect could have achieved this goal. As discussed earlier, Osaka dialect with its enregistered aspects of friendliness, intimacy, informality and *omoshirosa* (funniness/fun-ness) is the best candidate. It does not get bogged down in regional locality or negative prestige. The newly enregistered bits and pieces of OD are gradually being explicitly linked to a caregiving father (Agha 2007; Blommaert 2010). The connected, caregiving father is made audible through OD. Indeed, '[c]hange is gradual, step-by-step and slow, and the 'old order' of things persists while elements of the new order creep in' (Blommaert 2010:79). The film allows us to examine a case of the periphery moving toward the centre with agency. Connected fathers are on the move – they are a bit loud, dishevelled, chaotic and rough; but, they help with the care of children and do dishes. They just might be the future.

About the author

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Notes

- 1 OD was chosen over Kansai dialect (KD) given the kinds of regionalisms used by Yudai. KD refers to a set of linguistic features that encompasses far more geographical and linguistic landscape (see Long 1999). Yudai's embodied language includes features most readily associated with Osaka not any other part of KD. The film easily demonstrates the typical tensions between national-level recognisability and local-level accuracy that is so common in these contexts but beyond the scope of this current paper.
- 2 These multi-layered indices have facilitated expansion of OD beyond its geographical associations to represent a new social type, an affectionate father (SturtzSreetharan 2017b).
- 3 See Hashimoto's (2006) *kyūchūkan kaikyū* 'old/former middle class' designation.
- 4 This may appear contradictory to SturtzSreetharan's previous findings among actual male speakers of Kansai dialects. As she notes, the language, can be used to index an attitude of insistence, assertiveness, or anger; but, she also found that OD can be used to index solidarity and intimacy among homosocial peers (SturtzSreetharan 2004a, 2006, 2009). It is noteworthy, however, that several scholars have highlighted the way in which televisually represented speaking styles diverge from empirical inquiries of naturally occurring speech (cf. Mizumoto 2015; SturtzSreetharan 2017a).
- 5 Pitch accent differences were not included in the analyses.
- 6 Of Ryota's 312 utterances, 261 syntactically allow an SFP; Ryota uses a total of 88 SFPs of which 56 (64%) are stereotypically masculine. Of Yudai's 173 utterances, 151 syntactically allow an SFP; Yudai uses a total of 44 SFPs of which 16 (36%) are stereotypically masculine. A chi-square analysis of these data show a p -value of 0.096024 which is significant at the $p < 0.10$.
- 7 Japanese is not considered to have third person pronouns (see Hinds 1986); *koitsu* is glossed as such due to the way it is being used. A literal gloss of *koitsu* would be 'this guy/person'.

- 8 Translations are taken from the film's subtitling as well as the author's own translations.
- 9 There are only two instances wherein Yudai speaks to someone outside these two contexts: ordering food at the indoor playground and selling a lightbulb to a (non-Japanese) customer the electrical shop. The former context is replete with typical ordering language and no OD nor stereotypical masculine forms show up; the latter context is jovial and friendly with each man complaining about aches and pains but OD and masculine linguistic features are absent.
- 10 This linkage of coarse speech and masculinity is very much in accordance with Labov and Trudgill's findings decades ago, noting the correlation of vernacular speech and men (Trudgill 1974).
- 11 The kind of contemporary father that the Japanese government has been pushing for the past two decades (see North 2015).
- 12 Since 1994, the Japanese government has introduced various social policies encouraging men to participate more in domestic chores (for a discussion of this in English see Shwalb and Nakazawa 2013).
- 13 There is evidence that Yudai's family rejects Westernising tropes; this evidence includes the use of native Japanese terms (e.g. *bansōkō* 'self-adhesive plaster' versus *bandoēdo* 'band-aid') rather than foreign-loan words (used by Ryota's family). These issues deserve more attention than can be given here.

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