

## **Book Proposal: *Handbook of the Ryukyuan Languages***

(Editors: Patrick Heinrich, Shinsho Miyara & Michinori Shimoji)

The proposed book is part of a series of handbooks on Japanese linguistics. It comprises 33 commissioned chapters of up to 8,000 words. All authors listed in the proposal have been contacted. They have sent the abstracts of their respective chapters and agreed to have their manuscripts ready for submission to the editors by 31 December 2011. Allowing time for review and editing, we will deliver the completed and edited manuscripts four months after that, i.e., by the end of April 2012.

This handbook provides for the most appropriate and up-to-date answers pertaining to Ryukyuan language structures and use, and the ways in which these languages relate to Ryukyuan society and history. Each chapter delineates the boundaries and the research history of the field it addresses, comprises the most important and representative information on the state of research, spells out future research desiderata, and includes a comprehensive bibliography. The chapters aim at clarity and consistency in their organization and discussions.

### I CONTENT AND THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

The latest UNESCO atlas on the world's languages in danger of extinction in 2009 recognized the Ryukyuan languages as constituting languages in their own right, and this viewpoint represents nothing less than a dramatic shift in the ontology of Japan's linguistic make-up. Linguistics in Japan, especially Japanese dialectology, has played a key role in rationalizing the Ryukyuan languages as 'Japanese dialects' in adopting the Meiji period's nationalistic ideology. It is therefore high time that Ryukyuan linguistics be established as an independent field of study with its own research agenda and research objects. This handbook delineates that the UNESCO's classification is now well established and generally adequate, and that linguists working on the Ryukyuan languages would be well advised to refute the ontological status of the Ryukyuan languages as dialects and that of Japanese as an isolated language.

It is proposed here that Ryukyuan languages constitute a branch of the Japonic language

family and that this branch consists of five unroofed Abstand ('language by distance') languages, Amami, Okinawa, Miyako, Yaeyama, and Yonaguni, though in the above UNESCO atlas Kunigami (part of the dialect continuum between Amami and Okinawa) is listed as a distinct language. This handbook discusses Ryukyuan language history, linguistic properties, language use and attitudes. It brings together the leading scholars of Ryukyuan linguists in their respective fields.

## **II STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK**

The handbook consists of five sections, 'Historical Linguistics and Philology', 'Ryukyuan Dialectology', 'Descriptive Linguistics', 'Sociolinguistics', and 'Language Maintenance and Revitalization'.

### III INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS WITH SUMMARIES

#### SECTION I: HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS AND PHILOLOGY

##### *(1) The Japonic Language Family (Leon Serafim)*

The Japonic Language family has two branches, Japanese (on the Japanese archipelago) and Ryukyuan (on the Ryukyu archipelago). This author suggests that a pre-Proto-Japonic (PPJ) language existed on the Korean peninsula and some speakers migrated to Kyushu, that any PPJ speech on the Korean peninsula vanished with its speakers' absorption into Koreanic-speaking polities, and that Proto-Japonic then started off in northern Kyushu a few centuries BCE. He further explores when a definitive split between Japanese and Ryukyuan occurred, what features the Japonic language contains, what features Ryukyuan contain, and so forth.

##### *(2) Proto-Language (John Bentley)*

This chapter focuses on a reconstruction of the proto-language based on a comparison of the phonological and morphophonological features of the four main language groups: North Ryukyuan, Miyako, Yaeyama, and Yonaguni. Each of these language groups has a wall of mutual unintelligibility between them. It has been demonstrated how important Ryukyuan, especially proto-Ryukyuan, is for an accurate understanding of the language history of the Japanese archipelago. It can be demonstrated that much of the language change in Ryukyuan has occurred independent of the language of mainland Japan, obligating scholars to look to proto-Japanese (a combination of proto-mainland and proto-Ryukyuan) for answers. In the end, it is important that Ryukyuan be treated as a full-fledged language group and not just a 'dialect' as is the tendency in many Japanese scholarly circles. While there are clearly nationalistic reasons for the label 'dialect', scholars need to be aware of the importance of these languages, not only for preserving their culture and language, but also for the crucial data they can provide to answer the nagging questions of origins and heritage.

##### *(3) The formation of the Ryukyuan languages (Thomas Pellard)*

There still exists no comprehensive account of the historical settlement of the Ryukyu Islands with reference to linguistic situational factors. This chapter reviews archaeological, historical, anthropological and linguistic evidence pertaining to the

origins of the Ryukyuan languages and their speakers, and proposes a unified scenario that allows better understanding of the linguistic history of the Ryukyu Islands. The proposed classification of Ryukyuan will show that the settlement of the Ryukyu Islands did not take place in a progressive, linear fashion. At the same time, the recognition of a unified Ryukyuan branch will also refute the hypothesis that the islands were settled by multiple migration waves over a large period of time.

*(4) Ryukyuan language studies abroad from the 15-19<sup>th</sup> century (Sven Osterkamp)*

The proposed chapter will outline the history of foreign studies of and knowledge pertaining to the Ryukyuan languages up to Basil Hall Chamberlain. First, the situation in neighboring countries – China, Korea and Japan – will be examined. It is mostly from the field of diplomatic contacts that East Asian sources on Ryukyuan derive. Several works will be dealt with. The number of Korean sources is regrettably low, but at the same time they comprise the earliest transcriptions of Ryukyuan into an alphabetic script. As the involuntary destination of a great many shipwrecked Ryukyuan, Korea is also notable for the fact that the study of Ryukyuan was once encouraged officially. Finally, there are the Japanese sources, primarily dating from the second half of the Edo period. Western knowledge pertaining to Ryukyuan was generally rather restricted until well into the 19th century. Voyages of discovery conducted since the 1790s lead to the compilation of new glossaries of Ryukyuan, and eventually, with the founding of the Loochoo Naval Mission in 1843, even a dictionary and a grammar of Ryukyuan were prepared in a Western language.

*(5) Chinese language education in the Ryukyus (Daniel Kádár)*

While the teaching of the Japanese language in the Ryukyus has received much scholarly attention, Chinese language education has garnered far less interest in spite of the fact that in historical times the Ryukyu Kingdom maintained close political, cultural and economic ties with Imperial (Ming and Qing) China. Furthermore, the language educational materials written for Ryukyuan are significant, not only in terms of their textual merits but also because they are practically the only available authentic sources of historical Sino-Japonic intercultural communication. It is argued that historical Chinese language materials written for Ryukyuan are mementos of colonialism in the

sense that they served the purpose of strengthening China's claimed dominance over the Ryukyus.

## SECTION II: THE TRADITION OF RYUKYUAN DIALECTOLOGY

### (6) *Diachronic change and synchronic diversity of Ryukyuan dialects (Shigehisa Karimata)*

Ryukyuan is a Japonic language, and is the only language that has been proven to be a sister language of Japanese. The Ryukyuan dialects are spoken on an island chain called the Ryukyu Archipelago, located between Kyushu in Japan to the north and Taiwan to the south. There is a huge linguistic difference between Japanese and Ryukyuan, making them mutually unintelligible. Still, rigid sound correspondences can be established between Ryukyuan and Japanese, particularly with the Kyushu dialects, and there are also grammatical similarities between them. The size of the Ryukyu Archipelago is equivalent to that of Hondo (mainland Japan) in its entirety, and the dialects spoken on each island vary considerably. In fact, several mutually unintelligible dialectal groups can be identified, and this diversity in Ryukyuan gives rise to a variety of cross-linguistically interesting phenomena. Ryukyuan dialects divide into Northern and Southern varieties according to their phonological and grammatical features. Within the Northern Ryukyuan group, Amami and Tokunoshima form one subgroup, Okinoerabu, Yoron, and Northern Okinawa form another, and Southern Okinawa forms yet another. On the other hand, Southern Ryukyuan fall into the Miyako, Yaeyama, and Yonaguni subgroups. This chapter overviews the phonological and grammatical diversity found in Ryukyuan dialects by paying attention to their historical development. Classical Ryukyuan will also be examined based on Omorosoushi (1531). The phonological diversity will be described by comparing the sound system of Japanese and that of each of the six dialectal groups of Ryukyuan. The grammatical diversity will be described with a special focus on the morphology of verbs, adjectives, case markers, and focus markers. In dealing with the verbal morphology, attention will be paid to the tense-mood-aspect systems of Ryukyuan dialects, clarifying how structures such as the adverbial participle or infinitive form (*ren'yō*), the adjectival participle or adnominal form (*rentai*), and the conditional form (*jōken*) have developed.

(7) *Kakari musubi* (Rumiko Shinzato-Simonds)

This chapter discusses *kakari musubi* (KM) constructions in Okinawan from comparative and diachronic perspectives. More specifically, it addresses why Okinawan KM survive in Modern Okinawan while its Japanese counterpart disappeared, and why |do| (cognate of Old Japanese |zo|) survived, yet |su| (Old Japanese |koso|) did not. Furthermore, it deals with the question of why the functional expansion of the pronominal |si| into the complementizer |si| occurs concurrently with the demise of KM |su|. This change is interpreted differently by various linguists, and some fresh insights can be gained by taking Okinawan data into full consideration.

(8) *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Ryukyuan Dialectology* (Hiromi Shigeno, Kayoko Shimoji, Satomi Matayoshi and Satoshi Nishioka)

This chapter presents a comprehensive list of books, papers, and other materials of Ryukyuan dialectology. Ryukyuan dialectology has a rich literature that mainly comprises detailed descriptive studies of individual dialects, as well as studies that deal with different dialects comparatively. There exist many divisions and specialized areas of research in Ryukyuan dialectology, making it difficult for non-specialists to capture the entire picture of this vast research field. This chapter aims to provide an orientation to accessing literature in Ryukyuan dialectology. As well as presenting the past and present states of affairs in Ryukyuan dialectology, it will point to new topics of research, and draw attention to linguistic databases which allow these materials to be shared by both specialists and non-specialists of Ryukyuan dialectology. The present bibliography is divided into three major sections: ‘Databases’ (grammars, dictionaries, and texts), ‘Phonetics-Phonology’, and ‘Morphosyntax’, the latter with further sub-divisions. Each section begins with a brief introduction to the past tradition, current status, and future prospects of the area in question. In so doing, this chapter provides a carefully selected list of publications and materials that have importance for both specialists and non-specialists of Ryukyuan dialectology.

SECTION III: DESCRIPTIVE LINGUISTICS

(9) *Phonology* (Shinsho Miyara)

This chapter argues that, on a phonological basis, the Ryukyuan language group is a

sister to Japanese and is broken down into the Northern Ryukyuan and the Southern Ryukyuan language groups. It presents three phonological systems: one Northern Ryukyuan language, Okinawan, and two Southern Ryukyuan languages, Yaeyaman and the Irabu variety of Miyako. Following Serafim and others, we will consider these languages within the broader context of the Japonic language family and thus examine how they can aid in the reconstruction of Proto-Japonic. In addition, phonological issues pertaining to verb conjugation, diachronic change, adjective roots, and the lack of single mora constraint on words and phrases will be discussed.

*(10) Accent (Moriyo Shimabukuro)*

This chapter introduces the accentual systems of the Ryukyuan language, beginning with a comparison with the Standard Japanese system. This is followed by a critical review of previous studies comprising two sections on synchronic and diachronic analyses of Amami, Okinawa, Miyako, Yaeyama and Yonaguni systems. On the basis of data from these modern varieties, the chapter makes steps toward a reconstruction of the proto-accentual systems of both contemporary varieties and the Ryukyuan language as a whole. The development from proto-forms to modern varieties will also be discussed.

*(11) Intonation (Yasuko Nagano-Madsen)*

In this chapter, two areas of intonation in Shuri Okinawan that are significantly different from Tokyo Japanese are discussed from a typological perspective. The first is the manifestation of question intonation, and the second is the upstep intonation found in Shuri Okinawan in contrast to the well-known downstep intonation in Tokyo Japanese. One of the characteristics of Ryukyuan languages is the presence of obligatory mood suffix in verb formation. In Shuri Okinawan, a set of mood suffixes indicates not only whether the sentence is declarative or interrogative but also whether it is a yes-no question, *wh*-question, or emphatic question. Such a language with detailed mood suffix to indicate sentence type is rare among the world's languages. It is discussed how such typological features manifest with regard to intonation.

*(12) Lexicon (Wayne Lawrence)*

This chapter will provide a brief survey of dictionaries of the Ryukyuan languages from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and will draw attention to differences in the composition of the lexicon between dialects reflecting cultural differences, e.g. Shuri and Naha (seaside vs. inland); Ishigaki and Hatoma (cultural centre vs. subsistence community). Also introduced will be the now defunct distinction between gentry (*shizoku*) and commoners (*heimin*) as reflected in vocabulary. The make-up of the lexicon in terms of its origin will be discussed, including the amount of Chinese loans, loans from English and other languages, and the often-proposed possible relationship with Austronesian (this last point will be discussed negatively). Examples of the role of taboo in vocabulary usage will be given, as will some recent examples of semantic-shift in the traditional vocabulary due to the introduction of words from Japanese.

*(13) The Tense-Aspect-Mood systems (Tomoko Arakaki)*

The tense and aspect system in Ryukyuan languages is basically similar to that of Standard Japanese. As the grammars of Japanese and Ryukyuan languages have developed in somewhat different directions, however, the tense/aspect systems can differ in their meaning or function. There are two kinds of tense in the Ryukyuan languages: non-past and past. There are three types of aspect: general (perfective), continuative, and completed (resultative). The resultative is somewhat complicated owing to the fact that it expresses two meanings – the result of a completed action and also the definite (simple) past. Some consider this second form to convey inferential meaning rather than the definite past while others claim that it should be considered to be part of mood (or modality). Indeed, the distinction between mood/modality and aspect is not always clear-cut. This overview highlights the ongoing controversy over whether or not the elements of tense, aspect and mood should be completely separated from each other.

*(14) Amami grammar (Yuto Niinaga)*

This chapter is an introduction to the phonology, grammar, sociolinguistic situation and current research trends of Amami, a Northern Ryukyuan language spoken in islands between Kyushu and Mainland Okinawa. Amami is famous among Ryukyuan linguists for its phonological features – ‘glottalized phonemes’ and two kinds of medial vowels.

As with most Ryukyuan languages, however, little attempt has been made to describe Amami in its own right by providing a thorough and exclusive account of its grammatical features from phonology to complex clause structure. Thus far, no previous work has addressed such issues as exactly what kind of phonological rules govern the language, what kind of case alignment system is displayed, and what inflectional categories exist, all of which are essential in characterizing a language from a theoretical and typological point of view. This chapter fills this major gap in the literature, presenting a theory-informed, typologically meaningful, grammatical sketch of Amami.

*(15) Okinawan grammar (Shinsho Miyara)*

The Okinawan language has the largest speaking population among the Ryukyuan languages. This chapter is mostly devoted to the morphology and syntax of Okinawan. The grammatical features of Okinawan discussed in this chapter include unique word formation rules; interrelations between compounding, suffixation and *rendaku* voicing; and the existence of a verbal suffix of evidentiality that denotes the speaker's certainty of the information acquired from a third party.

*(16) Miyako grammar (Hayato Aoi & Michinori Shimoji)*

This chapter is an introduction to the phonology, grammar, socio-linguistic situation, and current research trends of Miyako, a Southern Ryukyuan language spoken in the Miyako Islands. Miyako comprises several major varieties such as Ikema, Irabu, Ōgami, Hirara, Bora, Tarama, etc. Miyako is relatively well described compared to other Ryukyuan languages, given that two reference grammars are available. From a typological point of view, however, Miyako Ryukyuan is not homogeneous, and more grammars should therefore be published for other varieties of Miyako. The Tarama variety is a good candidate, since it is severely endangered and has a number of phonological and morphosyntactic characteristics that are distinct from other Miyako varieties. This chapter provides a grammatical sketch of Miyako focusing on two typologically distinct varieties of Miyako: Irabu and Tarama.

*(17) Yaeyama grammar (Reiko Aso)*

This chapter is an introduction to the phonology, grammar, sociolinguistic situation, and current research trends of Yaeyama, a Southern Ryukyuan language. Yaeyama is spoken in eight islands of the Yaeyama group, only one of which – Hateruma – is the focus of this study. Until now, most of the research on Yaeyama grammar has been topic-oriented with the result that, as with most Ryukyuan languages, few descriptive grammars exist at present. This chapter discusses Hateruma grammatical features from phonology to complex clause structure. It also clarifies what kind of research is yet to be done, what kind of topics the current research has tended to focus on, and how to start fieldwork in the Yaeyama Islands.

*(18) Yonaguni grammar (Michinori Shimoji, Thomas Pellard & Masahiro Yamada)*

This chapter is an introduction to the phonology, grammar, sociolinguistic situation, and current research trends of Yonaguni, a Southern Ryukyuan language spoken on the island located closest to the national border between Japan and Taiwan. Yonaguni has particularly interesting phonological and morphological features. As with most Ryukyuan languages, however, little attempt has been made to describe Yonaguni in its own right by providing a thorough and exclusive account of its grammatical features from phonology to complex clause structure. Thus far, no previous work has addressed such issues as exactly what kind of case alignment system this language displays, what inflectional categories exist, and how case marking interacts with information structure, all of which are essential in characterizing a language from a theoretical and typological point of view. This chapter fills this major gap in the literature, presenting a theory-informed, typologically meaningful, grammatical sketch of Yonaguni.

## SECTION V: SOCIOLINGUISTICS

*(19) Japanese language spread in the Ryukyu Islands (Patrick Heinrich)*

This chapter discusses the spread of Japanese in the Ryukyu Islands from two perspectives. Firstly, Japanese language spread policy and language cultivation efforts are outlined. Secondly, the effects on language use and language structure are depicted. While Japanese was spread as a foreign language across the entire Ryukyu Islands, language spread was framed as part of a Japanese language standardization effort. As a consequence, the issue of the deliberate displacement of heritage languages has received

little attention until very recently. Furthermore, since the Japanese language standardization campaign in the Ryukyu Islands involved the introduction of a different language (Standard Japanese), it resulted in societal bilingualism, which in turn gave rise to phenomena such as code-switching and language crossing. This bilingualism has not been acknowledged, however, and most crucially, has not been recognized as a state worthy of being maintained.

*(20) Ryukyuan language suppression campaigns (Ken'ichiro Kondo)*

Immediately after the forced abolition of the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1879, the prefectural authorities in Okinawa encouraged local people to speak (Standard) Japanese. The newly established elementary schools were the main setting where Standard Japanese was taught and used. At the time, teachers spoke the Ryukyuan languages to schoolchildren who did not understand Standard Japanese, but this does not imply that teachers taught Ryukyuan languages. Rather, they used them as an auxiliary language. Since inhabitants of the Ryukyu Islands were still speaking local vernaculars in private domains, the 'dialect tag' was introduced. It played a crucial role in the subsequent suppression of the Ryukyuan languages. In each classroom, one such tag was used. School children who spoke in their local tongue were punished by being forced to wear a dialect tag in order to stigmatize them and their choice of language. The tag was used for a long time, roughly from 1900 until 1970. However, the actual purposes and methods of the policy as well as the practice of enforcing Standard Japanese changed over time. This paper surveys the major turning points which occurred from 1880 until 1970.

*(21) Language shift (Patrick Heinrich)*

The incorporation of the Ryukyu Kingdom into the Japanese state under the name of Okinawa Prefecture in 1879 led to language shift in public domains from 1880 onwards. This shift was facilitated by the education system, local newspapers, and literature, which used Japanese exclusively and thus played a major role in interrupting the linguistic adaptation of the Ryukyuan languages to the communicative requirements of modernity. As a consequence, vocabulary was not expanded, no new styles or functions were added, no orthographies developed, no standard varieties emerged, and no

grammars were written. Language shift in the private domains set in around 1950. Under US occupation, and in miserable living conditions, Ryukyuan sought to improve their wellbeing by seeking reunification with Japan. The fact that Japan saw itself as monolingual, together with the inability of the Ryukyuan languages to adapt, led to the view that the Japanese language ought to be used in private domains as well. Over the last ten years, it has been possible to witness the first efforts towards reversing language shift. At present, language revitalization efforts are focusing on limited social networks rather than on domains.

*(22) Ryukyuan language endangerment (Masahide Ishihara)*

If a language is neither acquired nor used, its future is doomed. It would appear that this is the situation faced by the languages of the Ryukyus at present, given that all Ryukyuan languages are endangered. While the majority of those in their seventies and older are usually able to speak a Ryukyuan variety, none of the Ryukyuan languages has been acquired as a first language by most people in their fifties or below. Hence, daily conversations are conducted in Japanese or Uchinaa-Yamatoguchi, a local variety of Japanese which incorporates elements of the indigenous languages. If nothing is done to maintain the local languages, it is predicted that they will become extinct within thirty or forty years. In this chapter, language endangerment is discussed on the basis of a series of surveys conducted in 2011 by a research group which included the author. In addition to depicting the degree of endangerment, these surveys also point to issues which need to be resolved in order to enhance language vitality.

*(23) Language mixing and code-switching (Mark Anderson)*

This chapter is a qualitative synchronic analysis of language mixing and code-switching in Naha, Okinawa. Taking a micro-interactional perspective, it attempts to characterize the speech behavior of various age-related subgroups in the community based on data from audio recordings of natural conversation. Included in the discussion is an explanation of how these subgroups differ in terms of their linguistic repertoires and behavioral patterns, with particular attention paid to the ways in which they mix Uchinaaguchi (Okinawan language) and Japanese on a daily basis. The speakers are allotted to four subgroups according to the extent to which they use Uchinaaguchi, and

the ways in which they use Uchinaaguchi together with Japanese. Each of the subgroups is discussed in terms of two primary foci: the extent to which four Uchinaaguchi-related constituents of speech (Uchinaaguchi, Morphologically Mixed Uchinaaguchi, Erroneous Uchinaaguchi and Mimicked Uchinaaguchi) are used in informal daily conversation, and the ways in which lexemes from these constituents are mixed with lexemes from the main constituent of Okinawan speech, Japanese.

*(24) Local language varieties and the media (Yuko Sugita)*

This chapter provides a general overview of recent important research in the field of language varieties and the media. This view of the broader literature will shed light on the role of mediated language use in language revitalization. The most important and most recent research tendencies of language varieties in the media specifically relating to endangered languages and language revitalization will also be reviewed. The following concepts will be introduced and discussed: (1) Language varieties in use: mixed language, code-switching; (2) Language and identity: stylization; (3) Language and space: the blurring concept of ‘domain’, glocality and digital community; (4) Language revitalization: essentialism, continuity and vitality. Emerging around the local broadcasting media at present is a global community which has the potential of strengthening the vitality of Ryukyuan language varieties. The last section of the paper will provide an outlook for the future research of mediated communication, in which different Ryukyuan varieties are observed as being vital according to the non-essentialist’s view of language.

*(25) Uchinaguchi in the Okinawan Diaspora (Katsuyuki Miyahira & Peter Petrucci)*

Just over a hundred years ago, thousands of Uchinaanchu (Okinawan) immigrants left their island home to settle around the Pacific and the Americas. Today, most third and later generation Uchinaanchu no longer speak the heritage language, or if they do, only haltingly. This chapter shows how Uchinaanchu continue to use Uchinaaguchi in a limited albeit creative manner for expressing identity and solidarity within and across the Okinawan Diaspora. Whether real or virtual, recent movements and interaction have helped reshape the identities of Uchinaanchu overseas. Symbolic uses of Uchinaaguchi are essential to this reshaping and offer a potential avenue towards an Okinawan

identity that relies more on transcultural parallels than on the distinct and in turn divisive notions of ‘homeland’ versus ‘periphery’.

*(26) Language and identity (Hugh Clarke)*

Identity is a modernist construct, just as tradition is. Neither concept exists prior to the modern period. The linguistic situation in the Ryukyu Islands today is very much the result of modernist identity politics. Japanese identity is intricately intertwined with language due to national language ideology. The policies based on this ideology gave rise to various problems during modern Okinawan history. In pre-war Japan, Ryukyuan were often doubted in their “Japaneseness” due to their lack of proficiency in Japanese and later due to their bilingualism. Both the Battle of Okinawa and the prolonged occupation under US rule are events which bear witness of exclusion from the Japanese nation as an effect of such doubts. Local language oppression, exclusion from the Japanese nation, and the dismal life under US rule, led to the language shift that is endangering the Ryukyuan languages today. In the light of such endangerment, neoliberal reforms of the Japanese state, and ongoing globalization, the language-identity nexus is again under discussion in the present-day Ryukyu Islands.

SECTION IV: LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND REVITALIZATION

*(27) Efforts towards cultural and linguistic revitalization (Kiyoshi Hara)*

Cultural revitalization underwent a long preparation period in the Ryukyus before it began to surface in more concrete terms. Proactive cultural and linguistic revitalization can be said to have commenced in the 1970s after the return of the Ryukyuan Islands to Japanese rule. This period of time is often referred to as the ‘first Okinawa boom’. Okinawa’s uniqueness was represented in foods, dress and other aspects of material culture. Mainland Japanese found appeal in the different cultural features of Okinawan singers, but during the first boom most songs were sung in Japanese. In the 1990s, Shuri Castle was restored and NHK aired a historical drama called ‘Ryukyu no Kaze’ (‘Winds of the Ryukyus’) as a symbolic event for the 20th celebration of reunion with Japan. In Okinawa Prefecture, this drama was also aired in the Okinawan language, thereby reaffirming the uniqueness of the Okinawan culture. These events along with other cultural phenomena are part of what is usually called the ‘second Okinawa boom’. It

was against this backdrop that Okinawan language speech contests were started in 1996 by the Federation of Cultural Associations in Okinawa Prefecture, as a symbolic event for the formation of the organization. This marked the beginning of the Okinawan language revitalization movement in the 1990s. The Council for Okinawan language revitalization was subsequently established in 2001. This period also saw the emergence of writers who chose to write in Okinawan. As a result of the campaign by this council, prefectural regulations for the promotion of Okinawan were legislated in 2008 as yet another step towards linguistic and cultural revitalization.

*(28) Orthography development (Shinji Ogawa)*

This chapter discusses the issue of orthography development for the Ryukyuan languages. The question is raised as to what has prevented a writing system of Ryukyuan from being developed. No Ryukyuan language has a general writing system or orthography, which is beyond doubt a powerful tool for a language to survive, especially in the modern world. The present chapter argues that there are two possible factors that have led to this situation: socio-political history and linguistic diversity in the Ryukyus. Accordingly, it is considered urgently necessary for researchers to co-operate in the development of a consistent writing system for the Ryukyuan languages, commencing with a discussion of the relevant issues such as whether an alphabetic or moraic script should be used.

*(29) Language documentation (Michinori Shimoji)*

This chapter discusses the current state of affairs and future prospects regarding the documentation of the Ryukyuan languages. Rather than discussing theoretical and technical issues of Language Documentation (LD) in detail, I focus on practical applications of LD to Ryukyuan linguistics. This chapter comprises two parts. The first of these is intended as a general precursory introduction to LD as a field of research. The second part overviews past efforts to document the Ryukyuan languages, indicates the current problems specific to the Ryukyuan languages, and discusses ways in which the theory of LD should be applied to Ryukyuan linguistics. In order to make the discussion as concrete as possible, I make frequent reference to my own ongoing documentation projects (Irabu Ryukyuan and Yonaguni Ryukyuan) in the second part of

this chapter.

(30) *Uchinaaguchi in the linguistic landscape (Peter Petrucci & Katsuyuki Miyahira)*

This chapter focuses on the linguistic landscape of Heiwa Dori and Makishi Market, located in downtown Naha, Okinawa. Throughout this public space Uchinaaguchi is visible in the linguistic landscape. Visual instances of Uchinaaguchi are for the most part limited to familiar words and phrases, e.g. *mensoore* (welcome) and *ichariba chode* (though we meet but once, we are friends for life) and names for traditional Okinawan foods and products, e.g. *tankan* (local mandarin orange) and *sanshin* (three-stringed musical instrument). Our data represent an array of texts, including but not limited to Uchinaaguchi signs and placards, T-shirts, and souvenir packaging, as well as *shiisaa* (temple lion), castle gates and other iconic visual images of Okinawa. All the texts are publicly produced. The chapter demonstrates that varied script and placement choices like these play a crucial role in our understanding and appreciation of Uchinaaguchi linguistic landscapes at the shopping complex. We reflect on whether the manner in which Uchinaaguchi linguistic landscapes at the marketplace are presented, circulated and consumed actually help Okinawans (re)contextualise and (re)assert Uchinaaguchi as a language separate from Japanese and thus directly challenge long-standing assumptions to the contrary.

(31) *Ryukyuan languages in Ryukyuan music (Matt Gillan)*

Music represents one of the most important contexts for the continued use of local languages in the present-day Ryukyu Islands. This chapter gives an outline of some of the linguistic and poetic forms used in traditional and modern Ryukyuan music, and examines some of the social and cultural meanings that these music-making practices hold. The first section outlines the use of language in the so-called classical music (*koten*) accompanied by the *sanshin*. Section 2 considers the use of language in the various *kake-uta* (antiphonal) singing styles, such as the *moo-ashibi* tradition in the Okinawan mainland and the *uta-asobi* of the Amami islands. Section 3 considers the importance of local languages in the music of the Yaeyama and Miyako islands in the southwest of Okinawa. The final section examines the use of local languages in more recent compositions by Okinawan musicians. I frame the discussion of this very

geographically specific language use in the context of similar attempts to maintain endangered languages through music in other parts of the world such as Canada and Hawai'i.

*(32) Ryukyuan languages in proverbs (Kate O'Callaghan)*

Standard definitions of proverb make it an interesting jumping off point for conducting paremiological studies in endangered languages. When a language system stops being conveyed from one generation to the next, we do not just witness a gradual loss of lexical forms, we also bear witness to the erosion of cultural wisdom embodied by the linguistic phenomena. That is to say, the loss of proverbs amounts to the severing of a culture's connection to ancestral knowledge and experience accumulated over time. Proverbs, being 'of the folk', are primarily generated in speech acts. An important aspect of proverb studies is the idea of 'currency' – how popular or well known a proverb is to the speakers of a language. Even proverbs in robust languages tend to go in and out of fashion, some having a much longer and more resilient shelf life than others. As their construction is far more fixed in nature than individual tokens, they tend to remain stable with a very minor degree of variance over time. This chapter collects proverbs from face to face contact with Uchinaaguchi speakers using techniques employed by non-native endangered language researchers. The resulting inventory of proverbs will serve to not only raise awareness of the current situation but also form a base from which to conduct future research.

*(33) Ryukyuan languages into the 21st century (Fija Byron & Patrick Heinrich)*

Maintaining the Ryukyuan languages in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will require language choices different from those of the last 60 years. Language choices are contingent on the specific socio-cultural and economic environment of the speech communities in question. That is to say, maintaining the Ryukyuan languages through change in language choices will necessarily require changes in the socio-cultural and economic environment of the Ryukyu Islands, and of Japan as a whole. We argue that such changes promise benefits for all, whether they are speakers or non-speakers of Ryukyuan languages. Possible benefits pertain to aestheticism, knowledge, science and the economy. While this is already fairly well known in the sociology of language, it is

now time to deal with the urgent question of how to mobilize enough people and resources into a Ryukyuan language maintenance project. This requires a comprehensive vision of how and what the Ryukyu Islands ought to be in the 21st century – a vision which must also involve the use of local languages. Such a vision is, however, not yet in sight.

#### **IV RELEVANCE OF THE BOOK / OUTSTANDING FEATURES**

The Handbook of Ryukyuan Languages is a long overdue publication, which both fills important gaps in the Japanese linguistics and integrates knowledge across disciplinary boundaries. It acknowledges that the Ryukyuan languages are languages in their own right, and studies them accordingly. It addresses issues of language history, philology, and language use. It provides pioneering accounts of all Ryukyuan languages at all levels of description. There is no other publication available which offers these features. The writers of the handbook are leading scholars of Ryukyuan linguistics and Ryukyuan studies.

#### **V TARGET AUDIENCE AND PROPOSED MARKET**

The Ryukyu Islands are said to be one of the regions of the world which have been studied in most detail. This notwithstanding, Ryukyuan languages have until recently received comparatively little attention. This handbook fills an important gap, which also affects several disciplines other than linguistics. These include history, history of thought, anthropology, sociology, regional studies, political science and media studies. This book is therefore of high interdisciplinary relevance, and will be a beneficial source of information to students across various disciplines. It addresses the requirements of descriptive linguists and students of language endangerment everywhere where Ryukyuan/Okinawan Studies, descriptive linguistics, and language endangerment are studied. Besides Japan, major markets will be the US, Europe and Australia. In view of the fact that no other work addresses the Ryukyuan languages as comprehensively and in as up-to-date a fashion as the present one, the handbook will be the standard reference on Ryukyuan languages for many years to come.

#### **VI INFORMATION ON THE EDITORS**

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Patrick Heinrich, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies 2011), and “Foot and Rhythmic Structure of Irabu Ryukyuan” (*Gengo kenkyū* 135).