

NINJAL International Symposium

Approaches to Endangered Languages in
Japan and Northeast Asia:
Description, Documentation and Revitalization

Tachikawa, Tokyo, August 6-8, 2018
(Poster session & Workshop: August 5, 2018)

ROUND TABLE (Day1: 6 AUG, 2018)
Ryūkyū, Hachijō and Japanese

Shoichi Iwasaki (UCLA, NINJAL)

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Keynote Talk

Session 1: Ryūkyū and Hachijō

Session 2: Revitalization in Ryūkyū

Session 3: Japanese dialects

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1. Historical linguistics and Language Dispersal (Pellard, Karimata, Kaneda/Holda)
2. Accent (Igarashi, Kibe)
3. Case marking (Shimoji, Sasaki)
4. Aspect (Tsuda)
5. Grammaticalization (Kaneda/Holda, Tsuda)
6. Language revitalization (Yamada, Yamamoto, Yokoyama, Matsumura)

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De-dialectization, Re-vitalization, Re-normalization,
Archivazation, and De-stigmatization

Shoichi Iwasaki
UCLA & NINJAL

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The goals of this presentation

- To provide a framework for discussing the 'language and dialect' controversy in the context of endangered language studies
- To understand options we have for the future of endangered languages and dialects

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The goals of this presentation

- What is "Dialect"?: 方言 (Dialects) in China and Japan
- Mutual intelligibility among Japanese dialects
- *Abstand* and *Ausbau* languages (Kloss)
- 'Dialectalization' of a language
- National language (国語) and Japanese (日本語)
- Japanese, Indonesian and Romansh
- Conclusion

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What is Dialect? 方言 (fang yan; hoo-gen)

In China

The first dialect dictionary in China

「揚子方言」(Yang Zi Fang Yan) by Yang Xiong 杨雄 (扬子) (53 BCE–18 CE)

「輪軒使者絶代語釋別國方言」"Local expressions of other countries in times immemorial explained by the Light-Carriage Messenger,"
A list of regional forms of different words

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Why did it take so long to adopt this word?

In Japan (18 century)

古活字本毛詩抄ハ「方言に注する時には其方々々の言を注するぞ」

東雅: 総論「天下の言には古言あり今言あり。其古今の間に於て又其方言あり。方言の中に亦各雅言あり俗言あり」

警諭尽: 「方言(ハウゲン)とは国々にて唱への違ひ替る詞をいふ」

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方言 Dialect

China

Japan

- early awareness of diverse varieties (different languages and different dialects)
- regional varieties (e.g. Cantonese dialect 広東方言) 'regionlect, topolect'
- an objective label (but see some developments in Taiwan; Min Nan Dialect > Taiwanese)
- late awareness of diverse varieties
- 日本語 (Japanese) is an object of linguistic inquiry as Korean and Japanese dialects are.
- 国語 (a national language) is a value system supported by nationalism, and is superior to other languages (e.g. Korean) and dialects. (Tokieda 1942)
- an objective label > a subjective label

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- As an attempt to reduce the subjective implication associated with the term 'dialect,' some linguists have started to take the concept of "mutual intelligibility" more seriously as a scientific tool to define languages and dialects.
- E.g., O'Grady, W. 2014. "Jejueo: Korea's Other Language." paper presented at the 7th World Congress of Korean Studies. Honolulu, Hawai'i.

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Mutual intelligibility among Japanese dialects

多文化・多言語社会としての日本の理解—消滅危機言語の相互理解性と世代間継承度のための客観的尺度の創出 (Toyota Foundation Grant, 2015)

(Understanding Japan as a multi-lingual and multi-cultural society – Creating an objective measurement tool for mutual intelligibility among endangered languages/dialects and intergenerational language transmission)

Masahiro Yamada, Yukinori Takubo, Shoichi Iwasaki, Celik Kenan, Soichiro Harada, Nobuko Kibe, Tyler Lau, Natsuko Nakagawa, Yuto Niinaga, Tomoyo Otsuki, Manami Sato, Rihito Shirata, Gijs van der Lubbe and Akiko Yokoyama

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Yamagiwa, Joseph. 1967. *On dialect intelligibility in Japan*. Anthropological Linguistics 9.1

College students (Keio University) translated the beginning part of dialect speeches by elderly speakers into the Standard Japanese.
42 from Kanto / 23 outside Kanto

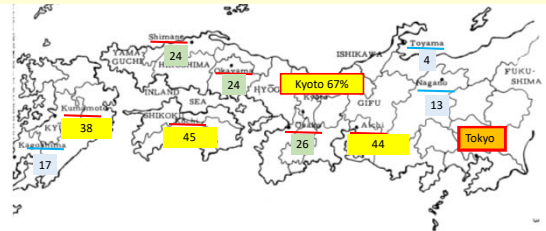
Their answers were graded against the correct translation

100% (mutually intelligible) < > (0 % = mutually unintelligible)

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Home regions of students and number of students	Dialects									
	Ōsa-ka	Kyōtō	Aichi-ano	Nag-ama	Toy-ama	Okay-ama	Kōchi-mane	Shi-moto	Kuma-moto	Kago-shima
Tōkyō and environs (Kaikō) 42	26.4	67.1	44.5	13.3	4.1	24.7	45.5	24.8	38.6	17.6
Aichi, Gifu 5	21.7	74.6	51.0	21.0	15.9	22.5	45.2	20.4	39.7	15.4
Hyōgo, Ōsaka 3	39.0	72.0	56.7	15.3	10.4	12.0	35.7	26.2	26.5	20.1
Yamaguchi, Hiroshima 4	32.0	82.7	43.5	23.4	10.5	41.8	46.5	34.9	54.5	28.1
Shikoku 2	34.1	80.8	42.6	16.0	16.1	31.1	45.9	28.3	34.1	25.2
Kyūshū 6	15.6	80.4	35.0	7.9	10.5	14.9	34.5	16.6	43.3	14.5
Ishikawa, Toyama 2	26.2	48.2	25.8	8.7	42.7	21.5	58.6	31.6	37.1	12.1
Fukushima 1	17.0	43.0	21.3	8.6	11.0	7.7	28.4	16.1	22.4	0
Non-Kaikō 23	25.0	74	39.5	15.2	15.6	21.6	41.9	24.2	40	17.9

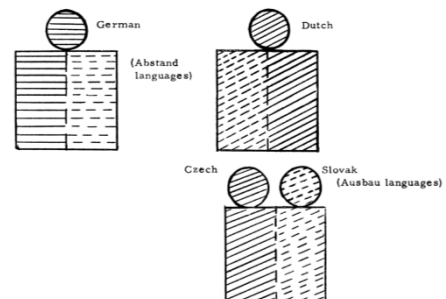
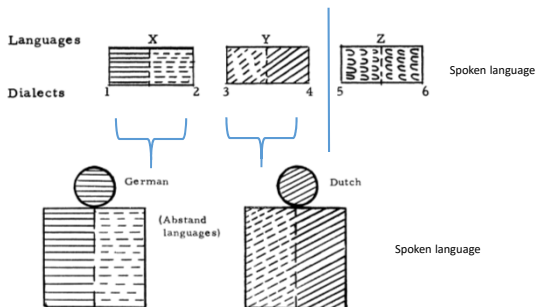
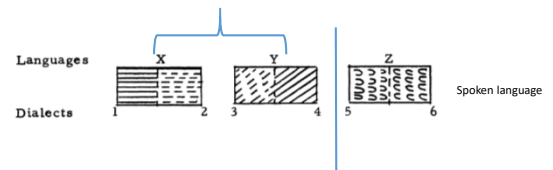
Japan is a much more linguistically diverse country than hitherto believed.

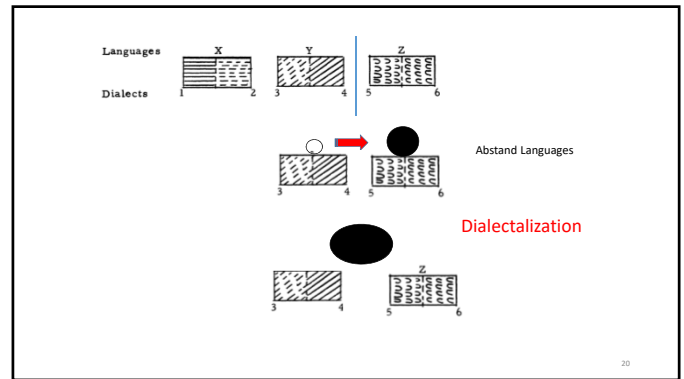
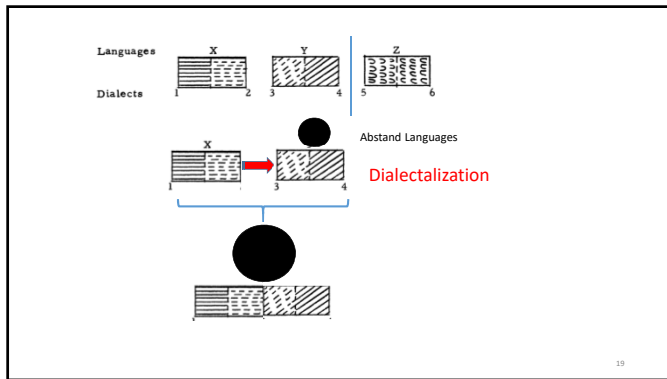


Abstand and *Ausbau* languages

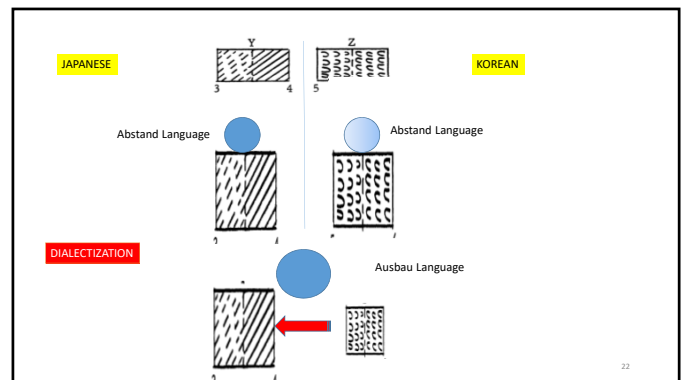
Kloss, Heinz. (1967) *Anthropological Linguistics* 9, 29–41.

- *Abstand* languages: language by (intrinsic, linguistic) distance; natural
- *Ausbau* languages: language by development, or through reshaping; artificial, sociological, language engineering

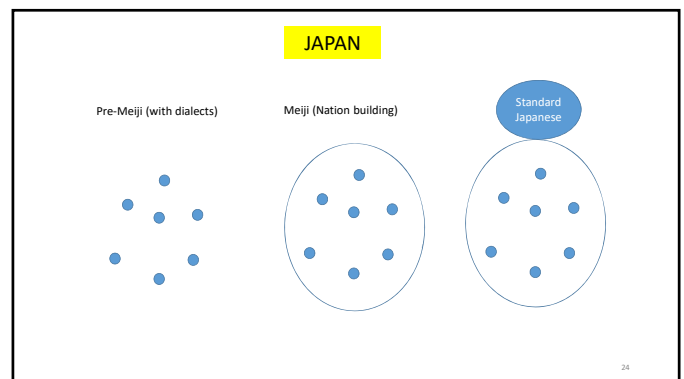


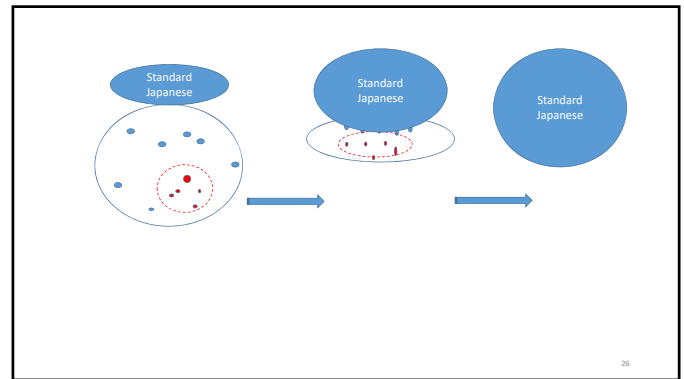
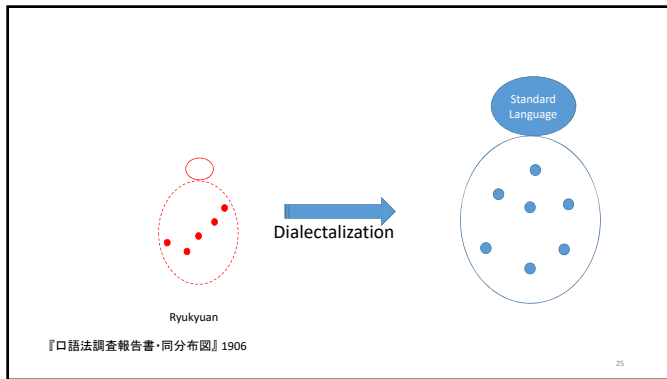



Japanese and Korean



“(Japanese wanted) to obliterate Korean culture, starting with the language. ... The Korean language was to become a regional dialect, nothing more.” (David Helberstam, as cited in Thomason 2015:76).





What should we do with  ?

- Should we 'de-dialectize' them?
- Should we 're-normalize' them?
- Should we 're-vitalize' them?
- Should we 'archive' them?
- Should we 'de-stigmatize' them?

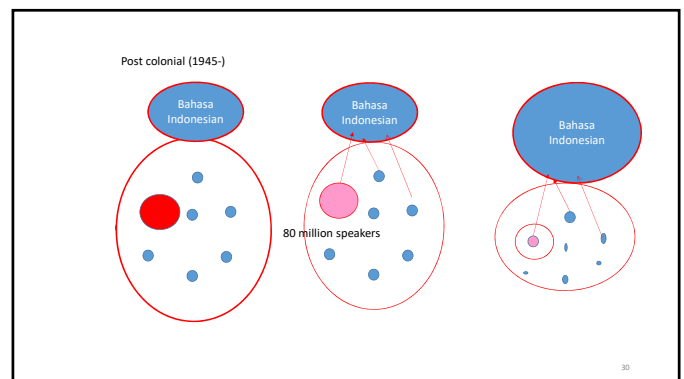
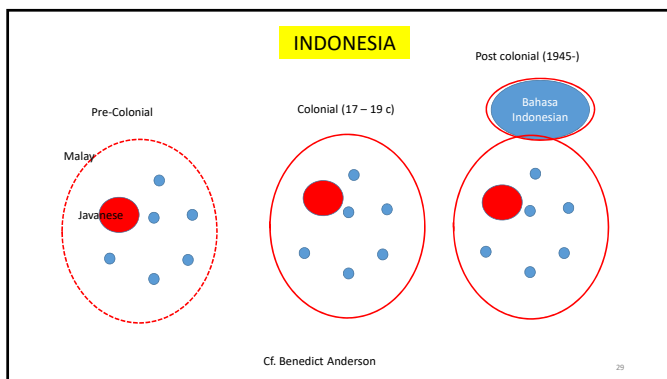
Before we give an answer, we look at two other language situations: Indonesian and Romansh in Switzerland.

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Indonesian context



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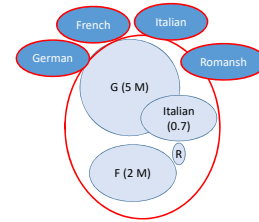
Can a language with millions of speakers be endangered? (Ravindranath and Cohn) 2014. SEALS

"Our discussion here suggests that **speaker size** may not actually confer special protections, whereas by definition, we expect that **official status** does." (p.65)

However, Romansh, though it is one of the four official languages in Switzerland, is declining against German, French and Italian.

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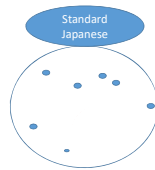
Switzerland (8.4 million people)



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What should we do with ?

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What should we do with ?

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Should we 're-normalize' them?



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What should we do with ?

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Should we 're-normalize' them?

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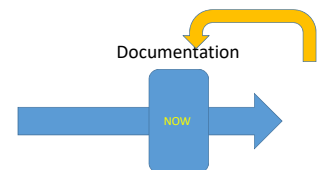
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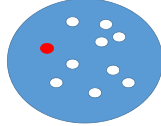
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National Language

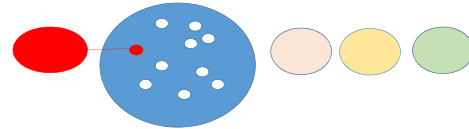
Japanese




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National Language

Japanese



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Conclusion

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- What is 'dialect'?
- 'Dialects' (in Chinese) are an objective label for regional varieties
- 'Dialects' (in Japanese) have acquired a negative semantic association during the country's nation building
- The Ryukyuan language was an *abstand* language (of the Ryukyu Kingdom), but was dialectized during the process of nation building of Japan.
- Once dialectized, it lost its autonomy and degraded, and its speakers started to shift to the Standard Japanese.
- Cantonese is a variety of Chinese, and is not a result of dialectization.
- In contrast, Javanese (despite its high prestige) is being dialectized in Indonesia, and is being endangered (despite its size).
- Romansh is being endangered despite its official status.

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I have proposed a framework to evaluate different endangered language situations toward creating "**typology of endangered scenarios**" (Himmelmann 2010), and to think about the future of languages and dialects.

Himmelmann, Nikolaus P. 2010. *Language endangerment scenarios: A Case Study from Northern Central Sulawesi*. In Margaret Florey (ed.), *Endangered languages of Austronesia*, 45–72. New York: Oxford University Press.

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