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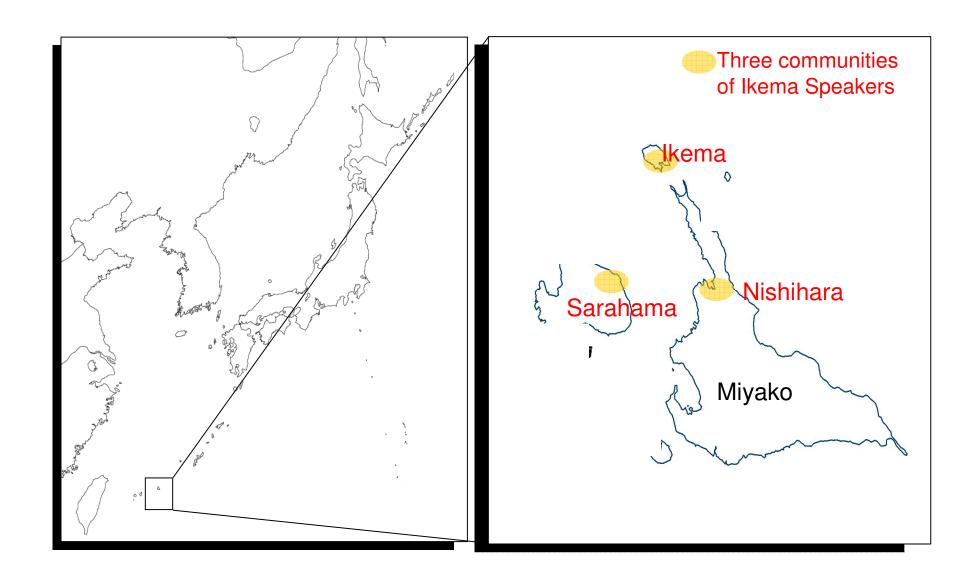
The Ikema Project

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Courtesy: Yuka Hayashi

- 1) Why is Ikema (or Ryukyuan in general) an invisible linguistic minority?
- 2) What is the level of endangerment of Ikema?
- 3) What can we do as linguists to participate in the effort of local communities to preserve their culture and language?

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History of language situation in Okinawa

Period I (before 1879)	Okinawan monolingualism
Independent Ryukyu Kingdom	
Period II (1879-1895)	Breakdown of monolinglualism
Japanese Sovereignty	(Top-down standardization)
Period III (1895-1937)	Bilingualism
Japanese Sovereignty	(Bottom-up standardization)
Period IV (1937-1945)	Language shift
Japanese Sovereignty	(Accelerated standardization)
Period V (1945-1972)	Decline of Okinawan
U.S. occupation	
Period VI (1972-Present)	Revival of Okinawan
Japanese Sovereignty	

Shinzato 2003:284

Mid 3rd – 6th C. (Hattori) Before 8th C. (Uemura)

Ryukyuan and Japanese are genetically related.

Basil Hall Chamberlain (1895)

Ryukyuan Japanese

Ryukyuan as a language

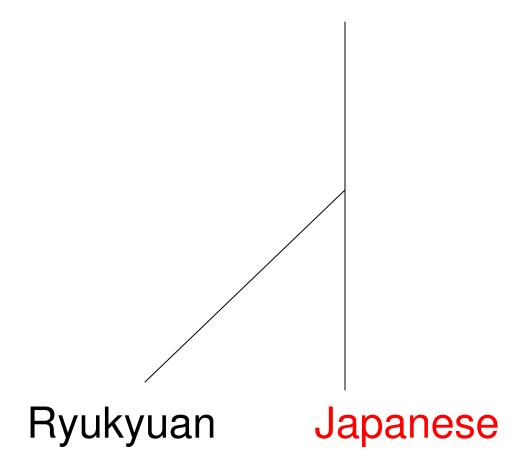
- historical depth and geographical isolation
- the language of Ryukyu Kingdom
- existence of written texts based on Japanese and Chinese writing systems
- existence of written literature (Omoro Soshi, late 15th - early 16th c.)

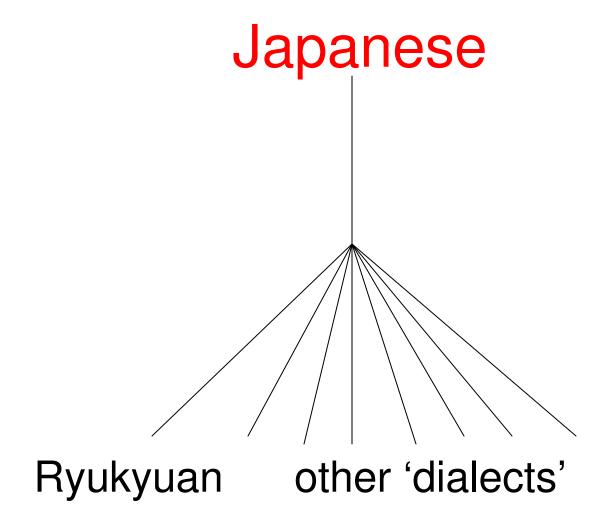
Ryukyuan as a dialect

(1) Government used this view to claim territorial ownership of Okinawa (denial of an independent Kingdom)

Ryukyuan as a dialect

- (2) Okinawans used this view to claim their ethnic affiliation to Japanese.
- Nationalism (Sino-Japanese war; Return to Japan after US occupation)
- Desire for assimilation (political, economic, emotional)
- To conquer discrimination
- To avoid punishment



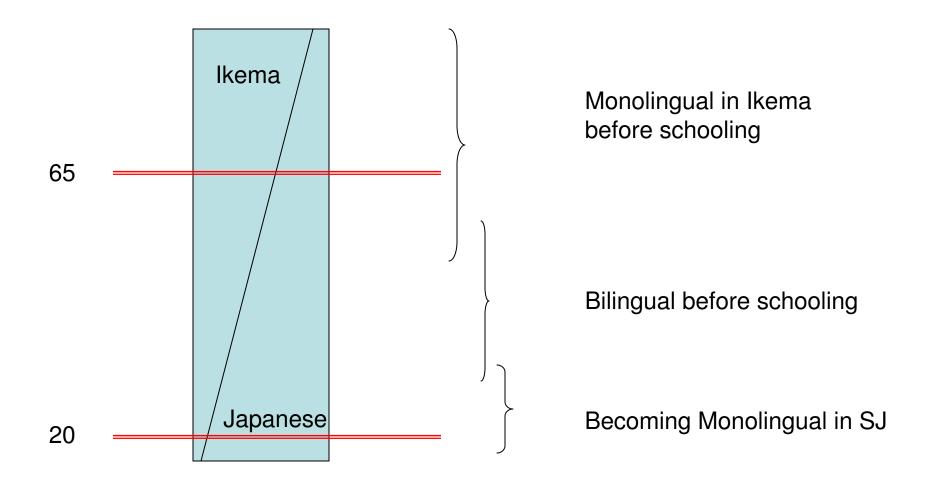


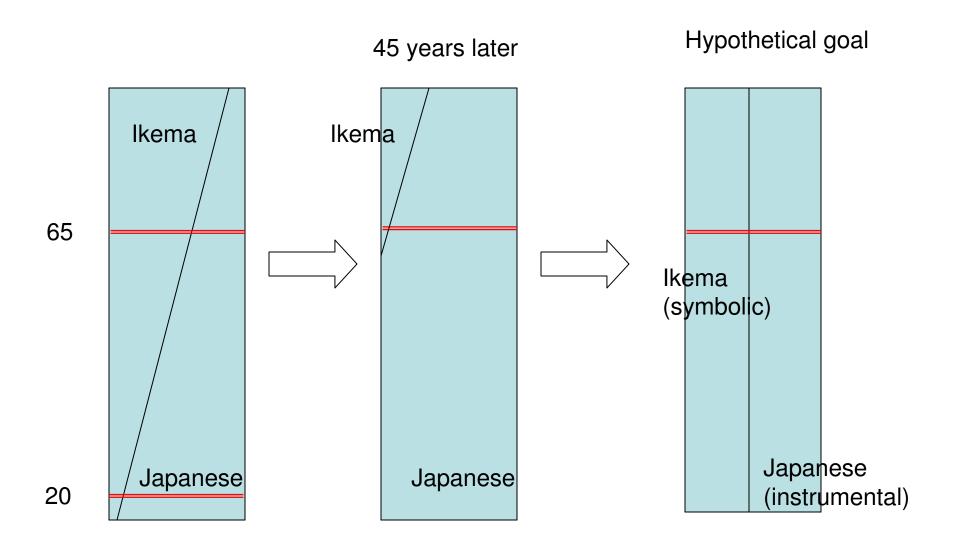
- Lack of policy for bilingualism
- Strong assimilation policy
- Creation of monoethnic-monolingual myth
- During this process, Ryukyuan (and specially smaller varieties like Ikema) has become invisible in Japan (cf. the Philippines).

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	Total population	Population over 65
Ikema	682	338 (49.5%)
Nishihara	1004	374 (37.2%)
Sarahama	3387	1000 (29.5%)
Total	5073	1712 (33.7%)

Levels of bilingualism





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Growing external support

- Activists movements
- Governmental legislations, resolutions
- "Okinawan Boom" (1990~)

More importantly.... Local grassroots resources and efforts

- Religious ceremonies
- Social gathering (Otoori speech in Nishihara)
- Festivals (*Myakudutsu*, Folk song and dance festivals...)
- Local community activities (speech contests, 'Opera' ...)

What can linguists do?

Documentation

- external (video-, audio-taping of speech activities)
- internal (linguistic analysis with living speakers)
- e.g. "Digital Museum" at Kyoto University

Cooperation with the local community

- to create a hospitable environment for language maintenance
- to preserve the heritage that surrounds the language
- e.g. Hiyodori project, Kyunufukarasha project, ...



※ ~いにしえ人に習う親の子育て、子の健やかな育ちを願い~

※ ニヌファブシ ※

※ ☆夜航行する船の目当ては北極星、親のニヌファブシは子どもなり☆※*※*※*※*※*※*※*※*※*※☆沖縄民謡ていんさぐぬ花より☆

宮古島市、ひよどり保育園における方言アンケート



3. しつけのことば ~やーなりゃー・ふかなり~

元気が一番のかなすっふぁ(かわいいこども)たちも、ときにはめをはずしてけがを したり、怒られたりすることになります。そんなとき大人たちは、昔から伝えられてきた 言い方で、子どもたちをしかり、諭すのです。昔自分たちも同じようにしかられたこと を思い出しながら・・・

(5)

「やぁなりゃー ぷかなり」

【宮古の方言】(家での習慣が外(社会)でも出る):色々な人が親または孫に。 しつけを伝えるときや行儀の悪い子に注意するときに。

> やなり・・・家の習慣 ぷかなり・・・外の習慣



(6)

「うっとうみ一泣き」

【池間島方言】(次の子どもが生まれるにあたり、上の子が甘えるためになくこと。お腹の中の「うとう一(弟・妹)」を「見て」「泣く」と考えられたことから。)

3歳の女の子:「おかあさんのおなかに赤ちゃんが見える」

おかあさん:「なにを言うの?」

子:「だって、見えるよ。男の赤ちゃんが」

お母さんは気付きませんでしたが、懐妊していました。10 ヵ月後、第三子にして待望の男の赤ちゃん誕生。この他にも…

第一子、第二子が卒園して、第三子(女の子、年長時)が、

「おかあさんのおなかにあかちゃんが、にこにこわらっている」<mark>と言って</mark>間もなく母は、つわりになりました。

アニ(姉)は、うっとう (弟、妹)み一(見)ができるのでしょうか?

たしかに7歳まではカンヌウツ(神とおなじ)という言い伝えもあります。これはもしかしたら本当かもしれないな、と思います。





