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Language obsolescence:
the challenge for linguists
and communities

Keynote speaker

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Tokyo University of Science / NINJAL

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Elia Dal Corso and **Patrick Henrich**

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September 2nd

Semantics and pragmatics, and morphosyntax

Ainu possession: loss of multiple alienable classes

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Is Ainu a Circum-Pacific language? Where possessive marking is concerned, the answer to this question is Yes. Ainu has an appositive possessive construction with the verb *kor* 'have' for alienable nouns, which in Ainu are non-possessible nouns. Inalienables are obligatorily possessed, and they take head-marked person indexation. Ainu uses a verbal appositive, a type that is not frequent overall but is well represented in the Pacific, and the minimal one-classifier system of recent Ainu finds a close parallel in several Papuan languages that also use a verb 'have' as their only possessive appositive. The larger system reconstructible for earlier Ainu is reminiscent of the Cahuilla system, which is also verbal; in both, the classifiers have to do with the history and cultural status of possession. The rapid shrinking from the earlier larger Ainu system to the recent minimal one, and the durability of the minimal one through language death, recall the expansions and reductions of the inventory of appositives that we can infer from the variation in large families like Uto-Aztecan, Oceanic and Cariban. The system remains an appositive possessive system and a core set of classifiers is retained regardless of the number of appositives. Ainu uses unspecified possessor and antipassive morphology as NPN (non-possessed noun) morphology, allowing an obligatorily possessed noun to be used without a specified possessor or an overt possessor. PSD (possessed) suffixes register a possessor but do not index its properties, and they mark a noun as requiring a possessor (which is then indexed with a possessive prefix). All in all the Ainu system, with its bound inalienables and non-possessible alienables, is a common type among Circum-Pacific languages. Ainu is easily interpreted as a remnant of what may have been a larger set of north Asian Circum-Pacific languages with appositive possession. Any others have been absorbed in the spreads of Tungusic, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Austronesian. Changes in possessive systems are very likely to occur due to language contact and obsolescence.

Inclusory constructions in Yuwan (Amami, Northern Ryukyuan)

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Yuwan has a type of constructions exemplified in (1), where the pronoun *ura* (2SG) is singular and *wa-ttəə* (1-DU) is dual, but the whole phrase does not mean ‘you (SG) and we (DU)’. Instead, it means ‘you (SG) and I (SG)’. In other words, the total number of people is two (not three). Some researchers call these types of constructions “inclusory constructions” (Lichtenberk 2000; Moravcsik 2003), and such constructions are not uncommon in the languages around the world (ibid.; Edgerton 1909; Jespersen 2007[1924]).

(1) Inclusory construction in Yuwan

ura=tu wa-ttəə ik-an-ba=jaa.

2SG=COM 1-DU go-NEG-CSL=SOL

‘We (lit. you and I) have to go there.’ (Totally 2 people)

Inclusory constructions in Yuwan are subject to the following person hierarchy: $1 > 2 > 3$, which has already been proposed by Moravcsik (2003). If we schematize the inclusory constructions in Yuwan as “NP1=*tu* NP2” (*tu* is the comitative particle), the grammatical number of NP2 is necessarily non-singular and higher than NP1 in the above person hierarchy; that is, $NP2 > NP1$. See (1), where the NP2 (first person) is higher than the NP1 (second person) in the person hierarchy.

In other words, if the NP1 is higher than the NP2 (that is, $NP1 > NP2$), the phrase cannot have the meaning of inclusory constructions. In example (2), where the NP1 is the first person *wa-n* (1-SG) and the NP2 is the second person *ura-ttəə* (2-DU). Consequently, the whole phrase is not an inclusory construction, so it refers to three people (not two).

(2) Non-inclusory construction in Yuwan

wa-n=tu ura-ttəə ik-an-ba=jaa.

1-SG=COM 2-DU go-NEG-CSL=SOL

‘We (lit. I and the two of you) have to go there.’ (Totally 3 people)

This is the first report of inclusory constructions in any Japonic language. I will illustrate the inclusory constructions in Yuwan in detail in this presentation and try to compare them with those in other languages.

Abbreviations

COM: comitative, CSL: causal, DU: dual, NEG: negative, SG: singular, SOL: solidarity

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Locative-focus verb classification in Mayrinax Atayal

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This paper aims to investigate the classification of locative-focus verbs in Mayrinax Atayal. Atayal is a VSO Austronesian language spoken by the Atayal people of Taiwan with several focus markers, including agent focus, patient focus, locative focus (henceforth LF), instrument focus and so on. LF is used to highlight the location of an event and make it a nominative. However, verbs affixed with LF -an, which function as a predicate, account for a fairly small proportion of all predicates. According to Huang (1995), verbs affixed with the LF marker -an usually form nouns and stand for locations; only very few are used as verbal predicates and make locations in focus. Consider the following examples with LF predicates underlined and highlighted location capitalized (Huang, 1995; Huang et al., 2016):

- (1) ta-tal-an nku' nabakis ku' 'ulaqi'
 RED-see-LF GEN father NOM.RF child
 'Father will see the CHILD.'
- (2) hihip-an ni' yaya' ku' 'ulaqi'
 kiss-LF GEN mother NOM.RF child
 'Mother kissed the CHILD.'

According to the materials collected from literature, 'sleep', 'go', 'see', 'kiss', 'request', 'rob', 'listen', and 'forget' tend to serve as LF predicates in Mayrinax Atayal. As for verb classification, Levin (1993) categorized English verbs into 49 classes in terms of meaning, including verbs of contact, verbs of change of state, verbs of social interaction, aspectual verbs and so on.

Situations of using LF are puzzling and need to be further explained (Huang 1995). Therefore, this paper attempts to answer two research questions: What else are LF verbs other than those mentioned in literature? What kinds of verbs tend to be LF, or how can LF verbs be classified?

More LF verbs were dug out with the LF verbs from literature as a starting point. The verb classification in this research was based on Levin's verb classes, some of which were then deleted and regrouped. The revised verb classes include 11 main classes, several subclasses and sub-subclasses. 153 verbs in total were collected, with which simple positive sentences were made in order to see whether the verbs are LF or not, then tested by asking indigenous Mayrinax Atayal people in Miaoli of the translation of the sentences, and classified. The results show that verb classes most frequently serving as LF predicates are as follows:

1. 'Unintentional', a sub-subclass of 'verbs of perception' under 'verbs of psychology', such as 'see' and 'hear'.
2. 'Verbs of change of state', including its subclasses 'verbs of completeness unchanged' and 'verbs of completeness changed', and the sub-subclasses 'combining' and 'separating', such as 'loosen', 'wake', 'close', and 'separate'.

3. 'Verbs of social interaction', including its subclass 'oral' and sub-subclass 'communication', such as 'ask', 'teach', 'request' and 'speak'.

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Udihe: is locative case locative?

Elena Perekhvalskaya

ILI RAN

In Udihe (Tungus-Manchu), the case system includes several spatial cases expressing the category of orientation. Cases generally may be subdivided into “central” or “grammatical” which code main semantic roles and “peripheral” or “spatial” cases (Plungian 2011). Cases usually express more than one meaning, so “central” cases may express temporal or spatial meanings while “spatial” cases acquire non-spatial meanings. Crosslinguistically, there are certain frequent kinds of case extensions. I will focus on one fact where Udihe does not follow the typical trend.

Five spatial cases of Udihe express the following orientations: quiescent state (Dative); motion to (Locative); motion from (Ablative); motion in the direction of (Directive); motion along/through (Prolative). There is uncertainty in the precise definitions of case meanings, mainly in making a demarcation line between the usages of Locative and Directive, on the one hand, and between Locative and Dative, on the other. “The distribution of the Locative and the Dative in the local sense does not follow any strict semantic or phonological criteria and has to be learnt for each individual instance” [Nikolaeva, Tolskaya: 2001].

In Tungusic languages three different cases express directive and locative, so from Eurocentric point of view three cases are used to express TWO meanings. The most enigmatic is Locative.

O. Konstantinova: “Locative expresses the meaning close to the meaning of Directive. The difference is that Directive case denotes the direction of the motion; while Locative denotes the place or an object to which (or in which) the motion is directed” (1964).

A. Malchukov “Directive denotes only Allative (trajectory of movement to a reference point), Dative denotes only location in some point; Locative may denote both Allative and Locative meanings”. “Syntax of Even” (2008).

In Udihe, Locative does not necessarily denote “motion to/in smth”:

- (1) *nyhø-lo-ni sanʒehæ-wa tuləsi-i-ti*
nose-Loc-3Sg nose.ring-Acc thred-Pres-3Pl
‘they put ring in the nose’ (motion through)
- (2) *Mənə aka-la-i sinda-gi-a-ni bata-wa əmyə yīə-də*
Refl back-Loc-Refl backpack-V-Pst-3Sg boy-Acc cradle Comit-Foc
‘She put the child with the cradle on her back’
- (3) *ni-tigi goajla-ŋi-me-də uli-lə taŋda bələntə*
human-Dir turn-Rev-Conv-Foc water-Loc pull.2Pst girl
‘Having turned into a human he pulled the girl out of the river’.

Locative denotes motion + being in/on/at/under a reference point. A. Pevnov called Locative a “Contact case”.

The Corpus study (about 40000 words): which verbs appear with circumstants marked LOC. Analyzed: 631 entries. Results: verbs of motion: 329; verbs of achievement: 122; verbs of located activity 97; verbs of perception: 72; nonverbal predicated: 17.

The distinction between Locative and Directive depends on the fact, whether the reference point was achieved:

(4) *Sama zugdi-tigi əhini ηənə.*

Shaman house-Dir Neg-3Sg go

‘Shaman does not enter the house’.

(5) *Ot’osi-tənə zəŋgæ zugdi-lə-ni iigi-hə-ti*

Then-and boss house-Loc-3Sg come.in-Pst-3Pl

‘Then they entered the house of the superior’

Expansive uses of Locative are connected with this meaning: *mafala-* ‘marry (to whom?); *asukta-* ‘subtract (arithm.)’, etc.

Locative designate neither position nor movement to a reference point but the fact of contact with this point, the action is seen as completed.

Epistemic authority in Okinawan

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All Okinawan finite verbs end with an obligatory non-zero mood suffix (table 1).

<i>-n</i>	<i>-tan</i>	Speaker authority	Declarative sphere
<i>-sa</i>	<i>-tasa</i>	Non-speaker authority	
<i>-see</i>	<i>-tasee</i>	Shared authority	
<i>-ra</i>	<i>-tara</i>	Indirect question	Interrogative sphere
<i>-mi</i>	<i>-tii</i>	Polar question	
<i>-ga</i>	<i>-taga</i>	Wh-question	
<i>-i</i>		Command	Imperative sphere
<i>-ee</i>		Request	
<i>-a</i>		Invitation	

Table 1: Mood markers in present and past tenses

Moods in Okinawan can be broadly classified into a declarative sphere, an interrogative sphere and an imperative sphere, with at least three moods in each. While the functions of the interrogative and imperative moods are relatively easy to describe, the three declarative moods seem to exhibit a rare organisation that could be called *authoritative modality*. This type of modality has previously been described for some languages of South America (Landaburu 2007, Grzech 2017).

Authoritative modality in Okinawan has previously been correlated with subject person. According to Arakaki (2003), the *-n* mood is reserved for the first person and her younger relatives, while *-sa* is required for other animate subjects. This makes *-n* / *-sa* resemble egophoric systems in languages of the Himalayan area.

(1) *waa-ga* *ʔc-u-n*_↓
1SG-REL go-PRES-*n*
'I will go.'

(2) *ʔari-ga* *ʔc-u-sa*_↓
DIST-REL go-PRES-*sa*
'He will go.'

Outside such elicited examples, however, there is little correlation between subject person and mood. Inverting our two examples:

(3) *waa-ga* *ʔc-u-sa*_↓
1SG-REL go-PRES-*sa*
'I can go [if you want me to].'

(4) *ʔari-ga* *ʔc-u-n*_↓
DIST-REL go-PRES-*n*
'He will go [I know better than you].'

These and other uses make preferable a treatment in terms of *authority to guarantee the truth of the proposition*. With *-n*, this authority rests with the speaker, who in future tense contexts (examples 1 & 4) commits to actualising his proposition. With *-sa*, on the other hand, the authority resides with a non-speaker or nobody in particular: in example 2 the speaker cannot control the third person subject, while example 3 either awaits confirmation from a hearer or expresses non-committal considering tomorrow's weather or any other reason. Finally, the shared authority mood *-see* calls attention to something the hearer should be able to know just as well as the speaker but has not noticed.

Absent from Japanese, the dominant language on Okinawa, this fascinating system is rapidly eroding. We will explore its workings with the help of a collection of natural dialogues (National Language Research Institute 1982–1987), classifying all attestations according to their pragmatic meaning. It is only as an abstraction of these real use contexts that we propose the labels *speaker authority mood*, *non-speaker authority mood* and *shared authority mood* for Okinawan.

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- National Language Research Institute = 国立国語研究所 1982–1987 『方言談話資料(6~10)』 国立国語研究所.

Abbreviations

DIST distal

PRES present

REL relative case SG singular

Double-subject constructions in East Asian languages: a typological survey

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This talk examines the Double-Subject Construction (DSC) in three East-Asian minority languages, Aragusuku (Ryukyuan, Japan), Shiiba (Japanese, Japan), and She (Sino-Tibetan, China). They are all critically endangered but are little documented. The present study aims to draw the world's attention to these languages by showing how the study of DSC in these languages can contribute to the theoretical advancement of language typology.

DSC is a non-verbal sentence which encodes external possession, where the possessor and the possessed are both encoded as a surface subject, a construction widely observed in East Asian languages (Li and Thompson 1981, etc.). (1) illustrates DSC in Aragusuku.

- (1) *karjaa mii=nu=du upumunu.*
3SG.TOP eyes=NOM=FOC big
"As for him, (his) eyes are big."

In DSC, the two arguments are in a whole-part (i.e. possessive) relationship. For example, in (1) the first argument is the possessor of the body part denoted by the second.

Languages differ with regard to whether DSC is permissible depending on the type of possession exhibited by the two arguments. For instance, in Aragusuku, DSC is ungrammatical if the first argument is the possessor of an alienable object.

- (2) **karjaa fuku=nu=du upumunu.*
3SG.TOP clothes=NOM=FOC big
"As for him, (his) clothes are big."

This talk aims to show that there is a considerable cross-linguistic variability concerning the type of possession relationship for which DSC is permissible and to give a coherent analysis of the variability. It will be shown that the Possession Cline (Tsunoda 1991; (3)) is relevant in the typology of DSC. That is, in all three languages being examined, DSC is more readily used for the upper end of the cline. (1) and (2) instantiate the left-most category 'Body part' and the category 'Clothing' respectively.

(3) Body part > Attribute > Clothing > Kin > Domesticated animal > product > Others

Table 1 below is a summary of the comparison of the three languages. As indicated, one minor modification of the Possessive Cline is suggested to accommodate the otherwise exceptional behaviors found in our language samples. Specifically, unlike Tsunoda's (1991) original Possession Cline, the present study divides the category "attribute" (one's knowledge, height, skill, etc.) into two subtypes, inherent and derived.

Table 1. DSC: in terms of the Possession Cline

	body part	attribute		clothing	(kin)	pet animal	product	other possessee
		inherent	dervied					
Aragusuku	OK	OK	OK NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG
Shiiba	OK	OK	OK	OK	NG	NG	NG	NG
She	OK	OK	OK	(OK)	(OK)	(OK)	(OK)	(OK)

The derived attribute is involved in situations where the agent's continuous successful performance (e.g. writing beautiful characters) leads the product of the performance (e.g. beautifully written characters) to become the agent's permanent skill, i.e. a derived attribute. This identification correctly places instances like (4a) on the cline and distinguishes it from instances like (4b), a true example of 'product'.

(4) Aragusuku

- a. karjaa **zii=nu=du** kagimunu.
3SG.TOP **character=NOM=FOC** beautiful
"As for him, (his) characters are beautifully written."
i.e. He has good handwriting [Derived attribute]
- b. *karjaa **zii=nu=du** takamunu.
3SG.TOP **character=NOM=FOC** expensive
"As for him, (his) characters are expensive."
(talking of a famous calligrapher) [Product]

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Predicative and nonpredicative verb forms in Yattuka¹

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This paper presents a description of predicative and nonpredicative verb forms and their possible loss in Yattuka, an understudied Northern Luzon language spoken by around 2,300 people in two villages in Ifugao province in the Philippines (Ananayo 2007: 1-2; PSA 2019).

In many Philippine-type languages the syntactic distribution of nouns and verbs is very similar in that nouns can function as predicates and verbs as substantivized arguments without any additional marking (Himmelmann 2005: 127).

The syntactic distribution of Yattuka verbs is somewhat different, as in this language verbs come in three types. Some verbs occur freely both in the independent predicate position (1) and substantivized positions (2). Others can occur only in substantivized positions (3). The third type includes verbs (e.g. <imm>amping (4)) that can be additionally marked with the prefix *paN-* when substantivized (5).

- (1) **Ing-kasi**=tu dogoh=tu.
CV.PFV-die=3SG.ACT illness=3SG.ACT
'He died of his illness.'
- (2) TB i **ing-kasi**=tu.
tuberculosis NOM CV.PFV-die=3SG.ACT
'Tuberculosis was what he died of.'
- (3) Human i **pan-amlong-an**=tu ni kubbuhan.
OS.NOM NOM STEM-happy-CV[NEUT]=3SG.ACT GEN tomorrow
'That's why he will be happy tomorrow.'
- (4) <**Imm**>amping / ***Nong-amping**=ngak ni tut~tuu.
<AV.PFV>slap PFV.STEM-slap[AV]=1SG.NOM GEN PL-person
'I slapped people.'
- (5) Hiya <**imm**>amping / **nong-amping** nihi-gak.
3SG.NOM <AV.PFV>slap PFV.STEM-slap[AV] 1SG.NACT
'He was the one who slapped me.'

The evidence for the third type of verbs is minor, as the data on them is a by-product of a fieldwork that was focused on a different aspect of the Yattuka grammar. At present, it is clear that this restriction on occurrence of *paN*-forms as independent predicates is not universal in the language community. On the one hand, there is variation regarding strength of this restriction across speakers. On the other, there is also such variation across verbs for the same speakers.

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No clear-cut difference regarding this variation can be observed between younger and older speakers based on the available evidence. However, at least for one verb the form without *paN-* seems to have been lost in speech of middle and younger generation speakers (*um-kan* [AV-eat] vs. *mo<ng~>ng-an* [<NEUT~>AV.STEM-eat]).

Predicative and nonpredicative verb forms have also been attested in some closely related languages (e.g. “restricted” and “unrestricted distribution” in Batad Ifugao (Newell 2005: 25-28), “complex topicalizing affixes” in Tuwali Ifugao (Hohulin and Hohulin 2014: 38), while unattested in other closely related languages (e.g. Ilokano (Rubino 1997), Dupanangan Agta (Robinson 2008), Northern Alta (García Laguía 2018)). The national lingua franca Tagalog does not possess this phenomenon either (Schachter and Otnes 1972).

The fact that for Batad Ifugao and Tuwali Ifugao this system is described as a stable one, with no variation reported, and the existence of the archaic form of the verb ‘to eat’ in Yattuka might point to the possibility that this grammar phenomenon is being lost in Yattuka.

Abbreviations

1, first person; 3, third person; ACT, actor form; AV, actor voice; CV, causal voice; GEN, genitive; NACT, non-actor form; NEUT, neutral voice form; NOM, nominative; OS, out-of-sight demonstrative; PFV, perfective; PL, plural; SG, singular; STEM, stem-deriving prefix.

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Decreolization as language loss? The case of Maquista

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Maquista (or *patuá*) is the Portuguese-based creole language of the Macanese, i.e. the people of Luso-Asian descent whose roots are in Macao (Pinharanda Nunes 2012a). Macanese was spoken roughly until the first half of the XX century: with the gradual diffusion of education in Standard European Portuguese and outward emigration, Macanese underwent decreolization and, eventually, disappeared from everyday use (Pinharanda Nunes 2014; Lebel 2018). Although exact figures are lacking (to the best of our knowledge), it is safe to assume that there are less than a handful of native speakers left in Macao, although there is a somewhat larger number (perhaps 50-100) of (semi-)speakers with varying degrees of fluency (Pinharanda Nunes 2012a- b). While for most of the XX century members of the Macanese community learned Portuguese in order to improve their chances for employment, after the handover to the P.R.C. Cantonese, Standard Chinese and English have become more important targets of learning, and nowadays even Portuguese is used as a home language only by a small minority of Macao residents (0.7% according to Xi 2017).

In the first part of this talk, we will sketch the sociolinguistic history of Macao since the establishment of the first Portuguese settlement (around 1557), highlighting the changes in the language ecology of the region. We will show that, as is often the case in creole ecologies, there has always been considerable variation in what is usually called *maquista*, including more pidginized and more acrolectal varieties (Pereira 1899; Matthews & Li 2012). Based on the analysis of a corpus of written *maquista* of the XIXth and XXth century, and on a sample of spoken *maquista* of the early XXIst century, as well as the analysis of descriptions of the creole from different historical periods (e.g. Arana-Ward 1978), we will propose an overview of some morphosyntactic differences between the corpora: specifically, verbal (TAM) morphology (see Pinharanda Nunes 2012b), negation, and reduplication. The choice is motivated by the fact that in these three domains there is strong differentiation between *maquista* and (Standard) Portuguese. In the second part of this talk, we will discuss the implications of the case of *maquista* for the notion of 'language obsolescence/loss'. The (admittedly controversial; see Siegel 2010) notion of 'decreolization' (or, better, 'debasilectalization'; Mufwene 2005) may be understood as an instance of language loss: indeed, it involves the adoption of features from a more prestigious variety (here, 'Standard' Portuguese), and may ultimately lead to the demise of the 'original' language. On the other hand, the very notion of 'another language' is debatable, when dealing with creole continua; besides, the changes which occurred in this case mostly go in the direction of more complex (and synthetic) morphology. We shall argue that, in the Macanese context, language loss involved pressure both from the lexifier (Portuguese) and from Cantonese, due to changes in the linguistic ecology of the region: this resulted in a series of non-abrupt changes including debasilectalization (with adstrate influence from Cantonese), shift to the lexifier, and shift towards an unrelated language, Cantonese.

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September 3rd

**Language identity and documentation, historical linguistics,
language shift and contact, and language vitality and maintenance**

Historical data on the languages in Witsen's Noord en Oost Tartarye and the work of the Mercator Centre and the Foundation for Siberian Cultures

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In this conference contribution, we will discuss several projects for the study of endangered languages and cultures in Europe and Asia, which have been undertaken by research groups in the Netherlands, Russia, Germany and Japan. We shall relate the study of historical data of indigenous languages to the position of these languages in the present urbanising world.

The Witsen Project aims to investigate the minority peoples of Eurasia, their history, cultures and languages. It is inspired by the book *Noord en Oost Tartarije (NOT)*, the magnum opus of Nicolaas Witsen. This wealthy Dutch merchant and mayor of Amsterdam collected data on the physical features of this vast continent, its flora and fauna and, in particular, on the inhabitants and their languages. In 2010, a Russian translation of the book was published. The language material consists of lists of vocabulary items, short texts, writing systems and other data. In 2015, the book and the Russian translation were also published online. In 2018, as a follow-up, a team of scholars in the Netherlands prepared a separate volume devoted to the study of all language samples in Witsen's *NOT*, entitled *The Fascination with Inner-Eurasian Languages in the 17th Century*. The volume contains articles on the following languages: Georgian, Kabard-Cherkes, Ossete, Crimean-Tatar, Kalmyk, Mordva, Mari, Komi-Zyryan, Mansi, Khanty, Nenets, Enets, Nganasan, Mongol, Dagur, Yakut, Evenki, Even, Manchu, Yukaghir, Korean, Chinese, Tangut, Persian and Uygur. Scholars who are familiar with the various languages have written a number of these contributions. The material in the book can be compared with the situation of these languages at present and possibilities can be considered to use the results in the work of the following two organisations devoted to minority languages. The Foundation for Siberian Cultures (www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/index_E.htm) was founded in 2010. One of its main objectives is to preserve the indigenous languages of the Russian Federation and the ecological knowledge expressed in them. Published print- and open access electronic learning tools on the languages and cultures of Sakhalin, Kamchatka, Northern Yakutia and Central Siberia respond to the pressing need of local communities to sustain their cultural heritage. Together with other publications on the research history and the cultures of the Russian North they provide useful materials for anthropological and linguistic research. The results of fieldwork and the data based on archived materials provide important information for the preparation of language descriptions, grammars, dictionaries and edited collections of oral and written literature. These can subsequently be used to develop teaching methods, in particular for younger members of ethnic groups who do not have sufficient knowledge of their native language.

The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning (www.mercator-research.eu) of the Fryske Akademy addresses the growing interest in multilingualism and the increasing need of language communities to exchange experiences and to cooperate in a European context. It gathers and mobilises expertise in the field of language learning in schools, at home and through cultural participation. The language diversity in Europe needs to be protected and promoted at all levels. The Mercator Research Centre tries to

meet this need by participating in and developing a multitude of activities ranging from carrying out research projects and making inventories of existing research. It provides data and internet sites on (often endangered) regional and minority languages and provides publications, such as the series of Regional Dossiers on Minority Language Education. In recent years, the state of languages in the Russian Federation has also been studied and dossiers have been prepared in Russian and English, such as for Nenets, Khanty, Mansi and Udmurt.

Language obsolescence in retrospect: the case of Alchuka

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Tungusic is a language family spoken in Northeast Asia. All of its members are already extinct, moribund, or endangered (Janhunen 2005). In many cases, a certain amount of attrition and can be observed in the language of the last speakers (Li 2005). While many Tungusic languages were already well described before they disappeared, this study addresses the more problematic case of Alchuka, an extinct Tungusic language that was only recorded during its phase of obsolescence (e.g., Mu 1985, 1986, Ikegami 1994). Although it is closely related to Manchu, it exhibits a number of important differences (Hölzl 2017). For instance, it shows several archaic features, such as a lack of labiodentalization (Alchuka *əp'i-*, Manchu *efi-* ‘to play’). It also preserves important lexical and morphological items, such as numerals from 11 to 19 of Para-Mongolic origin (Alchuka *tɔ-xɔŋ* ‘17’, but Manchu *juwan nadan* ‘10+7’, cf. Khitan **dol* ‘7’). In addition to these conservative features, Alchuka also has unique innovations, such as the loss of word-internal consonants (Alchuka *a'ɔ*, Manchu *akū* ‘NEG.EX’).

This unusual and unique mixture of features potentially changes our understanding of the diachrony of the entire language family. For instance, Alchuka somewhat irregularly preserves one phoneme as *k-* that was previously thought to be only retained in another branch of Tungusic (Alchuka (*k*)*ai*, Manchu *ai*, cf. Uilta *xai* ‘what’). Problematically, the accuracy of the available data has been questioned because of a certain amount of unexplained variation. This study will show that independent evidence found in other sources indicates that the data are generally accurate. For instance, Aixinjueluo (see 2014) independently recorded the same special numerals, e.g. *tohon* [tɔxɔn] ‘17’. Some problems can be explained by typographic errors, such as the flipped letter <ɪ> instead of <i>. More importantly, however, there are actual differences in the forms that were recorded, e.g. *tɔxɔŋ* ~ *tɔ'ɔŋ* ~ *tɔŋ* ‘17’. These cannot be explained by typographic errors, but represent actual variation in the language of the last speakers that must have been subject to sociolectal variation and attrition, such as an increase in phonetic erosion.

This study presents all available data for Alchuka, gives independent evidence for their overall accuracy, and identifies likely cases of typographic errors. Through a comparison with Manchu and other Tungusic languages, regular phonological changes can be tentatively differentiated from cases of attrition among the last speakers.

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The history and current situation of the Baekjeong language

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The Baekjeong are a people who have been long discriminated against in Korea. This history of discrimination can be traced back to the Goryeo era, and while the Kabo Reform in 1894 led to legal liberation for the Baekjeong, discrimination against them within Korean society continued to strongly exist. In South Korea today, it is considered that "they (the Baekjeong) disappeared due to the Korean War and in the midst of social changes resulting from modernization." Furthermore, it is commonly said that "the Baekjeong do not exist anymore" and that "discrimination against the Baekjeong does not exist." However, various studies and surveys have revealed that such discrimination is still strongly prominent and extremely serious. This study deals with the current situation of the language of the Baekjeong and will consider the problem of its invisibility and oblivion of the language of those people by examining its language type, historical background, and modern sociolinguistic status.

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Code-switching in the situation of the language shift: the case of Nanai and Ulch

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The paper presents a corpus-based study on code-switching in different dialects of Nanai and Ulch (closely related Southern Tungusic varieties), which are in intense contact with the dominant Russian language and endangered (to a greater or lesser extent in different localities). Code-switching in the situation of language shift is claimed to differ from that in balanced bilinguals. In particular, this concerns structural types of code-switching: e.g. Muysken (2000: 220-249) predicts a change from “insertion” to “alternation” or “congruent lexicalization”, Myers-Scotton (2000: 104- 105) postulates a special type of “composite” code-switching, which can break the rules formulated for the “classical” code-switching.

The data come from a field text collection, recorded from modern speakers, which are fluent in Nanai/Ulch, but nowadays use mostly or only Russian in their everyday communication. Therefore, these are spontaneous, but in some sense artificial narratives, intentionally produced in Nanai/Ulch especially for the linguist. Despite this speakers’ intention, the number of Russian fragments in the texts is quite high: ca. 19% of Russian tokens in the whole collection. Some of the attested switches look theoretically problematic, cf.:

(1) *každ-uju həŋhə*

every-F.ACC.SG spring

‘every spring’ (gld, rchk) – how does the Russian adjective get its feminine gender (no gender in Nanai)?

The aims of the paper are:

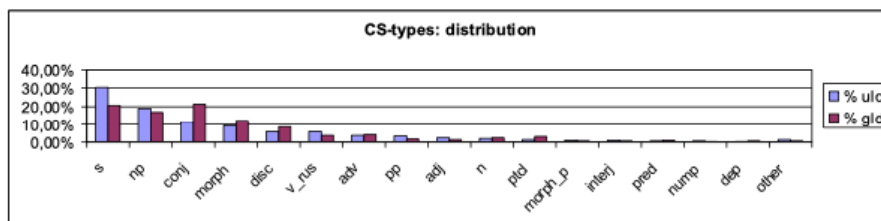
- to describe structural peculiarities of code-switching attested in this specific type of texts, basing on quantitative textual data (cf. the general distribution of CS-types in the Ulch and Nanai collections in (2));
- to identify individual strategies of code-switching by creating CS-profiles of particular speakers (cf. the data for several speakers in (3)-(7));
- to relate these data to the available sociolinguistic information on the speakers (the data of semi-structured sociolinguistic interviews).

Intrasentential code-switching (code-mixing), including that within the word and cases close to borrowing, is especially in focus.

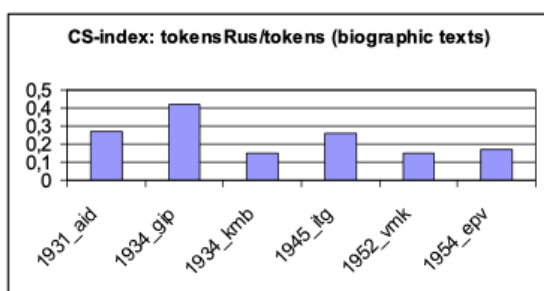
The size of the collection is 47268 tokens (20 speakers) for Ulch and 47353 tokens (36 speakers) for Nanai. The texts have been transcribed and translated in ELAN. For each word the language (Nanai/Ulch vs. Russian) has been annotated. A part of the collection (27702 tokens at the moment) has been provided with a more detailed annotation of code-switching: size of switched fragments (morpheme/one-word/multi-word/clause), morphosyntactic type (such tags as np, adj, adv, conj, disc etc.) and some other special tags.

The quantitative data on the whole collection and on different speakers, as well as qualitative data on some non-trivial types of code-switching will be discussed in a more general terms and compared to the published data of corpora of “classical” code-switching.

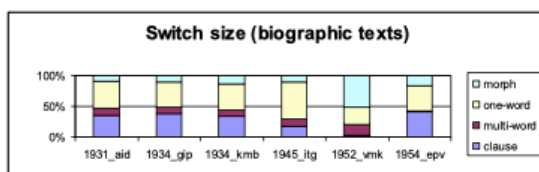
(2)



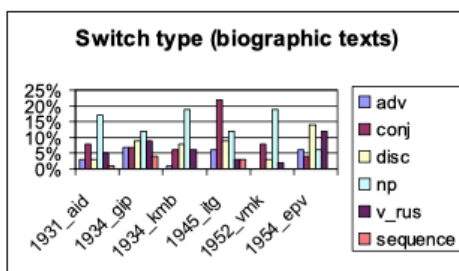
(4)



(5)



(6)



(7)

speaker	cs-index	size	type	ML Russian	strategy
1931_aid	medium		no disc, np		conscious: tries not to insert discursive markers...
1934_gip	high		adv, sequence	many	active: >> Russian
1934_kmb	low		np		purist: inserts

					Russian cultural words and clausal comments if necessary
1945_itg	medium	intrasentential, one-word	conj, adv, sequence		free: Russian conj, adv, disc
1952_vmk	low	intrasentential only, morph	no disc, np		adapting: marks Russian words with Nanai morphology
1954_epv	low	no multi-word	disc, adv, no conj	many	modest: no multi-word Russian constituents

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The losing numerals in the Yulin dialect

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The image of Chinese number words is always evoked by the traditional Chinese characters, e.g., “一”, “壹”, however in Yulin city, which is located in the Southeastern part of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, exist some special number words called *mok²⁻¹ɔi³²ti²¹* 木材字 (wood words). Wood words used to be a very popular and unique way to discuss about price among local people, the unique writing system and pronunciation provides local people with a code unknown to outsiders. Wood words' writing system and pronunciation not only differs from Mandarin Chinese number words but also differs from local dialects, e.g., in wood words, “one” is written as “—” or “收”, pronounced as *fau⁵⁴⁻³³*; in Mandarin Chinese “one” is written as “一” or “壹” and pronounced as *yī*; in the Yulin dialect “one” is written as “一” or “壹” and 5 pronounced as *iat*. Wood words only contain thirteen words - digits from “one” to “nine”, and words “寸”, “球”, “撇”, “方” to show “tens”, “hundreds”, “thousands” and “ten thousands”. For example, to represent twenty, it would use “——寸”, literally “two ten”, analogously to represent hundred it would use “—”with “球”, literally “one hundred”.

In the Chinese education system only Arabic numbers are used and they dominate in daily life. The numerals in Yulin city are being abandoned even faster than the main traditional number words, most young generation already don't know about wood words. More competitive and open markets even undermine their utility for local businesspeople.

This article focuses on archiving the characters, and pronunciation of wood words, recording the methods of using wood words to express number and price, and analysis of the language situation of wood words. The methods of data collection include searching existing documents and records, interviewing local elderly generation in Yulin city, and investigating on local markets.

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Language obsolescence in Mongolia: the case study of Sayan Turkic

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Mongolia is home of three different Sayan Turkic varieties: a) Dukhan (north-western Khövsgöl region), b) Tuhan (north-eastern Khövsgöl region) and c) Tyvan (Bayan-Ölgii and Khovd regions of Western Mongolia). With regard to the position of these varieties within the Turkic language family, Tyvan and Tuhan belong to Steppe Sayan Turkic, whereas Dukhan belongs to Taiga Sayan Turkic. Speakers of Steppe Sayan Turkic are low-land cattle breeders, whereas speakers of Taiga Sayan Turkic are high-land reindeer breeders. Within Sayan Turkic varieties of Mongolia, language obsolescence is particularly acute in Tuhan and Dukhan. In this presentation we will focus on a) Tuhan and Dukhan grammatical innovations, triggered by intensive contact with (various) Mongolic varieties, and b) the role played by such innovations in the process of language obsolescence.

If you can't hold on: language obsolescence in Yonaguni Island

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Every long-time fieldworker in an endangered language community will inevitably witness the decline, and possibly also the collapse, of a language, culture and identity. The higher the vitality of the language, the higher the hope that something can be done. Seen the other way around, the more vitality diminishes the lower the hope to keep the language, its encoded knowledge, its aesthetic potential and its ability to foster specific identities. Language is a public good, just like air, for example. It is free, accessible to all and non-depletable. This begs the question why is it so hard to keep a language in use, especially in view that it is obvious that nothing can be “gained” in “loosing” something? Classic language endangerment theory claims that language endangerment is fundamentally caused by domination through others, the lack of control over institutions and societal rewards, and the outcome of stigmatization. It therefore promotes the use of the endangered language in private domains (Dorian 1981, Fishman 1991, Gal 1979). The problem is that this rarely happens, and this cast another fundamental question. Why? In this paper I seek to give an answer to the latter question on the basis of long-time ethnographic observation of Yonaguni Island in the extreme southwest of the Japanese Archipelago. I argue that language endangerment and revitalization cannot be accounted solely on sociological and historical sociolinguistic grounds but that social psychological factors play a key role.

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Introducing a ‘polynomic’ approach to combat language obsolescence in the Ryukyus

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The Ryukyuan languages are a group of endangered languages traditionally spoken in the Ryukyuan island chain. There are several organisations and initiatives that strive to revitalize the Ryukyuan languages (Ishihara et al. 2019). A complicating factor is that the Ryukyuan languages have never been standardized and display strong regional variation.

This study is an argument for the inclusion of regional variation in learning materials for the instruction of individual Ryukyuan languages for adults, focussing on Okinawan. A ‘polynomic’ model, where a pluralistic view of language is offered without a single prestige variety is used in the teaching of Corsican (Sallabank 2011). We believe that a similar model would be very useful in the revitalisation effort of Okinawan and the other the Ryukyuan languages as well. We provide an overview of the Okinawan sociolinguistic situation focussing on regional variation, an overview of the factors that necessitate the inclusion of regional variation in Okinawan language learning, and a proposition for an approach that facilitates awareness of regional variation and the acquisition of regional varieties other than the ones featured in learning materials.

As of 2020, Okinawan is the only Ryukyuan language for which there are several textbooks for adult learners on the market, all focussing on the language of the Shuri-Naha region. Okinawan is unique among the Ryukyuan languages in the fact that there is a variety that has some characteristics of a standard language. The availability of textbooks is an advantage, however the fact that these textbooks do not touch upon regional variety is a disservice to learners and instructors for practical as well as social reasons. As for practical reasons, the remaining Okinawan native speakers can only speak their own regional variety, though they may have passive knowledge of other varieties as well. Since language learning in general ought to enable learners to communicate in a meaningful way with native speakers, learners and instructors of Okinawan must be provided with an understanding of regional variation.

As for social reasons, Okinawan speakers of areas that are considered ‘rural’ experience a sense of inferiority towards Shuri-Naha. This has sped up language obsolescence in some areas of Okinawa (Osumi 2001). Any form of language revitalization that discourages the use of certain varieties favouring a ‘higher’ variety contributes to this sense of inferiority, and perpetuates the attitudes that lead to language obsolescence in the first place.

Our approach focusses on the development of textbooks and a learners’ grammar for South Central Okinawan. We shall demonstrate that it is possible to introduce the linguistic boundaries wherein regional variation in Okinawan occurs (pronunciation, lexicon, grammar) to learners by using examples of five different varieties of Okinawan. This enables learners to passively understand varieties other than the textbook variety, and it also provides learners with the know-how to make specific inquiries to native speakers in case their target variety differs from the one(s) used in the textbook.

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On the situation of the Tsou and Paiwan languages in Taiwan

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Background. The Austronesian languages of Taiwan, once the only linguistic stock of the island, have survived until today mostly in the mountaneous parts of the country, in spite of the sociocultural, economic and political pressure exercised by various powers. In early colonisation history, the border between "civilisation" and "wilderness" represented a cultural divide between Chinese- and then Japanese- influenced areas with "cooked" indigenous peoples on the one hand, and the unruled areas inhabited by "raw" peoples. Under Japanese control, the independence of the mountain tribes was gradually undermined, and the Kuomintang assimilation policy finally put an end to the intra-family transmission of languages, among other changes. At the same time, Christian mission was very successful. With democratisation, a new Taiwanese and indigenous identity was constructed which attempts language revitalisation with the active support of politics, schools and affirmative action regulations.

Material & method. The small Tsou community (4000 people) and the relatively large Paiwan tribe (60.000+ people) are discussed on the basis of discussions with few (well-informed) elderly and middle-aged tribe members who expressed their subjective views on the situation of their languages.

Analysis. All competent speakers were "old"; the younger (i.e., middle-aged) speakers are to be considered semi-speakers and rememberers who grew up as bilinguals. The complex morphology of the language was basically lost in the younger speakers who felt uncertain even with simple translation requests. Family histories sometimes involve interethnic marriages between tribal groups with different languages, switching to Japanese, using Hokkien (and Hakka) as contact and family languages, and finally learning Mandarin Chinese at school. This led to the situation that actually only very old and some elderly people are able to communicate in the tribal language. Language is seen as an important marker of identity, but cannot serve this function with younger people who may no longer be able to use the language in daily life. A language shift from indigenous languages to Hokkien/Mandarin bilingualism over three generations can be observed, with modern education and urbanisation as a driving force. Large-scale conversion to Christian denominations possibly helps create a new indigenous identity.

Conclusions. While the languages are generally viewed as being endangered, the cultural situation of the mountain tribes is transformed into a cultural feature supporting a new Taiwanese identity as being a multicultural Pacific island state -- including the Hokkien and Hakka heritage, as well as the remaining 16 tribes which are mostly recognised on the basis of "still speaking their own language".