What motives and goals do learners of uchināguchi have and how do they shape the future of the language?

A case study on language circles in Tokyo

by Jelmer Reitsma
0917141

MA Thesis (Asian Studies – Japanese)
Instructor: Dr. R.J. Länsisalmi

Date: 2014-07-10
Word count: 14212

Contents

1. Introduction

The *uchināguchi*[1] proverb '*Umari jima nu kutuba washinnē, kunin washiyun*' roughly translates to: 'When you forget the language of the island you were born on, you forget the island'. This proverb came to mind when talking to the people from Okinawa who moved to Tokyo and gather to learn *uchināguchi*. Not only those from Okinawa are learning *uchināguchi*, life-long Tokyoites are frequenting these circles as well. If only a fraction of the islanders is speaking the language, what compels these people to study it in the capital, far away from the Okinawan archipelago? Being a minority language speaker myself, I was keen to find out what motivates them to learn *uchināguchi*, a language that is barely even studied in Okinawa. Using interviews and observations, I learned about their motivations and goals. In addition to the two circles in Tokyo, I also attended a study group in Okinawa for comparison.

Uchināguchi is one of the Ryukyuan languages. This paper refers to the Ryukyuan languages in plural, following UNESCO's classification (2009). They are generally divided into six different languages, not mutually intelligible. These languages are, seen from north to south: *Amami*, *Kunigami*, *Okinawan* (*uchināguchi*), *Miyako*, *Yaeyama* and *Yonaguni* (figure 2). Historically the most important is the Okinawan language, *uchināguchi* as its speakers call it. The reason for this being that the capital of the Ryukyuan Kingdom (1429-1879) was situated on the island, which is also the biggest of the archipelago. The capital of modern-day Okinawa prefecture, Naha, is also located on Okinawa Island. Because of this, most of the research on Ryukyuan languages is focused on *uchināguchi.* Consequently, the vast majority of revitalization efforts are concentrating on this language.

The before-mentioned case study sheds light on those trying to keep the language alive, but this thesis also looks to the future. Summing up the results of the circles, the motivations and goals of its members, a trend is detected among these groups. The goal of this thesis is to answer the following research question: *"What motives and goals do learners of uchināguchi have and how do they shape the future of the language?"*

[1] Romanization of Japanese words is done using the Hepburn-system. A long vowel is indicated by a macron, e.g. *ē* is pronounced *ee*.

First, the reader is introduced to the language situation in Okinawa, describing its history and policies in detail. This is followed by an explanation of language revitalization methods, illustrated with various examples around the world, with a particular focus on the successful Hawaiian case. Next, a description of the language circles and the results of the interviews and observations guide the reader through the fieldwork that has been carried out. The outcome of this case study is combined with sociolinguistic theory, resulting in a conclusive chapter that aims to offer a new perspective on the future of *uchināguchi*.

2. Existing Literature

2.1 The *uchināguchi* language situation

In order to understand the context of *uchināguchi* language circles it is necessary to provide an overview of its history and various efforts on the preservation of the languages. This chapter summarizes literature on these topics, but starts off with answering the basic question: what exactly is *uchināguchi*?

2.1.1 *Uchināguchi* and Japanese

The name *uchināguchi* means 'language of Okinawa', and its speakers refer to the Japanese language as '*yamatuguchi*', 'language of *Yamatu*[2], an old term for Japan. Historically there was a clear division between these two languages, but the increasing presence of Japanese gave birth to *uchināyamatuguchi*: a spoken language, mixing the two (Tsunamiko, 2000: 94). Although most people would not refer to themselves as a speaker of *uchināyamatuguchi*, in present day Okinawa speakers of 'real' *uchināguchi* are rare. What is perceived as *uchināguchi* is in fact a heavily 'Japanized' version, which will be explained more later on.

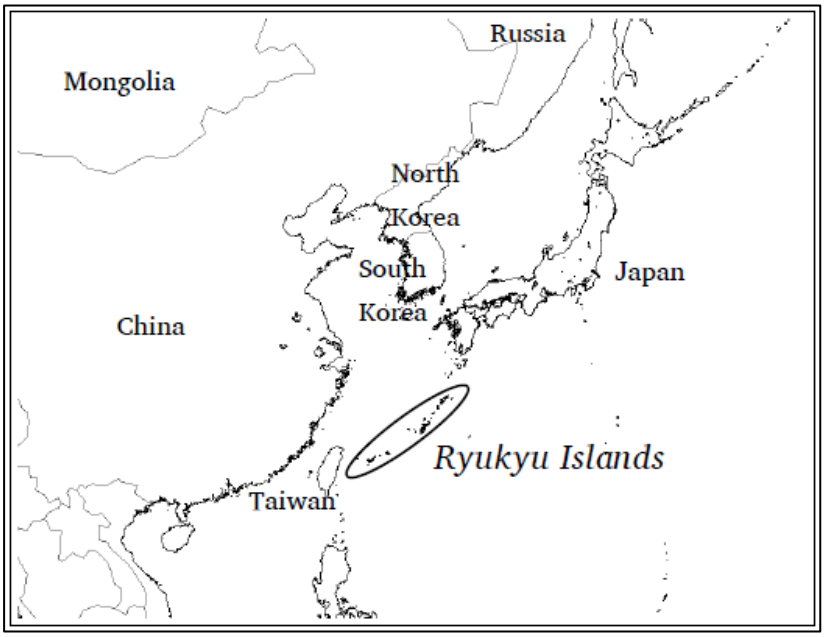


Figure 1: Ryukyu Islands (Shimoji & Pellard, 2010: 3).

[2] *Yamato* in Japanese, first used to refer to the province around the city of Nara, later semantically expended to mean all of the Japanese 'mainland' and its people.

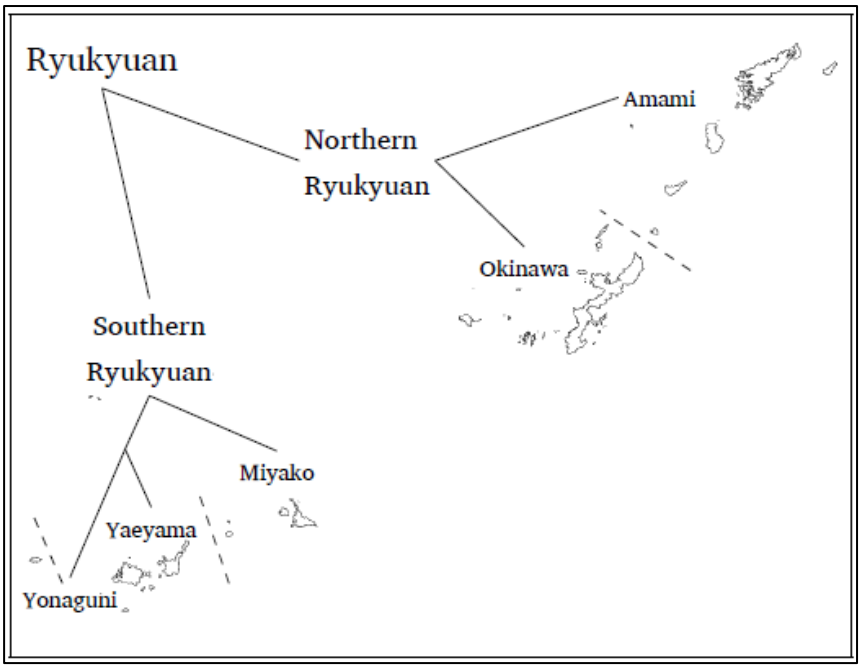


Figure 2: Ryukyuan Languages (Shimoji & Pellard, 2010: 3). Note: Kunigami is spoken in between Amami and Okinawa. All the Ryukyuan islands are part of Okinawa prefecture, except for Amami, which belongs to Kagoshima prefecture.

In Japan the Ryukyuan languages are widely seen as *hōgen*, dialects or *dai-hōgen*, 'greater dialects'. The languages are considered to belong to the Japonic language family, but the general consensus among linguists is that both Japanese and *uchināguchi* are a separate language on their own. However, Japanese authors on Ryukyuan languages are still using the term *hōgen* (for example: Hara: 2005, Uemura: 2003). Heinrich mentions that the introductory remarks to an Okinawan dictionary state that they "should be seen as Japanese dialects" (2004: 174). According to Gottlieb, using the term *hōgen* is a state-building tool, making it seem as though there is one state with one language (2005: 23). Heinrich argues that the relationship of the Ryukyuan languages in relation to each other as well as Japanese can be classified as *Abstandsprache*: even though similarities can be detected, there is little to no mutual understanding. During a lecture he said, "Dutch and German are even closer than Japanese and *uchināguchi* are" (2014). What exactly are the differences between Japanese and *uchināguchi*?

Belonging to the Japonic language family, *uchināguchi* and Japanese share similarities when it comes to grammar and vocabularies. They both are mora-timed, agglutinative languages, and the word order normally is subject-object-verb. Particles indicate the grammatical function of words. However similar the languages are, *uchināguchi* is incomprehensible to

Japanese speakers and vice versa. Like Japanese, *uchināguchi* has five vowels, indicated using the International Phonetic Alphabet as: /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/ and /o/. All are pronounced the same in both languages, except that /u/ is truly rounded in *uchināguchi* as opposed to functioning as a compressed vowel in Japanese. Vowel lengthening is possible with all five vowels in both languages. The majority of the consonants are interchangeable as well, but there are differences: for example, one can find the labialized consonants [kʷ] and [gʷ] in *uchināguchi* only. Furthermore, *uchināguchi* makes frequent use of glottal stops [ʔ], not found in Japanese, and features the voiceless bilabial fricative [ɸ].

The Japanese language is written using three writing systems, of which two are native Japanese: the *kana*. These syllabic scripts are *hiragana* and *katakana*, the first one is used for native words, grammatical particles, suffixes and inflections. In contrast, the second script is used for recent loanwords and onomatopoeia. Each *kana* depicts morae, either a vowel, consonant or consonant-vowel[3]. Thirdly, Japanese makes frequent use of *kanji*, meaning 'han characters'. This script consists of logographic characters, adopted from the Chinese language. *Kanji* convey meaning instead of sound, and often have more than one possible pronunciation. In contrast, *uchināguchi* does not have a standardized writing system. Various systems have been adopted throughout history, most of which were an improvised mixture of *hiragana* and Chinese characters. *Hiragana* was introduced to the island in the thirteenth century (Itasaka, 1983: 355) and Chinese characters were obtained through intensive trade with China, which will be explained in more detail later on. There are few written records of *uchināguchi* available because the language was only written down in official documents, and most of the population was illiterate. Before explaining more on the language, the next section will briefly outline the islands' history.

2.1.2 Historical Overview

As mentioned before, the Ryukyu Islands used to be an independent kingdom, referred to as the Ryukyu Kingdom (1429-1879). It had close relations with China and sent regular tributary missions to the Chinese capital Beijing. The major income source for the islands

[3] For example, /a/ can be written in both *hiragana* and *katakana*: あ and ア respectively. A voiced consonant is characterized by adding two small stripes on the top right side of the *kana.* For example, か /ka/ turns into が /ga/. When changing syllables starting with /h/ into /p/, a small circle is written instead, like with ぱ /pa/.

was trade in South-East Asia. In 1609 the Japanese Satsuma clan forced the kingdom to become a vassal state, but even during this period its status remained ambiguous (Heinrich, 2012: 84). In 1872 the kingdom was officially assimilated into the Japanese nation state and after 1879 the islands became a prefecture, *Okinawa-ken*. From that moment onwards, intensive language policies were carried out. In order to turn Ryukyuans into Japanese and integrate the islands into Japan, these policies were to solve the 'communication problem' that existed (Heinrich, 2004: 156). Education, an important domain for language change, was also implemented: compulsory school system – in Japanese. An effective way of discouraging the use of the local language was to make students wear a *hōgen fuda* (a dialect tag). This wooden tag with 'dialect' written on it was a symbol of humiliation and had to be worn by those who spoke a Ryukyuan language during class. This has led to painful memories that Ryukyuan speakers vividly remember up to today. The method proved to be quite effective, as the languages came to be associated with something undesirable and negative (Heinrich, 2004: 159, Miyara, 2011: 179). Language was not the only focus of the system, as it also saw to educate the local population in "mainland customs and traditions" (Shinzato in Heinrich, 2004: 156). Dubinsky and Davies write of children being forced to sing: "Using dialect is the enemy of the country" (*hōgen tsukau wa kuni no kateki*) at the start of class (2013: 16). Japanese gradually replaced Ryukyuan both in private and official domains. The Ryukyu Islands were the battleground for the final combats of the Second World War, killing 150,000 civilians and leaving an entire population in refugee camps (Heinrich, 2004: 163). Language had "literally become a matter of life and death: a military decree was passed and anyone caught using Ryukyuan languages (…) would be treated as a spy" (Heinrich, 2012: 92). From Japan's capitulation in 1945 up until 1972 the United States was in charge of the islands. In the early stages, the American government coined the idea of teaching the local language instead of Japanese, to relieve the population from their attachment to Japan. There were no available textbooks or teachers, however, and the language did not even have a standardized writing system. Because of these reasons, they quickly decided to continue the Japanese classes. These 27 years of American presence made the islanders grow more and more pro-Japanese (Heinrich, 2004: 163).

The island once again became the prefecture Okinawa in 1972, when the U.S. government returned the islands to the Japanese administration. According to Tsunamiko, efforts were

made in the 1970s and 1980s to introduce Okinawan textbooks and classic poetry classes in schools during the time slot for *koten* (classical literature), organized by the labor union of Okinawan teachers, but these had little to no effect (2000: 95). From the 1990s on, the government pushed schools to perform better, which left little time for other topics, such as the local language and culture (2000: 96). Compared to schools in other prefectures, the curriculum of Okinawan schools does not vary much, up until today. In all of Japan a school is only officially recognized if it teaches *kokugo* (literally 'language of the country', meaning the national language, in this case Japanese). This also goes for the textbooks and any other materials that might be used (Maher, 1997: 1). Although it is not impossible to establish a school that teaches a different language, its graduates would not be able to enter Japanese universities (Maher, 1997: 1). Consequently non-Japanese schools are very uncommon in Japan, including Okinawa. The majority of these schools teach in Korean, and their students can go on to Korean-speaking universities – institutions funded by organizations tied to North- or South Korea and not officially recognized by the Japanese government.

Nowadays it is very rare to come across speakers under the age of 50 years who still speak the local language. And even those who speak it hold Standard Japanese as their first language, although in most cases this would be the local variety. Speakers aged 50 and higher often are Japanese dominant bilinguals, as Heinrich writes (2004: 167). Taking into account that this article was written a decade ago, it is safe to assume that this now goes for speakers aged 60 and higher.

There are virtually no policies on a national level that are related to the Ryukyuan languages, although there are some publications and surveys on the matter by the Agency of Cultural Affairs which shows they start acknowledging the existence of minority languages in Japan (Bunka-chō, 2014). On a prefectural level, however, there is one policy concerning the annual *shimakutuba no hi* (day of the 'island language'), held annually on 18 September[4] since 2005 on all islands of Okinawa prefecture. On this day traditional songs and dances are performed, speech contests are held and people are free to join discussions on the local languages (Heinrich, 2012: 157). *Hōgen* (dialects, as Ryukyuan languages are considered to

[4] This date was chosen because '9-18' (*ku-tu-ba* in *uchināguchi*) spells *kutuba* ('language').

be) are mentioned in policy guidelines however: “dialects are to be respected, but the difference with standard language has to be understood” (Hayano, 2007: 141), which emphasizes the recommendation of only using Standard Japanese in schools.

2.1.3 Revitalization efforts

Following the countermeasures taken against Ryukyuan and the wide scale implementation of Standard Japanese described above, few speakers of Ryukyuan remain. According to Heinrich the languages will be extinct in 2050, if nothing is done to reverse this language shift (2013: 167). As there is no census or other official data, it is difficult to know exactly how many speakers are left. Several sources claim there are about 900,000 speakers (Ethnologue, 2014), but these numbers likely include variations such as *uchināyamatuguchi*. A more accurate calculation is done by Read, estimating 9,500 *uchināguchi* speakers are left (2011: 1). This chapter offers illustrative examples of efforts that aim to breathe new life into the languages.

For example, *uchināguchi* courses are offered at Okinawa University and University of the Ryukyus, the two biggest universities of the prefecture. The classes are aimed at students from Okinawa with some background in the language, but are open to ‘mainland’ students too. Set up like courses for foreign languages like French or Chinese, these classes only focus on the linguistic aspect and barely exceed the basic level. Tsunamiko studied the motives of students at Okinawa University taking the course (2000). She found out that the reasons students gave included: intergenerational communication, communication with the local population, learning more about the culture and customs of the island, learning more about their own identity and finally a general interest in languages (2000: 98). She detected a difference in reasons for Okinawan students and those from the mainland: local students prioritized being able to communicate with older family or community members, while ‘outside’ students focused on learning a new language and culture. Tsunamiko detected a rising interest in learning *uchināguchi* and therefore advises to combine language classes with culture, while keeping the focus on language (2000: 101). Examples of cultural elements that could be used in class include traditional poetry or songs, customs or food connected to the island and its history.

Not only universities, but also private circles, groups and organizations host Ryukyuan language classes. Most of this activity takes place in and around Naha, as education in the local language is less developed outside of the capital, especially on the other islands (Hara, 2005: 200) or other prefectures. Therefore, most research has been conducted on *uchināguchi* rather than other Ryukyuan languages. When it comes to endangered languages, every activity is of course welcomed, but what is needed most at this point is a standardized textbook (Miyara, 2011: 191). Textbooks used by these organizations or the universities are independently, commercially published. This means that there is no overarching body regulating what or how the language is learned, and for example no standardized way of writing has ever been established. In fact, the discussion on how to write *uchināguchi* has only recently started. The Japanese syllabaries, *hiragana* and *katakana*, generally used for Japanese words and foreign words respectively, match all morae in the Japanese language. Some sounds in *uchināguchi* do not exist in Japanese, and therefore textbooks have come up with ways of denoting the language in a different way. Roman alphabet, a combination of *hiragana* or katakana, and a whole new writing system are among the solutions. Besides the learning materials, teachers too should be subject to fixed criteria, for example being a native speaker, or having a wide knowledge of Okinawa's culture and tradition (Miyara, 2011: 194). Some of these circles, located in Tokyo and on Okinawa Island, will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

Besides the traditional setting of classroom and teacher, less conventional ways to promote the languages are also used. An example is the speech contest, held annually since 1996 in Naha, eventually spreading to other cities and islands as well (Hara, 2005: 195). Competing to win the contest, both adults and children recite traditional poems and tales in the local language. The *murāshubi*, village festival, is another example. The use of *uchināguchi* is essential during the festivities (Hara, 2005: 196). In an interview Heinrich had with 78-year-old Sakimoto, a former teacher, he tells him he did not use *uchināguchi* at home, but he and his family only spoke it when attending *matsuri*, local festivals (Heinrich, 2011b: 160). This shows that a traditional setting such as a festival is a specific domain in which *uchināguchi* is used. Therefore, both *matsuri* and *uchināguchi* are seen as a part of traditional, authentic Okinawan culture – as opposed to Japanese culture and language, which is perceived as

more modern. Heinrich describes the rise of *uchināguchi* in cultural and traditional context as a "return in the form of songs and tales and not as a language of instruction".

Ryukyuan languages, and especially *uchināguchi*, have found their place in popular culture as well. Songs that use some Ryukyuan words or traditional Ryukyuan instruments are sung at karaoke bars throughout Japan, drama series like *Churasan* (set in Okinawa prefecture) enjoy massive popularity and the popular television series *Ryūjin Mabuyā*, a live-action series set on the Ryukyu Islands, was turned into a movie in 2011. Finally, contemporary fiction about or situated on the Ryukyu Islands sells well. Medoruma, a novelist from Okinawa prefecture, has won prestigious prizes with his work, in which his background always plays an important role (Bhowmik, 2006: 111-117). This increasing interest in all things Ryukyuan is called the 'Okinawa-boom' (Hara, 2005: 196). Of course all interest in these islands and its languages should be welcomed, but it is feared that "Okinawa (and its languages and culture) transform into nothing more that commodities for the tourist industry" (Hook & Siddle, 2003: 6). Japan's other indigenous language, *Ainu* (spoken in the northern province of Hokkaido with only a handful of native speakers left) is already at this stage, having lost all essential domains that are needed for a living language. Victim of a similar linguistic extermination that took place in the Ryukyus, today *Ainu* has become a language used mostly in traditional contexts or 'traditional' museum villages catering tourists, although various language courses are offered across the country, as well as a weekly radio show that aims to familiarize people with the language (STV Radio: 2014).

2.1.4 Attitudes towards Ryukyuan languages

In a recent survey conducted by the Okinawan Bureau for Culture, Tourism and Sports, citizens from all over the prefecture were asked about how they felt about the 'dialect' and how much they understood. When asked whether or not they feel 'affection' (*shitashimi*) for *shimakutuba*, the 'island language', the biggest group (44,5%) replied they did. Some replies were in between, but only 3% responded they did not feel any affection at all. When analyzing the results further, it becomes clear that a higher percentage of men feels close to the language, and that the affection is significantly higher with the older age groups. Among teenagers, 17,5% answered in confirmative, against 81,3% of people in their seventies (*Okinawaken Bunka Kankō Supōtsu-bu*, 2013: 4).

Another question was about to what extent the respondents used 'island language' when talking to other people. One tenth said they "mostly use 'island language'", 25,4% replied they use 'island language' and standard language equally. The remaining group varies from not speaking it at all to only using some greetings (*Okinawaken Bunka Kankō Supōtsu-bu*, 2013: 5). Finally, they asked if they wanted their children to become able to use 'island language'. The responses were generally positive, with 34.4% responding they definitely want that, and 52,3% would like to see it happening "if possible". Only 1,7% said they did not want their children to use it "at all" (*Okinawaken Bunka Kankō Supōtsu-bu*, 2013: 8). However, a critical note is necessary when analyzing this questionnaire: the term 'island language' is vague and it is likely that most respondents thought of *uchināyamatuguchi* or other varieties, instead of the 'original' Ryukyuan language.

2.2 Language revitalization examples

Attitudes towards *uchināguchi* might be positive, but speakers of the language are rapidly decreasing. Although this might seem like a paradox, *uchināguchi* is not the only language in this situation. Around the world people are trying to revitalize endangered languages. This chapter will discuss various methods and accounts of language revitalization efforts from around the world, both (partially) successful and unsuccessful.

2.2.1 Revitalization methods

There are three groups into which most revitalization efforts can be divided: the total-immersion program, the partial-immersion program and the community based program. Being the most acclaimed method by linguists and educators (Grenoble & Lindsay, 2006: 51), the total-immersion program puts the focus on making the target language the sole language in that specific environment. In order to set this up, several native speakers are needed (Tsunoda, 2005: 202). When the instruction is in the standard language and the target language is learned as a second language, the program can be classified as partial-immersion. This is the method used most frequently, although it does not hold wide support of linguists (Grenoble & Lindsay, 2006: 55). It is an attractive program because of the little

costs in terms of time, money and effort compared to the total-immersion program. Another reason why this program is used frequently is because of the 'missing generation': the lack of native speakers capable to teach the language (Hinton, 2011: 313). Finally, the community-based program is quite different. Instead of taking place in the traditional setting of a classroom and a teacher, it uses every day activities to learn and teach the language, for example hunting, cooking or making traditional art. Some methods do not fit into one of these three groups, like radio broadcasting in a minority language (Tsunoda, 2005: 208). Another example is the telephone method: revitalizing an endangered language by holding conference calls with speakers that live away from each other (Tsunoda, 2005: 207-208). A similar method would be to use the Internet to hold video calls with the same purpose. Other innovative methods using the Internet include uploading language courses on YouTube, giving out language advice on Twitter and meeting other minority language learners and speakers on social networking sites.

2.2.2 Examples of language revitalization

Numerous language revitalization efforts across the globe use (variations of) the before-mentioned methods to keep a language from becoming extinct. This chapter will describe a selection of examples and summarize the commonalities of these different studies, both the challenges they face and the successes that have been achieved.

One of the many examples of a language that is currently actively promoted and taught is Scottish Gaelic. It is an uphill struggle, however. Armstrong writes: "language ability does not automatically translate into language use" (2013: 352). His study finds that even when the learners gain proficiency in Gaelic, it is hard for them to win over key speech partners. Armstrong acknowledges that the enthusiasm these adult learners have is very valuable (2013: 351), but that alone will not save the language. He concludes: "In the 21st century, Gaelic use does not happen by default or apparently naturally, but must be deliberately negotiated". Another study shows similar results, concluding: "there is a serious risk that (the Gaelic revitalization movement's) efforts will remain at the level of personal achievement and fail to contribute substantially to revitalizing Uist[5] as a distinctively Gaelic-speaking area" (McEwan-Fujita, 2010: 59).

[5] A group of islands off the west coast of mainland Scotland.

In the case of the Guernsey, an island in between Great Britain and France, Sallabank has studied the attitudes of both the minority (language speakers and learners) and the majority (those not involved with the language in any way) of the islanders. She argues that a positive shift in attitude of the majority can lead to more funding and concrete support, and the speakers of the local language, in this case Guernésiais, can claim some public space (2013: 344). Sallabank warns, however, "this raises the prestige, but does not ensure its survival" (2013: 344). In a similar study concerning Aboriginal languages in Australia, Bell writes that the success of a language programme is not fully dependent on outside help or funding. Rather, "(…) a programme is more likely to survive when there are strong positive attitudes and support from within the language community itself" (2013: 408).

The overall tone in these articles is rather pessimistic. It seems there is only so much you can achieve with support from the outside, if there is no willingness from the community itself. Does this mean that there are no chances for a successful revitalization organized by 'outsiders'? The following study begs to differ. A recent example of a successful revitalization program is that of *Aanaar* (*Inari* in Finnish) *Saami*, a Saami language still spoken by about 350 people in northern Finland. In 2009 an ambitious programme started, called CASLE (Complementary *Aanaar Saami* Language Education). The intensive one-year project consisted of both classroom courses at university and a Master-Apprentice programme, language nests and other immersion activities in the Saami country. The programme had remarkable results. After two years, the *Aanaar Saami* community has grown. There are several language nests where young children are immersed in the language, primary and secondary education in *Aanaar Saami* has tripled and the language is taught as a major subject at university (Olthuis, Kivelä & Kangas, 2013: 129). Although some of the organizers were originally from the province where *Aanaar Saami* is spoken, this study shows how a group of dedicated people can work together to build or strengthen a language community. This revitalization did not only benefit from the methods used, positive attitudes and willingness among potential language learners helped immensely as well. Lastly, the favourable political environment also worked in favour of *Anaar Saami*. However, arguably the most successful language revitalization so far took place on Hawai'i, and it is still going strong.

2.2.3 Hawaiian language

Experiencing the uphill struggle described before, most, if not all who are involved with the revitalization of languages will look at the Hawaiian case with a mix of amazement and jealousy. This is not without reason, as Hawaiian is considered to have undergone (and is still undergoing) a successful revitalization process. This chapter will lay out the historical background of the islands and their language, leading up to its situation today.

Once an independent empire, Hawai'i was the first non-European indigenous state that gained recognition as a nation. The monarchy was overthrown in 1893, and Hawaii went on to become part of the United States. The year can be seen as a turning point, not in the least when it comes to the language situation. Three years later, in 1896, Hawaiian was officially banned from all school education, causing Hawai'i Pidgin English (sometimes also referred to as Hawai'i Creole English) to become the language used by the children who previously spoke Hawaiian (Warner, 2001). Up until the 1950s a large number of Hawaiians left the islands to work or study, and this decline in population had to be adjusted by attracting immigrant workers. The enforcement of the 'English-only' policy and the growing number of non-Hawaiian speakers caused Hawaiian to gradually disappear from the public domain. Hawaiian survived as medium for spiritual-religious purposes, for example church services (Brenzinger & Heinrich, 2013: 302). However, in all other domains the language shift from Hawaiian to English was completed by 1960.

Merely a decade later, this grim future suddenly did not seem as inevitable, as the situation started to improve. On the mainland of the United States the Civil Rights Movement brought attention to its minorities, and this seemed to have an effect on the islands of Hawai'i as well. An increased interest in not only Hawaiian language, but also its culture (mainly dance and song) and history, was born: the so-called 'Hawaiian Renaissance' (Brenzinger & Heinrich, 2013: 302). Two important legislations changed the status of Hawaiian. In 1978 a new state constitution designated both English and Hawaiian the co-official status of the state Hawai'i. The federal government started to make efforts helping Hawai'i to preserve, use and support its indigenous language in 1990, when the Native American Languages Act was ratified. For the most part, individuals passionate about the language, rather than the state, have brought about this change.

The central factor in Hawaiian's revitalization movement is education. Language nests (preschools), the method the before-mentioned *Anaar Saami* schools have been based on, and immersion schools provide education with Hawaiian as the main language of instruction. Children who enter at the pre-school level and go all the way up to grade 12 do not *learn* Hawaiian, they naturally *acquire* the language. In other words, this education system produces native speakers of Hawaiian. This educational program is called *Papahana Kaiapuni* and is the most intensive of its kind (Yamauchi, Ceppi & Lau-Smith, 2000: 386). Because of its official status and the need for it in daily life, English is also taught, as well as Japanese, Chinese and Latin[6], but Hawaiian remains the first language of the schools. As Brenzinger & Heinrich put it: "In contrast to the English-medium schools, the school of the Hawaiian language revival movement aims at reintroducing the language as the medium of daily communication, with the highest possible proficiency in Hawaiian" (2013: 304).

The increased amount of Hawaiian language programs has not only achieved a higher number of fluent speakers, but also the number of people with limited proficiency has grown. This group primarily uses Hawaiian to frame their discourse as a marker of identity (Snyder-Frey, 2013: 232). By inserting some Hawaiian words or phrases in their daily, English conversation, they broadcast their Hawaiian identity rather than using it for communicative purposes. More and more people show linguistic competence in the Hawaiian language, but the actual native speakers do not account for more than a few hundred. However, the overall consensus is that the recent revitalization developments have been good for Hawaiian's position in society. Snyder-Frey concludes, "instead of being associated with lower class (…), Hawaiian is becoming indexical of educated, middle class, politically and culturally aware *kānaka maoli* ('real people', or indigenous Hawaiians)" (2013: 235).

[6] These languages are chosen because of the linguistic background of immigrants that came to Hawaii: the majority was from Japan and China, as well as South-America - Latin, related to languages such as Spanish and Portuguese, is taught for this reason. A large portion of the immigrants from Japan were actually from Okinawa, this fact is still celebrated by an annual Okinawa Festival. The University of Hawai'i also hosts a center for Okinawan studies.

2.3 Preliminary conclusion

Language revitalization is an uphill struggle: not only are the funds, governmental support or available teachers and materials limited, the biggest obstacle seems to be the willingness of the community itself. One might wonder why it is worth investing time and money into learning a language that serves no economical purpose and is barely still used. However, the revitalization taking place in Hawai'i shows that with the right program, governmental support, and, most importantly, a supportive community, change can be made.

When it comes to the *uchināguchi*, most studies focus on linguistic and pedagogic aspects of the language and its revitalization. Countless studies have described the grammar or writing systems of *uchināguchi* (for example: Uemura: 2003, Hayano: 2007, Shimoji & Pellard: 2010), and one can find studies on how to teach the language (for example: Tsunamiko: 2000). The language itself is the topic in each article, but what about the community? Since all revitalization eventually aims to influence the language use of the community, it would be quite insightful to get to know what the attitudes towards the languages are of those involved.

The following chapter aims to fill this gap by describing several communities involved in the revitalization of the Ryukyuan languages. Using interviews and observations, this case study aims to answer the question "*What motives and goals do learners of uchināguchi have and how do they shape the future of the language?"* Is revitalization like in the case of *Aanaar Saami* or Hawaiian potentially possible, or is the willingness in the community insufficient? And if so, what other options or possible scenarios would benefit the *uchināguchi*?

3. *Uchināguchi* Language Circles in Detail

3.1 Outline of the Fieldwork

In order to answer my research question, I observed and participated in the activities of three organizations revolving around *uchināguchi* for about 4 months. The goals were to interview and observe the participants, both students and teachers, and to get to know the ambitions, motivations and future goals they have. Two of these 'language circles' were located in Tokyo, one is held on Okinawa Island. This chapter describes the activities observed, and lets those involved tell their stories. Divided into three parts, all circles will first be presented with an overview of how they came to be and how they are organized. It is followed by a selection of the interviews and observations relevant to the research question. A short summary concludes each section. Finally, the activities of the circle on Okinawa Island will be compared with those of the circles in Tokyo.

Using the field method of participant observation, I participated to some degree in the activities of the groups. At the time of the first visit I announced who I was and what my reasons were for joining the language circle. I informed everyone that I might include what he or she told me or said in class in my research anonymously. Happy to see someone that shared their interest in *uchināguchi*, the members of all circles were welcoming and soon enough they were completely used to my presence in class. As an outsider in every sense of the word, my prediction was that it would be difficult to blend in and observe the natural course of the class. Johnstone writes that participant observers are "outsiders by virtue of occupying roles defined by themselves and other researchers and insiders by virtue of occupying roles defined by the people they are studying" (2000: 86). The role of outsider gave me the natural authority of asking questions, or interviewing people in between classes. The role of insider provided me with the opportunity to witness these classes while not disrupting the natural course of events.

3.2 *'Okinawa-go wo hanasu kai'*

3.2.1 Overview

This bi-weekly gathering, literally meaning: 'Okinawan speaking association' in Japanese, is located in central Tokyo. The organization, which will celebrate its 25th anniversary this year, was founded in 1987 and started teaching *uchināguchi* in 1989. The chairman has not changed up to today and is present at every gathering. It was originally intended for people from Okinawa who moved to Tokyo and wanted to maintain or learn *uchināguchi* (Ōtsuki, 2011: 78), but now welcomes everyone interested in learning the language. It is held every two weeks on a Saturday afternoon. Membership for a year costs 6,000 yen[7], not included the extra fee for participating in the annual summer banquet and year-end party.

The most important person behind this group of people currently is also the main teacher, Shinshō Kuniyoshi. He was raised partially by his grandparents, with whom he spoke *uchināguchi*. He moved to Tokyo for work and was involved with the founding of the association. About sixty years old, he teaches the first of two classes that are held every Saturday. These classes are aimed at total beginners and those who can understand *uchināguchi* but are unable to speak it. The class, which lasts for an hour and a half, makes use of a syllabus composed by the teacher himself, called *Uchināguchi Kyōshitsu* '*Uchināguchi* classroom' (see Appendix A). Just like the name of the circle, the name of the book does not only use *uchināguchi* but instead includes the Japanese word for 'classroom'. It focuses on learning and practising daily conversations. Shinshō puts a lot of emphasis on the pronunciation of his students and dedicated a significant amount of pages in his book on this matter.

As explained earlier, there is no standardized way to write *uchināguchi*. The textbook Shinshō wrote, as well as all other materials, includes *uchināguchi* with a script that Shinshō himself designed. He uses *hiragana* and has created new *hiragana* so that all words in *uchināguchi*, even the ones with sounds not found in Japanese, can be written down (figure 3). The first *hiragana*, top left, denotes the syllable /tu/. This syllable does not exist in

[7] About 43 euros

Japanese, instead placing /u/ after /t/ turns the first consonant sound into a dento-alveolar affricate resulting in the dental affricative /tsu/. Therefore, the corresponding *hiragana* つ /tsu/ would not work for /tu/. The 'new' *hiragana* is a combination of the existing *hiragana* と /to/ and う /u/, together forming the syllable /tu/. Although /tu/ is not found in native Japanese words, it is possible using these two *hiragana* to denote this sound, for example in the case of loanwords. However, these are written in *katakana* because the word is a modern loanword and the /u/ would be small, following the normal-sized /to/. This way, the reader knows it should be pronounced as one syllable[8].

New	IPA	Origin	New	IPA	Origin
とぅ	/tu/	と /to/ & う /u/ merged	どぅ	/du/	ど /do/ & う /u/ merged
てぃ	/ti/	て /te/ & い /i/ merged	でぃ	/di/	で /de/ & い / i/ merged
くゎ	/kʷa/	く /ku/ & わ/wa/ merged	ぐゎ	/kʷi/	ぐ/gu/ & わ/wa/ merged
くぃ	/kʷi/	く /ku/ & い /i/ merged	ぐぃ	/gʷi/	ぐ/gu/ & い /i/ merged
くぇ	/kʷe/	く /ku/ & え /e/ merged	ぐぇ	/gʷe/	ぐ/gu/ & え /e/ merged
ふぁ	/ɸa/	ふ /fu/ & わ/wa/ merged	ふぃ	/ɸi/	ふ /fi/ & い /i/ merged
ふぇ	/ɸe/	ふ /fu/ & え /e/ merged	ゃ	/ʔja/	い /i/ & や /ja/ merged
ゅ	/ʔju/	い /i/ & ゆ /ju/ merged	ょ	/ʔjo/	い /i/ & よ /jo/ merged
ゐ	/ʔɯa/	う/u/ & わ/wa/ merged	ゐ	/ʔɯi/	う/i/ & ゐ /wi/ merged
ゑ	/ʔɯe/	う/u/ & ゑ /we/ merged	ん	/ʔn/	ん /n/ + small stripe
い゛	/ji/	い /i/ + voicing marker	を	/wu/	を /wo/ & う/u/ merged
え゛	/je/	え /e/ + voicing marker			

Figure 3: Newly designed *hiragana* (adapted from Kuniyoshi, 2014).

The 23 new *hiragana* in figure 3 are all designed for syllables not native to Japanese.

[8] For example the loanword 'Tourette', written in *katakana* as トゥレット /tureƚto/. The *katakana* for /to/ is ト and /u/ is written with ウ. To denote /tu/ however, the /u/ is written smaller, resulting in トゥ /tu/.

Shinshō designed the *hiragana* in a way the reader reads the syllable as one syllable, rather than having sounds denoted by multiple *hiragana* as other scripts do (Ryukyu Shimpo, 2013). The book also uses *kanji* like the Japanese language, but shows their *uchināguchi* readings in *hiragana* above the characters. *Kanji* are used because they help the reader – already used to Japanese – guess the meaning of words. There are also records of *kanji* being used in the Ryukyus when it had close connections to China, and therefore the book includes *kanji* just like Japanese books do. An example of these close connections is the king of the Ryukyus receiving 36 families from China to assist managing his affairs in the 15th century, automatically resulting in all official documents being written using Chinese characters (Tsai, 1996: 145).

All lessons consist of one page introducing a new grammatical feature or topic. A conversation between two people shows its usage and the class concludes with an exercise. The beginner's class typically facilitates one lesson each time, preparing the exercises for the next class. The second half of the afternoon the 'B-class' is taught. This class is intended for those who are comfortable with speaking the language or 'veterans' looking for a place to keep using *uchināguchi*. Yoshiaki Funatsu teaches this part, though his role as a teacher is less obvious during this class because it is more of an *uchināguchi* practice than it is a class. Yoshiaki was born and raised on the Japanese mainland, but has lived in Okinawa for several decades and mastered the language, speaking it with his colleagues and neighbours. He also wrote an *uchināguchi* textbook called *Uchināguchi Sabirā*, meaning 'Let's Speak *Uchināguchi*' (Funatsu, 1980). The materials used in this class are not textbooks, but primary sources such as stories or poems – either spoken or written (see Appendix B). The writing system used is the same as in the other class.

3.2.2 Interviews and Observations

The A-class usually starts later than the scheduled time, as members catch up with each other and discuss news, often related to Okinawa. A female member, Yasuko[9] (40s), prepares the tea and snacks before the class begins. It normally starts off by repeating the contents of the previous lesson and some of the homework is discussed. After about 10 minutes Shinshō introduces the contents of the day using the textbook. As mentioned earlier, each chapter has a short explanation, a transcript of an example conversation and

[9] All names of participants are pseudonyms.

an exercise. The students, seven people on average, do ask questions about once every fifteen minutes, but for the most part it is the teacher that speaks. For about an hour and a half, from 13:30 to 15:00, the students in the A-class take notes and listen to the explanation, followed by the exercise. Even though it is a beginner's class, the differences between individual students are quite big. For example, Yasuko picks up new grammar quickly and is able to use it in short sentences, whereas other students such as Takenori (40s) seem to struggle to put theory into practice. Because of this, the majority of the group does not say much in class. Yasuko and Makoto (30s) answer most of Shinshō's questions.

These three students all decided to start learning *uchināguchi* for similar reasons. Makoto began taking *sanshin* (Ryukyuan traditional three-stringed instrument) lessons at a local music school out of curiosity. He did not know much about Okinawa and its culture, but eventually developed a deep affection for its music. After mastering the musical instrument, he decided two years ago that he wanted "to learn the dialect in order to understand the lyrics of the songs". Music is also how Yasuko came into contact with the language: songs in popular music sung (partially) in *uchināguchi* (see figure 4), sometimes referred to as '*uchinā*-pop', made her want to learn the language and be able to sing along. Now she not only sings these songs of modern times, but is gradually able to understand older folksongs and tales as well. She says she enjoys having a hobby to keep her busy during the day, when nobody is at home.

晴れ渡る　日　も　雨　の　　日 も　浮かぶ あの 笑顔
harewataru hi　mo　ame no　hi　mo ukabu　ano　egao
clear up　day too rain POSS day too float　that smiling face
想い出 遠く あせて　も　さみしくて　恋しくて
omoide tōku asete　mo　samishikute　koishikute
memory far　fade away even if lonely　be missed
君　へ の　想い　**涙　そうそう**
*kimi e　no　omoi　**nada sōsō***
you to POSS thought tears pouring
会いたくて　会いたくて 君　へ の　想い　**涙　そうそう**
*aitakute　aitakute　kimi e no　omoi　**nada sōsō***
want to meet want to meet you to POSS thought **tears pouring**

Figure 4: Partial lyrics of *'Nada Sōsō'*, sung by Moriyama Ryōko. The words in bold are in *uchināguchi*.

For Takenori, Okinawa has been the object of a life-long affection. As a kid he went to the islands on vacation, and he stuck with that tradition until this day. On his many visits to Okinawa, he has become very familiar with the local traditions, music and cuisine, and has made quite some acquaintances. Out of this interest, Takenori decided to join the circle. He seems to enjoy talking about Okinawa more than actually learning the language, as he hardly speaks during class but is leading conversations – in Japanese – during the break.

Their reasons for learning the language also reflect their goals. Upon asking what she wants to use her proficiency in *uchināguchi* for, Yasuko responds she would be happy when she understands all the songs and can sing them like a native speaker. She clarifies that she does not only mean the literal meaning of the words, but also hopes that mastering *uchināguchi* will help her understand the sentimental values and cultural references of the songs. Makoto has similar goals: he aims to understand all the songs he plays with his *sanshin*, and hopes that this understanding will benefit the quality of his music. Rather than music, Takenori hopes to understand Okinawa better on his next visits, and hopes he can maybe use some words in daily conversations. However, he says that he does not focus on a particular goal, and for now he enjoys the classes and the company. When asked about the endangered state of *uchināguchi*, Makoto does not quite seem to know what is happening to the language. The textbook solely focuses on language learning and does not give background information on the declining number of speakers. The instructors never explicitly explain this either, although the topic does come up in casual conversations before or after class. However, the course is purely designed to teach the language, and if one only attends the classes and reads the materials, not much is learned about the danger that the language faces. When given further explanation, Makoto admits he never really had any interest in anything except for matters related to *sanshin*. He expresses his concern, but is not sure of what needs to be done to reverse the language shift. Yasuko does not have a concrete solution either, although she knows about the challenges that *uchināguchi* faces. She hopes more people will learn the language outside of Okinawa, like her, and raise awareness. Asked whether or not she is planning to use her knowledge of the language next time she is in Okinawa, she laughs and says she is not sure whether anyone would understand. She prefers to speak Japanese, and use *uchināguchi* when it comes to music.

During the break between the A-class and B-class the more advanced students come in. They exchange greetings and stories for about half an hour, and the beginning students leave. The number of students in this class is smaller; usually about four people attend the class. Teacher Yoshiaki uses traditional folk tales in *uchināguchi* and they are read together with the students using CD-recordings. Every few sentences he will stop the recording, and discuss some of the difficult parts of the story. There is little room for questions or comments, and usually the tale is finished in an hour. For the remaining time various topics are discussed such as Okinawan politics or when they are planning their next trip to the island, but nothing is really related to *uchināguchi*. In the syllabus the B-class is described as a class during which "only *uchināguchi* is used". In reality, most of Yoshiaki's explanation is in Japanese. Especially at the beginning of the class he makes an effort to do everything in *uchināguchi*, but it is clear that Japanese is easier both for him and for the students.

Ikue (70s) has been attending the B-class for about three years; her late husband introduced her to the circle. Ikue grew up on Okinawa Island and remembers hearing *uchināguchi* around her as a child. However she says that when she was a girl her parents and teacher told her that she should speak Japanese – *hōgen* did not fit the image of a lady. Ikue is still able to more or less understand *uchināguchi* but has difficulties speaking it. She does not have a clear goal that she is working on, she says. Rather, her reason of attending is meeting her friends and socializing in an environment that reminds her of the island where she grew up. She is very much aware of the decline in *uchināguchi* speakers, as all her younger family members do not speak it anymore. She is pessimistic about the possibility of revitalization, and says that she is glad her grandchildren "speak perfect Japanese, so they will surely get a good job". The chairman (80s) attends every meeting, but he is most vocal in the latter part of this class, sharing stories of when he was young in Japanese. These stories tend to be long-winded, but everyone always listens attentively. It is because of these reasons that this class feels like a social gathering at times, rather than an educational setting.

3.2.3 Summary

'*Okinawa-go wo hanasu kai'* appears to cater to two needs of its students. The first and obvious one is learning *uchināguchi*. The classes are systematic and largely consist of the teacher's explanation. There is not much real practice that would enable the students to use

the language outside of the classroom. However, it does not seem like any of the students would benefit from such practice, as became apparent from the interviews. The incentive for them to learn the language is mostly hobbies or interests that are related to *uchināguchi*. The second function of this circle is that of a social meeting place for people with similar interests. Although the majority of the students are not from Okinawa, they all share the same fondness of the language, music and culture. Before and after class most conversations revolve around these topics, and having this affection in common creates a bond.

3.3 'Momojara Daigaku'

3.3.1 Overview

The name of this circle means 'University of a Hundred Rulers', the word 'university' is in Japanese. The reason for selecting this name is related to its mission statement: it hopes to "create leaders of Okinawa for the next generation", as stated on their blog website (*Momojara Daigaku*: 2014). It goes on stating that members will all contribute evenly and teach the other members what they know. Its members gather every two weeks on a Saturday, free of charge. It should be noted that this circle does not only focus on teaching *uchināguchi*; every time both language and other 'research topics' are discussed. The commonality of these topics is Okinawa, but it could be anything from politics to economy, from wildlife to education. During the language part, an effort is made to let all the members speak and read about the same amount as well.

Shigenobu (30s) is the founder of the circle. He felt there was a need to gather young (20s-30s) people who moved from Okinawa to Tokyo. Using mediums such as Facebook to announce events, Shigenobu caters the younger and highly educated crowd. Shigenobu grew up on Okinawa Island and still uses *uchināguchi* with his grandparents. He admits that he is not fully proficient, but understands everything they say. He is proud of his Okinawan heritage, and founding this circle is an attempt of spreading his ideology. Other Japanese from Okinawan descent living in Tokyo, because of their work or school, often wish to blend in and pretend not to be from the islands. This circle started two years ago to reverse this trend and foster a group of young people willing to 'come out' as Okinawan to change

Okinawa for the better.

For teaching *uchināguchi* the circle uses the book *Uchināguchi no Nyuumon* 'Introduction to *Uchināguchi*', written in Japanese (Nishioka & Nakahara, 2006). During every session one chapter is discussed. The book uses *katakana* (the Japanese phonetic syllabary for recent loanwords) to write *uchināguchi.* Latin alphabet, signifying specific aspects of the pronunciation such as glottal stops, accompanies all sentences. Japanese translations of words are at the bottom of each page, as well as information on which word class the word belongs to (see Appendix C). The stories vary from simple daily life events such as grocery shopping to traditional folktales.

For the remaining time the focus shifts to broader topics, in so-called 'workshops'. As long as they are somehow connected to the topic of Okinawa, members can prepare a PowerPoint presentation in Japanese or something similar in the area of their expertise. There have been presentations on *uchināguchi* as well, for example expressions or its historical context. The topics are announced two weeks in advance. Some members volunteer as presenters more often than others, but in principle everyone presents something at least once. Often the presenters choose a topic that is related to their profession. In addition to these gatherings, the circle also organizes other get-togethers such as dinners in an Okinawan-style restaurant and *nomikai* (drinking parties). These are informal events organized spontaneously by various members.

3.3.2 Interviews and Observations

Every other Saturday, in a conference room of the company he works for, Shigenobu sets up the beamer and other materials to prepare for the circle. A notice on the door welcoming the members in *uchināguchi* leads them to the right room. Coffee and tea is provided, and various members have brought snacks. Especially when anyone recently visited Okinawa, traditional sweets are handed out. On average 12 members are present, including Shigenobu. All meetings start off with announcements, news or the introduction of new members. After this, all members read aloud a modern Japanese translation of one of the six teachings written by the Hongwu Emperor, founder of the Chinese Ming Dynasty. These teachings were brought to the Ryukyus in the 18th century and became famous among

royalty and academics. The six messages are similar and teach one how to love and protect each other. The original text in Chinese as well as a modern Japanese translation is printed in the notebook all members receive (see Appendix D). Reciting these texts as a group creates a bond, according to Shigenobu. He also says the teachings remind the members of the history that lies in their roots.

In the *uchināguchi* class that follows, everyone is expected to participate equally as mentioned before. The members read along with the CD-recordings and repeat them one by one, and are asked to translate one sentence each. No one is fluent in the language, and even though he does not speak it perfectly, Shigenobu is by far the most proficient speaker of the group. Everyone participates in the *uchināguchi* class, but at the same time it is obvious to everyone that these lessons will not make anybody even slightly proficient in the language. Although everyone is willing to take part in this part of the meeting, the fact that it is not enough to really make any difference seems to be common knowledge. The *uchināguchi* class goes on for about twenty minutes, after which quite some members breathe a sigh of relief.

According to the syllabus, the following part will consist of 'research topics' for fifty minutes and a 'workshop' for an hour. In reality, most of the time these time slots intertwine and it is not always clear which topic belongs to which category. There are about three to four topics every meeting. The presenting member stands in front of the beamer and presents the topic or leads the discussion. An example is the presentation by Sonoko (20s). Working for a convenience store chain, she was sent to the headquarters in Tokyo to further help the expansion of the stores in Okinawa. Her presentation was on the growth of non-Okinawan companies throughout the prefecture, illustrating her talk with recent figures and graphs. A considerable amount of her information was acquired through her company, which provided a unique insight into Okinawa's economy. A discussion followed on whether this economic trend is desirable. Although various arguments are raised during the debate, it is obvious that everybody is fond of Okinawa and generally agrees with each other during the discussion. This sense of togetherness can also be felt whenever there is a new member introduced. Soon after mutual friends are discovered, or it turns out that two members went to the same primary school. Sonoko explained that during informal conversations

most members speak Japanese with a local accent and some *uchināyamatuguchi* can be heard as well.

Sonoko is one of the most active members, meeting other members as friends outside of the circle. She says that is what got her to join the circle in the first place: a mutual friend with Shigenobu introduced her to the circle when it had just started. She only found out about the *uchināguchi* lessons on that day, and it surprised her. Admitting she has not made much progress since then, it is clear that her reason for going to the circle is something other than learning the language. "Working together and sharing ideas with other young people from Okinawa makes me feel very positive about (Okinawa's) future. In the news you hear lots of stories about the high unemployment rate or military bases. I hope we can make a change for the next generation." She is aware of the decline in *uchināguchi* speakers, but understands young people prefer to learn other languages. Sonoko speaks English well and one of the reasons she is able to work in Tokyo is that her Japanese sounds like she was born there, instead of Okinawa, she says. She is proud of the fact that she does not have an accent associated with the islands, as it can be harder to find a job in the capital. However, she is still quite proud of her roots. "The first thing I think of when I hear *uchināguchi* is my grandparents. And that goes for my friends as well."

Shinya (20s) agrees with Sonoko, admitting that he has not learned much *uchināguchi* since he started attending the circle. He enjoys the classes, but has not spent time on the language outside of those twenty minutes. He says it is important to remember his Okinawan heritage, but his reason for joining the circle is mostly networking and interacting with other young professionals from Okinawa. There was not a single member who mentioned the language as his or her primary reason for joining the circle.

3.3.3 Summary

As became apparent from the interviews, learning *uchināguchi* is the priority of neither the circle nor its members. Most of the time and energy is invested in topics that are somehow related to Okinawa, but it is not very likely that anyone will become proficient in the language because of these gatherings. This does not mean these classes do not serve any purpose. The interviews have shown that the classes raise awareness about *uchināguchi*'s endangerment and let the members appreciate their unique heritage. Given the fact that

they all are highly educated and might become influential in Okinawa, this is good news for the language. During a discussion on the unemployment rate, most members acknowledged that they do want to return to Okinawa eventually. The actual goal of the classes is not achieved, however, as no members are studying and using the language outside of the circle.

3.4 Comparison with Okinawan circle *'Uchināguchi shūtoku'*

3.4.1 Summary of 'Uchināguchi shūtoku'

Organized every week, this circle is held at the University of the Rykuyus, the largest public university of the prefecture. Its name means '*uchināguchi* acquisition' in Japanese. It is a private initiative, and besides it being held in a classroom of the university, it is not supported in any other way. All participants are affiliated to the university. The teacher is a graduate student of the Japanese Studies program at Leiden University, Gijs van der Lubbe. He mastered *uchināguchi* through self-study for about 4 years, after which he moved to Okinawa and started interacting with native speakers. Being an Okinawan resident for about 2 years now, he teaches these classes to pass on the language to students from Okinawa. On average six students attend, who all understand and speak basic *uchināguchi*. Using PowerPoint presentations, YouTube clips[10] and nicely designed hand-outs, Gijs caters to his young audience of university students. The course also includes quizzes and assignments, written as well as oral. The texts are all written in *hiragana* and some *kanji* (see Appendixes E and F).

When talking about the reasons for attending the class, all of the students mentioned their family. Most of their grandparents are still (partially) fluent in the language, and in some cases prefer to speak it over Japanese, especially as they grow older. Another student mentioned identity as well. An exchange student asked her why she did not speak the language of her island, which made her question her identity. She says that when she started speaking *uchināguchi*, she felt more as an insider compared to when she could only speak Japanese. Secondary reasons included interest in the language or learning languages in general, but personal motivations such as family and identity, a sense of belonging, seemed most important to all the students. Everyone planned to, or already had used their *uchināguchi* ability outside of the classroom. Some of the students also responded

[10] For example: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1GloQA-bCE

affirmatively to the question whether they planned to raise any possible future children in *uchināguchi*. Some admitted they were afraid that if their children were to be raised in *uchināguchi*, their Japanese language acquisition might suffer from it. After they were explained more about this topic from Gijs, among others, the possibility of raising *uchināguchi* children became more possible. They all admitted it would depend on their spouse and their future *uchināguchi* proficiency, but at least two of the students seriously consider this to be their language goal.

3.4.2 Comparison of circles in Tokyo and Okinawa

All students from the three circles in both Tokyo and Okinawa are fond of *uchināguchi* and care about its future. Nonetheless, their reasons for joining and future perspectives are quite different. The members of one circle in Tokyo, *'Okinawa-go wo hanasu kai*', all mainly study the language because of a personal affection for *uchināguchi*. Reasons include songs or visits to the archipelago. A common affection for the islands and its language seems to create a bond, but it is clear that learning the language is merely a hobby to most members. There are no intentions of speaking the language outside of the classroom and most do not know much about its current state. Members of the other circle in Tokyo, '*Momojara daigaku*', are more aware of the decline in *uchināguchi* speakers. Despite their concern, the focus of the circle is mostly on Okinawa-related topics that do not involve the language. It can therefore be argued that for different reasons, neither circle increases the chances for a revitalization of *uchināguchi*. The first group only sees it as a hobby without planning on ever using it in 'real life' and the second group does not have the time or means to become proficient enough even though they do understand the need.

To the members of '*Uchināguchi shūtoku*' in Okinawa learning the language is more than a pastime. Their motivations and goals are a combination of those given by the language learners in Tokyo. For example, driven by their heritage and practical goals such as communicating with their family members, their motivation is similar to the members of '*Momojara daigaku*'. Learning the language becomes a search for identity and a sense of duty. Unlike that circle, '*Uchināguchi shūtoku*' revolves solely around the language. Students make noticeable progress and practice *uchināguchi* outside the classroom as well. It is without a doubt that living in Okinawa makes a big difference. Being able to use the language with community members, small as the number of speakers might be, creates

domains that are necessary for language learning. Coulmas describes domains as “typical situations of language use, such as home, school, workplace, church and market” (2005: 234). It is these domains that serve both as a motivation and a goal for those learning *uchināguchi*. However, the number of domains in which *uchināguchi* is used is rapidly declining. With the results of the observations and interviews in mind, what can be expected of *uchināguchi* in the future?

4. Planning *Uchināguchi*: From Language to Resource

As became clear in the previous chapter, there are various reasons for people to start learning *uchināguchi* and their goals differ as well. Learning and using the language is done in many ways across Japan, but there is no framework to hold onto. As genuinely motivated those involved might be, without a structured and unified approach the future does indeed look grim for *uchināguchi* and the other Ryukyuan languages. This chapter will introduce a theoretical framework, supporting the conclusions on *uchināguchi*'s future.

4.1 Language as resource

The general notion of 'language' is that of a static, immobile one. You either speak it, or you do not. When meeting somebody who is able to converse in the same mother tongue, it is assumed that both speak the same language. Although this is true in the common usage of the word 'language', from a sociolinguistic point of view the language of these two people is not the same. In a similar way, the Dutch that I speak is different from my neighbour, my professor and my niece. We are able to communicate without any problems, but there is not 'one Dutch language' that we all conform to. Rather than immobile languages, these different repertoires are mobile resources. "The place of language in the life of the community would be understood as more than a matter of sounds, spellings, grammatical categories and constructions. It would be properly understood as involving varieties and modalities, styles and genres, ways of using language as a resource." (Hymes, quoted in: Blommaert, 2010: 102). In other words, the focus should be on these repertoires, the collection of resources people use. This means a shift from *languages*, which are primarily ideological and institutionally constructed, to *resources*, which are the actual ways in which language is used (Blommaert, 2010: 102).

Native speakers are no perfect speakers; and in fact, there is no perfect speaker. All the 'languages' we know are unique repertoires constructed by our environment and ourselves. Blommaert says that each and every person's repertoire is biographical, reflecting "our own histories and those of the communities in which we spent our lives" (Blommaert, 2010: 103).

This includes code-switching, alternating between two or more languages that are no longer separate but are used as resources for a new repertoire. In sum, “speech itself is no longer treated as the output of a unitary speaker (…), individuals are seen as bringing very different levels of personal commitment to the styles they speak (…), and of course this also applies with written uses of language” (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011: 5).

On the Okinawan islands Japanese is the norm. The Japanese spoken by those living in Okinawa is different from the Standard Japanese heard on national television, and it is also common to speak *uchināyamatuguchi*, the vernacular that appeared as a result of mixing Japanese and *uchināguchi*. Okinawans are known to switch between these variations depending on the conversation partner: speaking Standard Japanese with a tourist from the mainland, but using *uchināyamatuguchi* with their grandmother. Another language that is spoken is English. When working in the tourist industry or working closely with Americans, it is expected to possess a basic level of English. Overall, throughout the capital and even outside of Naha, the general level of English seems somewhat higher compared to the rest of Japan. Finally, some merchants catering tourists know basic phrases in Mandarin, Cantonese or Korean as well. This diversity shows that in this case it is better to speak of resources rather than languages. The linguistic ability of Okinawans contains bits and pieces of various languages, all serving a specific target group or purpose.

When analysing the participants of the language circles in this manner, it is clear their repertoires contain different kinds of *uchināguchi*. The first circle mainly learns it as a tool for their hobbies, which include playing traditional instruments or singing songs in the language. Although all members feel affectionate towards the language, they do not (plan to) use the language outside of the classroom. They learn textbook *uchināguchi*, which fits the goals they have. The second circle is studying the language, but its members are barely able to remember or use any of it. The *uchināguchi* they learn is also from a textbook, but because of their Okinawan heritage, it is likely that the context in which they conceive the language is different. For them, it seems that spending time on the language creates a sense of identity, rather than proficiency. The members of the language circle in Okinawa study the language in a serious manner, and also use it with family members or acquaintances that speak *uchināguchi*. They aim for full proficiency, focusing on everyday vocabulary and

grammar.

The circles all claim to study the same language, but in reality every circle learns only part of *uchināguchi*. Without realizing it, they study the language as a resource. After a few years, members from different circles might claim they speak *uchināguchi*, and still have difficulties communicating with each other. However, this should not be viewed in a negative way. On the contrary, it makes perfect sense to only learn one aspect of a language that you need or want to learn. If you only use *uchināguchi* when you speak with your family members, there is no need to learn old expressions that appear in traditional songs. However, for those with an interest in the musical heritage, it is the other way around. Instead of attempting to learn the language as a whole, it is easier and more accessible to learn it as a resource, catering towards specific needs or interests.

4.2 Language planning

These private initiatives surely help the language live on a little longer, but without any proper planning, its extinction is merely delayed, not prevented. Language planning covers various fields all related to language, but in each field the perspective is different. This chapter discusses four variables: *corpus*, *status*, *language-in-education* and *prestige*. After explaining these variables, they will be put into practice: how is the language planning of *uchināguchi* doing in these fields and what can be done better in the future?

4.2.1 Status, corpus, language-in-education and prestige

The variables corpus and status are the most visible and logical aspects of language planning. Corpus planning focuses on intralinguistic targets, for example a spelling reform or revising a writing system (Haarmann, 1990: 106). Status planning, on the other hand, is about extralinguistic targets, such as using a certain language in politics or granting it official status (Haarmann, 1990: 107). These two variables can be easily recognised and many examples can be given, but are not enough. Haarmann writes: “Every planning has to rely on a kind of psychological background which favours an effective implementation of planning goals and which, ultimately, is the most crucial variable for a long term success of planning” (1990: 105). The crucial variable he refers to is *prestige*. This variable is as crucial to language

planning as corpus and status. For example, even when a language has been sufficiently structured and standardized (corpus) and has been allocated to respected domains in society (status), the lack of prestige can cause language planning to fail. In that case, language users' level of respect towards the language is lower compared to other languages.

Existing policies, or the lack thereof, can be categorised using this system. For example, Nakagawa (2009) used Haarmann's system to analyse the current state of Ainu, the language from Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island, spoken by only a handful of people. He writes that the lack of prestige was, and still is, the reason for Ainu's decline. Because there are no economical benefits, parents decided to not teach their children the language. Ainu was banned from schools and people denied being Ainu because of discrimination. As a result, most domains have been lost. Nakagawa says that to reverse this, not only the before-mentioned corpus planning and status planning is necessary, but especially prestige should be restored (2009: 5). He adopts three main strategies from Haarmann to achieve this: a reform in awareness and evaluation of (1) mother tongue, (2) contact language and (3) language maintenance situation. Nakagawa then argues that in the case of Ainu, this would mean creating a situation in which (1) people are proud to speak Ainu as their 'mother tongue'[11], (2) other language speakers such as Japanese would think of Ainu as 'cool', like they would of English, and (3) people who would like to learn Ainu are able to do so freely and continuously (2009: 6).

Finally, in addition to status, corpus and prestige, a fourth variable is used in language planning: *language-in-education*. Baldauf (2004), for example, includes this factor in his analysis of language planning in Australia. Language-in-education is more similar to corpus and status planning, than it is to prestige planning. It touches upon both corpus (textbooks, curricula) and status (compulsory second-language exams, allowing minority languages to be spoken in schools). Prestige is less about 'production', and more about 'reception'. To pass a law that requires children to learn their heritage language is relatively easy,

[11] Nakagawa distinguishes 'mother tongue' from mother tongue (without brackets). His explanation is that for a language to be someone's mother tongue, the speaker has to learn it at a young age and consider it their first language. However, 'mother tongue' is a language acquired aiming full proficiency (like a mother tongue) but learned at a later stage. Ideally, a society speaking a language, in his case Ainu, as a 'mother tongue' would gradually evolve into one that learns it as a mother tongue.

standardizing the language and writing textbooks does not take that much time, but prestige is a different story. It is about how people perceive the language, as mentioned earlier by Haarmann: a psychological background.

4.2.2. Uchināguchi and language planning

As mentioned before, *uchināguchi* has been subject to language planning, but mostly with the intentions to limit and restrict the language. However, this is no longer the case and although language planning is still fairly limited, there are positive examples on various levels: the release of multiple *uchināguchi* textbooks, songs and recorded tales (Appendix B) and novels translated into *uchināguchi* such as Natsume Sōseki's famous *I Am A Cat* (corpus), the implementation of Island Language Day and the existence of a Ryukyu Heritage Language Society (status), and classes and circles in universities – both in Japan and abroad (Chang, 2013) (language-in-education). As prestige is more receptive in nature, examples are less concrete. One can find it in its use in popular culture, for example pop songs or dramas. Examples of the 'Okinawa boom' are singers that are from the islands such as Namie Amuro or those incorporating the islands' music into their own, such as Ryūichi Sakamoto. *'Uchināpop'* is also available at karaoke parlors throughout Japan, often in the category *shimauta*: island songs. The fact that this music became popular with a general audience throughout Japan helped boost the image of *uchināguchi*.

The same strategies Nakagawa (2009) used for Ainu ('mother tongue', contact language and language maintenance situation), can also be applied to *uchināguchi*. To what degree have these strategies been implemented, and how likely are these goals to be achieved? Generally speaking, having lived through an era during which their 'dialect' was heavily stigmatized, older people do not feel very proud speaking *uchināguchi*. Young native speakers are rare, but those who speak it fluently are significantly prouder. Some grew up speaking some *uchināguchi* with their grandparents, and perfected their proficiency at a later age. These semi-native speakers are aware of the decline in speakers and do not just feel pride, but also a sense of duty. Speakers falling into this category that were interviewed for this thesis all led or played a big role in language circles. Second, Japanese people are becoming more positive and accepting towards the language. The image of *uchināguchi* gained a boost because of its inclusion in popular culture, making it 'cool' to be able to

speak it. Younger people from the island would therefore be less hesitant to learn or speak it. Finally, the language maintenance situation is getting better. There are several language circles and classes both within Okinawa prefecture, as well as in other major Japanese cities and outside of Japan. Home study is also possible because of the wide range of textbooks and dictionaries available.

However, there are counterarguments as well. Although the situation is getting better, the reality is that the language use declines. People who think *uchināguchi* is 'cool' might be increasing, but the majority of the Japanese population still regards it as a dialect not worth spending time on. The various language circles all use different books and writing systems, and because of the lack of standardization this will continue to be the case in the foreseeable future. Heinrich also writes that "the most significant obstacle in the way of establishing heritage language education may well be the idea of Japanese forming a homogenous nation" (2011a: 45) and that "the problem is that of nationalism, and the way that language, nation and state have been constructed as an inseparable trinity in Japan" (2011a: 46). In the case of successful revitalizations such as Hawaiian, the language has been granted official status. This, in combination with sufficient corpus and language-in-education planning, has made it easier and more accessible for people to study Hawaiian. Unlike in Japan, Hawaiian language learners will not feel as if they are somehow 'cheating' on their national language, or as if they are making a choice between two identities. To achieve this change in attitude among people on Okinawa will take time, but as in the case of the circle led by Gijs van der Lubbe there are already some results.

5. Conclusion

5.1 "What motives and goals do learners of uchināguchi have and how do they shape the future of the language?"

In this final chapter the research question of this thesis will be answered, which aims to contribute to *uchināguchi* survival. As the question is divided in two parts, the answers will be too. First the motives and goals will be summarized, followed by a prediction of the future of the language. Finally, the answers lead to advice on how to approach the language education of *uchināguchi*.

The motives and goals of those learning *uchināguchi* can be divided into three categories: personal interest, identity and practical use. Personal interest is mostly related to traditional and cultural aspects, such as songs, dance and music, as well as a personal affection for the islands. This is often because of vacations spent in Okinawa. The goals of those within this category are largely connected to these hobbies, such as being able to read lyrics or understanding the history of *uchināguchi* better. Others learn the language to create a sense of identity. This is especially true for those living outside of Okinawa. For these students, the goal is not fluency, but spending time learning something that is unique to their background with others that share the same heritage. In addition, there are those who have practical reasons for learning *uchināguchi*, such as communicating with the older generation. Their goal is to be able to communicate fluently in the language.

These groups all contribute differently to the future of *uchināguchi*. The first group made it clear to have almost no intention of using the language in a real-life setting. It is used as a tool for their hobbies or personal interest, but it is not going to be used outside of that domain. The second group achieves very limited proficiency, as their goal is spending time with the language and their heritage, rather than actually learning it completely. This group will create more awareness, but will barely raise the number of speakers. The third group has actual proficiency as its goal, and is motivated to use *uchināguchi* outside of the classroom. These different perspectives all contribute to the future of the language in

different ways. As mentioned in the second chapter, *uchināguchi* is expected to become completely extinct in 2050 – if nothing is done. What should be done to increase the number of circles, like the ones discussed here?

Ideally, granting it official language status would elevate the status of uchināguchi, and the language would be standardised with one writing system. Although this worked with Hawaiian, because of the unwillingness of the Japanese government and lack of a sense of urgency among the population this is not a realistic scenario for *uchināguchi*. Instead, the focus should be on the language planning variables *language-in-education* and *prestige.* Making it easier to learn the language by increasing classes and training teachers would be a start. Although most of all, the motivation to start learning the language should be increased. Raising its prestige can achieve this, making language learners proud to be able to speak the language somewhat - and be regarded as 'cool' by others. This starts at a grassroots level and we have seen an example at Okinawa University. Another way to make learning *uchināguchi* more accessible is to approach it as a resource, rather than a language. It is currently studied like other foreign languages such as French or English are studied in Japan; with teachers trying to get their students reach full proficiency. However, in reality the goals of students do not match this intention. One student only learns those parts of the language fitting his specific goals related to traditional music, another student concentrates on what is needed to communicate with his grandparents. This makes learning *uchināguchi* easier and more accessible.

To some, this might seem as giving up on ever revitalizing *uchināguchi* to its former glory. However, it is without a doubt that if we continue teaching *uchināguchi* as we do currently, it will disappear. Not enough students are willing to invest time and energy to learn *uchināguchi* as a language, as opposed to English or Chinese. When lowering the bar and making it acceptable for one to only partially understand *uchināguchi*, it will be preserved and continue to live on for future generations. Of course, raising complete and fluent speakers of the language would be preferred, but realistically speaking this is almost impossible. There is also a big chance that by making it easier to learn the language, those who start out knowing a bit of *uchināguchi* will continue learning it up to full proficiency. The focus should be on letting potential learners get in touch with the language, and they

will then learn it to a degree depending on their motivation and goals. We have seen many different reasons to learn the language, and this will continue to be the case. Rather than a handful of fluent speakers, raising *uchināguchi*'s prestige by increasing its speakers in different domains and on different levels will mean the survival of the language.

5.2 Limitations and future research

This study concentrated on three circles, two of which were located outside of Okinawa. It shed light on this group of language learners that has not been studied before. To acquire a more representative and detailed overview of the *uchināguchi* learners, more than three circles are necessary. Furthermore, the visit to the circle in Okinawa lasted only a couple of days. Visiting for a longer time and meeting different people studying the language might have led to a different impression.

It has become clear that those studying on the island are more productive in terms of language revitalization, and therefore future research should focus on these groups. With the conclusion of this thesis in mind, it would be insightful to research how potential learners of *uchināguchi* would respond to classes that shift the focus from 'language' to 'resource'. Additionally, more research is needed on the motives and goals of those in Okinawa wanting to learn *uchināguchi* and those already learning it. As a result, classes specifically catering these needs can be offered and the chances of *uchināguchi* surviving might increase.

References

Armstrong, Timothy. 2013. *"Why Won't You Speak to Me in Gaelic?" Authenticity, Integration, and the Heritage Language Learning Project*. Journal of Language, Identity & Education 5: 40-356.

Bairon, Fija & Patrick Heinrich. 2007. "*Wanne Uchinanchu – I Am Okinawan." Japan, the US and Okinawa's Endangered Languages*. Japan Focus. Available at: http://www.japanfocus.org/-Fija-Bairon/2586 (accessed July 10th 2014).

Baldauf, Richard. 2004. *Issues of Prestige and Image in Language-in-Education Planning in Australia*. Current Issues in Language Planning 4: 376-389.

Bell, Jeanie. 2013. *Language Attitudes and Language Revival/Survival*. Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 4: 399-410.

Bhowmik, Davinder. 2006. *Literature as Public Memory in Contemporary Okinawan Fiction.* In: Kreiner, Joseph (ed.) *Japaneseness versus Ryūkyūanism*. Bonn: Bier'sche Verlagsanstalt.

Blommaert, Jan. 2010. *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, Jan & Ben Rampton. 2011. *Language and Superdiversity*. Diversities 2: 1-21.

Brenzinger, Matthias & Patrick Heinrich. 2013. *The Return of Hawaiian: Language Networks of the Revival Movement*. Current Issues in Language Planning 2: 300-316.

Bunka-chō (Agency of Cultural Affairs). 2014. *Shōmetsu no kiken ni aru hōgen – gengo (Dialects and languages facing the danger of extinction)*. Available at: http://www.bunka.go.jp/kokugo_nihongo/kokugo_sisaku/kikigengo/ (accessed July 10th 2014).

Cadier, Linda & Clare Mar-Molinero. 2012. *Language policies and linguistic super-diversity in contemporary urban societies: the case of the city of Southampton, UK*. Current Issues in Language Planning 3: 149-165.

Chang, Cindy. 2013. *Breathing Life into a Dying Language.* Los Angeles Times. Available at: http://articles.latimes.com/2013/feb/24/local/la-me-okinawan-language-20130225 (accessed July 10th 2014).

Coulmas, Florian. 2005. *Sociolinguistics: The Study of Speakers' Choices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dubinsky, Stanley & William Davies. 2013. Language Conflict and Language Rights: The Ainu, Ryūkyūans, and Koreans in Japan. Japan Studies Review 1: 3-27.

Ethnologue. 2014. *Okinawan, Central*. Available at: http://www.ethnologue.com/language/ryu (accessed July 10th 2014).

Funatsu, Yoshiaki. 1980. *Uchināguchi sabira (Let's speak uchināguchi)*. Naha: Ryūkyū Shinpōsha.

Gottlieb, Nanette. 2005. *Language and Society in Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grenoble, Lenore & Lindsay Whaley. 2006. *Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Haarmann, Harald. 1990. *Language planning in the light of a general theory of language: A methodological framework*. International Journal of the Sociology of Language 86: 103–126.

Hara, Kiyoshi. 2005. *Regional Dialect and Cultural Development in Japan and Europe*. International Journal of the Sociology of Language 175/176: 193-211.

Hayano, Shingo. 2007. *Kokugoka kyōiku ni okeru chiiki gengo kyōiku – hōgen – hyōjungo – kyōtsūgo –* (*A Study on the Regional Dialect in Japanese Language Education – Dialect – Standard Language – Common Language* -). In: Miyazaki Daigaku Kyōiku Bunka Gakubu Kiyō 16: 137-152.

Heinrich, Patrick. 2004. *Language Planning and Language Ideology in the Ryukyu Islands*. Language Policy 3: 153-179.

Heinrich, Patrick. 2011. Difficulties of Establishing Heritage Language Education in Uchinaa. In: Heinrich, Patrick & Christian Galan (Ed.). *Language Life in Japan.* New York: Routledge.

Heinrich, Patrick. 2011. *Ryūkyū rettō ni okeru gengo shifuto* (*The language shift on the Ryukyu archipelago*). In: Heinrich, Patrick & Shin Matsuo (ed). *Higashi-ajia ni okeru gengo fukkō* (Language Revival in East-Asia). Tokyo: Sangensha.

Heinrich, Patrick. 2012. *The Making of Monolingual Japan, Language Ideology and Japanese Modernity*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Heinrich, Patrick. 2013. *Hōgen ronsō: the great Ryukyuan languages debate of 1940*. Contemporary Japan 2: 167-187.

Heinrich, Patrick. 2014, January 23. "Language, Security and Freedom in Okinawa." Lecture, German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo, Japan.

Hinton, Leanne. 2011. *Language Revitalization and language pedagogy: new teaching and learning strategies*. Language and Education 4: 307-318.

Holmes, Janet. 2008. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.

Hook, Glenn & Richard Siddle (ed.) 2003. *Japan and Okinawa, Structure and Subjectivity*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

Itasaka, Gen. 1983. *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*. Tokyo: Kodansha.

Johnstone, Barbara. 2000. *Qualitative Methods in Sociolinguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kuniyoshi, Shinshō. 2014. *Okinawa moji no kakikata (The way to write Okinawa letters). Okinawago Kyōiku Shien Bunko (Okinawan Education Support Archive).* Available at: http://www.wwq.jp/q/mojikakikata/mojikakikata.html (accessed July 10th 2014).

Maher, John. 1997. *Linguistic Minorities and Education in Japan*. Educational Review 2: 115-127.

McEwan-Fujita, Emily. 2010. *Ideology, Affect, and Socialization in Language Shift and Revitalization: The Experiences of Adults Learning Gaelic in the Western Isles of Scotland*. Language in Society 1: 27-64.

Nakagawa, Hiroshi. 2009. *Ainu-go gakushū no mirai ni mukete – kangaekata to annai (Towards the future of Ainu language learning – way of thinking and information). Ainu Seisaku no Arikata ni Kansuru Yūshokusha Kondankai (Dai 5 Kai) Shiryō 2* (Gathering of Employed People Regarding the State of Ainu Policies (5th time) Material 2) 1-11. Available at: http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/ainu/dai5/5siryou.pdf (accessed July 10th 2014).

Nishioka, Satoshi & Osamu Nakahara. 2006. *Uchināguchi no nyūmon - tanoshī uchināguchi (Introduction to uchināguchi - enjoyable uchināguchi*. Tokyo: Hakusuisha.

Okinawa Momojara Daigaku. 2014. *Okinawa Momojara Daigaku no burogu (The blog of Okinawa Momojara Daigaku).* Available at: http://ameblo.jp/momojara/ (accessed May 14th 2014).

Okinawaken Bunka Kankō Supōtsu-bu (Okinawan Bureau for Culture, Tourism and Sports). 2013. *Shimakutuba Fukyū Suishin Jigyō – Chōsa Kekka (Island language spread promotion project – questionnaire results).*

Olthuis, Marja-Liisa, Suvi Kivelä & Tove Skutnabb-Kangas. 2013. R*evitalizing Indigenous Languages: How to Recreate a Lost Generation.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Ōtsuki, Noriko. 2011. *Uchinā-raifu in Tōkyō 31: Dentō no Uchināguchi wo tanoshimi nagara manaberu 'okinawago wo hanasu kai' (Studying while enjoying traditional uchināguchi 'Okinawan speaking association')*. In: Shima He 1: 78.

Read, Zachary. 2011. *Number of speakers of Central Okinawan*. Available at: http://www.jlect.com/downloads/Number-of-Central-Okinawan-Speakers.pdf (accessed

July 10th 2014).

Ryukyu Shimpo. 2013. *Okinawan Pronuncation Added in Kumiodori play script*. Available at: http://english.ryukyushimpo.jp/2013/12/01/12381/ (accessed May 14th 2014).

Sallabank, Julia. 2010. *The Role of Social Networks in Endangered Language Maintenance and Revitalization: The Case of Guernésiais in the Channel Islands*. Anthropological Linguistics 2: 184-205.

Sallabank, Julia. 2013. *Can Majority Support Save an Endangered Language? A Case Study of Language Attitudes in Guernsey*. Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 4: 332-347.

Shimoji, Michinori & Thomas Pellard (ed). 2010. *An Introduction to Ryukyuan Languages*. Tokyo: ILCAA.

Snyder-Frey, Alicia. 2013. *He kuleana kō kākou: Hawaiian-language Learners and the Construction of (Alter)Native Identities*. Current Issues in Language Planning 2 : 231-243.

STV Radio. 2014. *Ainu-go Rajio Kōza (Ainu Language Radio Lectures)*. Available at: http://www.stv.ne.jp/radio/ainugo/index.html (accessed July 10th 2014).

Tsai, Shih-shan Henry. 1996. *The Eunuchs in the Ming Dynasty*. New York: SUNY Press.

Tsunamiko, Satoko. 2000. *Ryūkyū hōgengaku kamoku no kyōiku mokuhyō o saguru* (*Investigating the educational goals of classes in Ryukyu-dialect*). In: Okinawa Daigaku Kiyō 17: 93-101.

Tsunoda, Tasaku. 2005. *Trends in Linguistics: Language Endangerment and Language Revitalization*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Uemura, Yukio. 2003. *The Ryūkūan Language*. Kyoto: Nakanishi.

UNESCO. 2009. *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*. UNESCO. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/culture/languages-atlas/index.php (accessed May 14th 2014).

Warner, Sam. 2001. The Movement to Revitalize Hawaiian Language and Culture. In: Leanne Hinton & Ken Hale (Ed.). *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Yamauchi, Lois, Jo-Anne Lau-Smith & Rebecca Luning. 2000. *Teaching in a Hawaiian Context: Educator Perspectives on the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program*. Bilingual Research Journal 4: 385-400.

Yamauchi, Lois, Jo-Anne Lau-Smith & Rebecca Luning. 2008. *Family Involvement in a Hawaiian Language Immersion Program*. The School Community Journal 1: 39-57.

Appendix A

An example page of '*Uchināguchi* Classroom'. Note the use of the newly designed characters.

うちなーぐち・会話の練習９９

対話を通して接尾辞「～苦(ぐり)さん」の使い方を練習しましょう。

・～苦(ぐり)さん：～しにくい。～しがたい。　　例：言(い)ー苦(ぐり)さん：言いにくい。

場面：いつもの勉強会の席で、太郎(たるー)やっちー（45歳）が鶴小(ちるぐぁー)（29歳）に話しかけています。

太郎(たるー)「鶴小(ちるぐぁー)。只今霜月成(たでーましむちぃな)てぃ、なー、やがてぃ師走(しわーし)やさやー。景気(ちーちぇ)ー、宜(ゆた)さみ。」
鶴小(ちるぐぁー)「アベノミクス何(ぬー)ぬくぃーぬんてぃ言(ゆ)しが、暮(く)らし苦(ぐり)さいびーん。」
太郎(たるー)「あんやさ。我(わ)んにんぴーぴーそーんどー。銭(じぬ)ー、使(ちか)いねー、ふぃなゆくとぅ、勉強(ちょー)すしぇー益(ま)しやさ。」
鶴小(ちるぐぁー)「あんやいびーさ。頭(ちぶる)ー、ちゃっさ使(ちか)てぃん、ふぃないびらんやーたい。」
太郎(たるー)「とー。あんしぇー、なーふぃん稽古(ちーく)さな。」

語句：
・やっちー：兄。にいさん。
・何(ぬー)ぬくぃーぬ：何のかの。
・ぴーぴーそーん：困窮している。
・ふぃなゆん：減る。
・ちゃっさ：どれくらい（の数量・程度）。
・とー：（この場面では）さあ。それ。気合を入れる声。
・あんしぇー：そうしたら。
・立(た)ち易(やっ)さん：暮らしやすい。暮らしが楽である。
・あっくすん：しかりつける。

練習：左にある文の動詞を上記例のように「～苦(ぐり)さん」で活用して、右の文を完成させてください。

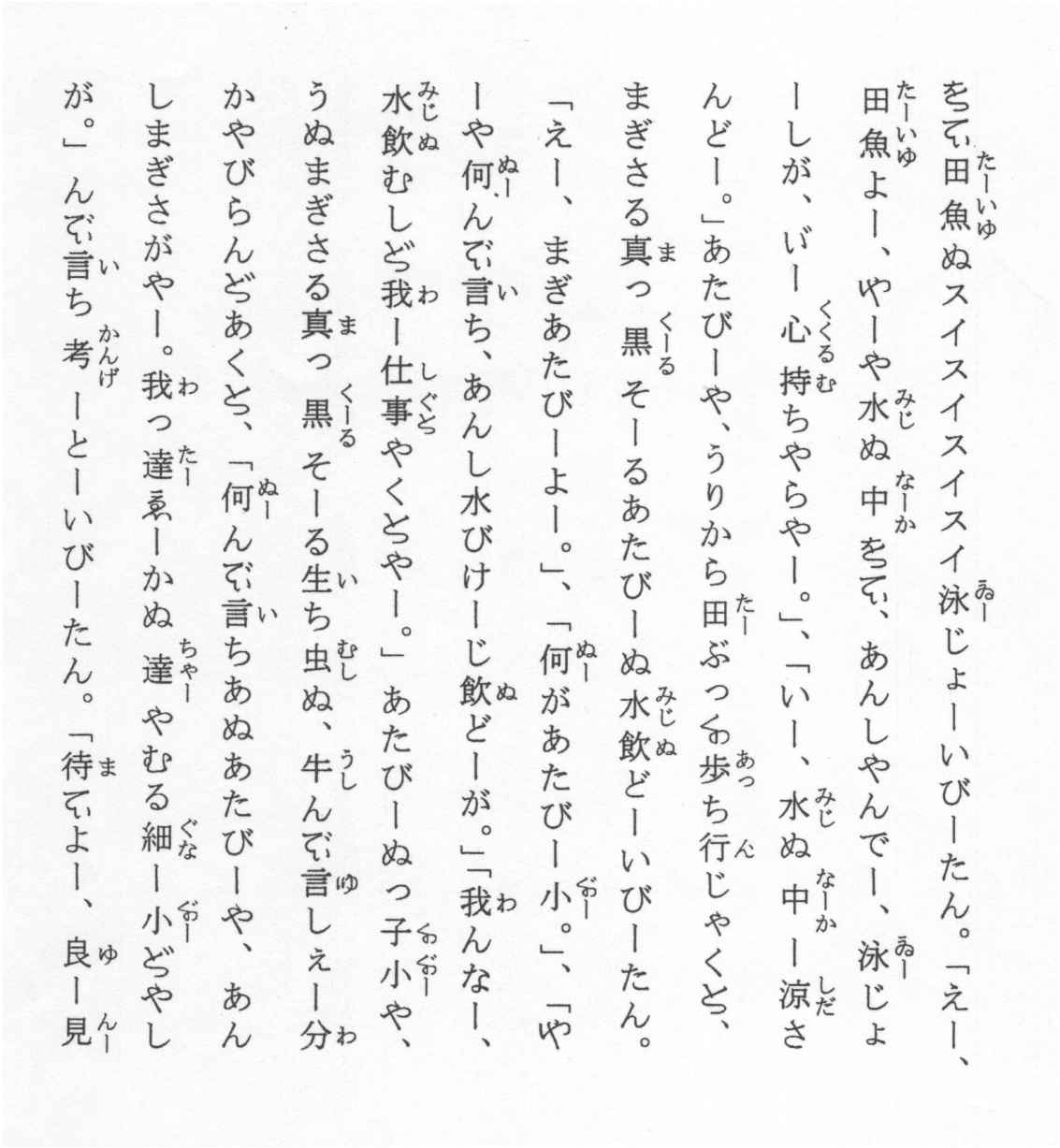
（1）細字(ぐまじー)や、良(ゆ)ー見(み)ーゆん。　　（1'）年寄成(どすいな)たくとぅ
（2）うぬパソコノー扱(あちけ)ー易(やっ)さん。　　（2'）新物買(みーむんこー)たくとぅ
（3）今(なま)ー、いっぺー立(た)ち易(やっ)さん。　　（3'）姑(しど)ぬ乱(んじゃ)り者(むん)成たくとぅ
（4）すとぅみてぃ物食(むんか)だしぇー、忘(わし)たん。　　（4'）童(わらび)そーいにあっくさったし
（5）先生(しんしー)んかえー、言(い)ー易(やっ)さん。　　（5'）親(うや)んかい
（6）くぬステーケー、食(か)み易(やっ)さん　　（6'）歯(はー)ぬ病(や)むくとぅ

１１月１６日２０１３年　沖縄語を話す会「東京」　國吉（眞）

- 101 -

Appendix B

An example page of a folktale on a snake, used in the B-class.



をてぃ田魚ぬスイスイスイスイ泳じょーいびーたん。「えー、田魚よー、やーや水ぬ中をてぃ、あんしやんでー、泳じょーしが、いー心持ちややらやー。」、「いー、水ぬ中ー涼さんどー。」あたびーや、うりから田ぶっくぉ歩ち行じゃくとぅ、まぎさる真っ黒そーるあたびーぬ水飲どーいびーたん。

「えー、まぎあたびーよー。」、「何があたびー小。」、「やーや何んでぃ言ち、あんし水びけーじ飲どーが。」「我んなー、水飲むしどぅ我ー仕事やくとぅやー。」あたびーぬっ子小や、うぬまぎさる真っ黒そーる生ち虫ぬ、牛んでぃ言しぇー分かやびらんどぅあくとぅ、「何んでぃ言ちあぬあたびーや、あんしまぎさがやー。我っ達ぁーかぬ達やむる細ー小どぅやしが。」んでぃ言ち考ーとーいびーたん。「待てよー、良ー見

14 [トゥーユーチ tuuyuuchi] マチグヮー（市場） 応用②

CD 17

＊ウチナーグチの講師・伊狩先生は，今日は那覇に買い物に来ています．

ワンネー　マチグヮーンカイ　カミムン　コーイガ
イチャビーン．
waN-nee machi-gwaa-Nkai kamimuN kooi-ga 'ichabiiN.

クンドゥヌ　ドゥユーベー，ヤマトゥカラ　ウチャクヌ
メンシェービークトゥ，ウチナーホーチュー　ティデーティ
トゥイムチュル　クトゥンカイ　ナイビタン．
kuNdu-nu duyuubee, yamatu-kara 'u-chaku-nu meNsheebii-kutu,
'uchinaa-hoochuu tideeti tuimuchuru kutu-Nkai naibitaN.

チューヤ　コーユル　ムンヌ　ウフォーク　アイビークトゥ
マチシヌ　コーセツイチバンカイ　イチャビラ．
chuu-ya kooyuru muN-nu 'uhwooku 'aibii-kutu
machishi-nu koosetsu'ichiba-Nkai 'ichabira.

マチグヮー machi-gwaa［名詞］　市場．
カミムン kamimuN［名詞］　食べ物．
クンドゥ kuNdu［名詞］今度．今年．
ドゥユーベー duyuubee　←ドゥユービ〈土曜日〉＋ヤ
ウチャク 'u-chaku［名詞］　お客．
ホーチュー hoochuu［名詞］　料理．
●ティデーユン tideeyuN［動詞］　ごちそうする．
●トゥイムチュン tuimuchuN［動詞］もてなす．とりもつ．
ウフォーク 'uhwooku　多く．
マチシ machishi［地名］　牧志．那覇市の地名．

マジェー　クーブカラ　コーイビーン．
majee kuubu-kara kooibiiN.

クーブトゥ　カチューブシェー　ワシテーナイビラン．
kuubu-tu kachuubushee washitee-naibiraN.

ヤサ！　ソーミン　コーリワドゥ　ヤサ．
ya-sa! soomiN koori-wadu ya-sa.
ウリカラ，ヤシェーン　コーリワドゥ　ヤルムン．
'urikara, yashee-N koori-wadu yaru-muN.

アンダーギー　ヤレー　ッンムトゥ　ゴーヤー　ヤイビーンヤー．
'aNdaagii yaree 'Nmu-tu gooyaa yaibiiN-yaa.

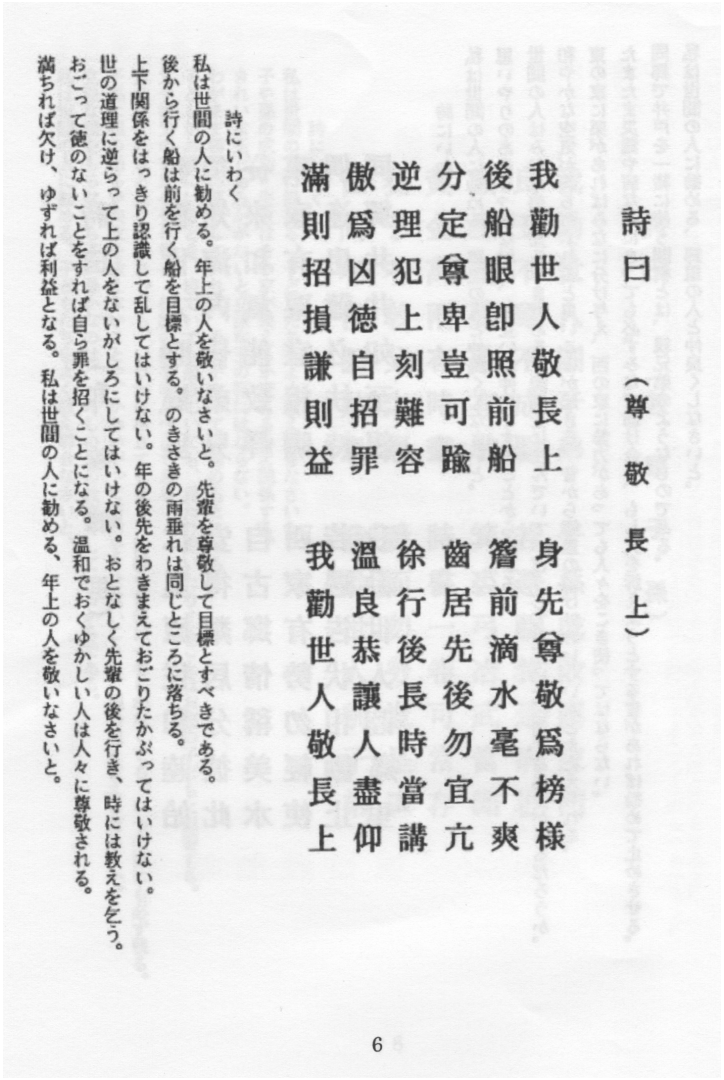
「シンシータイ，チューヤ　ナーベーラーヌ　ウフォーク
アイビーシガ，チャー　ヤイビーガ？」
"shiNshii-tai, chuu-ya naabeeraa-nu 'uhwooku
'aibii-shiga, chaa yaibii-ga?"

「アイ，アン　ヤサ！
トートー，ッンブシー　ッシ　カミワドゥ　ヤサ」
" 'ai, 'aN ya-sa! tootoo, 'Nbushii sshi kami-wadu ya-sa"

マジェー majee　まずは．←マジ maji〈まず〉＋ヤ
クーブ kuubu［名詞］　昆布．
●カチューブシ kachuubushi［名詞］　鰹節．
●ワシユン washiyuN［動詞］　忘れる．
ワドゥ wadu［助詞］　こそ．動詞の基本語幹＋ i について強調を表わす．
ヤシェー　yashee［名詞］　野菜．
アンダーギー 'aNdaagii［名詞］　油で揚げた料理．天ぷら．＜油揚げ
ヤレー yaree　～であれば．
ッンム 'Nmu［名詞］　芋．サツマイモ．
タイ tai［接尾語］　語の後に付けて丁寧の意味を添える．女性が使う．男性が使う場合はサイ．

Appendix D

One of the teachings read out loud by the members of *Momojara Daigaku*. The classical Chinese text is on the right, the modern Japanese translation is on the left.



詩曰（尊敬長上）

我勸世人敬長上　身先尊敬爲榜様
後船眼卽照前船　簷前滴水毫不爽
分定尊卑豈可踰　歯居先後勿宜亢
逆理犯上刻難容　徐行後長時當講
傲爲凶徳自招罪　溫良恭讓人盡仰
滿則招損謙則益　我勸世人敬長上

詩にいわく

私は世間の人に勧める。年上の人を敬いなさいと。先輩を尊敬して目標とすべきである。
後から行く船は前を行く船を目標とする。のきさきの雨垂れは同じところに落ちる。
上下関係をはっきり認識して乱してはいけない。年の後先をわきまえておごりたかぶってはいけない。
世の道理に逆らって上の人をないがしろにしてはいけない。おとなしく先輩の後を行き、時には教えをこう。
おごって徳のないことをすれば自ら罪を招くことになる。温和でおくゆかしい人は人々に尊敬される。
満ちれば欠け、ゆずれば利益となる。私は世間の人に勧める、年上の人を敬いなさいと。

6

Own translation: “The poem says: This is what I recommend the people. Respect those older than you. Your goal should be to respect your seniors. The boats coming from behind target those in front of them. The raindrops of the rooftops fall on the same place. You have to recognize the hierarchy and not disturb it. Bear in mind those who are older than you, and do not flaunt your successes. Do not go against the reason and make light of those higher than you. Go obediently behind your seniors, you will learn through time. If you are haughty and do things without virtue, you are asking to be punished from within yourself. Gentle and refined people are respected by others. If you are arrogant you will get splintered, if you are humble you will be blessed. I recommend the people to respect those older than you.”

Appendix E

This hand-out from *Uchināguchi no Shūtoku* explains homework (a composition on their progress of learning the language) in both Japanese and *uchināguchi.*

うちなーぐち作文

今学期ぬ　うわいぎさいびーん。うちなーぐち　びんちょー　しはじみてぃ　やがてぃ　よんかげつ　ないびーん。うちなーぐちぬ　文法ぬ　基礎　うびてぃ、なー　いるいる　いーゆーすんねー　ないびたん。なーだ　さちぬ　なげーさんでぃ　うむいる　はじ　やいびーしが、なまから　語彙　なー　いひぐゎー　うびーねー、「うちなーぐち　ないん」でぃ　いちん　しまびーん。

今学期が終わりそうです。沖縄語を勉強しはじめてもうすぐ四ヶ月になります。沖縄語の文法の基礎を覚えて、もういろいろと言えるようになりました。まださきが長いと思うかもしれませんが、今から語彙をもう少し覚えれば、「沖縄語ができる」と言ってもいいです。

あんしぇー、今学期ぬ　「うちなーぐち習得」ぬ　まとぅみとぅし　作文　かちんじゃびら。作文　かちゅしぇー、どぅーぬ　いーぶさし　うちなーぐちし　ちゃーし　ちてーいぶさがやーんでぃ　かんげーいる　きっかけ　ないんでぃ　うむいびーん。いひぐゎー　むちかさが　すら　わかいびらんしが、ちばてぃ　かちんじゃびら。

そこで、今学期の「うちなーぐち習得」のまとめとして作文を書いてみましょう。作文を書くことは、自分の言いたいことを沖縄語でどう伝えたいか考えるきっかけになると思います。少し難しいかもしれませんが、頑張って書いてみましょう。

1．作文ぬ　テーマー

「四日月めーに　ぬーんち　うちなーぐち　びんちょー　せーやーんでぃ　うむたが」

「わったー　びんちょーくゎいに　参加し　ぬーぬ　びんちょー　なたが」

「なまから　うちなーぐちにちーてぃ　ぬー　びんちょー　しーぶさが」

とぅか。くまから　てぃーち　いらでぃ　かちん　しまびーしが、むるにちーてぃ　かちん　しまびーん。

1. 作文のテーマ

「四ヶ月前にどうして沖縄語を勉強しようと思ったか」

「わったー勉強会に参加して何が勉強になったか」

「これからうちなーぐちについて何を勉強したいか」

などなど。ここから一つを選んで書いてOK、全部について書いてもOK

2. 作文ぬ　ながさ

1分ー2分ぬ　えーだうぅてぃ　発表　ないる　さくし　しまびーん。

2. 作文の長さ

1分ー3分以内で発表できる程度の長さでOK

Appendix F

This hand-out from *Uchināguchi no Shūtoku* lists vocabulary in *uchināguchi*, Japanese and *uchināyamatuguchi*.

うちなーやまとぅぐち

ちゃーいー	ずっと言っている	とぅーち　あびとーん
ちゃー＋連用形 例：ちゃーみーしてた	ずっと何かをする	ちゃー＋連用形（うちなーぐちの！） 例：「ちゃーんじーそーたん」
あんまさい	面倒くさい	かしまさん 例：「くぬ　しくちぇー　かしまさぬよー」 注意：「あんまさん」は「体の具合が悪い」という意味。 例：「あんまさぬ、学校んかいいからん」
～ちょーん	している	動詞によってかわる。「動詞の活用」で調べてください。
にりー	あきる	にりーん
くるす	ぼこぼこにする、なぐる	くるすん
しかぶ しかばす	びっくりする びっくりさせる	しかぶん しかばすん
～じらー 例：やー先生じらーか？！	～のつもりか？	～やるちむいるやるい？ 例：いゃーや　しんしー　やるちむいる　やるい？！
形容詞＋～さよ 例：おもしろさよ	強調	～さぬよー 例：「うむっさぬよー」
動詞・形容詞の連体形＋ばーよ 例：今友達と電話しているばーよ。だから、あとからご飯食べる。	動詞・形容詞の連体形＋んだよ・のよ	連体形＋ばーよー 例：「なま　どぅしとぅ　電話そーる　ばーよー。あんすくとぅ、あとぅから　むぬ　かむん」
～ば？	～のか？	肯否質問：連体形＋ばーなー・ばーい？ 「やるばーい？」（そうなの？） 疑問詞質問：連体形＋ばーが？ 「ぬー　やる　ばーが？」（なんなんだい？）
しに、でーじ、しか	とても	いっぺー、じこー、でーじな PS:「でーじ」は「大変」という意味。「でーじなとーん」
からびー	裸足	からびさー
やー、やったー	お前、お前ら	いゃー、いったー
わったー	私達	わったー
うすまさ	とても	いっぺー、じこー PS:「うすまさ」は「そんなに多く」という意味。 例：「うすまさ　こーてーっさーやー」（そんなに多く買ったんだね）
るまんぎる	混乱してパニックする	どぅまんぐぃーん
ちびらさ	カッコいい	ちびらさん
～あんに？、～やんに？	～じゃないか？	～や　あらに？ 動詞の「ん」＋「や　あらに」＝「のー　あらに」 例：「論文　かちょーのー　あらに？」
やっけー	とても	いっぺー、じこー