

**Contact and obsolescence in a diaspora variety of Japanese:
The case of Palau in Micronesia***

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Abstract:

This paper presents a variationist analysis of the Palauan Japanese negation system with two specific aims. The first aim is to highlight that the variety of Japanese spoken on Palau appears to be a koine which shows many of the characteristics of contact varieties demonstrated by Trudgill in his 1986 book *Dialects in Contact*. The second aim is to examine some methodological and theoretical issues involved in language death studies. We ask the following questions: With what should the use of

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a dying language (Palauan Japanese in this case) be compared? - with the formal standard, the informal non-standard Japanese of the mainland or with the fluent spoken Japanese of older speakers in Palau? During the process of linguistic obsolescence, are there any differences in the *route of decay* between an informally *acquired* language (Palauan Japanese in this case) and a formally *learnt* language (Japanese by American L2 learners, for example)? In order to address these questions, our analyses comprise comparisons of the Japanese spoken by (i) rememberers and semi-speakers in Palau, (ii) fluent speakers in Palau, as well as (iii) Japanese speakers in Japan and in doing so we contrast the attrition patterns of informally acquired Palauan Japanese with those of formally learnt Japanese.

Our results highlight the necessity of comparing rememberers' and semi-speaker language use with fluent speaker language from the same community, and not with fluent speaker language in a geographically distant community. In order to understand the Palauan Japanese negation system, we also need to take account of the fact that Palauan Japanese, as a diaspora Japanese, shows characteristics of the koineisation that emerged as a result of the contact of different dialects of Japanese on the islands in the first half of the 20th century.

1. Introduction

This paper is a report on our ongoing study of Japanese dialect contact and subsequent language obsolescence in the Republic of Palau in the Western Pacific. Palau was occupied by Japan between 1914 and 1945, and subsequently by the United States between 1945 and 1994. Japanese rule led both to mass migration to the Palauan islands by Japanese workers and considerable Japanese-Palauan bilingualism on the part of the native Palauans. The arrival of American colonisers in 1945, however, halted the expansion of a Japanese speech community, and introduced English as the ‘high’ language of colonial administration.

Our paper has two aims: firstly to highlight that the variety of Japanese spoken on Palau appears to be a koine which shows many of the characteristics of contact varieties demonstrated by Trudgill in his 1986 book *Dialects in Contact*. Secondly, since the US introduced English after the Second World War, the Japanese-speaking population of Palau has become older and many middle-aged speakers are only semi-speakers or rememberers. This paper therefore introduces our studies of the obsolescence of this Palauan koine. Firstly, we will briefly outline the background of Palau and its demographic history. We will then show how our empirical investigations of Palauan Japanese have shed light on the extent both of koineisation and of language death.

2. Background

The Palau Islands are an archipelago located in the Western Caroline region of the Pacific, with a population of 17,000 (Office of Planning and Statistics 1997, Table 1). As Table 1 shows, as the result of a century of colonial domination by Spain, Germany, Japan and the US, the Austronesian indigenous language, Palauan, has come into prolonged contact with other non-local languages. During the Japanese and the US colonial eras, their languages, namely, Japanese and English, were enforced as official languages in Palau. Even after its independence in 1994, English has remained as the official language along with the indigenous language, Palauan, while the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language has been set up in Palauan schools. Thus, contemporary Palau provides an interesting diglossic situation, where English replaced Japanese as a high language, while Palauan remains as a low language.

However, historical records reveal that despite the fact that formal education taught Palauans standard Japanese, islanders had far greater exposure to *non-standard Japanese dialects* in their daily lives. Notwithstanding a lack of research on this issue, in 1942, Asahara (p101-2) maintained that ‘due to standard Japanese teaching in schools, the effects that the various dialects spoken by the Japanese residents in Palau had upon the Palauans’ Japanese appear to be minimal’.

Table 1. Language contact history in Palau

<i>Period</i>	<i>Language in contact</i>	<i>Factors engendering contact</i>	<i>Administration</i>
Pre-1885	(British) English	Shipwreck Discovery of the “new world”	Belau
1885 – 1899 (14 years)	Spanish	Christianity	Spanish administration
1899 – 1914 (15 years)	German	Commercialism Christianity Militarism	German administration
1914 – 1945 (30 years)	Japanese	Imperialism Commercialism Militarism	Japanese administration as Japan’s Mandatory authorised until 1933 by the League of Nations
1945 – 1994 (49 years)	(American) English	Politics Militarism	American administration as the US Trust Territories of Pacific Islands authorised by the United Nations
1994 to Present Day	Mainly English and Japanese	Politics Commercialism Cultural Hegemony	The Republic of Palau (Belau)

However, she (1942: 101-2) additionally suggested that ‘any dialect speakers of Japanese should use standard Japanese to islanders, in order to enable them to learn standard Japanese’. This, of course, suggests that there *were* non-standard dialect speakers in Palau.

Table 2. Population of Palauans and Japanese immigrants in Palau¹

Year	Palauans	Japanese and Okinawans			Total
		Male	Female	Total	
1922	4,720	409	176	585	5,323
1923	5,770	502	209	711	6,500
1924	5,717	587	295	873	6,608
1925	5,305	709	406	1,115	6,435
1926	5,763	874	502	1,376	7,153
1930	6,009	1,266	812	2,078	8,102
1935	6,230	4,325	2,228	6,553	12,798
1937	6,509	10,977	6,029	17,006	23,584
1940	6,587	15,320	8,447	23,767	30,385
1941	6,514	15,045	8,935	23,980	30,511

Sources: Annual Reports by South Seas Government (1928; 1939; 1941; 1942)

¹ The South Seas Government used two labels to classify ethnic groups in Micronesia; ‘邦人 *hojin*’ (literally meaning ‘Japanese’) and ‘島民 *tomin*’ (literally meaning ‘islanders’). *Hojin* includes Japanese, Koreans and Taiwanese, whereas *tomin* consists of Chamorro and *Kanaka*. Chamorros refers to the genetic admixture of Spanish and natives in the Marianas, while the other natives in Micronesia, including Palauans, were identified as *Kanaka*. Therefore, the population of ‘Palauans’ in Table 2 includes both *Kanakas* and Chamorros, while the number of ‘Japanese and Okinawans’ includes Koreans and Taiwanese. In 1926, 5 Koreans, 24 Chamorros were included; in 1939, 571 Koreans, 1 Taiwanese and 20 Chamorros were included; in 1940, 1189 Koreans, 2 Taiwanese, 248 Chamorros were included; in 1941, 1,663 Koreans, 3 Taiwanese and 119 Chamorros were counted respectively.

Historical records also suggest that the Japanese period brought about not only formal Japanese education, but also a high degree and frequency of everyday interaction between Japanese and Palauans. Palau had the highest proportion of Japanese immigrants of all the former Japanese territories in Micronesia. Table 2 shows that the massive influx of Japanese immigrants into Palau outnumbered Palauans by an approximate ratio of one to one in 1935, three to one in 1937, and four to one in 1941. What is crucial here is that those Japanese immigrants were mostly civilian manual workers who were fishermen and farmers in Japan. So, when they came to Palau, they worked with Palauans in Japanese enterprises in Palau, and also settled into Palauan residential areas. Due to such a mixed settlement pattern, Palauan children interacted daily with Japanese children. Even before they went to school, they were taught Japanese morals, aspects of Japanese culture, such as Japanese fairy tales with songs, the Japanese language, jingles used for memorising multiplication in mathematics, and so on. Ultimately this contact led to a large number of marriages between the Japanese and Palauans². Thus, the degree and frequency of everyday interaction between Japanese and Palauans was great enough to have brought about a local variety of Japanese in Palau.

Now, the question arises as to what sort of dialects those Japanese

² See Matsumoto 2001 for details.

immigrants brought with them (and which subsequently shaped the new variety that koineised on the islands). Table 3 and Map 1 show the numbers of different Japanese dialect speakers in Palau during the Japanese era. The total number of Japanese immigrants in Table 3 shows that the top five districts from which most immigrants came were Okinawa, Kanto³, Kyushu, Tohoku and Hokkaido. Their dialects may, to some considerable extent, have contributed to the formation of the distinctive variety of Japanese spoken in Palau. We will come back to this point later.

3. Aims of this research

Given the historical demographics of Palau, the aim of this research is to investigate:

- a) the extent to which Palauan-Japanese is a koine; and
- b) if and how it is structurally obsolescing.

4. Data

This project employed a combination of long-term participant observation and the recording of 20 hours of spontaneous conversation from 23 fluent speakers, 10

³ The Kanto district included not only areas surrounding Tokyo but also a number of islands, such as the Ogasawara Islands, which are located between Japan and Micronesia. The figures above therefore contain a number of islanders who were a mixture of European and American ‘sailors and Polynesian and Micronesian women whose language was a modified but probably not creolised English’ (Mühlhäusler and Trew 1996: 380; see Long 2000).

Table 3. Origins of Japanese Immigrants to Palau⁴

Origin in Japan	1926	1938	Total
Hokkaido District	42	1,141	1183
Tohoku District	92	1,133	1225
Kanto District	252	1,782	2034
Tokaido District	124	982	1106
Tosando District	46	210	256
Hokuriku District	77	459	536
Kinki District	98	862	960
Chugoku District	76	355	431
Shikoku District	35	451	486
Kyushu District	305	1,370	1675
Okinawa District	218	8,148	8366

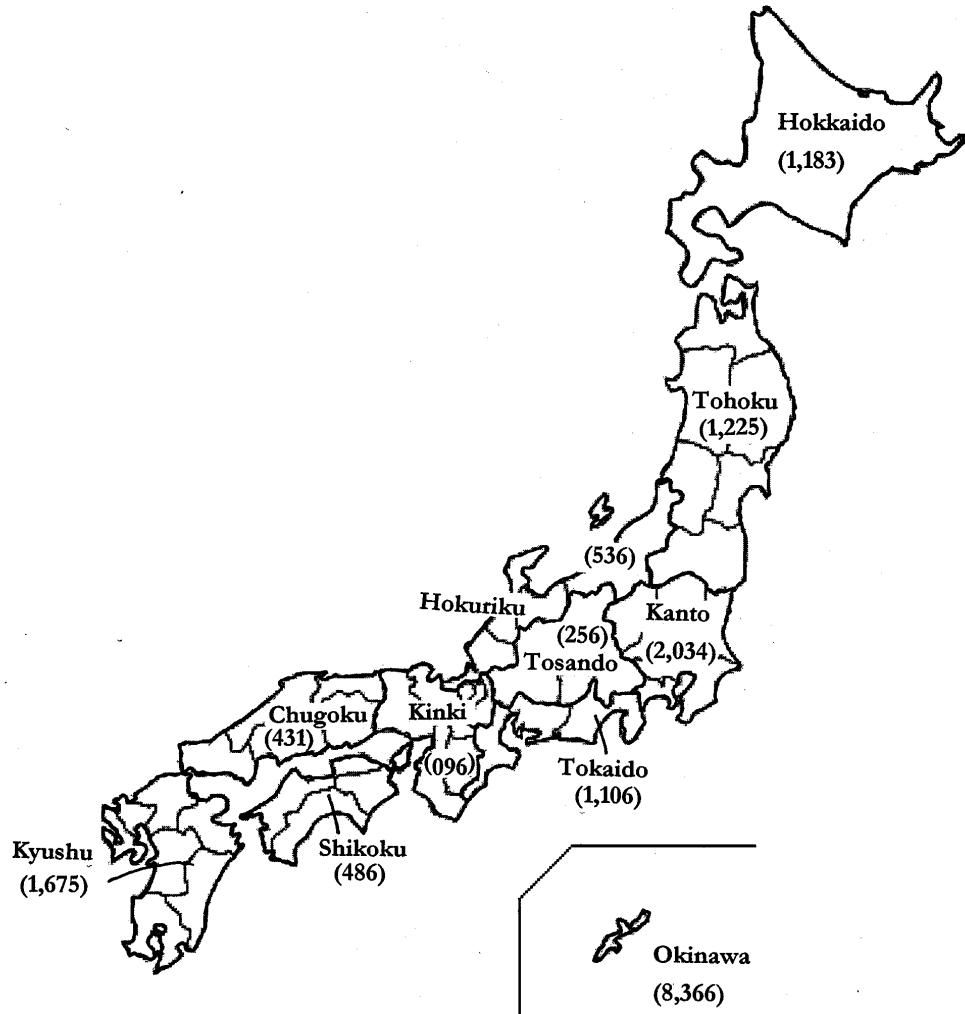
Sources: Annual Reports by South Seas Government (1928; 1939)

semi-speakers and 6 rememberers (see Table 4). ‘Fluent speakers’ are those who were born, brought up, educated and worked under the Japanese administration, and therefore, whose Japanese shows linguistic and sociolinguistic competence.

‘Semi-speakers’ indicate those who were born towards the end of the Japanese era, but received no formal Japanese education, and acquired Japanese through playing with neighbouring Japanese children and other neighbourhood contact for the short time until the end of Japanese rule. Their Japanese shows a reduction in linguistic repertoire and range of usage compared with fluent speakers. They can often

⁴ In addition to the 1926 and 1938 censuses in Table 3, the South Seas Government reports that in 1941 and in 1942, the majority were from Okinawa, Tokyo (in Kanto district), Fukushima (in Tohoku district) and Kagoshima (in Kyushu district). However, exact numbers of Japanese immigrants from each district were not provided.

Map 1. Origins of Japanese immigrants to Palau in 1926 and 1938
(South Seas Government: 1928, 1939)



produce sentences in the language, but show limitations in structure and function.

'Rememberers' refer to those who were born at the very end of Japanese era or the beginning of the US era, and acquired a little Japanese either from Japanese neighbours or from Palauan fluent speakers after the Japanese immigrants had been deported to Japan at the start of the US period of domination. They show very limited ability in the Japanese that they had once heard spoken but had never really learnt.

Table 4. Semi-speakers and rememberers of Japanese sampled in this research

Speaker type	Fluent speakers (Age over 73 in 2000)	Semi-speakers (Age 67-58 in 2000)	Rememberers (Age 60-52 in 2000)
Male	11	4	2
Female	12	6	4
Total	23	10	6

The linguistic variable we will discuss here is *negation* – considering the linguistic constraints of predicate category (verbs, nouns, nominal adjectives and adjectives) and tense (non-past and past) and the stylistic constraint of formality (formal and informal) – but our research will be extended to look at other variables in due course. In Japanese, negators are bound morphemes suffixed to the element being negated. This negated predicate can be a verb (V), noun (N), nominal adjective

Table 5. Negation Patterns in Standard Japanese (from Hayashi 1995: 115; Hansen 1999b: 144)⁵

		Informal		Formal			
Non-past	V-		nai	V-		masen	
					nai	desu	
	N-	dewa/ja	nai	N-	dewa/ja	arimasen	
					dewa/ja	nai	desu
	NA	dewa/ja	nai	NA-	dewa/ja	arimasen	
					dewa/ja	nai	desu
	A-	ku	nai	A-	ku	arimasen	
					ku	nai	desu
Past	V-		nakatta	V-		masen	deshita
						nakatta	desu
	N-	dewa/ja	nakatta	N-	dewa/ja	nakatta	deshita
					dewa/ja	nakatta	desu
	NA-	dewa/ja	nakatta	NA-	dewa/ja	nakatta	deshita
					dewa/ja	nakatta	desu
	A-	ku	nakatta	A-	ku	arimasen	deshita
					ku	nakatta	desu

(NA) or adjective (A). Japanese has an extensive negative morpheme system⁶,

classified according to tense and formality (see Table 5). Japanese verbal morphology

⁵ There seems to be disagreement on which conjugational ending form of nominal adjectival and/or nominal negations should be regarded as ‘standard’ or ‘non-standard’ amongst Japanese linguists. Hayashi (1995) initially examined ‘-**dewa**-nai’ only in her analysis, and then in her recent paper in 1999 and in Hansen's paper in 1999b, they both examined both ‘-**dewa**-nai’ and ‘-**ja**-nai’ forms. Tsujimura (1996: 137) uses ‘-**ja**-nai’ in her example (see Table 6), while the National Language Research Institute (1993b: 205) treats ‘-**de**-nai’ as the standard.

⁶ There is a disagreement about what the term ‘negator’ refers to amongst Japanese linguists depending on their theoretical analyses of the language. For instance, in the construction *A-ku-nai-desu*, some Japanese linguists have analysed *ku* as a separate morpheme, inflector of the A predicate, rather than as part of the negator. Other linguistics, such as Hayashi (1995, 1999) and Hansen (1999b) adopt the term ‘negator’ as incorporating all of these morphemes. This study follows the methods of Hayashi (1995, 1999) and Hansen (1999b).

is agglutinative, with inflectional suffixes marking tense, aspect, voice, mood, negation, causation, conditionality etc. Japanese ‘nominal adjectives’ are different from ‘adjectives’ in that nominal adjectives take the same conjugational endings as nouns, as Table 6 illustrates.

Table 6. Negation of Standard Japanese nouns, nominal adjectives and adjectives (Tsujimura 1996: 137)

	Noun		Nominal adjective		Adjective	
	‘hon’ (book)		‘kirei’ (pretty)		‘ookii’ (big)	
Non-past	hon	da	kirei	da	ooki	i
Non-past neg.	hon	ja-nai	kirei	ja-nai	ooki	ku-nai
Past	hon	datta	kirei	datta	ooki	katta
Past neg.	hon	ja-nakatta	kirei	ja-nakatta	ooki	ku-nakatta
Tentative	hon	daroo	kirei	daroo	ooki	i-daroo

5. Koineisation

Mufwene (2001), in his elaboration of the so-called **Founder Principle**, has suggested that it is the founding settlers of a community that shape the dialect for subsequent migrants. That is to say, it is not necessarily overall numbers that count, but the numbers and proportions of the *earlier* group of migrants. Applying this to Palau, Table 3 and Map 1 shown earlier both need to be rearranged. Table 7 and Map 2 illustrate the number of early Japanese immigrants to the island according to dialect division. It reveals that even though Okinawa district *ends up* being the largest sender

Table 7. Number of Japanese immigrants in Palau according to dialect divisions⁷

Dialect division by Hirayama (1986: 41) ⁸	Origin in Japan depending on district	1926	1938
Eastern dialect	Hokkaido District	556 Eastern dialect speakers	5248 Eastern dialect speakers
	Tohoku District		
	Kanto District		
	Tokaido District		
	Tosando District		
Western dialect	Hokuriku District	286 Western dialect speakers	2127 Western dialect speakers
	Kinki District		
	Chugoku District		
	Shikoku District		
Kyushu dialect	Kyushu District	305 Kyushu dialect speakers	1,370 Kyushu dialect speakers
Ryukyu dialect	Okinawa District	218 Ryukyu dialect speakers	8,148 Ryukyu dialect speakers

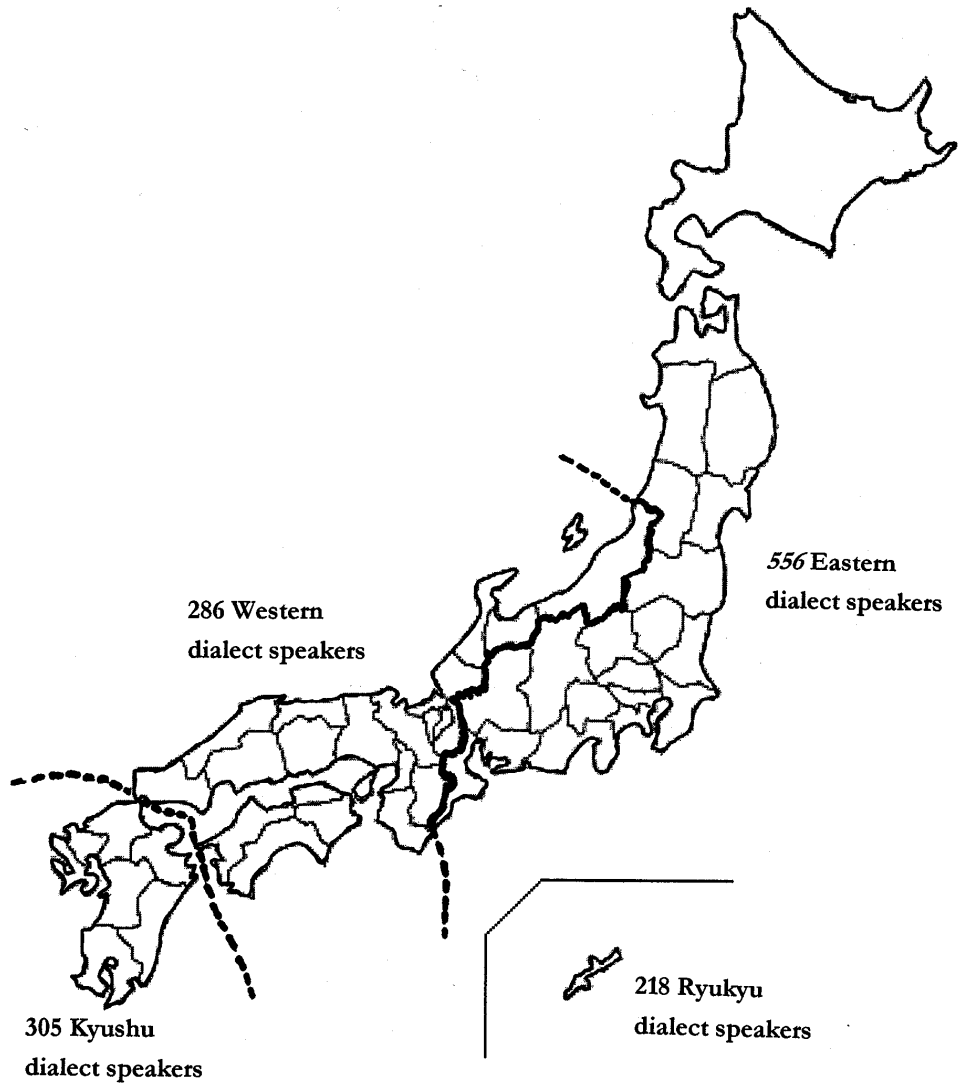
Sources: Annual Reports by South Seas Government (1928; 1939)

of migrants overall, the early settlement in 1926 was dominated by the *Eastern dialect speakers of Japanese*. This leads us to believe that features of the Eastern dialects are likely to have become dominant in Palau.

⁷ We are aware that various dialect divisions have been proposed for different aspects of the language. Accentual patterns and vocabulary items each provide different dividing lines. However, Hirayama's (1986: 41) dialect division in Table 7 and Map 2 draws from the pioneering work of Tojo (1954), which is considered to be 'one of the most representative attempts at dialect groupings' (Shibatani 1990: 187). It is also more relevant and useful to our study in that his dialect divisions are made 'mainly on the basis of phonological and syntactic patterns' (Hirayama 1986: 40).

⁸ According to Hirayama's (1986: 6) dialect divisions, the Hachijo and Aoga Islands, which are located to the south of Tokyo, constitute the Hachijo dialect. In the annual reports by South Seas Government, however, these dialect speakers are included in Kanto district.

Map 2. Number of Japanese immigrants in Palau according to dialect division in 1926
(South Seas Government 1926)



There are two pieces of evidence to support this belief. The first evidence from our Palauan data is the *levelling of verbal negations*, such as *-nai* vs. *-n* for non-past tense and *-nakatta* vs. *-nanda* for past tense. The dialect survey conducted in 1906 by the Japanese Language Research Committee seems to be particularly useful here, since it provides information on the variety of Japanese that migrants from Japan spoke in their home regions before their arrival in Palau. Table 8 summarises their findings⁹.

Table 8. Regional variation in non-past and past negators in Japan in 1906

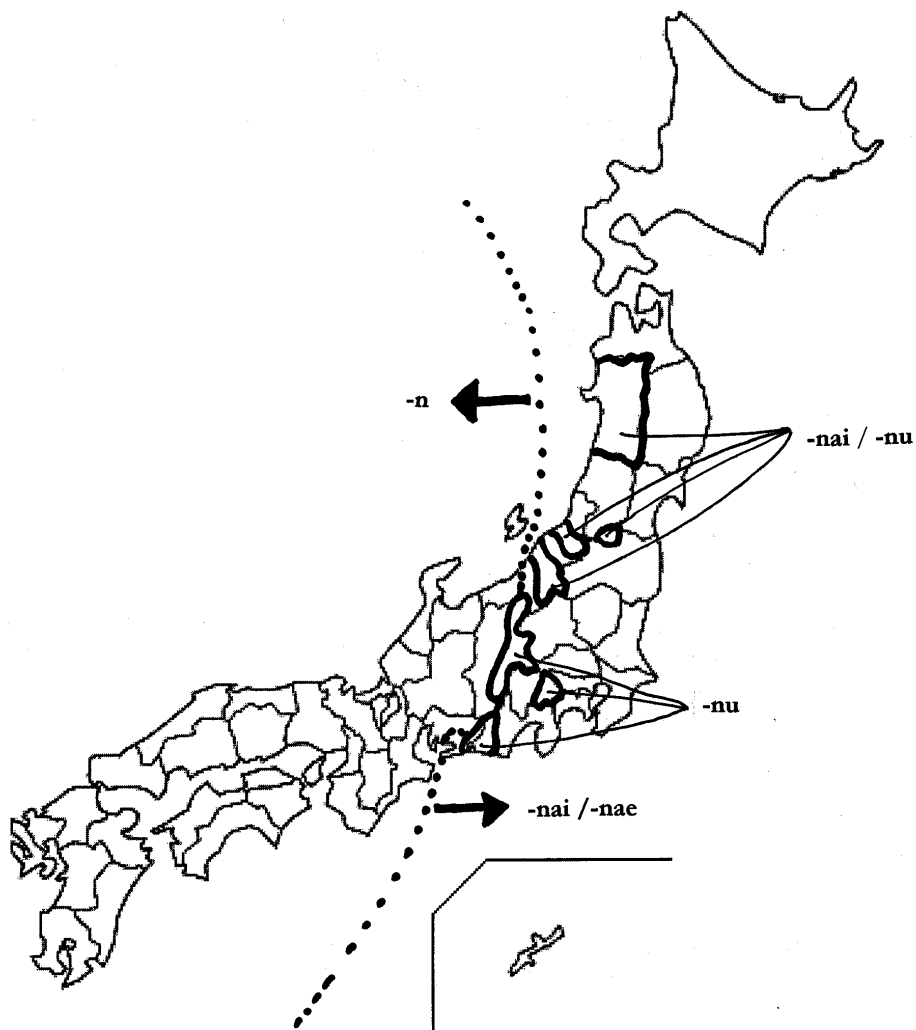
	Eastern dialect	Western dialect	Kyushu dialect
Non-past	<i>-nai</i> and <i>-nae</i> <i>-nai</i> and <i>-nu</i>	<i>-n</i>	
Past	<i>-nakatta</i> <i>-nkatta</i> <i>-nakatta</i> and <i>-nanda</i>	<i>-nanda</i> <i>-nakatta</i> and <i>-nanda</i> <i>-zatta</i>	<i>-ndatta</i> <i>-njatta</i> <i>-zatta</i> and <i>-njatta</i>

Source: Japanese Language Research Committee (1906)

Map 3 reveals that in 1906 there was regional variation in the non-past tense negator, with a clear isogloss between the Eastern and Western dialects. In the Eastern dialect-speaking region, the widest use of *-nai* and *-nae* or some use of *-nai* and *-nu* were observed. In the Western dialect-speaking region as well as the Kyushu region, *-n* appeared to be the only choice for non-past negation.

⁹ Unfortunately, no information on use of negation in Hokkaido and Okinawa districts is provided.

Map 3. Regional variation in non-past negators: *-nai* vs. *-n*
(Japanese Language Research Committee 1906: 5)



Map 4 uncovers that in 1906 there was regional variation in the past-tense negator too, again with a clear division between the Eastern and Western dialects. In the Eastern dialect-speaking region, **-nakatta** was predominantly used with some other variants, such as **-nkatta**. In the Western dialect-speaking region, **-nanda** was the majority form, although some other variants, such as **-zatta**, was used in Shikoku and Chubu districts. This time, the Kyushu dialect-speaking region seems to have had its own distinct variations, such as **-ndatta** and **-njatta**.

Although there is no readily available data on what Ryukyu dialect in Okinawa was like in the early 1900s, the texts of tape-recorded conversations in Ryukyu dialects by the National Language Research Institute (1982) seem to be useful, since the subjects are in the same age-range as those who emigrated from Okinawa to Palau (and their children). Distinct variants of negation are found: e.g., the negators **-nu** and **-ji** for non-past verbs; the negator **-aran** for non-past nouns and nominal adjectives; and **-fa-noon** for non-past adjectives.

As Table 9 illustrates, our Palauan data shows the predominant use of **-nai** for non-past and **-nakatta** for past, both of which were the most common negator forms in the Eastern dialect-speaking region in 1906. There are only a few occurrences of **-n** or **-nu** by fluent speakers, and semi-speakers and remembers did not use them at all.

Map 4. Regional variation in past negators: *-nakatta* vs. *-nanda*
(Japanese Language Research Committee 1906: 8)

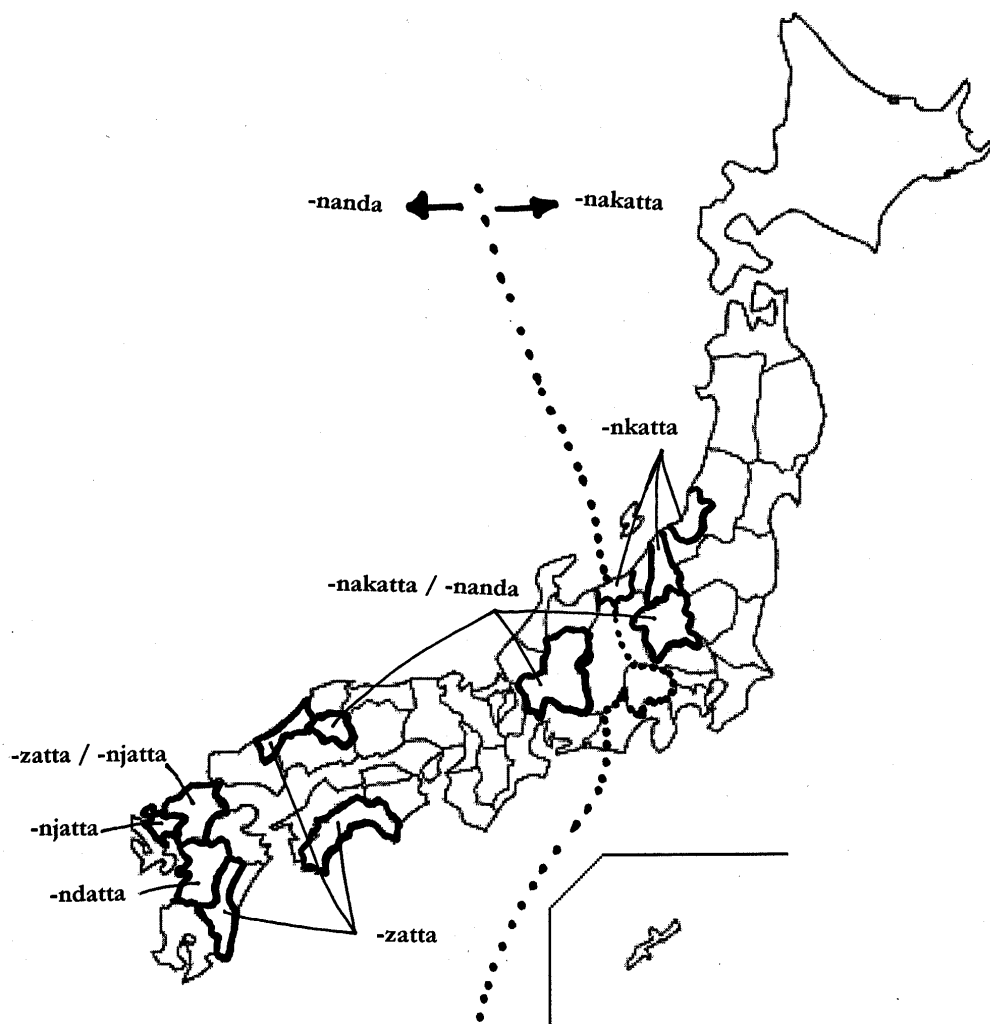


Table 9. Palauan Japanese verbal negation strategies classified according to dialect area, negation type and speaker competence

Speaker type	Morphologically negated		Pragmatically negated
	Standard/Eastern form (which are identical)	Western form	
Fluent speaker (Tokens: 684)	N=654 (95.61%) V- nai (non-past) V- nakatta (past)	N=15 (2.19%) V- n , V- nu (non-past) V- nanda (past tense)	N=15 (2.19%)
Semi-speakers (Tokens: 214)	N=203 (94.86%) V- nai (non-past) V- nakatta (past)	N= (0%)	N=11 (5.14%)
Rememberers (Tokens: 75)	N=66 (88%) V- nai (non-past)	N=0 (0%)	N=9 (12%)

Due to the large number of immigrants from Okinawa, one might wonder if their Japanese may have had a strong influence upon Palauan Japanese. However, none of the Okinawan negation forms were found in this study. Local factors suggest some reasons for this. The Palauans regarded the Okinawans as being of a lower rank than themselves in the social hierarchy and labelled them as ‘Japan-Kanaka’. Toyama (1993) sites Palauans as saying that ‘Okinawan had a primitive and low standard of culture and living’. Also, it should be noted that Japanese was the second language for the Okinawans¹⁰. Thus, as much sociolinguistic research demonstrates

¹⁰ The present Okinawa district is the former Ryukyuan Kingdom, which used to be an independent nation with the indigenous language called ‘Ryukyuan’ or ‘Luchuan’. Whether Ryukyuan is an independent language or a sister language of Japanese has been (politically and linguistically) controversial (Shibatani 1990: 189-191). Chamberlain (1895 in Shibatani

that ‘minority’ languages fare badly in dialect and language contact situations (e.g., Gaelic in the Falkland Islands (Sudbury 2000)), there should be some scepticism towards the claim that the Okinawans’ Japanese was as influential upon the Palauans’ Japanese as the demography might appear to suggest¹¹. Thus, this seems to be prime evidence of *dialect levelling* – the majority negator forms brought by Eastern dialect-speakers, who formed the largest proportion of the earlier group of migrants to Palau, levelling away the forms used among less populous dialect groups in the early Palauan-Japanese speech community.

Our second piece of evidence of koineisation in Palauan Japanese is the co-existence of *-de-nai* and *-ja-nai* for nominal and nominal adjectival negations. As Tables 10 and 11 show, the non-standard nominal and nominal adjectival negation form *-de-nai* is used alongside the standard written form *-dewa-nai* and the standard oral form *-ja-nai* by both fluent and semi-speakers. The *Grammar Atlas of Japanese Dialects* by the National Language Research Institute (1993a) seems to be useful here, since it illustrates today’s regional variation in nominal adjectival negations across Japan (see Map 5). Generally speaking, in the Eastern

1990: 189-191) states that ‘the relationship between Ryukyuan and Japanese is something like that between Spanish and Italian or between French and Italian.

¹¹ Much research supports the idea that no non-prestigious words can be borrowed (see McArthur 1992: 141). However, Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 43-5) claim that prestige often appears to be irrelevant in some cases of borrowing, and, in particular, in cases of dialect interference.

dialect-speaking region, **-de-nai** appears to be most common, while in the Western and Kyushu dialect-speaking region, **-ja-nai** is dominant, although there is some use of **-ya-nai** in Kinki district and some use of **-ni-nai** in Chugoku and Shikoku districts.

Table 10. Palauan Japanese nominal negation strategies classified according to dialect area, negation type and speaker competence.

Speaker type	Morphologically negated			Pragmatically negated
	Standard written form	Standard oral/Western dialect form (which are identical)	Eastern dialect form	
Fluent speaker (Tokens: 55)	N=2 (3.64%) N- dewa-nai	N=33 (60%) N- ja-nai	N=15 (27.27%) N- de-nai	N=5 (9.09%)
Semi-speakers (Tokens: 17)	N=0 (0%)	N=5 (29.41%) N- ja-nai	N=7 (41.18%) N- de-nai	N=5 (29.41%)
Rememberers (Tokens: 8)	N=0 (0%)	N=1 (12.5%) N- ja-nai	N=3 (37.5%) N- de-nai	N=4 (50%)

As Tables 10 and 11 illustrate, our Palauan data show the use of both **-de-nai** and **-ja-nai**. The former, **-de-nai**, would have been brought by Eastern dialect-speakers, who were the largest in number of the earlier group of migrants in Palau. The latter, **-ja-nai**, is today the most common nominal adjectival negation form in the Western and Kyushu dialect-speaking area. A forthcoming closer examination of the linguistic

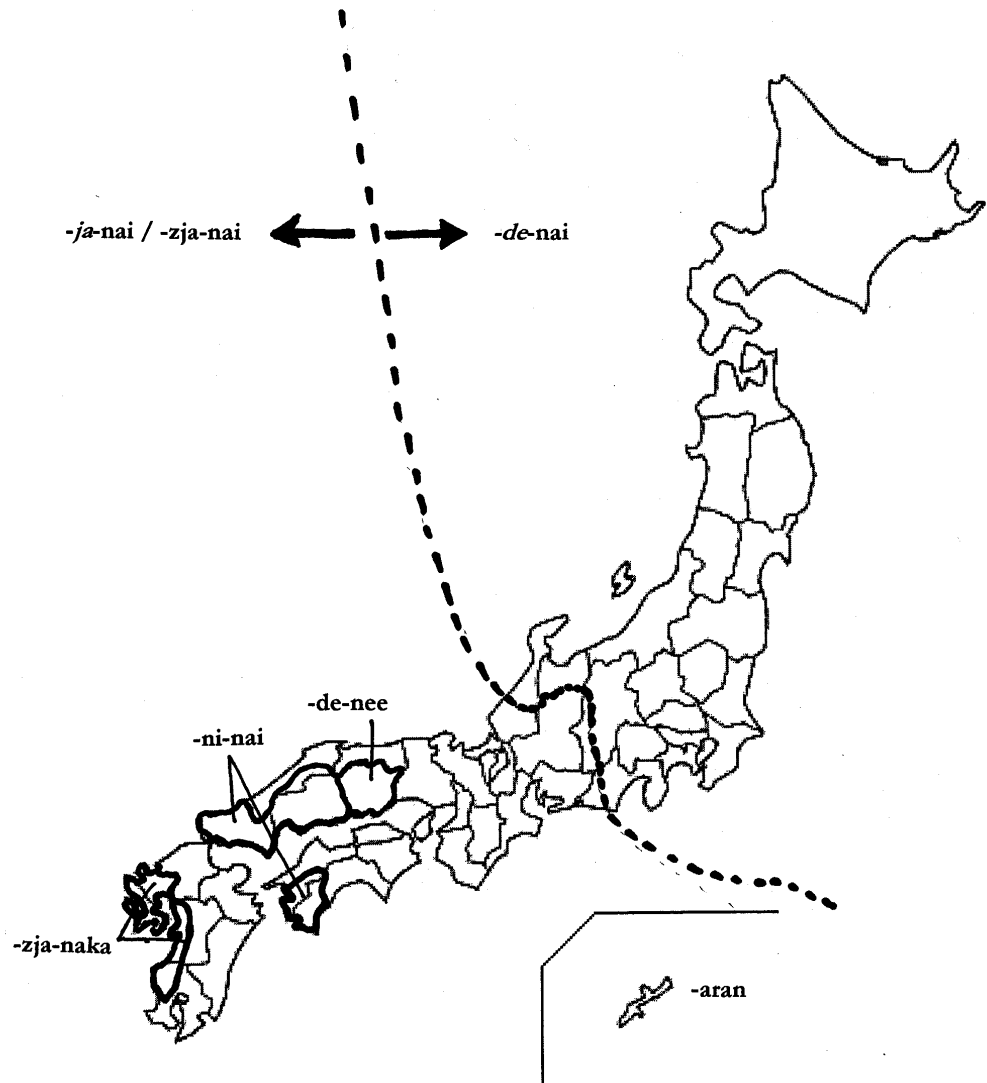
Table 11. Palauan Japanese nominal adjectival negation strategies classified according to dialect area, negation type and speaker competence

Speaker type	Morphologically negated			Pragmatically negated
	Standard written form	Standard oral/Western dialect form (which are identical)	Eastern dialect form	
Fluent speaker (Tokens: 30)	N=4 (13.33%) NA- dewa-na NA- dewa-nakattai	N=16 (53.33%) N- ja-nai	N=8 (26.67%) N- de-nai	N=2 (6.67%)
Semi-speakers (Tokens: 8)	N=0 (0%)	N=1 (12.5%) N- ja-nai	N=5 (62.5%) N- de-nai	N=2 (25%)
Rememberers (Tokens: 4)	N=0 (0%)	N=0 (0%)	N=2 (50%) N- de-nai	N=2 (50%)

and social factors that may variably affect the choice of these negation forms will help us discover whether this mixing of **-de-nai** and **-ja-nai** has been reallocated in a stylistically, socially or linguistically structured way. Both mixing and reallocation, of course, are well-attested possible outcomes of dialect contact (Britain and Trudgill 1999).

What is more interesting is that this **de-nai** form was applied even to regular adjectival negations by semi-speakers and rememberers. Table 12 shows that despite the fact that fluent speakers mostly use the standard **-ku-nai** form, **-ku-nai** was used only *once* by semi-speakers and not used by rememberers at all. Instead, **-de-nai**, which is the Eastern dialect form for nominal and nominal adjectival negations, was allocated to regular adjectival negations twice by semi-speakers and

Map 5. Regional variation in nominal adjectival negation: *-de-nai* vs. *-ja-nai*
(The National Language Research Institute 1993: 147)



once by rememberers. So here we have a case where a morphological form with very rare frequency is levelled away by one serving a similar function in a more frequently occurring class.

Table 12. Palauan Japanese regular adjectival negation strategies classified according to dialect area, negation type and speaker competence.

Speaker type	Morphologically negated		Pragmatically negated
	Standard form	Non-standard Palauan-Japanese	
Fluent speaker (Tokens: 14)	N= 10 (71.43%) A-ku-nai	N=0 (0%)	N=4 (28.57%)
Semi-speakers (Tokens: 7)	N=1 (14.29%) A-ku-nai	N=2 (28.57%) A-de-nai	N=4 (57.14%)
Rememberers (Tokens: 4)	N=0	N=1 (25%) A-de-nai	N=3 (75%)

Thus, the Founder Principle has, to a certain extent, been shown to be crucial in determining the long-term diachronic development of these contact varieties of Japanese in Palau. However, as shown earlier, the Eastern dialect and the Standard dialect sometimes overlap. Therefore, our task for future research will be to examine the fate in Palauan Japanese of forms where the standard and the Eastern forms differed back in the early part of the 20th century. In such cases it will be fascinating to see whether the demographically dominant Eastern dialects or the prestige-dominant standard dialect ‘won’ in the Palauan dialect contact.

6. Language death

Palauan Japanese provides an interesting case for language death studies as well. On the one hand, Japanese is not the L1 of most inhabitants of Palau – it is not sociolinguistically, therefore, comparable to Dorian's (1978) research on East Sutherland Gaelic. On the other hand, it is not a formally learnt L2 for most speakers either. Most Palauans *acquired* it as an early L2 through neighbourhood contact, reinforced perhaps by later formal teaching. Does the obsolescence of Palauan Japanese, therefore, if there is any, match that of L1 death or that of L2 death? There is little research at all on the L1 or L2 death of Japanese, though there is somewhat more on the latter.

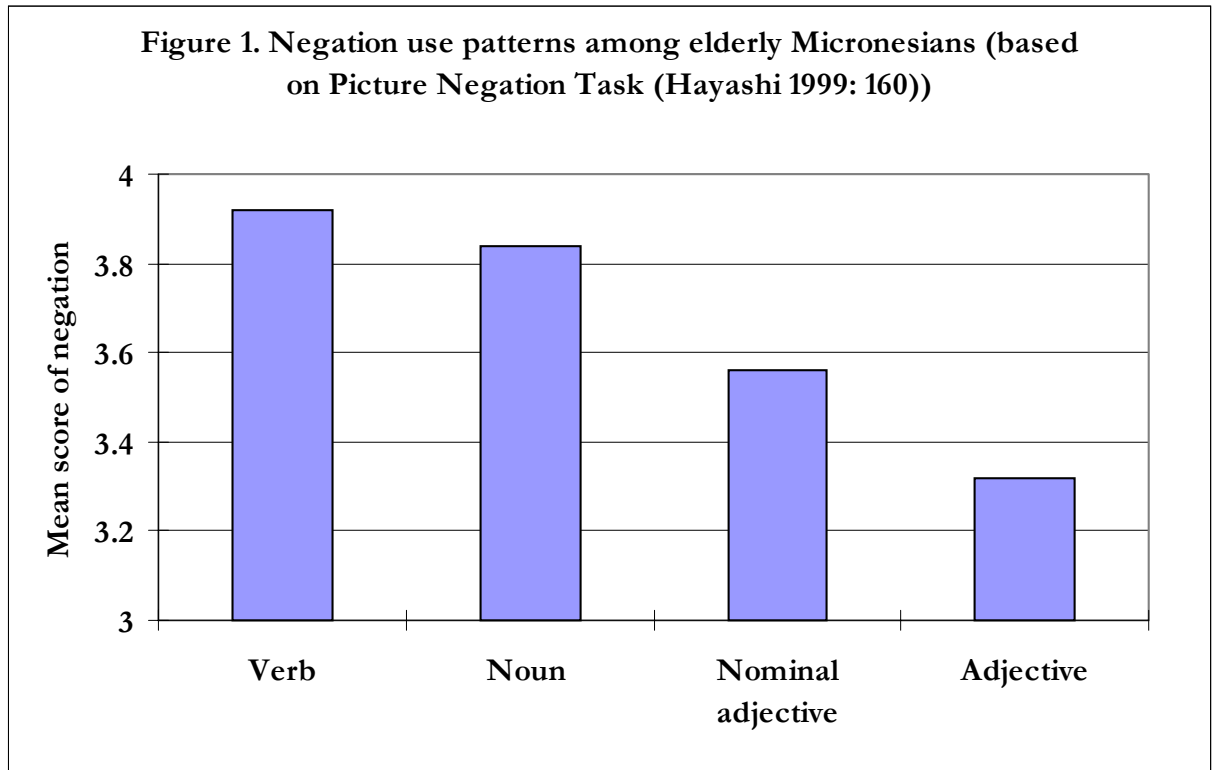
Here, we will briefly revisit, therefore, some previous research on the attrition of Japanese negation. Empirical research on children's L1 acquisition of Japanese negation (Hansen-Strain and Iwata 1992; Hansen-Strain 1992; Kanagy 1991) as well as American adults' and adolescents' L2 acquisition of Japanese negation (Clancy 1985; Kanagy 1991) all demonstrate that negated structures develop in a succession of stages. It has been found that Japanese children and learners of Japanese acquire the negation forms of verbs first, next nouns, thirdly nominal adjectives and finally adjectives. The regression hypothesis suggests that, in language death situations, language decay progresses in the reverse direction, with those

structures acquired last being lost first. So, in cases of language death and attrition, Japanese speakers should lose the negation forms of adjectives first, nominal-adjectives next, thirdly nouns and finally verbs.

The regression hypothesis for the Japanese negation system is supported by Hayashi's (1995, 1999) study of elderly Micronesians and Hansen's (1999b) study on American missionaries' L2 attrition of Japanese. The results of their studies are shown in Figures 1 and 2. These figures are on the basis of a Negation Picture Task, which was designed to force speakers to negate a certain number of verbs, nouns, nominal adjectives and regular adjectives.

We analysed our data to some extent expecting to find a similar pattern to Hayashi (1995, 1999) and Hansen (1999b). What we found, however, is that the situation in Palau is far less pessimistic about the fate of Japanese than Hayashi (1995, 1999) and Hansen's (1999b) work predicts. As Figure 3¹² shows, in the case of Palauan Japanese, morphological marking of negation is, to a large extent, *retained* by semi-speakers and rememberers. The decline in use from fluent speakers to rememberers is fairly shallow. However, at the same time, as Figures 3 and 4 illustrate, pragmatic negation markers without morphological marking are

¹² Negation use by 'native speaker in Japan' in Figures 3 and 4 is based on texts of tape-recorded conversations in different regions in Japan by the National Language Research Institute (1979, 1980, 1981, 1982). The subjects are in the same age-range as those who emigrated from Japan to Palau (and their children).



increasingly used as a strategy to negate by semi-speakers and rememberers.

Pragmatic negation markers here are single word utterances, which Japanese children are said to first acquire in natural first-language settings as a way of negating. As

Table 13 shows, good examples of these are *iya* to reject objects or refuse suggestions

(perhaps translatable as ‘I don’t want’ in English), *chigau* to express denial (like ‘not so’ in English), *dame* (like ‘no good’ or ‘Don’t’ in English) (see Examples 1 and 2

below for details). Thus, whilst regression by predicate category is not particularly

marked, regression to those pragmatic negation markers acquired first in infancy is

quite striking.

Figure 2. Negation use pattern by American Missionaries
 (based on Negation Picture Task (Hansen 1999b: 148))

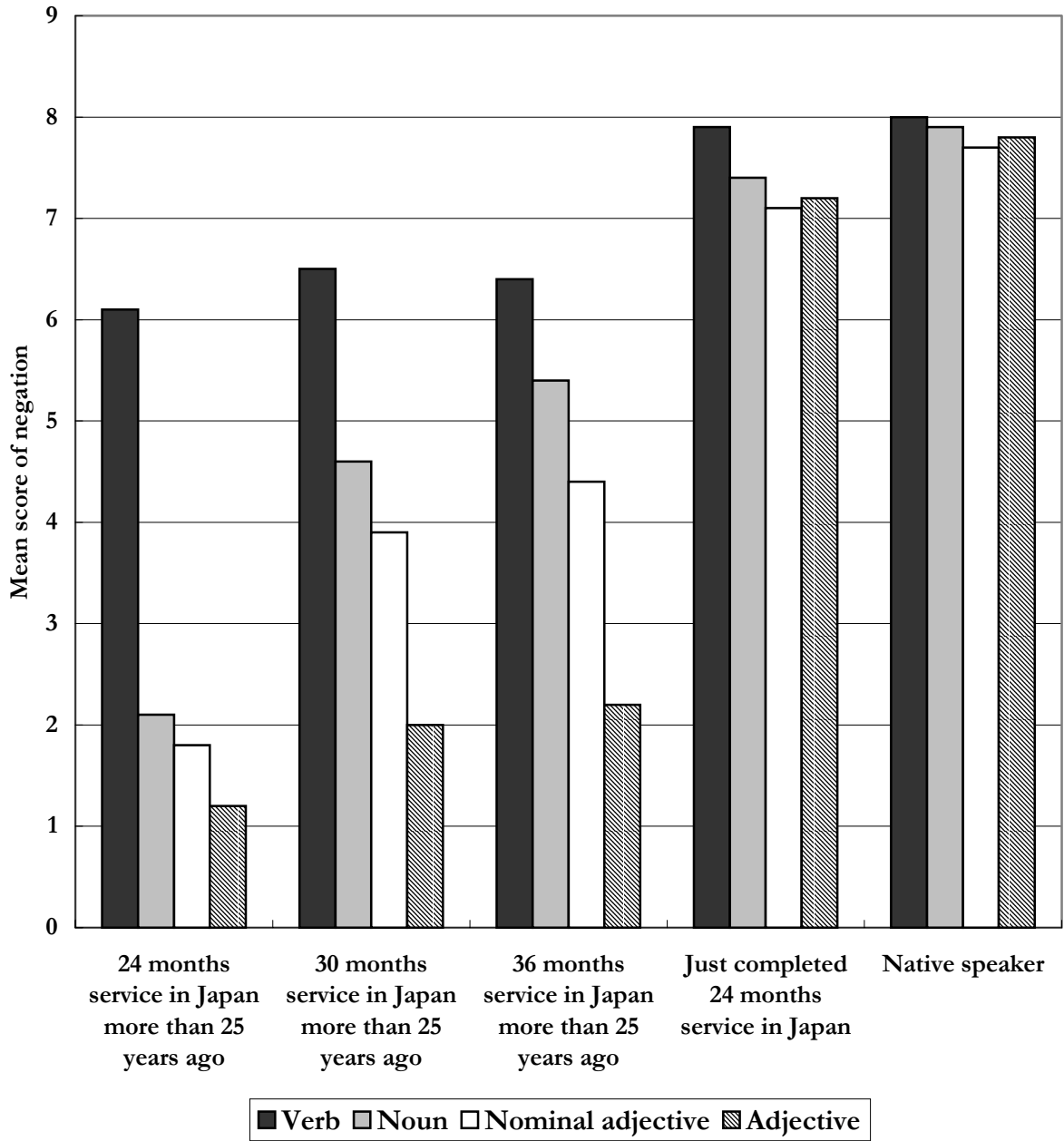


Figure 3. Negation use pattern in Palauan Japanese and Japanese Japanese

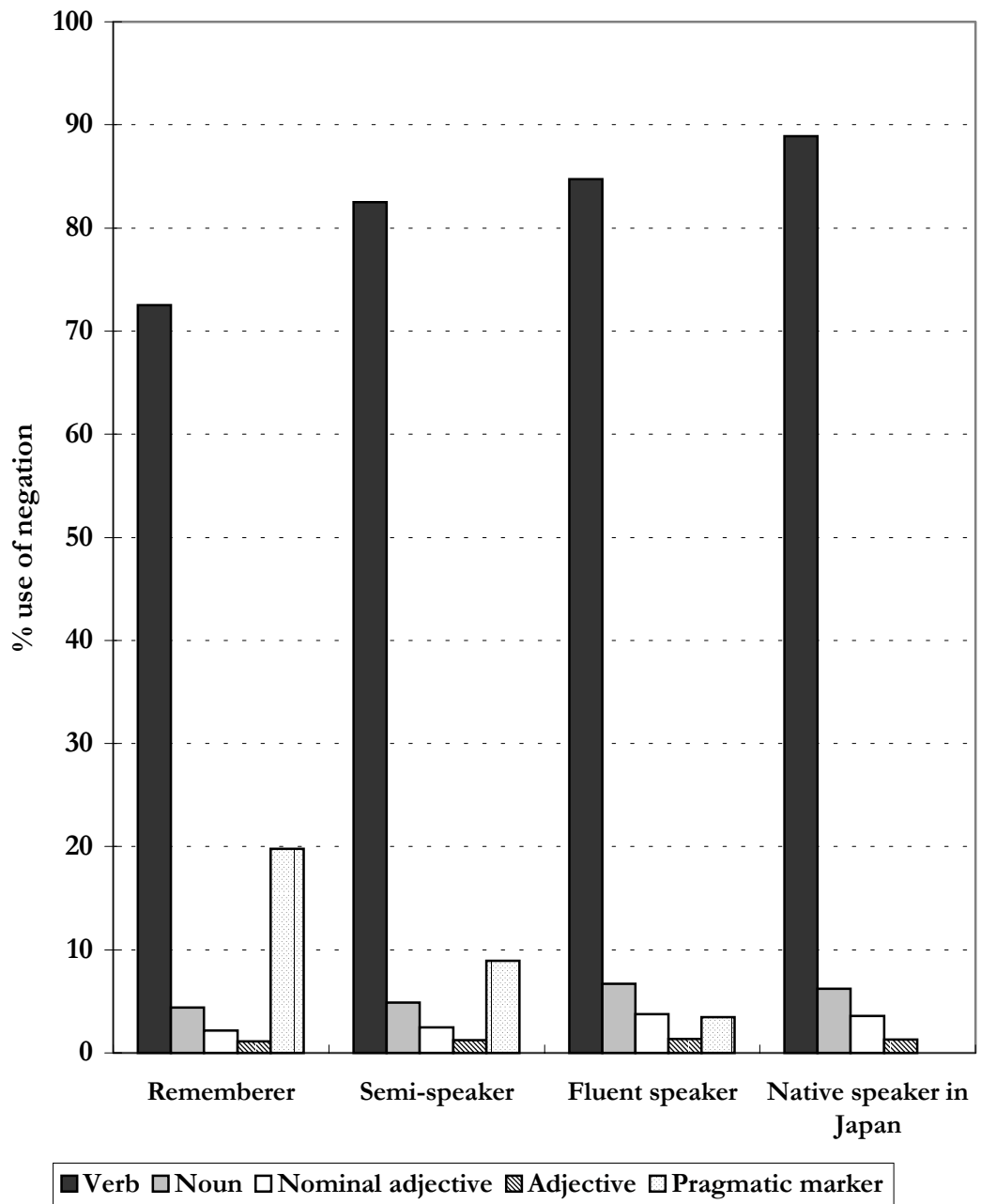


Figure 4. Morphological versus pragmatic negation marking

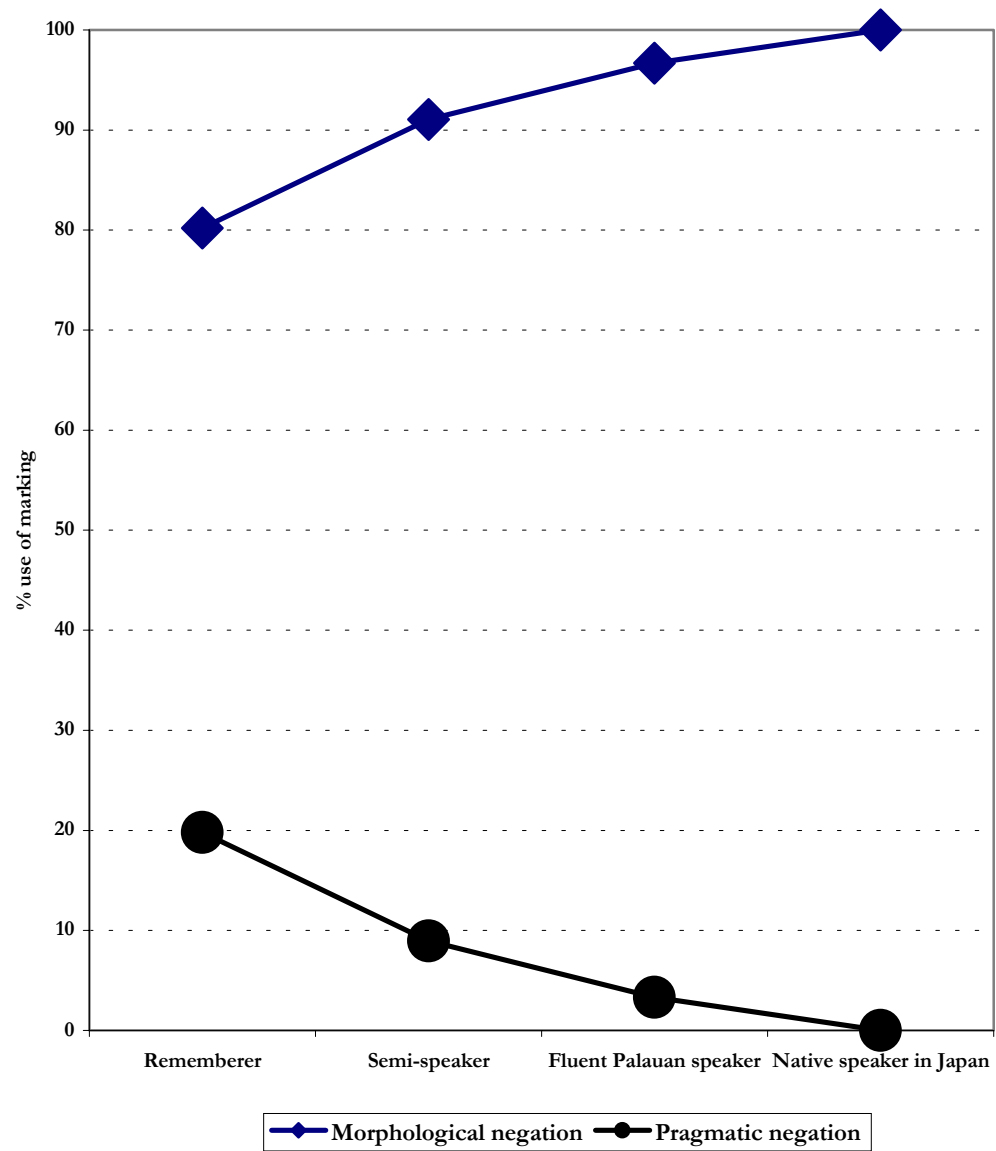


Table 13. Pragmatic negation markers in Palauan Japanese

Pragmatic negation marker	English translation
iya	I don't want' (to reject objects or refuse suggestions) not so
chigau	not so (to express denial)
dame	no good Don't!
ammari	rarely
zenzen	not at all
mada	not yet

Example 1: (the use of *dame* for adjectival negations)

T: atama **dame** kao **dame** okane nai demo mondai nai!
 Head **dame** face **dame** money no, but problem no!

English translation: I'm not clever, not beautiful, have no money, but no problem!

Standard Japanese: atana mo yo-**ku-nai**, kao mo yo-**ku-nai**, okane mo nai, demo mondai nai.

Example 2: (the use of *iya* for verbal negations)

B: ima no wakamono wa ryoori **iya** benkyo **iya** oyakoko **iy**o nannimo **iya**
 Today's youngsters cook **iya** study **iya** filial piety **iya** everything **iya**

English translation: Today's youngsters don't cook, don't study, don't have filial piety to their parents, don't want to do anything.

Standard Japanese: ima no wakamono wa ryoori mo shi-**nai**, benkyo mo shi-**nai**, oyakoko mo shi-**nai** nanimo shitaku-**nai**

Thus, unlike Hayashi (1995, 1999) and Hansen's (1999b) suggestion of L2 death, there is relatively little morphological decay in Palauan Japanese. Although the proportion of pragmatic negation markers increase as competence decreases, both semi-speakers and rememberers still retain morphological marking of verbal, nominal,

nominal adjectival and adjectival negations to a great extent. Thus, as Dorian's (1978)

L1 study suggested for Gaelic, Palauan Japanese appears to be dying, at least in this

respect, with its morphological boots on.

7. Conclusion

Palauan Japanese seems to be a koine, created through dialect contact processes

working on the varieties of Japanese spoken by the migrants and local Palauans

during the Japanese colonial period. That this variety was born in this way is

reinforced to a certain extent by the way it is dying. Unlike the evidence from studies

of L2 attrition, from speech communities where Japanese was learnt much more

formally, semi-speakers and rememberers of Palauan Japanese are retaining

morphological competence to a great extent, which is suggestive of the types of

attrition found in some L1 situations. These results all suggest that Japanese was

“acquired” to a greater extent than being learnt formally in Palau.

What further evidence is there of koineisation in Palauan Japanese? Is it the

case, as it appears, that those who *acquired* their second language lose it less rapidly

and more intact than second language *learners*? Are other morphological forms of

Japanese being retained relatively well among semi-speakers and rememberers or are

some being relatively well retained and others decaying more rapidly? Further

investigations of Palauan Japanese will explore further the extent of koineisation and the nature of its attrition in this rather interesting and unusual speech community.

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