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Indigenous Language Education at University Level in Hawai'i and the Ryukyus

Panel: Language, Teaching and Learning

Okinawa's indigenous languages (Ryukyuan languages) face endangerment today and I believe that the university must take the initiative in Ryukyuan language education. Strong interests in language revitalization have surged among university students in Okinawa; however, a statistics suggests that they have little opportunity to learn the language. Taking the University of the Ryukyus as an example, this paper first explains the past and current situations at the university curriculum on Ryukyuan language that has been traditionally administrated under a general education course. Secondly, based on a survey conducted on June 2013, I will show that 70% of the students answered that they would like to take a Ryukyuan language class as a language course. Finally, I will analyze what can be done for advanced Ryukyuan language education at university level in the context of language revitalization movement.