

***A few Lexical, Grammatical and Phonological  
insights into early Hachijō –  
A glimpse into wordlists from the Edo period***

**Étienne Baudel – Exploring Language Diversity in Japan –  
In Memory of Alexander Vovin**

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# Introduction

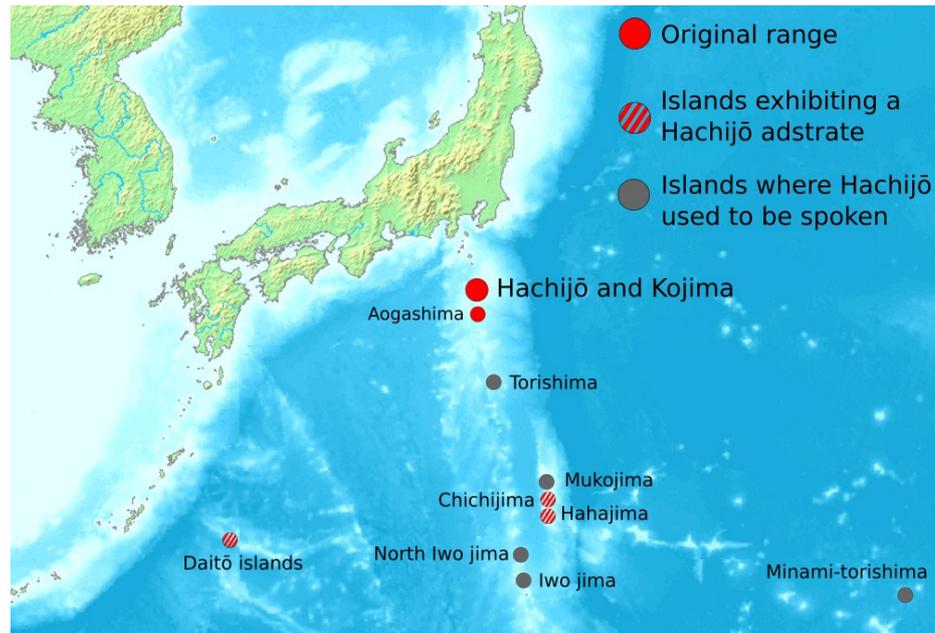
# Introduction (0)

- This presentation is **the second of a series** dedicated to Hachijō wordlists from the Edo period.
- The first presentation on this topic was called *Edo travel books and local word lists – A glimpse on the early sources of Hachijō language*.
- It can be found on my personal webpage:  
<http://crlao.ehess.fr/index.php?2097>



# Introduction (1) – What is Hachijō?

- Hachijō (locally simply called 島言葉 Shima-kotoba 'island speech') is an endangered **minority language** of Japan, originally spoken on the **South Izu islands**:

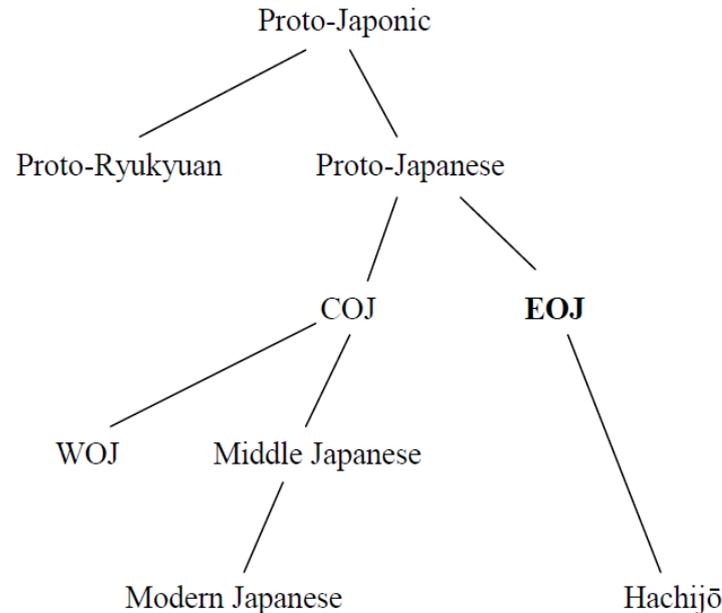


# Introduction (1) – What is Hachijō?

- Like most languages of Japan, Hachijō belongs to the **Japonic language family** (日流語族).
- It was long considered a **dialect of Japanese**, but is now often considered a **different language**.
- As a matter of fact, it seems to have **no clear mutual intelligibility** with other Japanese varieties (IANNUCCI, 2019: 100-106).

# Introduction (1) – What is Hachijō?

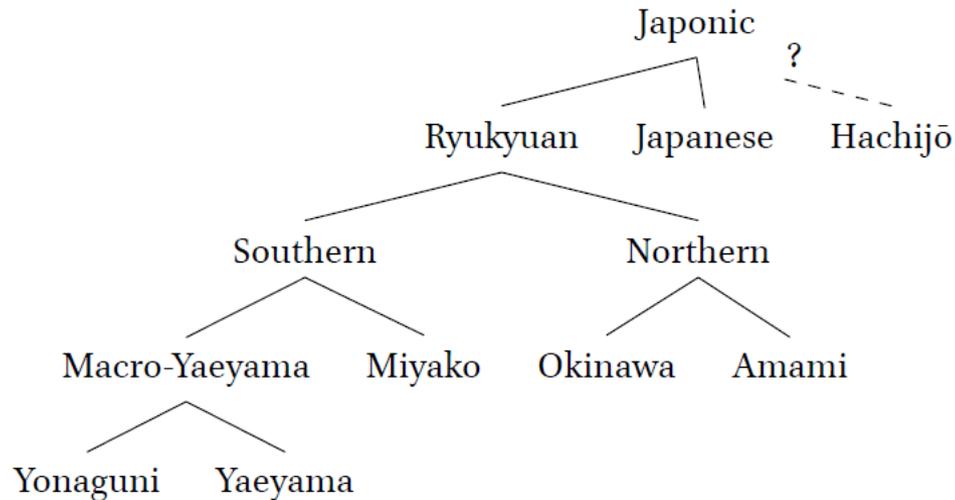
- The classification of Hachijō within Japonic is **still a matter of debate**.
- It is often supposed to be the **descendant of Eastern Old Japanese** (ex : KUPCHIK, 2011:7)



Japonic language tree  
proposed by KUPCHIK

# Introduction (1) – What is Hachijō?

- However, other specialists consider that there is **not enough evidence** yet for this classification, and that it is better classified as being on its own branch (ex : PELLARD, 2018:2)



Japonic language tree  
proposed by PELLARD

# Introduction (2) – Edo travel books

- During the Edo period (**1603-1867**), the Izu islands were perceived as **remote** and **exotic**, and were the subject of many legends.
- They were under direct rule of the shogunate, and were used as a **banishment territory**.
- Because of this peculiar status, no less than **30 descriptions** of the South Izu islands were written **between 1781 and 1858**.

# Introduction (2) – Edo travel books

- Those books are often **richly illustrated** and are **highly informative**:



Ōhara Masanori,  
*Hachijō-shi*, vol. 1,  
pp. 2-3 (1811 [1854])

# Introduction (2) – Edo travel books



Satō Yukinobu, *Izu kaitō fudoki*, vol. 2, pp. 69-70 (1782)

# Introduction (2) – Edo travel books



Kakusō Kizan, *Yatake no nezame-gusa*, pp. 20-21 (1848)

# Introduction (2) – Edo travel books

- Those Edo travel books also contain **several attestations of the local language**, including:
  - **11 wordlists**
  - **2 texts** (a letter and a theatrical dialogue)
  - **countless isolated words** and names
- The diversity of these sources provides valuable information about the language's history.

# Introduction (3) – Aim of this presentation

- This presentation will be dedicated to the linguistic data provided by those documents.
- Originally, I wanted to include all pre-modern sources to my study.
- However, due to lack of time, **I will focus solely on wordlists.**

ウノコトワ アガ ワルキャ ザンメーヨー  
(あのことは 私が 悪い、 勘弁してくれ)。

ASANUMA, 1999: 107

# Introduction (3) – Aim of this presentation

- First of all, I will briefly introduce the **11 wordlists** I could gather so far.
- Then, I will present a few **lexical**, **grammatical** and **phonological** insights that they provide on early Hachijō.



A family at work,  
Kodera Ōsai, *Shichitō-  
nikki*, vol. 3, p. 40 (1796)

# (1) The Hachijō wordlists

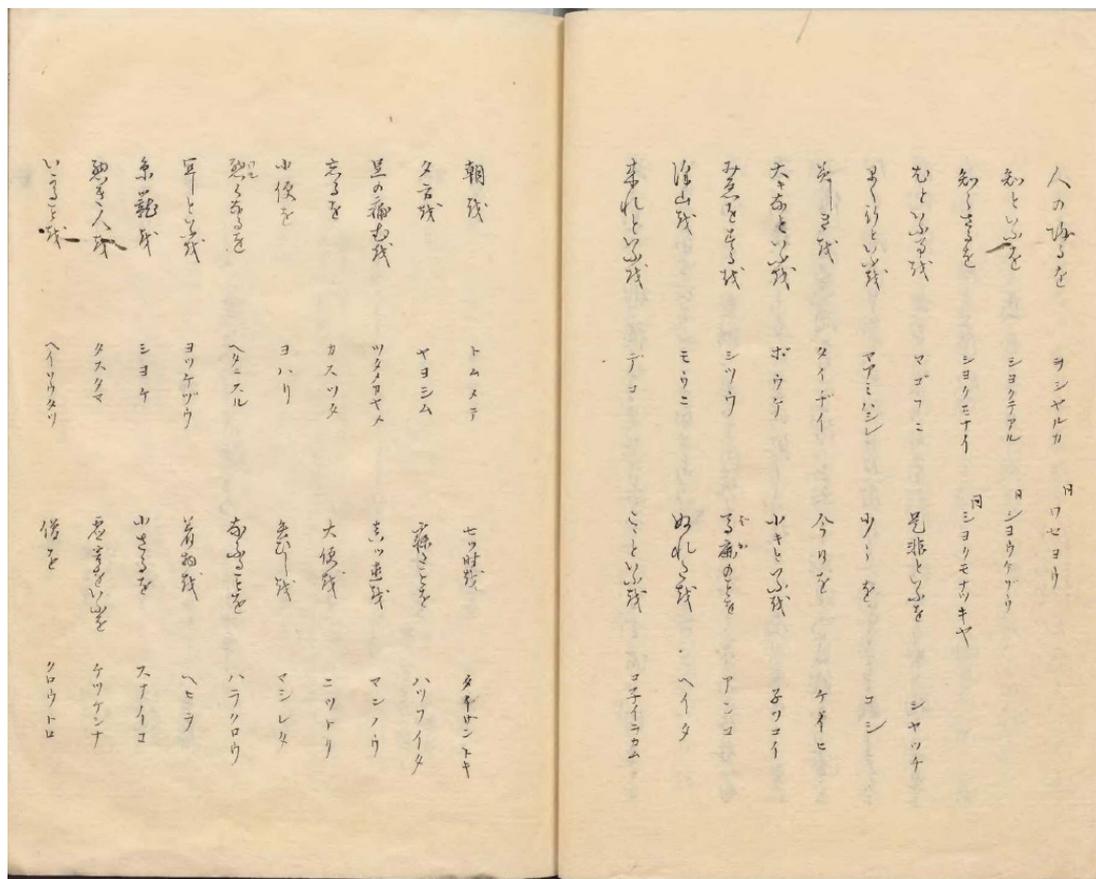
# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

- So far, I found **11 Hachijō wordlists** from the Edo period, published in 10 books from **between 1781 and 1858**.
- They are usually ordered thematically, Hachijō items are provided in ***katakana***, with a translation into classical Japanese.
- Those wordlists were not made by the islanders, but mostly by shogunate officials **for the mainland elite**.
- Thus, they show **influence from the classical language** in both grammar and spelling.

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists

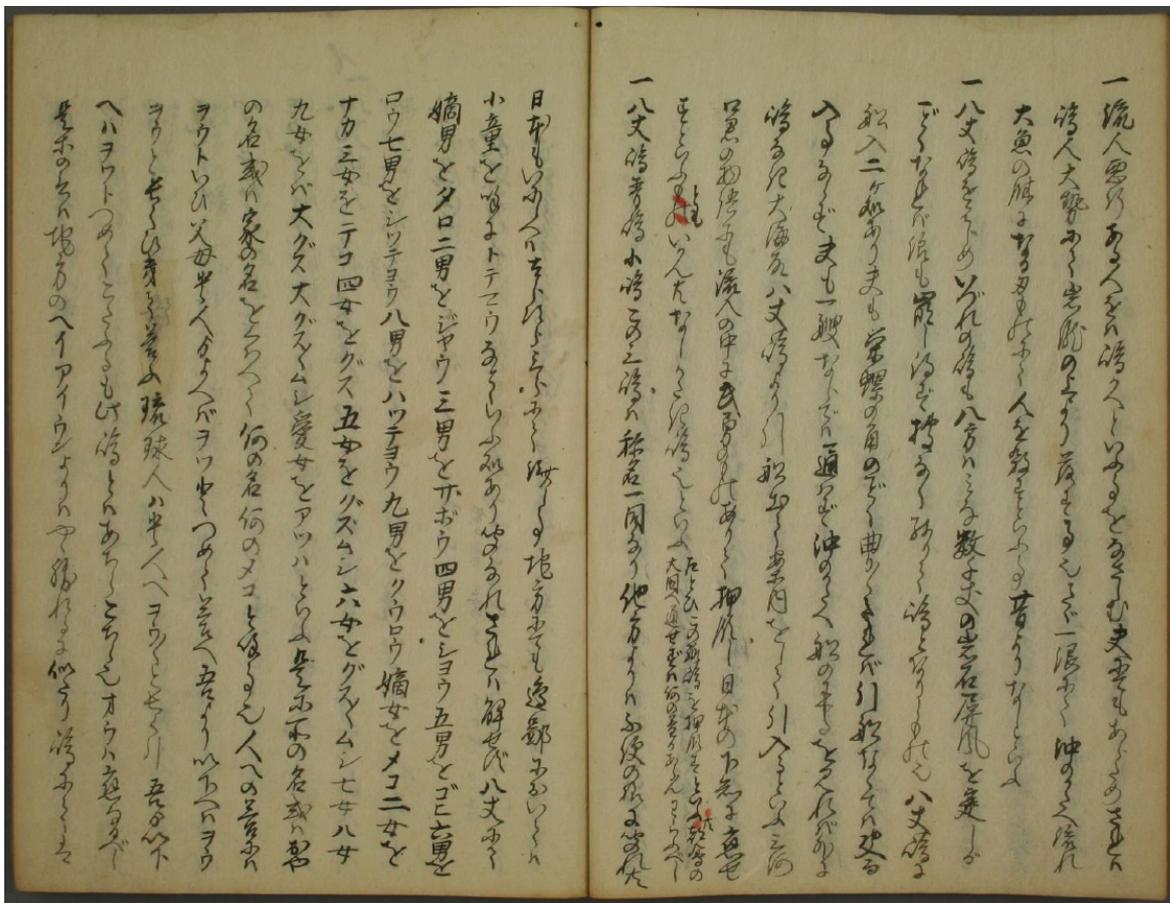
- The 11 wordlists are the following, ordered **chronologically**:
  - the 1781 *Izu kaitō fudoki*, written by SATŌ Yukinobu (ca. 80 items)
  - the 1791 *Nanpō kaitō-shi*, by AKIYAMA Funan (ca. 40 items)
  - the 1796 *Shichitō nikki*, by KODERA Ōsai (ca. 40 items)
  - the 1797 *Hachijō Hikki*, by FURUKAWA Koshōken (ca. 30 items)
  - the 1801 *Izu shichitō fudo sairan*, by MISHIMA Masahide (ca. 80 items)
  - the 1802 *En'ō kōgo*, by TAKAHASHI Yoichi (ca. 200 items)
  - the 1811 *Hachijō kiriko-ori*, by HATTORI Yoshitaka (ca. 60 items)
  - the ca. 1811 [1820] *Ichiwa ichigen*, by ŌTA Nanpo (ca. 210 items)
  - the 1839 *Asahi gyakutō-ki*, by SAWARA no Kisaburō (ca. 30 items)
  - the 1858 *Hachijō jikki*, by KONDŌ Tomizō, with 2 word lists (ca. 210 items / ca. 390 items)

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists



A clear example:  
Hattori Yoshitaka, *Hachijō kiriko-ori*, pp. 77-78 (1811)

# (1) – The Hachijō wordlists



A more difficult example:  
Furukawa Koshōken, *Hachijō hikki*, pp. 18-19 (1797 [1805])

## (2) Lexical insights

## (2) – Lexical insights

- Those wordlists are made up of **between 30 and 290 items each**, which makes a total of roughly **1400 items**.
- The first step of my work was to **transcribe** and **compile** them to a single file.
- The second was to identify double occurrences, in order to have **one comprehensive lemma list** for all those documents.

## (2) – Lexical insights

- I could observe that **most items occur in at least two wordlists**, and that **some wordlists are based on older ones**.
- Thus, after removing double counts, I estimate the total amount of old Hachijō data in those wordlists at **about 730 items**, i.e. roughly **1000 lemmas**.
- These lists contain a lot of **iconic Hachijō words** (such as *nyoko*, *menarabe*, *ojari-yare...*), but they also contain **many words that are unattested elsewhere**.
- Furthermore, it must be noted that **many words** from those sources **are completely impossible to analyse**.

## (2) – Lexical insights

- The attested pre-modern Hachijō lemmas belong to **various grammatical categories**:
  - more than **400 substantives**
  - slightly less than **100 verbs**
  - roughly **40 adjectives** (20 *-kya* = 𑖅𑖆 adjectives, and 20 *-doa* = 𑖇𑖈 adjectives)
  - around **40 given names**
  - approx. **25 adverbs**
  - a few words belonging to **other categories**: numerals, particles, pronouns, interrogatives, interjections...

## (2) – Lexical insights

- They belong to **various semantic fields**, with roughly:
  - 140 **idiomatic expressions** or **complete sentences**
  - 85 words related to **traditional society**
  - 80 words related to **geography and nature** (incl. 40 animal names & 7 plant names)
  - 75 words related to **traditional housing, clothing and tools**
  - 70 words related to **family and kinship lexicon**
  - 50 words related to **traditional counting of time**
  - 40 words related to **health and body parts**

## (2) – Lexical insights

- As for the **lexical *strata***, we can list:
  - roughly **525** words of **native** origin
  - about **60** words of **sino-Japonic** origin
  - around **50** words of **mixed** origin
  - around **10** words that are likely to be **onomatopoeic**
  - around **130 uncertain or impossible to analyse**

## (2) – Lexical insights

- When comparing this data with modern-day wordlists (e.g. HIRAYAMA et al. 1992-1994; ASANUMA, 1999; YAMADA, 2010), we can see that:
  - **More than half** of the pre-modern words are still used in the modern language.
  - **Some words** seem to have been common in pre-modern Hachijō, but have **disappeared** in modern sources (for instance, *taka-dara* 'bamboo basket', found in 5 wordlists).
  - Overall, the words that were preserved best are the **animal and plant names** and the **kinship lexicon**.
  - On the other hand, many words related to **clothing, time measuring**, as well as most **given names** were lost.
  - Statistically, **verbs** and **-kya adjectives** were more often preserved than **substantives**.

# (3) Grammatical insights

# (3) – Grammatical insights

- Those sources also contain several **grammatical elements that characterise Hachijō**, such as:
  - adjective adnominal form **-ke** (first attested in 1781)
  - negative adnominal form **-nnoa** (first attested in 1797)
  - imperative **se** 'do!', negative final form **-nnaka** (first attested in 1801)
  - copula **dara** and past tense **-tara** (first attested in 1802)
  - adjective final form **-kya** (first attested in 1811)
  - adjective past final form **-kara**, verbal final form **-o=wa** (first attested in 1858)

# (3) – Grammatical insights

- However, possibly by **influence from mainland or classical Japanese**, several **non-Hachijō features** also occur, such as:
  - **-ta** past tense (instead of *-toa / -tara*)
  - adjective final **-shi** (instead of *-kya*)
  - negative auxiliary **-nu** (instead of *-nnaka / -nnoa*)
  - imperative **koi** ‘come!’ (instead of *ko*)
  - adnominal **suru** (instead of *sho*)
- A final adjective form *-i* also occurs, but it is uncertain whether it is due to an influence from mainland Japanese, or whether those forms **predate the reflection** *\*-ke=wa > kya* (BAUDEL, forthcoming).

# (4) Phonological insights

## (4) – Phonological insights

- Finally, we can observe that the **allography** is quite strong in those sources; e.g.:
  - <shitsuchiyō>, <shitsuchiyau>, <shitsuteu>, <shitsu-chiyō>, <shitsuteyou>, <hichiyau>, <hitsuteu>; 七郎  
→ /**shicchou**/ 'seventh son' (modern Hachijō *shicchō*)
  - <daichii>, <daidjii>, <daijihi>, <daishii>, <dahijihii>, <taidjii>;  
美し, 美しき, うつくしき, 見事  
→ /**daijii**/ 'beautiful' (modern Hachijō *deajikya*)

## (4) – Phonological insights

- In most cases, those variants are due to **allography in the classical Japanese spelling**, such as <ou> / <au>, <o> / <wo>, <teu> / <chiyau>, etc.
- In other cases, some variants are most likely to be **copy mistakes**, for instance in Mishima, 1801:
  - <**beta**>, 出来の悪き : *heta* (ベ / ヘ)
  - <**kusudama**>, 盗賊 : *nusutama* (ク / ヌ)
  - <**hiutega**>, 平鋏 : *hiratega* (ウ / ラ)

# (4) – Phonological insights

- However, in other cases, spelling variants show a **variation that exists in modern-day Hachijō**:
  - **d**okurou / **r**okurou `sixth son`
  - **h**itsuteu / **sh**itsuchiyau `seventh son`
  - **yok**ke / **yok**e `good`
  - **hi**iru / **he**iru `moth`
  - **ho**a / **hou** / **ha**a `mother`
- A lot of those variations correspond to modern **free variation** (*r- ~ d-, sh- ~ hy-, -k- ~ -kk-*).

## (4) – Phonological insights

- However, some of those variations correspond to modern **isoglosses**, ex:
  - h*ii*ru (Ōta, 1820) / h*ei*ru (Kondō, 1858) ‘moth’  
= h*i:*ru (‘uphill’) / h*ei*ru (‘downhill’)
  - h*ofu* (Takahashi, 1802) / h*oa* (Hattori, 1811) / h*aa* (Ōta, 1820)  
= h*ou* (‘downhill’) / h*oa* (KT, NnG) / h*a:* (SY)
- This could indicate that **the authors did not have the same sources or informants.**

## (4) – Phonological insights

- Furthermore, some other variants could indicate that sound changes were possibly still ongoing at that time, e.g. the word 'heel':
  - akk**ahi** (Ōta, 1820)
  - akk**ae** (Kondō, 1858)
  - > akk**e:** (downhill and SY) / akk**ja:** (KT, NnG)  
(modern unified spelling: akk**ea**)

## (4) – Phonological insights

- Finally, some words could possibly preserve phonemes that were lost in modern Hachijō, for instance:
  - *yobi* 'belt' > *obi* (cf EOJ *yepi* 'sash'?, cf Vovin, 2021: 416)
  - *yoke* 'box' > *oke* 'bucket' (?)
- However, **further research is needed on that topic.**

# Conclusion

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- Wordlists from the Edo period are **highly valuable** as they are the **first attestation of Hachijō**.
- However, they **must be used with caution**, as they were written by mainlanders for mainlanders, and then intensively copied and altered.
- **Much more research is needed** on this topic in order to analyse difficult words and to include them to the description of the language.

おかげさまで！

/ Thank you very much!

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