The Sound of *AjCh'oyoy* Is the Voice of Them: Emotions, Identities and Voices Carried in the Mopan Maya Narratives[1]

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Rethinking the importance of sound and emotion is a crucial locus for thinking through cultural voices and silences carried in narratives. Inspired by Silverstein (1998b) and Kroskrity's (2009) notion of "sites," I have reconsidered the role of language documentation and the moments that the act of language documentation can produce, and suggested that language documentation can create "sites" of linguistic transaction, of self recognition, and of ideological and emotional stance shift (Tanaka-McFarlane, 2015). Examining the use of sound symbolic utterances in Belizean Mopan Maya[2] speakers' story-telling, this paper attempts to extend this notion of language documentation as "sites" to the discussion of the sound suggestiveness through phonological iconicity (Barrett, 2014, 2016), of the imaginative possibilities via sound (Webster, 2009, 2014, 2015), and of the emotionally signified and ideologically silenced ancestors' voices and identities. My focus is on the usage of an onomatopoeic lexical item, *ch'oyoy* 'cicada' that reveals not only its grammatical and structural function as a lexicalized sound but also its emotional, historical and imaginative semanticity that connects the call of *ajch'oyoy* and the voices of ancestors.

1. Setting

On the evening of April 10th, 2014, I was chatting with IxAndrea Pop, my Mopan Maya host mother, whom I addressed as *Na'chiin* 'grandmother,' by a fire hearth inside the thatched house where I was staying. The sun was setting and the day was at an end. Na'chiin looked tired and slightly sad. It had been a long interesting day. We took a short

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[2] Mopan Maya is a member of the Yukatekan branch of the Mayan language family spoken in the southern Petén region of Guatemala and in the Maya Mountain region of southern Belize (Hofling, 2009: 97). According to Ethnologue, it is spoken by 9,200 people in Belize as of 2006 and by 3,000 – 4,000 people in Guatemala as of 2008 (Hofling, 2011). It is classified as a severely endangered language (Moseley, 2010).

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trip to a small unexcavated Maya ruin with her son, AjPablo's family. We toured his cacao grove and harvested some plants and spices for cooking, and *jipijapa* palm leaves for basket weaving. Our hands were full of food, it was a good day.

I was remembering a very short adage that Na'chiin told me while we were climbing a steep path leading to farms and the mountains. The path was thorny and Na'chiin told me that old people said that when you burn your *milpa* on Sunday, it will have lots of thorns. I also remembered a couple days ago when the wind was blowing hard, she giggled and told me that we needed to burn a seed of a *mamey* fruit to stop the wind because her deceased mother told her that the seed was the wind's penis and burning it would scare the wind away. We had some time before dinner so I decided to record the adages while I still had a fresh memory of them. I asked Na'chiin if she could retell the adages in Mopan and told her that I would like to hear more about what the old people said. I grabbed my digital voice recorder and was about to begin the recording session.

Right then, we heard the cry of a creature in the darkening woods. I did not know what it was, but Na'chiin did. It was *ch'oyoy*, she said. "When you hear ch'oyoy, you remember your dead mother, father, and old people," she continued. "My mother always cried when she heard it," she said. The *ch'oyoy* is a 'large cicada[3]' found in the forest and is heard only during the end of a dry season. I knew the lexical meaning of *ch'oyoy* from Hofling's dictionary. Additional knowledge was obtained later, but it was clear that the word *ch'oyoy* contained more than such lexical information. I asked Na'chiin to explain what she said about the *ch'oyoy* in Mopan. It was at this moment that the act of language documentation created the site of linguistic interaction and of re-recognition of myself.

2. Translating the Story of Ch'oyoy Cicadas

The example below is a transcription and translation of IxAndrea Pop's explanation of the sound of the *ch'oyoy*. Lines have been numbered based on morpho-syntactic structure, parallelisms and pauses. Parentheses indicate elided sounds. Double and triple periods index the length of pauses.

(1) 1. *Le'ekoo' ..*
2. *Le'ekoo' ukimen na' ..*
3. *inna'a. ...*
4. *Yajoo' uyool ulakoo'.*
5. *Le'(e)k uchiji'*
6. *'uchb'en kristiyaanoj. ...*
7. *Le'ek b'in ti walakoo' upeek ajch'oyoyoooo. ...*
8. *Ajch'oyoy ..*
9. *ki' upeek. ...*
10. *Le'ek inna'*
11. *innene'. ..*
12. *Walak uyok'tik ukimen na'. ...*
13. *Porkej tumene ..*
14. *ki' u*
15. *yaj uyool. ...*
16. *Ki' uyoolil uchij. ...*
17. *Tanoo' uch'äk che' ...*

[3] In Hofling (2011), the English translation is 'large locust' and Spanish translation is *cigarra grande* 'large cicada or locust'.

18. *b'aala k'in tanoo' upak'. ...*
19. *Tan ajch'oyoyo ..*
20. *"B'ix tun awad'iki jitka'al aj nukuch ek'en umenoo' ...*
21. *inna'*
intata,"
kut'an inkimen na'a.
22. *Walak uyok'tikoo'*
23. *uyilik ukimen na'. ...*
24. *Yaj uyoolil kad'a jaab'a'.*
25. *kut'an inna',*
"To'ono mentäk inweeleje. ...
26. *tak t(an) innen aleeb'e walakilik uyajtal inwool*
t(an) inwu'yiki. ...
27. *Ki' kuchi a kuxtala', pere' ...*
28. *job'oo' tina'*
29. *titat*
30. *kimoo'. ...*
31. *mjm ...*
32. *jad'i' ab'e'e.*

1. It is them ..
2. It is them, her deceased mother ..
3. and my mother. …
4. They were all sad.
5. It was then
6. ancient people. …
7. They say, they made the sound, *ch'oyoyoooo.* …
8. *Ch'oyoy* cicadas,
9. their sound is good. …
10. It is my mother
11. and my baby. ..
12. She is crying for her deceased mother. …
13. Because
because..
14. happy…
15. she is sad. …
16. They were happy before. …
17. They were chopping wood …
18. as this day they are planting. …
19. There was the *ch'oyoy* ..
20. "Like you say the big pigs are lying lengthwise by them …
21. by my mother
and my father,"
says my deceased mother.
22. They are crying,
23. she sees her deceased mother. …
24. She is sad every year.
25. My mother said,
"As for us, therefore I know. …
26. to me now I always feel sad
when I hear it." …

27. Life was good before, but …
28. our mother passed away,
29. and so did our father
30. they died. …
31. mjm …
32. Only that.

One of the most prominent features of this story is IxAndrea's utterance of *ch'oyoy*, as its name and as its sound, shown in lines 7 and 8. Her usage of this onomatopoeic lexical item reveals not only its grammatical and structural function as a lexicalized sound but also its emotional, historical and imaginative semanticity. The analysis of this particular segment also echoes the problems and challenges on translating indigenous narratives discussed by numerous scholars (Becker, 1995; Sammons and Sherzer, eds,. 2000).

Verse analytic alignment in the example (1) shows that the utterance of *ch'oyoy* in line 7 and 8 forms a parallelism and so does *upeek* in line 7 and 9. Like many Maya words that can serve both as verbs and nouns, *peek* was used as a verb in line 7 and as a noun in line 9. The third person set A marker *u-* in both lines mark *ajch'oyoy* 'cicadas' as the makers of the sound. The masculine noun classifier *aj-* that accompanies both utterances of *ch'oyoy* can serve as a definite marker when it is followed by a topic marker, which is marked by a word-final echo-vowel, *-o* in this case. Echo-vowels often mark topics. They are ubiquitous in Mopan Maya discourse (Hofling, 2015, personal communication) and are generally audible[4] (Hofling, 2016, personal communication; Ulrich and Ulrich, 1965). These *aj-* markers also form a parallelism in line 7 and 8. However, I think her original intention was not to make an exactly parallel structure but to provide its name (*ch'oyoy*) and then its sound (*ch'oyoyoooo*) shown below.

(2) 7. *Le'ek b'in ti walak-oo' u-peek aj-ch'oyoy-o
3IPR[5] REPORT to INC-PL 3A-make noise MASC-cicada-TOP
They say, the cicada makes a sound, …

8. *ch'oyoyoooo ..
ONOM
(like this,) ch'oyoyoooo,

9. ki' u-peek. …
good 3A-noise
their sound is good.

The basis for this argument is that the name-sound sequence presentation seems to be a default or a common style, at least within this family. For example, in one recording, AjBrigido told me about other kind of cicadas (*chikiriin* and *tokoroon*) followed by the

[4] Echo-vowels are also a widely observed phenomenon among other Mayan languages and their existence can also be observed in ancient Maya hieroglyphic writing (Josserand and Hopkins, 1987, Kaufman, 2007, Tanaka, 2008). My field assistant, Orlando believes the frequency of echo-vowels as a distinctive feature of the Mopan language.

[5] Abbreviation referred in this paper are: 1SG.A=1st person singular set A (Absolutive), 2A=2nd person set A, 3A=3rd person set A, 3IPR=3rd person independent pronoun, ADJ=adjective, DUR=durative aspect, MASC=masculine noun classifier, INC=incompletive aspect, ITS=incompletive transitive status, ONOM=onomatopoeia, PAST=past marker, PL=plural, PRT=participle, REPORT=reportative, TOP=topic marker

description of their sounds:

(3) "*Tokoroon*, *Ajch'oyoy*, they like to, to sing in there, to say, *tok, tok, tok, tok, tok, tok*, they call it. *Tok, tok, tok, tok, tok, tokoroooon.* And they start to sing.
(B.C. 140410_002_Before Recording Ch'oyoy)"

In one of my email conversations with Orlando, in which I asked him a name of a cicada in attached photos, Orlando gave a name of the cicada (*ajchikiriin*), and then its sound in the way very similar to that of AjBrigido:

(4) "These photos that you send are the cicada. Their song is chikireen[6], chikireen, chikireen and they stretch the last sound reeeeeeeeeeeeeen until they stop.
(O.S. 2015-10-04)"

In reverse to my expected name-sound order shown in the example (2), example (1: 7-8) shows that as IxAndrea was uttering the word, she lengthened the echo vowel following the name *ch'oyoy* and turned her utterance of the name into its crying sound. Subsequently, she uttered the name of the cicada again without emphasizing its sound quality. It is reasonable for her to repeat the name again to make a parallelism, which is one of distinctive features of Mayan narrative style. However, it seems that the way she uttered these two utterances of *ch'oyoy* indicates something more than the parallel structure, and translating the lines 7 to 9 requires additional thoughts and strategies.

With a traditional morpheme-by-morpheme and slightly more phonological analysis, lines 7 to 9 can be analyzed and translated as follows.

(5) 7. Le'ek b'in ti walak-oo' u-peek aj-ch'oyoy-o::: …
3IPR REPORT PAST INC-PL 3A-make noise MASC-cicada-TOP
They say, the cicada made a sound, …

8. Aj-ch'oyoy ..
MASC-cicada
cicadas,

9. ki' u-peek. …
good 3A-noise
their sound is good.

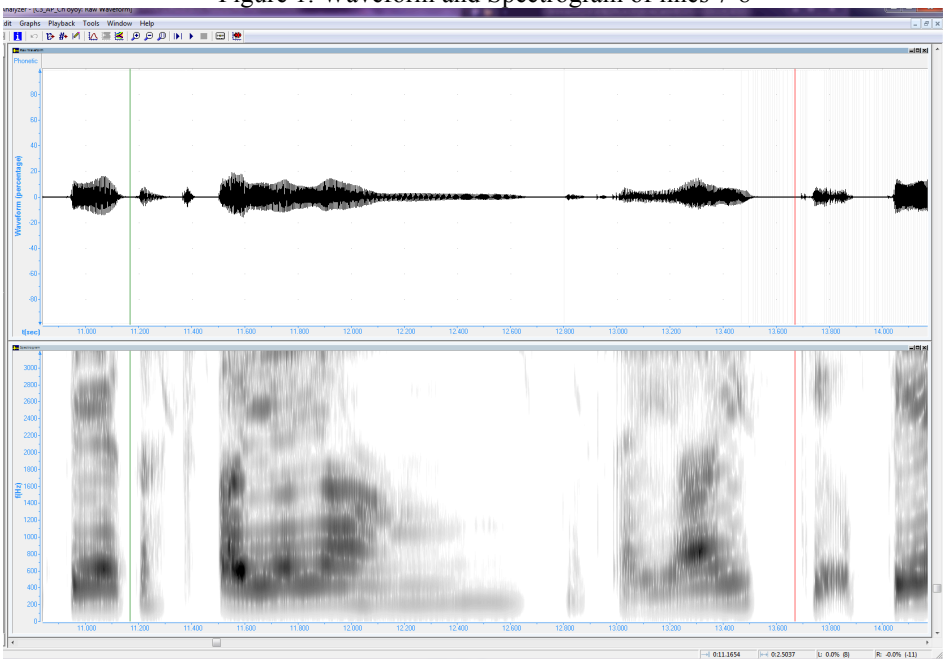
This translation has several problems. First, the translation based solely on a morpheme analysis will translate the word *ch'oyoy* as its literal meaning, 'cicada, locust' and thus does not explain its sound quality. This relates to the second problem that *ajch'oyoy* is not the only 'cicada' in Mopan language, and in fact, there are several other insects we recognize as 'cicada' or 'locast', such as *ajchikiriin*, *ajtzelel*, or *ajtokoroon*. These insects are more common and widely seen than *ajch'oyoy*. However, if people who have no knowledge of Mopan read this "AjCh'oyoy" story to learn Mopan, they might equate *ajch'oyoy* with a generic small 'cicada' even though for many Mopans, the correct term would be *ajchikiriin* for the small cicada and *ajch'oyoy* only refers to a large black cicada that is rarely seen.

Third, the literal translation ignores a prosodic quality of the utterance. The waveform

[6] He spelled *ii* sound as *ee* (as in English *keen* [ki:n]).

and the spectrogram below shows the sequence of sound from the end of line 7 to the end of line 8, *ajch'oyoyooo ajch'oyoy*, displayed between two vertical lines.

Figure 1. Waveform and Spectrogram of lines 7-8



[a h ch' o y o y o : : a h ch'o y o y]

The spectrogram shows that the echo vowel after the first *ajch'oyoy* consists of 4 morae. Although the echo-vowel *-o* at the end of line 7 is recognized as a grammatical feature (topic marker), in terms of translation, only the initial pronunciation (the first mora) was concerned and the following 3 morae attributed to the lengthening were treated as a suprasegmental prosodic feature that does not affect the literal translation. However, this lengthening should not be ignored. Hinton et al (1994: 4) point out that in the process of "synesthetic sound symbolism", the acoustic symbolization of non-acoustic phenomena, "certain vowels, consonants, and suprasegmentals are chosen to consistently represent visual, tactile, or proprioceptive properties of objects, such as size or shape (Hinton et al., 1994: 4)," for example, deep voice and vowel lengthening representing large objects. Many studies have also shown that prosodic lengthening often carries symbolic or affective meanings. For example, in Thai and the Hainan form of the Southern Min dialect of Chinese, tone raising and vowel lengthening are used for the purpose of intensification of adjectives (LaPolla, 1994: 132-133). Matisoff (1994: 126) also reported that Lahu, an omnisyllabic tonal language of the Loloish subgroup of the Tibeto-Burman branch of the great Sino-Tibetan family, has onomatopoetic adverbials that are "characterized by a lengthening of their last vowel to "a mora and a half," … (and) … the drawling or prolongation of the vowel has sound-symbolic significance, in the sense that it is consistently correlated with the expressive portion of the vocabulary (Matisoff, 1994: 126)." Le Guen (2011: 8-9) reported that speakers of Yucatec Maya "tend to iconically map the sound of the (ideophonic) word on the duration of the event (described by the meaning of the root) in lengthening of the vowel phonologically (Le Guen, 2011: 9)" when a short vowel in the root, such as WOH (mv) 'loose' is lengthened to derive an

ideophone as in example (4).

(6) *ti* *yaan-en* *t-u-chi'* *k'áak'* *b'ey-a'*
FOC EXIST-2B FOC-3A-mouth fire MAN-TD

woo::h *k-u-lúub-l* *in-k'ilk'ab'*
IDPH.loose HAB-3A-fall-NOM 1A-sweat
'(when) I'm near the fireplace like this, *woo::h* falls my sweat [i.e. heavy drops of sweat]'
[Modified from Le Guen (2011: 9), example (21)][7]

Fourth, like many singing birds' and insects' names in Mayan languages, the name of *ajch'oyoy* is onomatopoetic. Recalling Barrett (2014)'s study of K'iche' poet Humberto Ak'abal's strategic treatment of the names of the birds as actual bird calls, the utterance of *ajch'oyoy* here can be used both as its name and to indicate its calling sound. Therefore, together with other reasons stated above, it is not adequate to apply a conventional literal translation method for the translation of lines 7 to 9.

Below is another translation done by my field assistant, Orlando Sho.

(7) 'When they sing the ch'oyoyooo, ch'oyoy sound good.'

His translation leaves its sound but does not translate its meaning, thus the nature of *ch'oyoy*, whether it is an animal or a bird, or an insect, remains unclear.

My translation below tried to keep both the name and sound.

(8) 'They say, they make the sound, *ch'oyoyoooo. Ch'oyoy* cicadas, …'

However, this translation still cannot retain the beauty of the parallelism, and the sense of who "they" are. IxAndrea used the third person independent pronoun *le'ek* 's/he, it' and its plural form *le'ekoo'* 'they' in lines 1, 2, 5, 7, and 10. She used these pronouns in the introductions of almost all the stories she told. In this story, the referents were IxAndrea's mother and grandmother (mother's mother), father and grandfather (mother's father), and one of her babies; all were deceased. While some may have been recently deceased, but soon become a part of the old (ancient) people referred in line 6. When IxAndrea referred to her mother in line 3, this topicalized utterance, *inna'a* 'my mother' was referred to by *u-* 'her' in line 2 and is a part of the entity referred to by *le'ekoo'* 'them' in line 4. Even though she did not say *inkimen na'* 'my deceased mother', the shadow of death and the sense of loss were embedded into her utterance.

Repeated use of *le'ek*, not only in the introduction of this story but also in other stories, built up the sense that it was not just IxAndrea's deceased mother, but all of her ancestors, who told IxAndrea and her mother, who probably heard the same story from her mother (IxAndrea's grandmother), about the sound and the name of *ch'oyoy*. The use of the reportative marker *b'in* 'they say' signals that the emotion and the function of the sound (recalling memories) described in the story were believed to be true and that truth was not just based on a personal experience but rather was collectively shared.

[7] Based on his unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (in French, http://olivierleguen.free.fr/Le%20Guen-pub/Le%20Guen-2006-THESE_01.pdf), abbreviation are: 1A=1st person set A (ergative), 2B=2nd person set B (absolutive), 3A=3rd person set A, EXIST=existential, FOC=focus? (no record), HAB=habituative, IDPH=ideophone? (no record), MAN=adverb of manner, NOM=nominal suffix, TD=final deictic.

3. Sound and Emotions in the Narratives

Sapir (1921) says that "every language is itself a collective art of expression. There is concealed in it a particular set of esthetic factors-phonetic, rhythmic, symbolic, morphological-which it does not completely share with any other language" (Sapir 2006 [1921]: 134). It is clear that the translations above do not capture the acoustic and semantic expressiveness of IxAndrea's utterances. The lengthening of the echo-vowel/topic marker -o in the first utterance of *ajch'oyoy* in line 7 expresses not just description of how this particular kind of cicada sounds, but thoughts, beliefs, memories and feelings that went through IxAndrea's mind as she mimicked the ch'oyoy cicada's sound. Repeated uses of *le'ek* 's/he, it', *b'in* 'they say', and *ajch'oyoy* 'cicada' create aesthetic synergistic effects from which feelings of sadness and nostalgia emerge.

Sound has a strong power that directly reaches listeners' minds. Common examples are the effects of music and songs. Many people share the experience that a particular music or a song made them sad, happy, cheered up, or frightened. David Samuels (2004) examines the feelingful qualities of "country" music in San Carlos Apache reservation in Arizona and shows this "Western music" is actually deeply connected to western Apache individuals' life histories and experiences. Echoing Sapir (1921)'s "feeling-tones of words" (Sapir, 2006[1921]: 22) and Boas's sense of an emotional attachment to aesthetic forms, Samuels (2004) argues that multiple genres of Apache music carry "feelingful iconicity" that is "emotional attachment to aesthetic forms" (Samuels, 2004:11) that creates a sense of continuity. Webster (2009) similarly defines "feelingful iconicity" as "the felt attachments that accrue to expressive forms" (Webster, 2009: 9).

Samuels (2004) also argues that with this "aesthetic experience of popular culture, … the participatory space of expressivity becomes expansive over place and time. In those moments, the wall around the present becomes transparent, and the imagined community moves beyond the bounds of the now to incorporate people who lived and suffered and felt in the past" (Samuels, 2004: 261). Not only creating the felt attachment to the aesthetic form, the music and the sounds create ambiguous spacetime and connect the past and the present.

At a more micro level, a cluster of sound, or a word, can evoke a certain memory and emotion. For example, Keith Basso (1990, 1996) demonstrated that Western Apache's place names can evoke emotional attachments to the land and memories, as well as create and circulate a "moral landscape" which connects Apaches with the words of their ancestors who named the place and to the events that happened in the past at that specific location and the moral consequences of those events in the present. The utterance of the place name and the sound of the place itself connect speakers and listeners to an individual's life history and the emotion evoked via the sound.

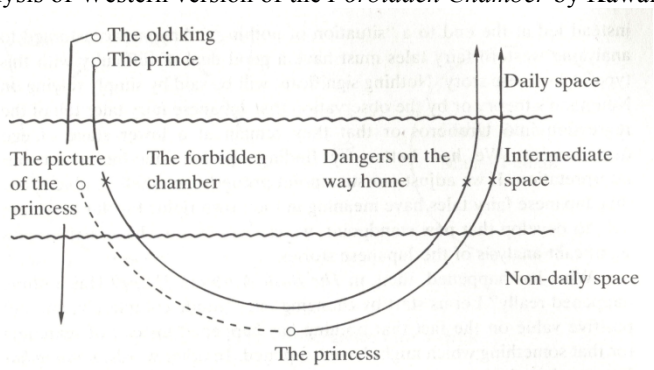
Even a single phone can demonstrate an affectivity of the sound. For example, Hill and Zepeda's (1999) work demonstrates how Tohono O'odham women utilize pulmonic ingressive sounds to create intimate relationship among them. Mitchell and Webster (2011) discuss how a velar fricative [x] in Navajo poetry evokes an affective stance, such as a feeling of "lack of control." Using Navajo poets' punning practices as the demonstration of sound affinities and phonological iconicity, Webster (2013) argues that the affective and expressive features of language have precedence over semantic-referential meanings in Navajo poetry. Those speech plays in Navajo poetry are "intimately concerned with the sounds of Navajo and the ways such sounds echo, reverberate, and evoke affinities (and stand) as a testament to the validity of Navajo being in its sounds" (Webster, 2013: 137). What is also important to Webster (2009, 2010a, 2013, 2015) is the feelings and thoughts that those poems evoke. As the importance of

Navajo poetry resides in its sounds, a word, especially a sound-based word, or ideophone, can play an important role in their poetic practices. For example, Navajo ideophones in poetry can be perceived as both poetic and political (Webster, 2009: 79) and can be considered as the "intimate grammar", or the poetic and aesthetic practices of language (Webster, 2010b, 2011, 2015).

In addition to these studies, I want to call attention to the work of a Japanese psychologist, Hayao Kawai's (1991), especially his approach to understanding the motif of the *forbidden chamber* (C611 in Stith Thompson, 1955-1958) in Japanese fairy tales, such as *Uguisu no Sato* 'the bush warbler's home'. By contrasting the completeness of the Western version (Figure 2) with the ambiguity and incompleteness (the sudden termination of the story) of the Japanese version (Figure 3), Kawai (1991: 172-176) suggested that in order to discuss the story as a whole, the subjective feelings in the reader's mind, such as the feeling of *aware* 'sorrow', needed to be incorporated.

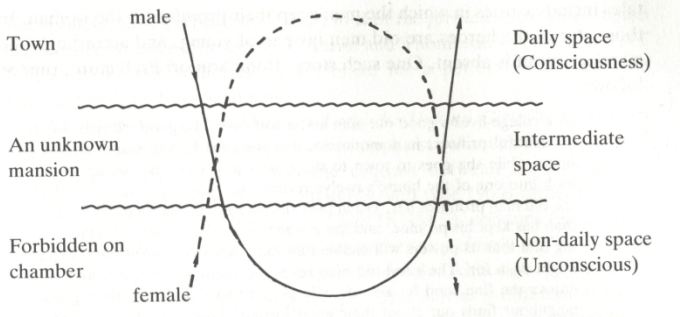
According to Kawai (1991), incompleteness awakens the feeling of *aware* induced in the reader's mind, which sorrowfully completes the Japanese sense of beauty (Figure 4). Kawai's concern with emotion as a crucial locus to complete and understand Japanese narrative resonates with the discussion of linguistic affects and the sound suggestiveness through phonological iconicity. This suggests that in order to understand or even analyze the story of *ch'oyoy*, we must take the feeling of sadness that was evoked by the sound of *ch'oyoy* into consideration.

Figure 2. Analysis of Western version of the *Forbidden Chamber* by Kawai (1991: 173)



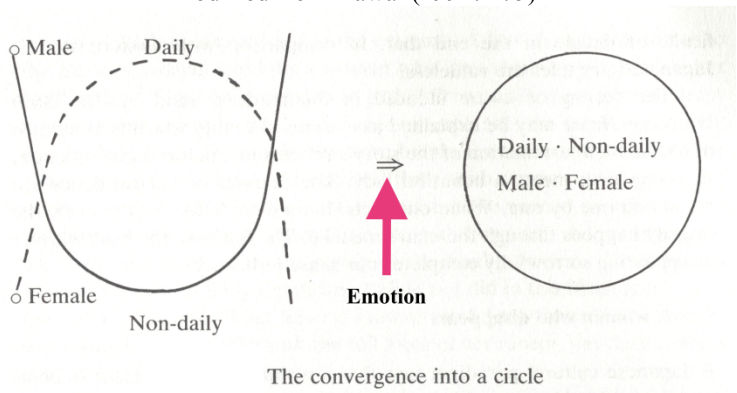
Loci of the male and the female in *Faithful John*

Figure 3. Analysis of Japanese version of the *Forbidden Chamber* by Kawai (1991: 161)



Loci of the male and the female in *Bush warblers' home*

Figure 4. The convergence into a circle through Emotion,
modified from Kawai (1991: 175)



4. Sound, Memories, Emotions, and Ambiguous Spacetime

The sound of *ajch'oyoy* evoked the memory of good old times when ancestors lived happily with plentiful resources of food and land.

(9) 20. "B'ix tun aw-ad'-ik jit-ka'al aj-nuk-uch ek'en u-men-oo' …
like now 2A-say-ITS lie-PRT MASC-big-ADJ pig 3A-make-PL
"Like you say the big pigs are lying lengthwise by them

21. in- na' in-tat-a,"
1SG.A-mother 1SG.A-father-TOP
my mother and my father,"

22. k-u-t'an in-kim-en na'-a.
INC?-3A-say 1SG.A-die-ADJ mother-TOP
says my deceased mother.

The lines 20 and 21 mention the time when IxAndrea's mother and grandparents were alive. Back then, raising pigs was a big business among the Mopans in San Antonio, where IxAndrea and AjBrigido's families were from (Gregory, 1984; Howard, 1977). Several times, AjBrigido told me about his childhood memory of getting up very early to shell corn off the cob to feed his father's pigs. According to AjBrigido's account, the pig business faded away due to the increasing cost of medicines and foods, and the rise of more industrialized commercial farms as he grew up. His childhood was also the time when villagers still frequently gathered communally and had a big fiesta that called for butchering and consuming a pig or two. In the 1980s and 1990s, AjBrigido and IxAndrea used to own some pigs like many Mopan households described by Gregory (1984: 17), who notes that a few pigs and chickens were kept for the special meals served on festive and ceremonial occasions. They also owned a small grocery store and lived in a house with a concrete floor and a zinc roof, symbols of a successful life among villagers. These accounts suggest that the memory of raising pigs was tied to the memory of festive times, business and economic prosperity, and "good old days" when everything was fine and happy. The memory also evokes a nostalgic feeling for the time with parents and

grandparents (and old people), and perhaps with children before they became adults and started to bring their problems to her.

These happy memories and feelings, however, led them to feel sad, because the sound of *ch'oyoy* made them think of deceased family and ancestors. It also reminded them of the first time when they heard the sound of *ajch'oyoy* and hence learned the story. Interestingly, IxAndrea's mother is Q'eqchi'. Although IxAndrea did not learn *kuxtal* weaving, a technique associated with Q'eqchi's, she learned the Q'eqchi' language from her mother and through interaction with other Q'eqchi' speaking women with whom her mother spent time until IxAndrea was married off to her late first husband in San Jose at the age 13. Her only elder brother, AjLucas Pop also learned Q'eqchi' but her other six younger siblings did not. Both of them expressed a nostalgic feeling and joy of speaking Q'eqchi' with her mother. The word *ch'oyoy* seems to be only attested among Mopans, and there is no entry in Kaufman with Justeson's (2003) Mayan Etymological Dictionary. However, historical and geographic mobility practiced among the Mopans (Feldman, 2000, Jones, 1989, 1998; Palka, 2005; Thompson, 1972, 1977) , ambiguous mixed ethnic identity stemming from frequent exogamous marriages between the Mopans and the Q'eqchi's, and the strong sense of belonging to the land, all suggest that the word *ch'oyoy* may be used by both Q'eqchi' and Mopan Mayas in this region and that *'uchb'en kristiyaanoj* 'ancient people' whose voices and emotions are represented by Ch'oyoy cicada's cry are people who used to live on this land, all Mayas with no distinctive differentiation in their ethnic identity. Similarly, when IxAndrea was recalling the memories of her deceased relatives and thinking of her ancestors, their images reflects both IxAndrea and many local elders' identities as inclusive "Maayaj", rather than the recently politically polarized and emphasized single ethnic identity as either Q'eqchi' or Mopan. The temporal axis and person deixis in this story are rather ambiguous. For example, "they" in line 23 might indicate both cicadas and ancestors (mothers and fathers) and "she (who feels sad)" in line 25 could be either IxAndrea's mother or grandmother, or implying both. When IxAndrea said the name of *ch'oyoy* again in line 19, the referent spacetime of this image and the sound of *ch'oyoy* in line 19 were both in the distant past with ancestors and in the near past, which they, IxAndrea and her mother, individually experienced (see Hofling, 1993 for the related discussion of discourse structure of making time and space in Itzaj Maya narrative).

(10) 19. Tan aj-ch'oyoy-o' ..
DUR MASC-cicada-TOP
There was the Ch'oyoy cicada,

In contrast, the sound of *ch'oyoy* was heard both in the past and in the present when this story was being told. Here, the utterance of *ajch'oyoyo*, a combination of a classifier, name, and a topic marker, indicates not only its name but also the sounds the name evokes - the call of *ajch'oyoy* and the voice of the beloved person who told the story of ajch'oyoy. Echoing Hill and Zepeda's (1999) work that demonstrates how Tohono O'odham women utilize pulmonic ingressive sound to create intimate relationship among them, it seems that this particular cry of *ch'oyoy* cicada, and people's voice itself mimicking its sound both create an intimate feeling and ties between speakers and hearers. Usually silenced pan-Maya identity was signified by the memory and feelingful iconicity of these ancestors voices that evokes the sense that people lived here were neither Q'eqchi's nor Mopans, but inclusive Mayas.

The ambiguity of tense marking and person marking in this story also suggests the breakage of a clear boundary between present and past as well as story-teller and the story's referents respectively. IxAndrea was at the ruin that day and saw the vestiges of

those who lived before her might have triggered her memories and sadness more than usual. Thinking about deceased loved ones often ends up with a heart-wrenching sense of loss even though memories of the deceased also contain feelings of joy and happiness. The fact that the proximity between the living and the dead of the Mayas has been very tight (McAnany, 1995) and that women often take care of the dead (Hofling, 2015, personal communication; Vogt, 1976) may have increased IxAndrea and her mother's feelings of grief and sorrow as women. When she uttered the sound and the name of *ch'oyoy*, she resonated her memory and emotion with a dialogue that she had with her mother about *ch'oyoy*. That dialogue was a recurrence of a discourse her mother had with her grandmother and with their ancestors and thus the re-creation of associated emotions. The sound of *ch'oyoy* in her mind was made both by the *ch'oyoy* cicada and by "them", her mother and their ancestors.

By explaining to me what ch'oyoy means to her, IxAndrea created an ambiguous spacetime of present and past, story-tellers and listeners, and sounds and meanings. And all are framed by the utterance of the name and the sound of *ch'oyoy* in lines 7 and 8.

Conclusion

I never heard my grandmother speaking in Miyako, nor visited the Island where my ancestors lived. Situating myself into the site of language acquisition, my experience resonated with the start Orlando showed when he truly learned the meaning of *alam* 'meat of sprouting corozo palm' but it differs from the joy that Richard Peck showed when he learned *maneeb' xot-ja'* his long-awaited Mopan word for "bridge" (Tanaka, 2012). Through my language documentation fieldwork, I have developed nostalgic affection and diasporic identity as a heritage non-speaker of Miyako, one of endangered Ryukyuan languages in Okinawa Islands, Japan. As a Japanese speaker, I have developed a strong emotional attachment to sound symbolism. However, in this case, the affection I feel for this onomatopoeic word, *ch'oyoy* stemmed mainly from my felt attachment to this particular speech community I was documenting as well as to my ancestors and their language that I had lost. Sapir (1933: 1) stated language as "primarily a system of phonetic symbols for the expression of communicable thought and feeling." In terms of communication, I cannot be a fully qualified member for either the Maya or the Miyako language communities. However, in this moment, I was a part of IxAndrea's speech community. Through language documentation, the border between strangeness and familiarity became permeable; and that enabled me to recognize distinct and arbitrary sequences of phonemes as meaningful symbols of reference (Sapir, 1933).

The importance of the *ch'oyoy* story resides in its sound and the emotion evoked, not solely in its linguistic features. More than just a name or a mere call, the sound of *ch'oyoy* consists of something untranslatable, such as the subjective feelings and memories in the story-tellers' and in the listeners' minds. These untranslatables were the vestiges of the deceased, evoked and convoked through the sound of *ch'oyoy*. Long ago, they were embedded and circulated only within listeners' memories and transmitted to the next generation through direct oral communication. The act of linguistic documentation, however, enabled researchers to physically capture them within a "signifying instrument (Derrida, 1981; McDowell 2000; Hill, 2015)," a digital voice recorder. The sound was heard and memorized in the past, then recurred and was restored in the present. The ambiguous spacetime summoned by the call of *ch'oyoy* triggered the signification of the sound through which a new iconicity and indexicality between the sound and meaning were created, and that knowledge will be circulated and transmitted from the story-teller to the listeners in the "sites" of language documentation.

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Whenever I listen to the recording, my mind travels back to the room with Na'chiin and Tata, filled with both dusk lights and darkness. When I say "*ch'oyoy*," I hear Na'chiin's voice resonating with mine that reminds me of a glimpse of tears in her eyes. Her mother and her baby are also the mother and a child of her deceased mother; all of them are gone. So are my brother, grandparents, and my *Miyako* ancestors. My heart is filled with sadness synchronizing with her sorrow. It is them; the sound of *ajch'oyoy* is the voice of them; they are her ancestors, my Na'chiin, IxAndrea's ancestors' voice… that is the sound of *ajch'oyoy*.

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