

Ohkado Masayuki

Ohkado Masayuki (b 1963) is a Japanese linguistics professor and parapsychologist, with interests in postmortem survival phenomena, chiefly reincarnation but also memories of birth, pre-birth and intermission, and near-death experiences. He has conducted multiple surveys on the prevalence of birth, pre-birth, intermission and past-life memories in children.

Background and Education

Ohkado¹ was born on 12 September 1963 in the city of Ise in Mie Prefecture, Japan. He earned his baccalaureate in English studies from the Osaka University of foreign studies in 1986, his masters in English linguistics from Nagoya University in 1988, and his PhD in Liberal Arts from the University of Amsterdam in 2005.²

Though Ise is home to one of Japan's greatest religious shrines, Ohkado's parents rarely spoke of spiritual matters, and his father, a junior high school teacher, strongly advocated materialistic science. His son followed in that position until he started reading books on the meaning of life and death in response to family bereavements and other striking events, including one of his students joining the mass-murdering cult Aum Shinriko, and the Kobe child murders of 1997.

The book [*Value of Life*](#) by Iida Fumihiko introduced him to the study of [reincarnation](#), [near-death experiences](#) (NDEs) and [past-life regression](#). Ohkado found the evidence persuasive and resolved to pursue the research himself,³ struck by how little of it came from Japanese sources, and also unsatisfied by materialistic explanations for human linguistic ability.

Ohkado also has musical interests as a pop/rock singer, songwriter and guitarist. He has released three CDs (all available on amazon.co.jp) and some of his songs can be watched on his [YouTube channel](#).) His song lyrics (all in Japanese) and some photos and videos can be seen on his website [here](#).

He grew up with one younger brother and has a wife and two daughters.

Positions Held

Ohkado is currently a professor in the Department of Language and Cultures, Graduate School of Global Humanics, Department of General Education at Chubu University, Japan, having accepted the position in April 2011. Previously he has held other teaching positions at Chubu University and other institutions including Osaka Kyoiku University.

Ohkado has been a visiting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Amsterdam, and the [Division of Perceptual Studies](#), University of Virginia Medical School Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences, USA – the division originally headed by the pioneering reincarnation researcher [Ian Stevenson](#) – since March 2012.

He has also served with several Japanese organizations involved in postmortem survival research. At the [International Society of Life Information Science](#), whose purpose is the scientific study of unexplained phenomena of mind, consciousness and spirit, he held the positions of director, managing director and member of the editorial board. He has also served the Society for Mind-Body Science as director and the Japan Medical Hypnosis Association as advisor.[4](#)

Reincarnation Research

Ohkado's mainstream academic interest is linguistics, specifically concerning the English language and its history. Accordingly, for his first reincarnation investigation he sought out a case of [xenoglossy](#) (linguistic ability without apparent learning). In 2009, he discovered a Japanese housewife who, under hypnotic regression, remembered a past life in Nepal as a village chief. Several remembered facts were verified and with the aid of a native Nepali speaker she was found under hypnosis to be able to converse in Nepali (responsive xenoglossy).[5](#)

Subsequently Ohkado investigated and published several Japanese reincarnation cases including the historical case of Koyata Katsugoro, a young farmer's son whose past-life memories were investigated by respected scholars in the early nineteenth century. Ohkado published a report of Katsugoro's case in the Japanese publication *Bouekifuu* in 2011 and more recently in the *Psi Encyclopedia* [here](#).

Ohkado published two international cases. One concerned Tomo, a young Japanese boy who recalled a life in 'Edinbua' (Edinburgh) and showed a striking ease in learning English; he also learned to read Latin characters before learning Japanese, and was heard singing along with the Carpenters' song 'Top of the World'.[6](#) In the second, a young Japanese girl recalled a life in India and drew pictures of her past self wearing a *bindi*, the forehead marking worn by Hindu women.[7](#) Samples of her drawings can be seen [here](#).

In 2014, Ohkado published the results of an innovative experiment testing whether Burmese children who recalled lives as Japanese soldiers during the Japanese occupation of Burma really did have Japanese-looking facial features, as local people claimed. He had a group of Japanese subjects look at two sets of photographs, one set showing Burmese children with claimed non-Japanese past lives, and the others of Burmese children with claimed Japanese past lives. The subjects did indeed rate the latter as having features that looked more Japanese to a statistically significant degree.[8](#)

Ohkado has also explored same-family reincarnation cases, suicide cases and a case involving abortion.

Children's Birth, Prebirth, Intermission and Past-Life Memories

Ohkado collaborated on several publications with Ikegawa Akira, a medical doctor who came across children with past-life memories while studying children's prenatal memories. In their first report, they gave examples of children who

described [intermission memories](#) but not past-life memories, suggesting that these be viewed within the larger context of birth, prebirth, intermission and past-life memories.⁹

Ohkado and Ikegawa published *We Can Be Reborn* in Japanese in 2015.

Independently, Ohkado published a paper in the *Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health* on a large-scale internet survey he conducted with parents in Japan, in which he found a surprisingly high prevalence of children remembering birth, being in the womb, intermissions and past lives, in descending order.¹⁰

Near-Death Experiences

In a co-authored paper, Ohkado and [Bruce Greyson](#) probed key differences between Japanese and Western [near-death experiences](#) with regard to the way experiencers interpreted and interacted with their visions of light and images of heaven, concluding that these were due to cultural factors. They also commented on the absence in Japanese cases of the life review. Ohkado notes, however, that in a separate investigation he was told by several children of a ‘reflection room’, a dark space that spirits could voluntarily enter to contemplate their past actions.¹¹

Ohkado also co-authored with Greyson a study comparing the scores of two groups of subjects – ones who underwent spontaneous NDEs versus ones who had death experiences while under hypnotic regression – on Greyson’s NDE scale, which measures depth of experience. Results showed the regression scores as comparable to the NDE scores and in fact higher than those from one NDE study, warranting further research. ¹²

Awards for Parapsychological Achievements

Ohkado has received the following awards for his parapsychological work:

Promotion Prize, Prize of the International Society of Life Information Science, 31 March 2010.

Yuasa Prize (Promotion Prize) for *A Study of Spirituality, with Special Reference to Xenoglossy*. (2011). Society for Mind-Body Science, 24 November 2012.

Excellent Paper Prize, International Society of Life Information Science, 1 July 2019.

Select Works on Paranormal Topics

This list includes works in English and Japanese. For a full list of Ohkado’s publications see the collection on his website [here](#) and Google Scholar [here](#).

Books

In English:

Katsugoro and Other Reincarnation Cases in Japan (2024). Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA: Afterworlds Press.

In Japanese:

A Scientific Approach to 'What Happens When a Person Dies?' (2010). Kasugai, Japan: Institute of Global Humanics, Chubu University.

A Study of Spirituality, with Special Reference to Xenoglossy. (2011) Nagoya, Japan: Fubaisha.

We Can Be Reborn (2015, with A. Ikegawa). Tokyo: Poplar Publishing.

Why Are People Born and Why Do They Die? (2015) Tokyo: Takarajima.

Journal Papers

[A study of a case supporting the 'reincarnation hypothesis'](#) (2009, with K. Inagaki, N. Suetake, & S. Okamoto). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 27/2, 183-85.

[On xenoglossy occurring in hypnosis and what it suggests](#) (2010, with K. Inagaki, N. Suetake, & S. Okamoto). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 28/1, 128-33.

Children with 'past-life' memories – A case study of a Japanese child (2011). *Journal of Mind-Body Science* 20, 33-42. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

The story of Katsugoro as a case of reincarnation type (2011). *Bouekifuu* 5, 233-39.

[Verification of 'past-life' recalls under hypnosis](#) (2011, with S. Okamoto). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 29/1, 87-89.

[Spirituality and the level of happiness](#) (2012). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 30/1, 84-7.

[Children with 'past-life' memories—A Case of a Japanese female child with 'memories' as an Indian](#) (2012). *Journal of Mind-Body Science* 21, 17-25. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

[A case of a Japanese child with past-life memories](#) (2013). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 27/4, 625-36.

[Facial features of Burmese with past-life memories as Japanese soldiers](#) (2014). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 28/4, 597-603.

[Children with life-between-life memories](#) (2014, with A. Ikegawa,). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 28/3, 477-90.

[A comparative analysis of Japanese and Western NDEs](#) (2014, with B. Greyson). *Journal of Near-Death Studies* 32/4, 187-98.

[A case of xenoglossy occurring under hypnosis](#) (2014, with S. Okamoto). *Parathropology* 5/1 (January), 91-7.

[Children's birth, womb, prelife, and past-life memories: Results of an internet-based survey](#) (2015). *Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health* 30/1, 1-16.

[A spontaneous case of the reincarnation type showing characteristics similar to the therapeutic effects](#) (2016). *Journal of the Faculty of General Education, Chubu University* 2, 9-21. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

[A same-family case of the reincarnation type in Japan](#) (2016). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 30/4, 524-36.

[Children with pre- and perinatal memories -Three Japanese cases](#) (2017). *Journal of the Faculty of General Education, Chubu University* 3, 13-27. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

[Same-family cases of the reincarnation type in Japan](#) (2017). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 31/4, 551-71.

[A comparison of hypnotically-induced death experiences and near-death experiences](#) (2018, with B. Greyson). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 36/2, 73-7.

A case of the reincarnation type involving memories of committing suicide (2018). *Journal of the Faculty of General Education, Chubu University* 4, 15-31. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

[A case of spiritually transformative experiences induced by a child's prenatal memories](#) (2018). *Journal of Mind-Body Science* 27/1, 13-22. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

[A new approach to collecting children's statements concerning their prenatal and perinatal memories](#) (2018). *Biomedical Journal of Scientific and Technical Research* 4/4, 1-4.

Philosophical reflections on immortality, with special reference to the survival hypothesis (2019). *Journal of Mind-Body Science*, 28/1, 1-9. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

[Similarities between life-between-life experiences and near-death experiences -- Story of Butterfly Island](#) (2019). *Chubu University Journal of Liberal Arts* 1, 58-71. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

How real are 'death' experiences during hypnotic regression therapy? Comparison with near-death experiences (2020). *Science of Hypnosis* 35/1, 9-18. (In Japanese.)

[Controversy over the notion of 'prenatal memory' \(Tainai Kioku\)](#) (2020). *Journal of Mind-Body Science* 29/1, 22-31. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

[A case of the reincarnation type involving abortion](#) (2020). *Chubu University Journal of Liberal Arts* 2, 14-30. (In Japanese with English abstract.)

Conference Presentation DVDs

Children with life-between-life memories (2013, with Ikegawa A.) Unsettled Science: Complete Set of DVDs, Vol. 4, Society for Scientific Exploration. [Recording of the 32nd Annual Conference of the Society for Scientific Exploration held at The Dearborn Inn, Dearborn, Michigan, 6-8 June 2013.]

Book Review

Irreducible Mind: Toward a Psychology for the 21st Century, by E.F. Kelly, E.W. Kelly, A. Crabtree, A. Gauld, M. Grosso, & B. Greyson (2007). *Chubu International Review* 5, 197-206. (In Japanese.)

Psi Encyclopedia Articles

[Japanese Children with Past-Life Memories](#) (2022).

[Katsugoro \(reincarnation case\)](#) (2021).

KM Wehrstein

Literature

Ohkado M. (2012). Children with 'past-life memories': A case of a Japanese female child with 'memories' as an Indian [In Japanese with abstract in English]. *人体科学* 21/1, 17-25.

Ohkado M. (2013). [A Case of a Japanese child with past-life memories](#). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 27/4, 625-36.

Ohkado M. (2014). [Facial features of Burmese with past-life memories as Japanese soldiers](#). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 28/4, 597-603.

Ohkado M. (2015). [Children's birth, womb, prelife, and past-life memories: Results of an Internet-based survey](#). *Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health* 30/1, 1-16.

Ohkado M. (2016). [A same-family case of the reincarnation type in Japan](#) (2016). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 30/4, 524-36.

Ohkado M., & Greyson, B. (2018). [A comparison of hypnotically-induced death experiences and near-death experiences](#). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 36/2, 73-7.

Ohkado M. (2021). [A brief biography \(CV\) of Dr. Masayuki Ohkado](#). [Web Page.]

Ohkado M., & Ikegawa, A. (2014). [Children with life-between-life memories](#). *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 28/3, 477-90.

Ohkado M., Inagaki K., Suetake N., & Okamoto S. (2009). [A study of a case supporting the 'reincarnation hypothesis'](#). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 27/2, 183-85.

Ohkado M., Inagaki K., Suetake N., & Okamoto S. (2010). [On xenoglossy occurring in hypnosis and what it suggests](#) *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 28/1, 128-33.

Ohkado M., & Okamoto S. (2011). [Verification of 'past-life' recalls under hypnosis](#). *Journal of International Society of Life Information Science* 29/1, 87-89.

Endnotes

Footnotes

- [1.](#) In this article his full name and other full Japanese names are rendered Japanese style: family name first and given name second.
- [2.](#) Ohkado (2021).
- [3.](#) Personal communications, October 2021.
- [4.](#) Ohkado (2021).
- [5.](#) Ohkado, Inagaki, Suetake & Okamoto (2009, 2010), Ohkado & Okamoto (2011).
- [6.](#) Ohkado (2013).
- [7.](#) Ohkado (2012).
- [8.](#) Ohkado (2014).
- [9.](#) Ohkado & Ikegawa (2014).
- [10.](#) Ohkado (2015).
- [11.](#) Ohkado (2016).
- [12.](#) Ohkado & Greyson (2018).