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The modern Japanese tone and accent systems

Abstract

The prosodic systems of the modern Japanese dialects are diverse. Some dialects are clearly tonal, while other dialects can be described in terms of (pitch) accent. In my talk I will introduce the different systems and compare them to the far richer set of tonal distinctions found in Middle Japanese. I will then discuss ways in which the modern systems may have derived from this older system, based on comparisons with tonal developments in other languages.