Comments on Four Papers:
Hirose & Kitagawa
Jennifer Smith
Igarashi & Kitagawa
Norvin Richards

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Wh Prosody and Syntax

- Tradition: Production in Tokyo Japanese
- Perception/comprehension in Tokyo Japanese (Hirose & Kitagawa)
  - speaker-listener asymmetry, F0 & duration
- Other Japanese dialects (Igarashi & Kitagawa; Smith)
  - generalization of ‘post-focal restraint’
- Beyond Japanese (Richards)
  - cross-linguistic generalization as to a condition on Wh prosody.
Wh focus and Post-focal compression of pitch

anáta-wa aómori-de náoko-to NÁni-o mimásita-ka?
‘you-TOPIc Aomori-in Naoko-with see-PAST-Q?’
= What did you see with Naoko in Aomori?
Question 1  accent deletion or phonetic reduction?

If it is a phonological accent **deletion**, lexically unaccented words/phrases in the post-focal position should not be affected; sentences with lexically accented and unaccented words in this position should be intonationally neutralized.

If it is a phonetic **reduction** in pitch (range), lexically unaccented words should be equally affected; they should not be neutralized with lexically accented words.

Compare ‘Wh+unaccented words’ with ‘Wh+accented words’ as well as ‘non-Wh+unaccented words’.

Cf. nónde míru ‘drink-see=attempt to drink’
    nónde iru ‘drink-be’=‘is drinking’
Question 1’ Osaka Japanese

- Tokyo
  NAni-o nomimasu-ka?
  ‘what (do you) drink?’
  NAni-ka nomimasu-ka?
  ‘(Do you) drink anything?’

- Osaka
  nani-O nomimasu-ka?  naNI nomu?
  naNI-ka nomimasu-ka?  naNIka nomu?
  Sugito (200?): intonationally indistinguishable.

- No post-focal reduction in Osaka Japanese?
Question 2: prosodic phrase

- Popular interpretation: syntactic Wh domain coincides with a prosodic domain.
- What is this prosodic domain?
- **Wh domain=Major Phrase** (=intermediate phrase)?
  - Pierrehumbert & Beckman (1988), Selkirk, etc.
  - vs. Kubozono (2005), Kubozono, Kitagawa & Yoshida (morning session)
If post-focal pitch compression = accent deletion

Wh domain may be Minor Phrase

(MiP = domain of initial rise, domain where at most one lexical accent can be realized)

anáta-wa aómori-de náoko-to NÁni-o mimásita-ka?
Question 3: Phrasing?

- Does ‘phrasing’ correctly capture the Wh domain?
- Is phrasing the only (right) way of explaining Wh prosody?
- Cf. Kubozono, Kitagawa & Yoshida
- Focus prosody may be independent of intonational phrasing (cf. Ishihara 2005).
Thank You