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**A prosodic unit and phonological process of the Miyako-jima
and Tarama-jima systems in Miyako Ryukyuan**

MATSUMORI Akiko
Japan Women's University

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While most generalizations concerning Japanese prosody have been made based on the accent and intonation of Standard (Tokyo) Japanese, the recent development of descriptive studies on the prosody of Ryukyuan dialects, the sister varieties of mainland Japanese, has provided some new and interesting insights into the prosodic theory of Japanese and Ryukyuan.

Focusing on the three-pattern prosodic systems in Miyako Ryukyuan, one of the endangered dialects in the Japonic-family (i.e., Japanese and Ryukyuan) languages, this presentation will first provide two sets of data, both of which delineate the uniqueness of the systems: (i) evidence to show that a prosodic unit Prosodic Word (PW) is necessary, in addition to mora, for the accent assignment of the varieties of Miyako Ryukyuan; (ii) in Tarama-jima, within the same region, the accent assigned in each minor phrase (MiP) is realized with alternating patterns between H*L and L*H within a major phrase (MaP).

One of the prosodic units, based on which places of accent in Miyako Ryukyuan is decided, is the PW, a unit which is only determined by referring to its morphological information. This is represented by the following three-way distinction of the Uechi dialect in Miyako-jima, in which the bold

fonts indicate H-tone, while normal fonts L-tone, and “]” indicates the place of the pitch fall:

A	mizu	gami	ka] ra du...	from a water pot
B	Msu]	gami	kara du ...	from a miso pot
C	u] pusu	gami	kara du ...	from a sea-water pot

We will then see, by examining the dialects of Uechi and Yonaha in Miyako-jima, that the recursive structure of PW has to be assumed in order to explain the patterns of neutralization of the three-way distinction.

This paper will then show, focusing on the system of Tarama-jima, that the accent assigned to each MiP is realized showing an alternating pattern, at the level of MaP, between H*L and L*H patterns (i.e., the accent of the first MiP within a MaP is realized with the H*L pattern, while the accent of the second MiP is realized with the L*H pattern, the accent of the third MiP is realized with the H*L pattern, etc.), which is illustrated below:

<**kjuu ma'i**>_{MiP} <upu'**sj**u+**gami u**>_{MiP} <**katami'** i-but**aL**>_{MiP}
H*L **L*H** **H*L**
 (They) were carrying the sea-water pot on their shoulders today, too.

This is in stark contrast to the Tokyo Japanese, in which accent is always realized with the H*L pattern, no matter which MiP accents are included:

<**kjo'o mo**>_{MiP} <**ni'**motu o>_{MiP} <**katu'**ide-ita>_{MiP}
H*L **H*L** **H*L**
 (They) were carrying their belongings on their shoulders today, too.

The prosodic unit and the phonological process in Miyako Ryukyuan reported above have not been found in any of the dialects of the Japonic languages, except for Yaeyama. Based on these data, the presentation predicts that studies on the prosodic systems of the Miyako Ryukyuan dialects will make significant contributions to the future development of prosodic theory in general.