

Tonal alignment and preaccentuation

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This paper proposes a new version of the antepenultimate accent principle that defines the default location of the pitch accent in Japanese words. The chief innovation is that accent in compounds with "short" N2 (one or two moras—so-called "preaccentuation" at the end of N1) now follows from the same principle, as does, with suitable extensions, the N2-initial accent in compounds with "long" N2 (three to four moras).

The basic explanation relies on two hypotheses. (1) In compounds with short N2, the second member is a sub-word constituent, a foot, and therefore not the head of the whole compound (the first part is the head). The result is a suffixation-like structure. (2) The second factor is NONFINALITY itself, which we claim applies only to weak final moras/syllables (weak = not head of a foot). The second part of a compound, even if it is not a full prosodic word, is still a foot and hence not prosodically weak, so it is not barred from carrying tones by tonal NONFINALITY.

Finally, we show that the prototypical junctural compound accent in word-word compounds at the beginning of N2 follows from a very simple extension of the analysis of unaccentedness in Japanese in Ito and Mester (2016).