

## Intonation of Wh-Questions in the Aizu Dialect

Past research (e.g., Ishihara 2003, Kibe 2010) has investigated the intonation used in wh-questions in a variety of Japanese dialects. However, there have been no in-depth investigations of the intonation used in wh-questions in the Aizu-region dialects of Fukushima. We collected data from speakers of the dialects of this region. In this paper, we describe the basic intonation patterns used in (short- and long-distance) single wh-questions and in multiple wh-questions.

We found several interesting features (not found in comparable data collected by Ishihara 2003 with speakers of standard Japanese) in wh-questions. Fig. 1 shows the pitch track for the single short-distance wh-question in (1), spoken by a 95 year-old female. The blue line in the figure shows the pitch and the following tiers show what was spoken. First, the highest pitch does not fall on the wh-word *nani* ‘what’. Second, the question, which ends with the interrogative marker *be*, ends in falling intonation. The long-distance single wh-question (2), spoken by a 58 year-old female ends in *da-be*, and the speaker uses falling intonation (pitch track is not shown here). Fig. 2 shows the pitch track for the multiple wh-question (3), as spoken by a 94-year-old male. This is interesting because it ends in falling intonation and there is no interrogative particle. Thus, the only indication that this is a wh-question is the presence of the two wh-phrases *dare* and *nani*.

(1) *Jisama nagashi-de nani nondara-be?*  
grandpa kitchen-in what drink Q  
‘What did grandpa drink in the kitchen?’

(3) *Dare-ga ano ban nani-o sokora-hen*  
Who-Nom that evening what-Acc there  
*de kutta?*  
at ate  
Who ate what over there that evening?

(2) *Anesa-wa jicchi-ga nani mizuya-*  
Sister-Top grandpa-Nom what kitchen  
*de nonda-to ima omotten da-be?*

in drink-Comp now think Q  
‘What does my sister think that grandpa was  
drinking in the kitchen?’

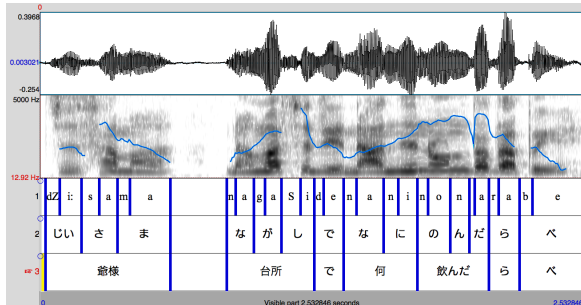


Fig. 1: Pitch track for (1)

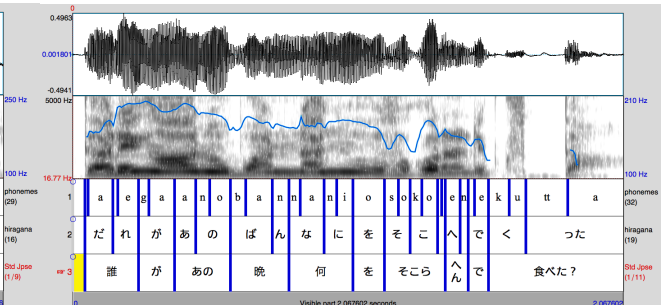


Fig. 2: Pitch track for (3)

We found several distinct features (not found in standard Japanese) in wh-questions in the Aizu-region dialect. First, highest pitch does not necessarily fall on a wh-phrase. Second, a wh-question need not end in rising intonation, even in the absence of a question particle. In addition, it is likely that intonation, as well as question forms, are influenced by various factors, such as age, gender, and location within the Aizu region. We are currently collecting more data, which we hope will shed light on these influences and on the intonation patterns that are utilized in the Aizu-region dialects. We will present further details about, and analyses of, the intonation patterns used in these dialects.

**References:** [1] Ishihara, Shinichiro. 2003. Intonation and interface conditions. MIT dissertation. [2] Kibe, Yoko. 2010. Intonation-no-chiiki-sa Shitsumonbun-no-intonation. In *Hogen-no-hakken shirazaru chikisa-o shiru*. Tokyo: Hituzi Shobo. 1-20.