What is pitch accent?
○○○○○

Japanese pitch accent
○○○○

Now what?
○○○○

Japanese pitch accent

A short introduction

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Listen:

- I'll read three words out loud:

What is pitch accent?
●oooo

Japanese pitch accent
oooo

Now what?
oooo

Listen:

- I'll read three words out loud:
- がくせい [0]
  学生

What is pitch accent?
●○○○○

Japanese pitch accent
○○○○

Now what?
○○○○

Listen:

- I'll read three words out loud:
- <ruby>学生<rt>がくせい [0]</rt></ruby>
- <ruby>世界<rt>せかい [1]</rt></ruby>

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●○○○○

Japanese pitch accent
○○○○

Now what?
○○○○

Listen:

- I'll read three words out loud:
- <ruby>学生<rt>がくせい [0]</rt></ruby>
- <ruby>世界<rt>せかい [1]</rt></ruby>
- <ruby>歩く<rt>あるく [2]</rt></ruby>

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●○○○○

Japanese pitch accent
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Now what?
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Listen:

- I'll read three words out loud:
- がくせい [0]
  学生
- せかい [1]
  世界
- あるく [2]
  歩く

Pitch accent

Words differ in pitch!

What is pitch accent?
○●○○○

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Pitch accent in Japanese

- Distinct from intonation
  - Word pitch is preserved through changes in intonation
- Words rarely deviate from a set pitch pattern (in a dialect)

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Pitch accent contrasts stress accent

- Pitch accent language: syllables are emphasized through variation in pitch
  - Japanese
  - Swedish
  - Sanskrit
- Stress accent language: syllables are emphasized through variation in stress
  - English
  - Latin (and romance languages)
  - Arabic

- incorrect emphasis location makes words sound wrong!

Correct	Incorrect
orange	or**an**ge
party	par**ty**
com**pu**ter	**com**puter
ex**treme**	**ex**treme

What is pitch accent?
ooooeo

Japanese pitch accent
oooo

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oooo

Emphasis method

Japanese pitch accent

Syllables in Japanese are emphasized through **drops in pitch**

- In both English and Japanese, at most one syllable is emphasized
  - In English, everything after a stressed syllable is unstressed
  - In Japanese, once the pitch falls it won't rise again

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Dictionary notation

extreme

adjective

UK 🔊 /ɪkˈstriːm/ US 🔊 /ɪkˈstriːm/

歩く

ある・く [2]【歩く】
（動カ五）
①人や動物が普通の足どりで，体を前方に移動させる。歩行する。あゆむ。「駅まで―・く」
②徒歩や乗り物で行く。「世界の各地を―・く」
③経過する。進む。生きる。「人生の裏街道を―・く」
④野球で，打者が四死球で一塁に行く。
⑤〈多く，他の動詞の下に付けて〉…してまわる。「製品を売り―・く」「孫の自慢をして―・く」〔上代，歩行の意では「あゆむ」が使われ，「あるく」は主に移動する意に用いられた〕
可能あるける

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Pitch pattern 1: 平板 (へいばん)

- "Flat" pattern (typically, pitch rises slightly)
- Next particle attaches high
- Notated [0]
- Examples: 私, 日本語, それ, これ, 君, 勉強

私は　　日本語を　　勉強しています

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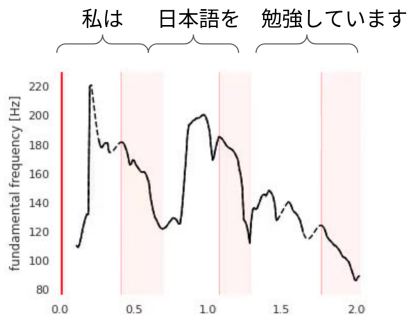
Pitch pattern 2: 頭高

- Pitch falls on the first syllable
- Notated [1]
- Examples: 今日, 彼, 綺麗

Pitch pattern 3: 中高
なかだか

- Low-high-low pattern
- Syllable right behind the pitch drop is called the *accent nucleus*
- Denoted by [1-index of accent nucleus]
- Examples: 歩く [2], 長い [2], 十人十色[5], ありがとうござ
  います [2]
  じゅうにんといろ

Pitch pattern 4: 尾高

- Very similar to the flat pattern, except the pitch drops *before* the next particle.
- 気 [0] になる vs 木 [1] になる
- Examples: 弟, 足, 好き

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Pitch is semantically important

Some words differ only by pitch!

| 箸 (はし [1]): chopsticks | 橋 (はし [2]): bridge |
雨 (あめ [1]): rain	飴 (あめ [0]): candy
酒 (さけ [0]): alcohol	鮭 (さけ [1]): salmon
今 (いま [1]): now	居間 (いま [2]): living room

People will still understand you with context but...

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Analysis of NHK 日本語発音アクセント新辞典 (nouns)

Noun pitch accent distribution

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oooo

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ooeoo
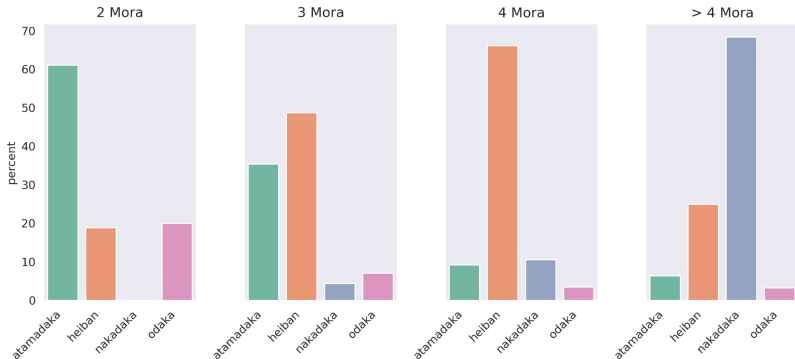
Analysis of NHK 日本語発音アクセント新辞典 (nouns)

Noun pitch accent distribution
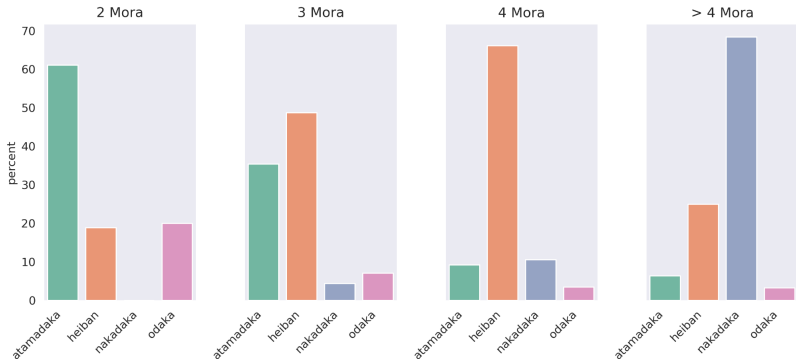
- 2-mora noun is usually [1]
- 4-mora noun is usually [0]

What is pitch accent?
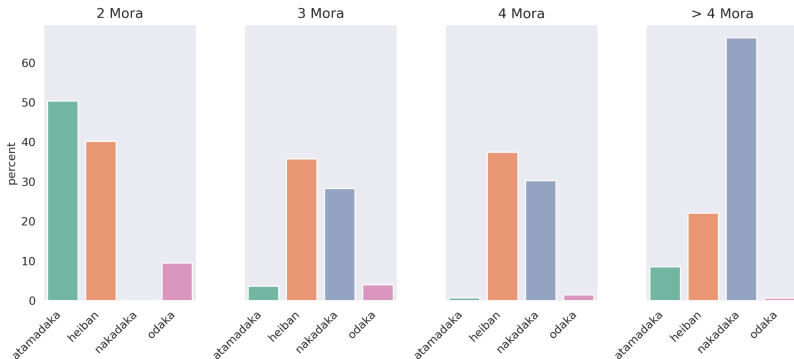○○○○○

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Analysis of NHK 日本語発音アクセント新辞典 (verbs)

Verb pitch accent distribution

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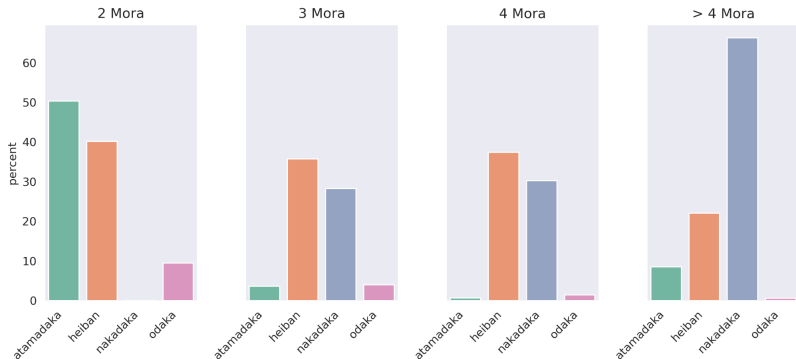
Analysis of NHK 日本語発音アクセント新辞典 (verbs)

Verb pitch accent distribution

- yeah… we're screwed

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Miscellaneous thoughts on learning pitch

- Native stress-accent speakers have a hard time noticing pitch
- Learning pitch is similar to learning readings
    - Intuitive patterns emerge after seeing a lot
    - There are always more exceptions to memorize