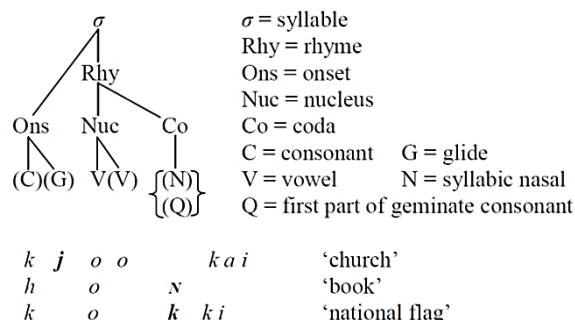


Kuniya Nasukawa (Tohoku Gakuin University, Sendai, Japan): *Syllabification issues in Japanese: the case of the palatal glide*

Resum:

In the literature (Abe 1987, et passim), it is assumed that Japanese allows consonant sequences word/morpheme-initially (e.g. *kjookai* 'church') and word/morpheme-medially (e.g. *kokki* 'national flag').



And in both cases, the segments concerned are subject to certain distributional restrictions. In a word-initial sequence, the first C position is distributionally free while the second must contain a palatal glide *j*: (e.g. *kjookai* 'church', *bjooki* 'illness'). Word-medially, on the other hand, a consonant sequence must form a full or partial geminate. The standard view is to treat the first member of a geminate as being in a syllable coda and the second member in the onset of a following syllable (e.g. *kok.ki* 'national flag', *han.ko* 'stamp').

Meanwhile, an alternative approach to word-medial sequences is set out in Nasukawa (2004, 2005, 2010ab, 2012), who claims that geminates (either full or partial) are not true geminates, but rather, are pseudo-geminates consisting of two identical consonants separated by a silent vowel (i.e. an empty nuclear position). This structure is supported by evidence from static distributional patterns and word formation processes. And importantly, we may infer from it that Japanese does not have medial consonant clusters in the traditional sense.

This paper extends the argument just outlined by claiming that not only word-medial sequences but also word-initial consonant sequences are absent from the phonology of Japanese. More precisely, it challenges the idea that the palatal glide *j* is an onset segment and is the only permitted consonant in the second position of an initial CC sequence. The motivation for such a radical re-analysis of *j* comes from its distributional characteristics: *j* shows a stronger correlation with a following vowel than with a preceding consonant. Specifically, *j* may only appear if the following vowel is non-front. This dependency relation between *j* and a particular class of vowels suggests that *j* is part of the vowel (i.e. belongs in a syllable nucleus) and not one of the consonants in a CC sequence. By extension, I further argue that an initial (single) *j* also forms part of the following vowel, making *jV* (*ja, ju, jo*) a light diphthong rather than a CV sequence.

Building on the arguments in Nasukawa (2004, 2005, 2010ab, 2012) that (i) a word-final syllabic nasal in Japanese is the phonetic realization of nasality followed by an empty nucleus, and (ii) that Japanese geminates actually have the structure of pseudo-geminates (i.e. two onsets flanking an empty nucleus), the proposed analysis succeeds in characterizing Japanese as a strict CVCV language in which consonant clusters and consonant-final forms are not attested.

Nota biogràfica

Kuniya Nasukawa és professor de Lingüística anglesa. Té un doctorat en lingüística per la University College London (UCL), i els seus interessos de recerca inclouen la relació entre la fonologia prosòdica i melòdica i la fonologia lliure de precedència. Ha escrit nombrosos articles que cobreixen una àmplia gamma de temes en teoria fonològica. És autor de *A Unified Approach to Nasality and Voicing* (Mouton 2005), coeditor (amb Phillip Backley) de *Strength Relations in Phonology* (Mouton 2009), coeditor (amb Nancy C. Kula i Bert Botma) de *The Bloomsbury Companion to Phonology* (Bloomsbury 2013), i coeditor (amb Henk Van Riemsdijk) de *Identity Relations in Grammar* (Mouton 2014).

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