Tones Worldwide

A typological questionnaire

Author name: Anna Smetina  
Email address: [snetta.15@gmail.com](mailto:snetta.15@gmail.com)

The information in this questionnaire is mainly based on [Kubozono 2015].

### General Information on the language

**Language name**: Japanese (standard, Tokyo)

**Genetic affiliation**: Japanese < Japanese

**Area**: East Asia, Japan

Please, put geographical information with detalization in the end of the Index (AF (Africa) . WA (West Africa), CA (Central Africa), EA, NA, UA; AS (Asia). HIM (Himalaya); FE (Far East) etc.; AM (America); EU (Europe); e.g. AM.CA (America.Central America); EU.EE (Europe.Eastern Europe)

**Language international code**: ISO 639-3: jpn

### 1.1 TYPE: Tonal language type

**TYPE INDEX**

**Iσ(2**–**P)+Ds+Ft [LX] AccYes IntYes { fus?; prdg1; word ?, ?} AS.E**

#### Coding

If the subject language has a traditional way of coding and classifying tonal distinctions, please, indicate correspondence of traditional way of writing to uniformed transcription[[1]](#footnote-1).

Japanese (2 level tonal units: L, H):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| traditional (1) | traditional (2) | uniformed | translation |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| は | し | ha’si | ha2si1 | ‘chopsticks’ |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | し | hasi’ | ha1si2 | ‘bridge |

Traditional terms: Japanese is usually regarded not as a tonal language, but a language that have musical (pitch) accent.

**Comment 1:** There exist at least two traditions of coding the pitch change in Japanese: (1) showing the full contour of pitch changing throughout the word (with vertical lines that correspond shifts from the low pitch (underline) to the high pitch (overline) and vice versa); (2) showing the placement of the high pitch that precedes the low pitch (with apostrophe) (that is “the placement of pitch accent” of a word).

#### 1.1.1 Type of tonal system

In this questionnaire we will distinguish between two broad classes of tonal systems: **level tone systems** and **contour tone systems**.

In this section, please, indicate the predominant type of the tonal system.

* I ☐ Mainly level tonal units
* II ☐ Mainly contour tonal units
* III ☐ Other

Please in the section “Type” mark the corresponding Latin numbers (I, II or III).

The option III “Other” is provided for so called “register languages” and other types which are not clearly enter the first two classes.

[**Comment 2:**](#_Comment_2.)

#### 1.1.2 Tone bearing unit

What is the tone bearing unit in the subject language?

* μ ☐ [Mora](#_11_Types_of)
* σ ☐ [Syllable](#_9_Types_of)
* π ☐ [Foot](#_10_Types_of) (Pes)

Please in the section “Type” mark the corresponding letter, e.g. Iσ.

**Comment 3:**Though the syllable is known as the tone bearing unit in Japanese, both mora and syllable are crucially important notions for Japanese phonology. For instance, “mora is used as a unit to measure phonological distances in the computation of word accent. <…> Some accent rules are sensitive to both the mora and the syllable in measuring phonological length” [Kubozono 2015]. This language may be called as a ‘mora-counting, syllable language’ [McCawley 1978].

## Characteristic of language

Non tonal characteristics of the language are put in the Index in {braces}.

##### 2.1. Level of fusion

* ☐ 0 Absent
* ☐ 1 Low
* ☐ 2 Medium
* ☐ 3 High

Fusion of morphemes is a change in their phonemic composition. In this section, please, indicate the degree of fusion in the subject language, describe it, please, as low (one or two cases), medium (fusion happens in some cases) or high (fusion is typical for morpheme boundaries).

In the section “Type” mark in braces the corresponding level of fusion **{fus1}**.

If the subject language completely lacks inflexional and/or derivational affixes, put **fus0.**

[**Comment 4:**](#_Comment_4.)

##### 2.2. Existence of segmental paradigmatic classes

* ☐ 0 Absent
* ☐ 1 Low
* ☐ 2 Medium
* ☐ 3 High

##### Segmental paradigmatic classes are groups of lexemes whose inflexional paradigms differ at the segmental level, and this segmental difference is not phonetically or morpho-phonologically conditioned, i.e., it is unpredictable. If it is always determined by the context (as in many Turkic languages), please, in braces mark **prdg0**. If it is always necessary to know the paradigmatic class of the lexeme in question (as in Russian), mark **prdg3**.

[***Comment 5****:*](#_Comment_5.)Nouns do not have inflexional paradigms. Verbs have, but they are mostly determined by the end phoneme of the root. Verbs with root ending in -i form two different groups, so their behaviour is unpredictable if concern the segmental structure only. Two verbs (kuru ‘come’ and suru ‘do’) have their own paradigms.

##### 2.3.Average number of syllables in a word

☐ in text: feet 1,15; syllables 1,4

In a text containing 100 words: a spontaneous narrative, if possible, without recent borrowings, personal and geographic names, preferably without new names for modern realities.

* ☐ in dictionary: feet 1,76; syllables 2,66.

100 words of a dictionary the subject language in a row starting with a letter neutral concerning the distribution of parts of speech.

***Comment 6****:* [Counting word length for Mwan (Ctr+click)](#_Counting_word_length)

## 3 Specific features of type I (level tones)

3.1. Number of tonal levels

* ☐ 2

Please, put the corresponding number (in brackets) into the section “Type” after the indication of the language type, e.g. Iσ(3).

**Comment 7**.

##### 3.2. Number of modulated tones

* ☐ 1

If the language has no modulated tones, skip this stage. If there are modulated tones, please, put the corresponding number (in brackets after the number of level tones, dividing these numbers with n-dash) into the section “Type”, e.g. Iσ(3–1).

**Comment 8**.

##### 3.2.1. Structure of modulated tones

Please, list all possible types of modulated tonal units, and their proposed term:

e. g. HL (high – low), proposed term F (falling).

HL (Falling tone). Its frequency is rather narrow.

[**Comment 9**.](#_Comment_9.)

## 4 Specific features of type II (contour tones)

##### 4.1. Number of tonemes (tonal units)

* ☐

Please, put the corresponding number (in brackets) into the section “Type” after the indication of the language type, e.g. II(6).

[**Comment 10**.](#_Comment_10.)

## 5 Tone unit structure

Please, list all functional tonal units of the subject language

L (v1), H (v2)

[**Comment 11**.](#_Comment_11.)

##### 5.1. Tone unit structure

List suprasegment features which are relevant for tone units representation (present in one)

* P ☐ modulation of pitch
* F ☐ phonation
* L ☐ length
* I ☐ inerrumption
* O ☐ other

Please, put the corresponding Capital letters (in brackets after the number of tonal units, dividing these numbers with n-dash) into the section “Type”, e.g. II(6–PFI).

##### 5.1.1. Types of phonations

Name phonations characteristic for the subject language

* λ ☐ Laryngealisation (Creaky voice)
* φ ☐ Pharyngealisation (Breathy voice)
* α ☐ Other

##### 5.1.1. Autonomity of phonations

Are phonations autonomous or an integral part of the tonal unit?

[**Comment 12**.](#_Comment_12.)

##### 5.2. Tonal sandhi

List variants of changes depending on tonal context.

[**Comment 13**.](#_Comment_13.)

### 6 Additional features of tonal system

* Dd ☐ Downdrift
* Ds ☐ Downstep
* Up ☐ Upstep
* Ft ☐ Floating tone

Please, put the corresponding letters with the sign +Xx into the section “Type” after brackets, e.g. Iσ5(3–1)+Dd

**[Comment 14](#_Comment_14.):** Japanese nouns definitely have floating tones (the tonal unit of the morpheme that attaches to the noun stem depends on the tonal properties of that noun). Downstep is realized on the phrase (sentence) level.

### 7.2. Tonal behavior specific for certain classes of words

* ☐ Yes:
* ☐ No

[**Comment 15**](#_Comment_14.)**:** The rules of pitch changing (“the positon of accent”, in traditional terms) seem to differ for recent loanwords and native Japanese words. Also, there may be some difference between nouns VS verbs and adjectives.

##### 7.2.1. Tonal paradigmatic classes

Are tonal paradigmatic classes characteristic for the subject language?

* ☐ Yes:
* ☐ No

[**Comment 16**.](#_Comment_16.)

## 7 Functions of tone

Please, mark functions of tone in the subject language.

### 7.1 Functions of tone

Please consider, what are possible functions of tonal units in the subject language:

* L ☐ lexical
* D ☐ derivational
* X ☐ inflexional
* O ☐ other

Please, put the corresponding capital letters (it can be more than one) in square brackets into the section “Type”, e.g. Iσ5(3--1)+Dd [LX]

[**Comment 15**.](#_Comment_15.)

### 8 Other suprasegementals

##### 8.1. Word accent

##### 8.1.1. Does word accent exists in the subject language?

* ☐ Yes
* ☐ No

Please, put the corresponding information after square brackets into the section “Type”, e.g. Iσ5(3--1)+Dd [LX] AccNo

##### 8.1.2. If word accent exists, is there any correlation between accent and tone?

* ☐ Yes
* ☐ No

[**Comment 17**.](#_Comment_17.) The accent in Japanese is realized by means of pitch change: the fall from high to low pitch means here accentuation.

##### 8.2. Phrase intonation

##### 8.2.1. Does phrase intonation exists in the subject language?

* ☐ Yes
* ☐ No

Please, put the corresponding information after the information on accent into the section “Type”, e.g. Iσ5(3--1)+Dd [LX] AccNo IntNo

[**Comment 18**.](#_Comment_18.)

## 9 Additional information, comments

Please add any remaining comments below.

[**Comment 19**](#_Comment_19.).

**End of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your participation!**

## 

## References

Kubozono, Haruo (ed.). 2015. Handbook of Japanese Phonetics and Phonology. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

McCawley, James D. 1978. What is a tone language? In Victoria A. Fromkin (ed.), Tone: A linguistic survey, 113–131. New York: Academic Press.

**Additional part**

## Types of syllables

*List all possible types of syllables.*

(1) light (contains 1 mora)

(2) heavy (contains 2 morae)

Superheavy syllables seem to be avoided in Japanese.

“The syllable structure can be described as (Cj)V(VC), where materials in the parentheses are optional. /V/ and /C/ in the second parentheses cannot generally co-occur with each other due to the strict constraint banning superheavy syllables”. “/j/ is a glide that can appear between a consonant and a back vowel” [Kubozono 2015].

*List all possible tonal variations with different types of syllables*

## Types of feet

*List all possible types of feet.*

Bimoraic foot.

*List all possible tonal variations with different types of feet*

## Types of morae

*List all possible types of morae.*

(1) syllabic (head, independent)

(2) non-syllabic (non-head, dependent)

*List all possible tonal variations with different types of morae*

1. Uniformed transcription of our Project assumes the designation of tonal units with numbers. For level systems: 1 - the lowest level, then, depending on the number of levels: 2, 3, 4, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)