

## Biased Questions, Givenness, and Direct Evidentiality

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## Adjective Predicate

- When the predicate of the construction is an adjective, there are two intonational patterns used by the young speakers of the Tokyo dialect.

- (2) ano umi aoku nai?  
that sea blue NEG  
'That sea is blue, isn't it?/Isn't that sea blue?'  
(Bias: I think that sea is blue.)

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## Bias meaning

- A Japanese negative sentence uttered with a rising intonation expresses a biased question.
- Intuitively, it has a function similar to English tag questions or negative bias questions [Romero, 2005, Nilsenova, 2002].

- (1) a. Where is Mary?  
b. heya ni i nai?  
room in exist NEG  
'She is in her room, isn't she?'/ 'Isn't she in her room?'  
(Bias: I think she is in her room.)  
c. #heya ni iru?  
room in exist  
# 'She is in her room?'

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## Rise with Accents

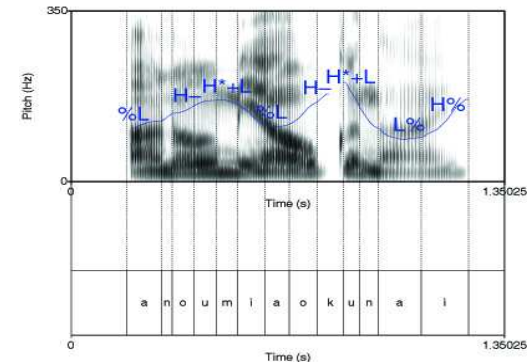


Figure: Rise with Accents

%LH- = AP-initial rise, H\*+L=accentual fall, L%H%=(incredulity rise)

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## Rise with Deaccentuation

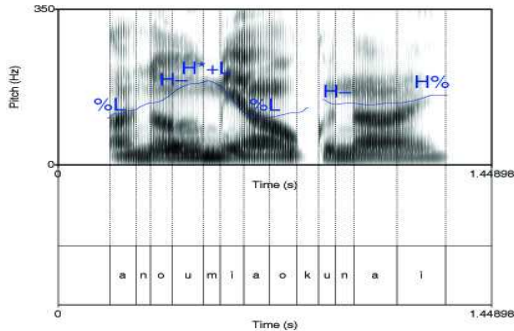


Figure: Rise with Deaccentuation

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## Two accent patterns

- (3) ano u'mi aoku nai?  
that sea blue NEG  
'That sea is blue, isn't it?/Isn't that sea blue?'
- a. ano u'mi a'oku nai?  
L%H\*+L L%H% (Rise with Accents)
- b. ano u'mi aoku nai?  
%LH- H% (Rise with Deaccentuation) **New!**

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## Negation

- These two variants are not completely interchangeable.
  - First, the presence of negation is necessary for deaccentuation to occur.
- (4) koko samui?  
here cold
- a. ✓ koko samu'i? (Rise with Accents)
- b. \*koko samui? (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Iterated Negation

"Kon'ya wa Boogie Back" Kenji Ozawa featuring Schadaraparr (1994)  
sample

- (5) a. yoku nai? kore.  
good NEG this  
'Isn't it good? This one.'
- b. kore yoku nai?  
this good NEG  
'Isn't this good?'
- c. yoku naku naku naku naku naku nai?  
good NEG NEG NEG NEG NEG NEG  
'Isn't this not not not not not good?'

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## Emotive Content

- Second, the deaccented versions often express a variety of strong **emotive meanings** compared to the normal rise versions.
- (2) is understood as an **exclamation (surprise)**.
- (3-b) is perceived as a **complaint**.

(2) Ano umi aoku nai?  
that sea blue NEG  
'That sea is blue, isn't it?'  
(and it's amazing how blue it is)  
(Rise with Deaccentuation)

(3-b) koko samuku nai?  
here cold NEG  
'It's cold here, isn't it?'/Isn't it cold here?'  
(It's too bad that it's cold here') (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Digression: Parallel Intuition in English

- The preposed negative question uttered with Falling intonation seem to convey similar emotive effects (originally pointed out by Maribel Romero, p.c.).

(6) a. Don't you look nice today↓  
b. (Oh dear,) Isn't it cold here↓

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## Distributional Difference

- Third, there is an asymmetry in the distribution with respect to **context types**.
- Both can be used when both the speaker and the addressee are acknowledging the coldness of the room.

(3-b) **Context: both interlocutors are in a cold room.**  
koko samuku nai?  
'It's cold here, isn't it?'/Isn't it cold here?'  
a. ✓ sa'muku nai↑ (Rise with Accents)  
b. ✓ samuku nai↑ (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Room for Doubt

- Rise with Deaccentuation is infelicitous when the speaker doesn't have evidence for p,
- I.e., when evidence for p is available for both of the interlocutors.

(7) Context: B has just won a lottery. A has never won a lottery in her life.  
A: takarakuji atat tara ureshiku nai?  
lottery won COMP happy NEG  
'Aren't you happy, since you won a lottery?'  
(i) ✓ ureshi'ku nai↑ (Rise with Accents)  
(ii) #ureshiku nai↑ (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Interim Summary 1: Basic Observations

- There are two intonational variants for Japanese biased questions:
  - Rise with Accents** used by all speakers of the Tokyo dialect.
  - Rise with Deaccentuation** used by **young** speakers.
- Rise with Deaccentuation often (but not always) tones up **emotive content**.
- The asymmetry of distribution:
  - Rise with Accents** can be used as long as the speaker is biased toward the positive answer.
  - Rise with Deaccentuation** requires the context where evidence is available for both of the interlocutors.

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## English preposed negation

- A preposed negation question necessarily carries an epistemic implicature that the speaker believed or at least expected that the positive answer is correct.
- (8) Isn't Jane coming?  
 Positive epistemic implicature: The speaker believes or at least expects that Jane is coming. (Romero and Han, 2004)

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## Research Questions

- 1 Why does Rise with Deaccentuation often (but not always) express emotive content?
- 2 Why does Rise with Accents have a wider distribution than Rise with Deaccentuation?

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## Japanese Biased Questions

### Assumption

Regardless of the presence/absence of deaccentuation, a question of the form *p-nai?* gives rise to the Bias implicature [see Aihara, 2007].

- (1)
  - a. Where is Mary?
  - b. heya ni i nai?  
 room in exist NEG  
 'She is in her room, isn't she?'/ 'Isn't she in her room?'  
 (Bias: I think she is in her room.)
  - c. #heya ni iru?  
 room in exist  
 #'She is in her room?'

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## Bias Implicature

- In terms of Lewisian subjective probability [Lewis, 1986], the speaker's degree of belief is at least **above chance**.
  - a. The implicature of *p-na?*:  
The speaker has a Bias toward *p*.
  - b.  $C_{A,c}(p) > .5$

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## Deaccenting in Japanese

- The accentual rises of Given materials in post-FOCUS positions are reduced [Deguchi and Kitagawa, 2002, Ishihara, 2002, 2003].

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## Deaccenting Rule

- Many researchers have recognized the importance of deaccenting rules [Ladd, 1980, Brown, 1983, Terken and Hirschberg, 1994, Schwarzschild, 1999].
- In particular, in English, given materials in the discourse are deaccented [Brown, 1983, Terken and Hirschberg, 1994].

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## Post-FOCUS Reduction in Japanese

- (10) Naoya-ga nani-o nomiya-de nonda no?  
 Naoya-NOM what-ACC bar-LOC drank Q  
 'What did Naoya drink at the bar?' [Ishihara, 2002]

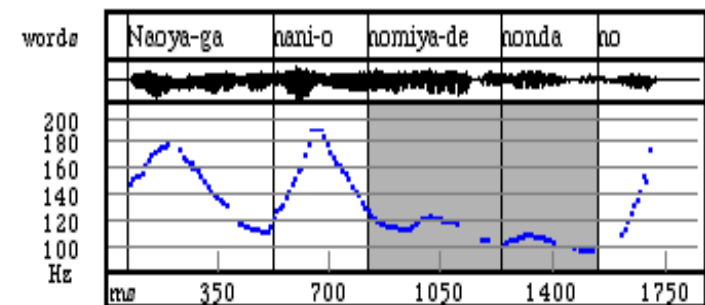


Figure: Ishihara 2002, p. 4

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## What's next?

- Deaccenting marks Givenness in Information Structure.
- In biased questions, deaccenting seems to indicate that evidence is available for both the speaker and the addressee
- Can we generalize these two instances of deaccenting?

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## Toward a unified analysis of Givenness

### Our Proposal 1

Define Givenness in terms of **Publicity**.

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## Givenness in Information Structure

- The given material corresponds to the issue that is publicly committed (or assumed to be committed).
- (11) a. Who came to the party?  
 b. [*Focus* John ] [*Given* came to the party ].
- Given: Someone came to the party.
  - Question under Discussion (QUD): Who came to the party?
  - Both the speaker and the addressee are committed to the issue, 'Who came to the party?'

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## Givenness in Biased Questions

- The given material corresponds to the information that has publicly available evidence.
- (3-b) koko samuku nai?  
 here cold NEG  
 'It's cold here, isn't it?'/ 'Isn't it cold here?'
- I know that evidence is publicly available.
  - Don't you think that this evidence is clear enough to conclude that 'it is cold', to make it as a public commitment?

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## Barker (to appear): Clarity and the grammar of skepticism

(12) It is clear that Abby is a doctor. (Barker, to appear)

*Why ever assert clarity? Because doing so reveals information about the epistemic standard of evidence that is operative in a discourse.* (Barker, to appear; p18)

- Why do we question something Given?
- Deaccentuation in biased questions, i.e., specifying Givenness, gives rise to a meta-linguistic talk about the standard for the justification of evidence.

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## Deaccenting: Lexicalized Givenness

### Our Proposal 2

Deaccentuation has gained a grammaticalized meaning, Givenness.

- Deaccenting marks Givenness in the discourse.
- We go one step further:  
(At least in the context of biased questions,) deaccenting is conventionalized to mean Givenness as its lexical specification.

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## Interim Summary 3: Givenness as Publicity

- Givenness observed in different constructions can be generalized in terms of Publicity
  - ▶ Public commitment to a certain issue. (QUD)
  - ▶ Justification from public evidence.

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## Post-Focus Reduction

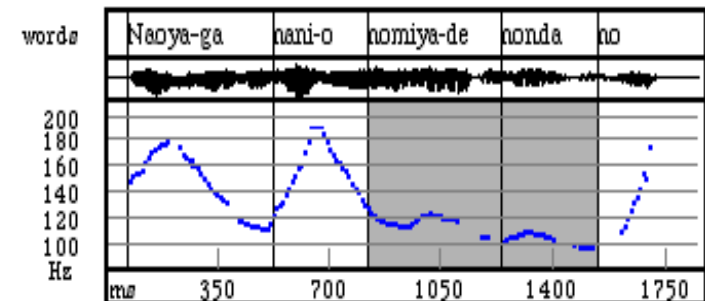


Figure: Ishihara 2002, p. 4

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## Deaccentuation

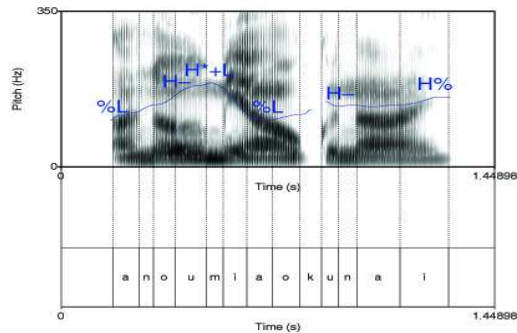


Figure: Rise with Deaccentuation

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## Emotive Meanings

- By defining the lexical meaning of deaccentuation, we can account for why Rise with Deaccentuation induces emotive meanings.

(3-b) koko samuku nai?  
 here cold NEG  
 'It's cold here, isn't it?'/ 'Isn't it cold here?'  
 (Complaint: 'It's too bad that it's cold here')  
 (Rise with Deaccentuation)

(2) Ano umi aoku nai?  
 that sea blue NEG  
 'That sea is blue, isn't it?'  
 (Surprise: 'and it's amazing how blue it is')  
 (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Scale

- If  $p$  is Given, the speaker is ready to add  $p$  to the common ground.
- It follows that the speaker strongly suspects  $p$  ( $C_{A,C}=.98$ ).
- We argue that this Givenness implicature and the Bias implicature form a scale.

## Subjective Probability Scale

Given  $\subset$  Biasi.e., if  $p$  is Given, it is entailed that  $p$  is Biased.

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## The motivation of superfluous questions

- When the speaker asks a question with deaccentuation, the speaker is inquiring something which is already Given (publicly evident).
- The speaker is not seeking for information.
- What is communicated is the high reliability of evidence in the common ground.
- Question: The speaker is trying to elicit some reaction from the addressee.
- The speaker is expressing a personal opinion (emotion) expecting that the addressee will accommodate the opinion into the common ground as well.
- See also Egg's [2007] discussion on rhetorical questions.

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## When Givenness is not marked,...

- The speaker only has a mere bias toward p.
- The speaker wonders whether the addressee wants to make p as a joint commitment.
- Emotive meanings are less prominent.

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## Scale

### Subjective Probability Scale

Given  $\subset$  Bias

i.e., if p is Given, it is entailed that p is Biased.

- (2) Context: Both interlocutors are in front of the beautiful blue sea.
- a. ano u'mi aoku nai?  
that sea blue NEG  
'That sea is blue, isn't it?/Isn't that sea blue?'
- (i) ✓ano u'mi a'oku nai↑ (Rise with Accents)  
(ii) ✓ano u'mi aoku nai↑ (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Interim Summary 4: Grammaticalized Givenness in BQ

- Our claim: deaccentuation in biased question has a lexicalized meaning, Givenness.
- Uttering a biased question with R<sub>wD</sub>  
→ Inquiring something Given.
- Asking a superfluous question  
→ Expressing emotive implicatures.

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## Room for Doubt

- (7) Context: B has just won a lottery. A has never won a lottery in her life.

A: #takarakuji atat tara ureshiku nai?

lottery won COMP happy NEG

'Aren't you happy, since you won a lottery?'(Rise with Deaccentuation)

- Deaccentuation requires p to be already Given (public evidence).
- If the context is such that there is still room for doubt in adding p to the common ground, the use of Rise with Deaccentuation is illicit.
- Rise with Accents exhibits a broader distribution than Rise with Deaccentuation.

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## Interim Summary 4: Asymmetry Explained

- Our claim: Deaccenting grammatically marks Givenness.
- Givenness and Bias form a scale in terms of Subjective Probability, Given  $\subset$  Bias.
- By defining the lexical specification for deaccenting, we account for the asymmetry of the distribution:

RwD Given

RwA Bias (including Given)

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## RwD possible only with Direct Evidence

- (2)
- a. Context: Both the speaker and the addressee stand in front of the beautiful sea.
  - b. Ano umi aoku nai?  
that sea blue NEG  
'That sea is blue, isn't it?'/ 'Isn't that sea blue?'  
(i) ✓ Ano umi ao'ku nai↑ (Rise with Accents)  
(ii) ✓ Ano umi aoku nai↑ (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Evidential Effects: Indirect Evidence

- (13)
- a. Indirect Evidence Context: Yao Ming is a huge guy. I've never seen his son, but, guessing from Yao Ming's height,...
  - b. Yao-Ming-no musuko tte **ookiku nai**  
Yao.Ming-GEN son TOP big NEG  
'Yao Ming's son is big, isn't he?'  
(i) ✓ ooki'ku nai↑ (Rise with Accents)  
(ii) #ookiku nai↑ (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Evidential Effects: Hearsay Evidence

- (14)
- a. Hearsay Evidence Context: The speaker has never been to Canada, but she heard that it's cold over there.
  - b. kanada tte **samuku nai**  
Canada TOP cold NEG  
'Canada is cold, isn't it?'  
(i) ✓ samu'ku nai↑ (Rise with Accents)  
(ii) #samuku nai↑ (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Digression: Parallel Intuition in English again

- If the speaker has never been to Canada, a tag question with Falling accent is inappropriate (Chris Potts, p.c.).
- (15)
- Canada is cold, isn't it↑
  - Canada is cold, isn't it↓

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## Bias–Evidence

- (9) The implicature of *p-nai?*:  
The speaker has a Bias toward *p*.

Having a bias toward *p* implies that the speaker has at least some kind of (possibly weak) evidence for *p*.

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## Summary of the Evidential Data

### Rise with Deaccentuation

RwD is licit only when the speaker has **direct (sensory) evidence**. RwD is not compatible with inference derived from indirect evidence, nor from hearsay evidence.

### Rise with Accents

RwA can be used in all contexts as long as the speaker is expressing his/her bias.

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## What happens if you deaccent on the biased Q?

- With deaccentuation, the scale proposed above specifies a stronger implicature (i.e., higher on the scale), resulting in **direct evidentiality**.
  - Indeed, in the literature of evidentiality, direct evidence is placed higher on the scale than indirect evidence and hearsay evidence.
- (16)
- Direct Evidence  $\subset$  (generic) Evidence.
  - Direct Evidence  $>$  Indirect, Hearsay Evidence [Adapted from Willett, 1988, Faller, 2002]

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## Conclusion

- We have documented and analyzed two intonational patterns in Japanese.
  - ① Rise with Accents
  - ② Rise with Deaccentuation
- Givenness is characterized in terms of Publicity
  - ▶ Public commitment to a certain issue
  - ▶ Publicly available evidence
- Deaccentuation in a biased question is grammaticalized.

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## Not always

- Note that this emotive content is not a lexically specified meaning of deaccentuation.
- (17) Context: A and B are looking for a smart person to recommend to NASA.
- A: No one here is smart. We cannot recommend anyone to NASA.
- B: e? Hanako-san-tte atama yoku nai?  
 Intj Hanako-SUF-TOP head good NEG  
 'Wait! Isn't Hanako smart?' (Rise with Deaccentuation)

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## Conclusion

- When the predicate in the rising negative question is deaccented, the sentence presupposes that the positive proposition is already Given.
- Rise with Deaccentuation tends to induce various emotive contents as an accommodation of the speaker's personal opinions
- By positing a scale for Givenness,  $\text{Given} \subset \text{Bias}$ , we account for the asymmetry in the distribution of deaccented and non-deaccented biased questions.
- Finally, the clarity scale determined for Givenness further supports the scale which has been proposed for evidentiality.

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## When Givenness is not marked

- Inference from the private knowledge is sufficient to license biased statement.
- (7) Context: B has just won a lottery. A has never won a lottery in her life.
- A: takarakuji atat tara ureshi'ku nai?  
 lottery won COMP happy NEG  
 'Aren't you happy, since you won a lottery?' (Rise with Accents)
- From what I know, I infer that it's fun to win a lottery.
  - Will you make it as your commitment or not?
  - There is no meta-talk concerning justification from the evidence.

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