Mora-syllable interactions in Japanese
（日本語におけるモーラと音節の共存）

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This talk discusses the roles that the mora and the syllable play in various phenomena in Japanese and considers how they coexist in one and the same linguistic system. It will analyze how the two prosodic units interact with each other in (a) language acquisition/development, (b) word accent and other phonological processes, (c) truncation and other morphological processes, (d) vocative prosody and other intonational processes, (e) text settings in Japanese songs, and (f) historical changes involving mora-counting and syllable-counting prosodic systems. In language development, the syllable plays a pivotal role in its early stage, while the mora seems to emerge as a second relevant unit at a later stage. As for phonological and morphological rules, many rules cannot be properly formulated without reference to both the mora and the syllable. Moreover, recent research on text settings in Japanese songs has revealed that the mora is replaced by the syllable as a relevant alignment unit as the word becomes longer. Furthermore, recent work on accent changes in regional dialects suggests that a mora-counting accent system can change into a syllable-counting system, but not the other way around.