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Adjectives and adjectival derivates in Miyako-Ryukyuan

1. Introduction

Miyakoan, or Miyako-Ryukyuan, is a minority language of Japan currently spoken by an estimated number of 12,000~22,000 people in the Miyako islands (for detailed estimates cf. Jarosz 2015: 161–162). It is a member of the Japonic language family with Japanese as its biggest and dominant representative. Apart from Japanese, all Japonic languages – UNESCO/Moseley (2010) distinguishes seven such entities – are endangered and have no official status of minority languages on the level of state legislature. Indeed, in Japan these languages are still often labeled by default as *hōgen*, “dialects” of Japanese.

Miyakoan belongs to the Sakishima/Southern subgroup of the Ryukyuan group within the Japonic family, its closest relatives being the two Macro-Yaeyama (Pellard 2015) languages, Yaeyama and Yonaguni/Dunan. Like most Ryukyuan ethnolects, it is not a language used in literacy. It also has few written records from the pre-World War II period, which coincides with the pre-endangerment period in the history of the language. Although the number and quality of research and publications on Miyakoan has rapidly increased over the last decades and especially post-2000, both its documentation and description remain insufficient as evaluated by Aso, Shimoji and Heinrich (2014) with the employment of the UNESCO (2003) language vitality assessment scale.

The purpose of this paper is to introduce a selected aspect of Miyakoan language system and in so doing, to disseminate results of this author’s research, providing non-specialists of Ryukyuan linguistics with an occasion to become familiar with a specific topic in Miyakoan studies.

The paper will describe Miyakoan from a single angle, and namely its lexical class of adjectives. The description, unless explicitly stated otherwise,

will pertain mainly to the Hirara regiolect of the Miyako main island, and it will be based on the data (lexicon and sample sentences) retrieved from Nikolay Nevskiy's handwritten draft of a Miyakoan dictionary from 1920s (Nevskiy 2013; Jarosz 2015). Morphosyntactic properties of adjectives will be discussed along with the basis to distinguish them as a separate lexical category in Miyakoan. Further, categories derived from adjectives as defined in this paper will also be presented. Finally, the system of Miyakoan adjectives and their derivatives will be compared and contrasted with their counterparts in Japanese, Old Japanese and Shuri-Okinawan (Central Ryukyuan).

2. Typological overview of Miyakoan

Miyakoan is a predominantly agglutinative, agentive, postpositional language. Its basic constituent order is SOV, with a modifier-head order of the phrase. In these respects, one can say it is a typical Japonic language.

In terms of phonology and phonotactics, Miyakoan has a rather diverse syllable structure for a representative of Japonic. It has moraic/syllabic consonants (in Hirara these are /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /m/ and /n/) which can also take the coda slot of a syllable (*kam* 'god', *in* 'dog', *niv* 'to sleep', *uz* 'to be') and form consonant clusters (*fmu* 'cloud', *azsu* 'those who are/have'). It also has the so-called apical¹ or fricative vowel [ɿ]², which by this author at least for Hirara is considered a predictable allophonic realization of /i/. The apical vowel facilitates spirantization of certain environments (post-obstruent positions and onsetless syllables), and as a consequence, Hirara often has /s/ or /z/ where there are close front or central vowels in other Ryukyuan languages or in Japanese (*tsʔks* 'moon', Japanese *tsuki*, *bzz* 'to sit', Old Japanese *wi-ru*).

Length is distinguished for both vowels and consonants. The basic unit of prosody is mora rather than syllable. Like in most other Ryukyuan languages (cf. papers in Pellard and Shimoji, 2010), lexical units are bound by the so-called minimality constraint, which claims that a word has to be at least two morae long. Because of the presence of moraic consonants, Hirara has words which on the phonological level consist of consonants only (*ksks* 'to listen', *v*: 'to sell', *z*: 'rice').

¹ Detailed articulatory analysis of this vowel reveals that it is in fact laminal and not apical (cf. Aoi and Niinaga 2013; Aoi 2015: 406).

² This vowel has no official IPA symbol, and consequently, there are basically two schools in Miyakoan studies postulating two different notations of this vowel: one is with the symbol <ɿ>, which is preferred by this author, and the other is the "centralized" symbol <ɨ̠>. For the sake of consistency, the symbol <ɿ> will be used throughout the paper, also when citing examples from the "i-school" sources.

Miyakoan verbs inflect for tense, mood, aspect and polarity. They can also be marked honorifically and undergo valence-changing operations into passive, causative and potential voice. Miyakoan nominals inflect for case, and the case inflection paradigm involves marking related to the information structure (the concept of information structure defined here as in Lambrecht 1994), the specific cases being topic, inclusive and focus. In inflection, a fusion or assimilation between root and affixes (or between combined affixes) may occur if, for instance, the root ends with a moraic consonant and the affix begins with /j/: *tsʔks* ‘moon’ > *tsʔks* + *-ju* > *tsʔkssu* ‘moon (accusative)’, *in* ‘dog’ > *in* + *-ja* > *inna* ‘dog (topic)’.

3. Adjectives in Miyakoan

As implied in section 2., the two main lexical categories in Miyakoan are differentiated by their expected inflectional properties: verbs inflect for tense, and nominals inflect for case. The category of adjectives is defined here as inflecting neither for tense nor for case, and by their primary noun-modifying function. An adjective in a narrow sense is thus the bare root form, a unit frequently called property concept or PC stem in contemporary Miyakoan studies (Shimoji 2008, 2011; Pellard 2010 or Hayashi 2010, to name a few). It is usually argued that PC stems are not an actual lexical category, as they constitute bound forms which cannot appear independently of the head noun and which may cause the initial consonant of the head noun to voice in a usual Japonic manner of word-medial voicing (Japanese *rendaku*). This author’s impression is also that bare roots form single prosodic units with head nouns, thus sounding like a single word unit (cf. sound samples at Okinawa Center of Language Study, 1993–2003).

There is, however, a number of reasons why in the present paper bare root forms are considered full-formed words rather than word-formation stems, and are consequently identified with the category of adjectives in Miyakoan:

- they appear to be bound by the minimality constraint (cf. 2. above): although compliance with minimality constraint would not be necessary if root forms were not systemically considered as free morphemes, no root form shorter than two morae is known to this author;
- they can be modified, i.e. become the head of a phrase, by adverbs such as *du:du* ‘quite, much’ or *za:na* ‘the most’, or by nominals such as *ati* ‘too much’ (similar examples are also presented in: Shimoji 2011: 103);
- they can be derived from other lexical categories, most notably nominalized verbs, by using a range of suffixes, such as desiderative *-bus*, *-jas* ‘be easy to’ or *-guri* ‘be difficult to’ (ibid., 107);

– they may become a complement phrase to a subordinate clause by directly hosting the quotative clitic *-ti*: (cp. *εεana-ti: asʔ* ‘to consider [something] dirty’);

– assimilative phonological alternations transcending word boundaries are not unheard of in Miyakoan: for instance, extensive palatalization such as when the preceding word ends with /i/ and the subsequent word begins with a vowel may cause word boundaries to blur, as in the following song fragment *Naha minatu-gami ukura > Naha minatu-gamju:kura* ‘let’s send you to the port in Naha’³; as a consequence, voicing of the initial consonant of the modified noun (such as *ssu* ‘white’ + *pama* ‘beach’ > *ssu bama* ‘white beach’, cf. also 3.1.) does not necessarily indicate that one is dealing with compounding rather than noun phrase.

Reduplicated forms can be derived from the root forms, and it is the reduplicated forms that are usually identified as the adjective in Miyakoan studies. For this reason, reduplicated forms will also be discussed in this section rather than section 4., even though formally, reduplicated adjectives display a strongly defective yet clear case inflection paradigm and for this reason they are considered a subclass of nominals, here called adjective nominals.

3.1. Bare root forms

As mentioned before, the status of bare root forms as an independent lexical category is arguably controversial. In the examples below, root forms *taka* ‘high’ and *ssu* ‘white’ cause the voicing of the initial consonant of the modified nouns, which are *ki*: ‘tree’ and *pama* ‘beach’ respectively.

taka gi:-n-du kaza: kakal
tall tree-DAT-FOC wind.TOP blow.NPST

‘It is against the tall trees that the wind blows the strongest’ (a proverb from Sawada-Miyakoan);

ssu bama kagi bama-ga ui-n ssu tu:z butur-aba
white beach beautiful beach-GEN above-DAT white bird soar-COND
ban=teu umu-i naru=teu umu-i tungara
1SG=QUOT think-IMP oneself=QUOT think-IMP friend

‘If a white bird soars over a beautiful white beach, then think that this is me myself, my friend’ (Shimajiri-Miyakoan, from the song *Pstu-jumja a:gu*, originally published in Nevskiy 1978: 43–44, 122–124).

³ From the song *Ni:ma-nu eu.*, originally published in Nevskiy (1978: 5–15, 101–112).

3.2. Reduplicated root forms (adjective nominals)

While in modern descriptive sources reduplicated adjectives tend to be described as the adjective, or the basic form of adjective – Shimoji (2011: 102) gives precisely this definition: “an adjective is a reduplicated form in which the reduplicant is attached word-initially and its final segment is lengthened by one mora” – in Nevskiy’s draft they are presented as having an intensifying meaning compared to bare root forms. Consequently, according to Nevskiy, if an adjective *fka* means ‘deep’, then the reduplicated form *fka:-fka* should mean ‘very deep, extremely deep’. A number of reduplicated adjectives recorded in Nevskiy’s draft were given a lexically intensified translation in Japanese, such as *masshiro* ‘pure white, snow white’ for *sso:-ssu* (bare root *ssu* ‘white’), or *mammaru* ‘totally round’ for *ma:ku:-ma:ku* (bare root *ma:ku:* ‘round’).

Modern sources on Miyakoan do not attribute such marked meaning to reduplicated adjectives, considering them a purely syntactic device instead. This might imply either a shift in the function of reduplicated adjectives – intensifying/empathetic in Nevskiy’s times and semantically unmarked as of now – or an erroneous assumption by Nevskiy that a reduplicated form must necessarily mean emphasis, unproved by an actual Miyakoan language use. Given that Nevskiy was a methodologically scrupulous researcher and that his research involved interviewing native speakers of Miyakoan, the latter possibility does not seem likely.

In terms of morphophonological formation of reduplicated adjectives, the process involves a change in the initial morpheme of the reduplicated adjective, and namely lengthening its final sound. The lengthening occurs regardless whether the final sound is a vowel or a consonant. If the final sound is already long, however, it remains unchanged.

There also occur instances of morphophonological alternations other than simple lengthening the root-final sound. For example, in Hirara, if the root-final sound is /i/, then it changes into long /a:/ and the preceding consonant is palatalized in the process (cf. *kagi* < *kagja:-kagi* ‘beautiful’). Also, if the root-final sound is /u/, it undergoes a change to /o:/ (cf. *maru* < *maro:-maru* ‘short’).

Aforementioned morphophonological circumstances provide evidence that the underlying form of reduplicated adjectives is not simply a doubled bare root, such as *Xkagi-kagi* for ‘beautiful’ or *Xmaru-maru* for ‘short’, but rather that the roots are mediated by the topic case marker *-ja*: *kagi-ja kagi* > *kagja:-kagi*, *maru-ja maru* > *maro:-maru*.

This observation is believed to be quite significant considering the etymology of reduplicated adjectives, and it has not been found to be men-

tioned elsewhere in the existing sources discussing Miyakoan adjectives⁴. One conclusion that can be drawn from this apparently original hypothesis is that historically, bare roots could host the topic case marker, which is clearly a nominal property.

Nevskiy's draft itself does not include any example utterances with reduplicated adjectives, so their paradigm and syntactic status cannot be determined using this source alone. On the other hand, evidence from Shimoji (2008: 356–360) clearly shows the nominal character of this category in phrases such as *taka:-taka-nu pžtu* 'tall man', with genitive case marker hosted by the adjective in the adnominal position, or *taka:-taka-n-du nartar* 'he grew tall', with dative and focus case markers hosted by the adjective in the predicate argument position. For these reasons, the label "adjective nominals" might be considered more adequate for this part of Miyakoan lexicon.

Shimoji (2008: 359) also observes that reduplicated adjectives are to be found predominantly in noun phrases, and it is only exceptionally – even though apparently systemically valid – that they occur as the modifier of an existential verb. This existential verb retains animacy agreement with the subject argument noun: *uz* if the subject is animate and *az* if it is not (cf. examples in Karimata 2015: 137). Such constructions might also be interpreted as adjectival predicates, although assigning such status to them requires a theoretical examination that exceeds the scope of this paper.

Also, in Shimoji's (2008: 358) examples, the only verb aside from existentials that is directly modified by reduplicated adjectives is *nar* 'to become'. This can be interpreted as an evidence that even though reduplicated adjectives may function as verbal modifiers, this is a parasystemic and unproductive role for them. Counter-evidence, however, is provided in Karimata (2015: 137), with examples such as *nu:ka-nu:ka azki* 'walk slowly', which is presented as a representative of Hirara-Miyakoan, and which involves a direct verb modification by a reduplicated adjective.

It is hypothesized that because of this essentially nominal/noun phrase affiliation of reduplicated adjectives, a need has arisen for a more prototypical verb phrase construction to carry the function of adjectival predicate. The resulting strategies are verbalization (cf. 4.1.) and adverbialization with existential verbs (4.3.).

⁴ Although Shimoji (2008: 353) mentions that adjectival and verbal reduplication mechanisms differ from each other in that the latter "does not involve the lengthening of the final segment of the reduplicate", no elaboration on the reasons for this state of affairs is provided.

4. Derivational strategies

In this section, a number of class-changing operations involving adjectival root forms will be discussed. All these derived forms display their own specific syntactic functions, mostly in a straightforward accordance with their respective lexical categories: predication, clausal argument, verb phrase modifier, and head of nominal predicate phrase.

4.1. Verbalization

When verbalized, Miyakoan adjectives resemble the most the so-called adjectives (stative or property verbs) of Japanese (cf. section 5). With a verbalizing suffix attached, they can inflect for tense and multiple other verbal dimensions, such as mood or polarity. As such, they can take on the role of the clausal predicate, modify a noun in a relative clause, or participate in complex verb forms. Their paradigm, however, remains defective in comparison with prototypical verbs, which likely results from their inherent property/state semantics.

Verbalizing suffix in Pre-Miyakoan was **-kaŋ*, and it should be a cognate with an Early Middle Japanese verbalized adjective *-kari* (< *ku* + *ari*, i.e. infinitive base form + stative/existential verb) conjugation pattern. This **-kaŋ* later developed in specific Miyakoan regiolects in accordance with their respective phonological changes, resulting in *-kaz* in Hirara, *-kall/-kar* in Irabu, *-kai* in Ikema, and *-tsaz* in Karimata (2015).

The following examples involve the use of verbalized adjectives heading verb phrases in various syntactic circumstances (main clause, relative clause, verb modifying/clause chain):

ja:ma-nkai iks-bus-ka-taz-suga
 Yaeyama-DIR go-DES-VRB-PST-but
 ‘I wanted to go to the Yaeyamas...’⁵;

mja:ku-nu o:-kaz ba:ki
 Miyako-NOM green-VRB.NPST level
 ‘As long as Miyako [/the world] is green [/blue]’

pukarasŋ-kar-i: uciagil-m
 grateful-VRB-MED offer-RLS
 ‘I offer this with gratitude’ (Sawada);

⁵ Desiderative mood suffix, *-bus(ŋ)*, displays adjective characteristics, and in order to predicate a clause it needs to be verbalized.

pja:-kar-i *azz-ira*
 fast-VRB-MED say-EXH
 ‘Come on, tell me now!’.

Tarama regiolect, which was the first to separate from Pre-Miyakoan and thus is genetically most distant from the rest of Miyakoan regiolects (Pellard 2009: 294–295), does not have a verbalization strategy related to the Pre-Miyakoan **-kaŋ* suffix. Instead, it uses mainly the nominalized *-sja* form (Tarama cognate of *-sa*, cf. 4.2.) conjoined with the existential verbal, which apparently inflects synthetically as a verb, examples being *takas-ja:l* ‘(to be) tall’, *pe:sja:l* ‘to be fast’ (cf. Hirayama et al. 1967), etc. The inherited **-kaŋ* form has likely been replaced by a structural loan from the neighboring Yaeyama regiolects.

4.2. Nominalization

Nouns are derived from adjective roots using the suffix *-sa*, which has cognates of the same function elsewhere in Japonic languages (cp. Japanese *taka-i* ‘tall’ > *taka-sa* ‘tallness’, *ureshi-i* ‘happy’ > *ureshi-sa* ‘happiness’, etc. – cf. also section 5). Available Miyakoan evidence implies that rather than abstract noun formation (like in Japanese), this nominalization serves primarily for syntactic purposes.

As nouns, nominalized adjectives take on case marking, which enables them to function as clausal subjects or objects while displaying semantics typical of adjectival predicates (‘it is strange that...’, lit. ‘it became strangeness’; ‘he considered it dirty’, lit. ‘he did/made it dirtiness’):

kai-ga antei: sŋ-taz kuto: du:du pinna-sa-nu nar-an
 3SG-NOM like that do-PST thing.TOP at all strange-NMN-NOM become-NEG.
 NPST
 ‘It is not strange at all that he did such a thing’;

εεana-sa-u-mai εεana=ti:-ja as-uda
 dirty-NMN-ACC-INC dirty=QUOT-TOP do-NEG.GER
 ‘He didn’t even consider himself dirty, even though he was, and...’ (Sawada).

The range of verbs an argument of which nominalized adjectives can become appear limited to high-frequency verbs with a low degree of lexicality, such as *naz* ‘to become’, *asŋ* ‘to make, to do’, or copulas *ja:z/da:z*. Aoi (2015: 413) indicates that in Tarama, nominalized adjectives

can only directly modify a similarly limited set of verbs, rather than become their case-governed arguments. These verbs are the copula *ar*, *nar* ‘to become’, *nasɿ* ‘to make’, and *sɿ*: ‘to do’. In these instances, it would be perhaps more accurate to speak of nominal predicates in a broad sense rather than of nominal-modified verb phrases. With *ar*, Tarama nominalized adjectives undergo fusion (*ffa* ‘dark’ > *ffasja* ‘being dark’ > *ffasja* + *ar* > *ffasja:r* ‘to be dark’), enabling them to function as verbalized adjectives, a markedly different strategy from what is attested elsewhere in Miyakoan (cp. 4.1.).

Like bare root and reduplicated forms, nominalized adjectives can still fill the modifier slot of a noun phrase, and it appears that in such position the expected genitive marking of the modifier nominal can be omitted. Perhaps this can be explained as a consequence of noun modification being the primary function of the adjective (even when it is nominalized itself), the result being that in this position the modifier does not need to be marked for its dependency relation with the head:

ba: *tu:-sa-nu* *mtts-a alk-i:-du* *multu* *bugari-karj-a:*
 1SG.TOP far away-NMN-GEN road-TOP walk-MED-FOC completely tired-VRB-TOP
 ‘Because I’ve come a long road and I’m so very tired...’ (Sawada);

m:-sa *mu:tu*
 alike-NMN marriage
 ‘Like husband, like wife’ (= ‘A well-matched couple’, a proverb).

There are also instances of nominalized adjectives modifying predicates directly, i.e. without the mediation of case markers, in an adverbial rather than argument-like manner:

This setting, however, is unconfirmed in Shimoji (2008: 365), where it is stated explicitly that at least in Irabu-Miyakoan, a nominalized adjective “does not allow adverbial modification”. Furthermore, (ibid., 366–367), discusses specifically the lexeme from the above example, *tujusa* (*tu:sa* in Irabu), as a syntactic exception. Apparently there is no reduplicated version (*?tu:-tu:*) of the root in question, and consequently, its nominalized variant fills the gap by syntactically behaving like it was reduplicated, and as such it allows direct modification of verb phrase⁶.

⁶ It also displays prototypically nominal characteristics in that it can itself be modified by adjective roots, as in *daizɿna tu:sa* ‘really far away’, lit. ‘great farness’ (Shimoji 2008: 366).

4.3. Adverbialization

A number of suffixes can be attached to the bare root form in order to derive adverbs, uninflected forms which specialize in predicate modification. The label “adverb” is used here for its syntactic rather than morphological properties, because, as will be explained below, two of the adverbializing suffixes themselves are derived from topic and focus case inflection, which makes their “uninflected” status questionable.

The basic, least marked adverbialization suffix is *-f* or *-fu* (the vowel apparently is often devoiced and dropped), cognate with Japanese infinitive suffix *-ku*. It allows for the modification of all verbs except statives/existentials, the special status of which will be explained below.

ba:-ja ka-nu pstu-to: nagja:-fu idj-a:n
 1SG-TOP that-GEN man-COM.TOP long-ADVR meet-NEG.NPST
 ‘I haven’t met him in a long time’;

kizz-a:-mai kizz-a:-mai upu-fu naz-so: no:-ga
 scrape-CONJ-INC scrape-CONJ-INC big-ADVR become.NPST-NMN what-FOC
 ‘What is it: it only becomes bigger if you keep scrapping it?’ (a riddle).

Stative-existential verbs *az* ‘to exist (inanimate)’ and *nja:n* ‘not to exist’ participate in forming constructions that can be interpreted as adverbial predicates. A phrase consisting of the string “rootX-adverbializer + *az*” will be understood as ‘to be the X way’, and conversely, the string “rootX-adverbializer + *nja:n*” carries the meaning ‘not to be the X way’.

These analytic adverbial constructions are synonymic and thus interchangeable with more synthetic verbalized adjectives. Concerning adjectival predication in affirmative sentences, Shimoji (2008: 369–370) reports that the distinction between synthetic and analytic constructions in Irabu-Miyakoan relies on the information structure properties of the predicate in question: if the predicate is topicalized or focused, the analytic form is selected, and if it is neutral in terms of information structure, it is realized synthetically. Given that the analytic adverbial suffix is *-ftu* which etymologically involves a focus-marking *-du*, an etymology confirmed by the fact that in Irabu the suffix remains in its non-contracted agglutinative form *-fu-du* (*-fɿ-du* in Shimoji’s notation), this explanation sounds highly convincing.

On the other hand, the choice of either synthetic or analytic adjective predication in negative sentences imposes respectively a dynamic (‘to be-

come’, *urja ssukaran* ‘it has not become white’) or static (‘to be’, *urja ss-sufj-du nja:n* ‘it is not white’) interpretation of the predicate (ibid., 375–376).

The suffix which co-occurs with *az* is *-ftu*, diachronically *-fu* (adverbial suffix) + *-du* (focus marker), while the suffix that co-occurs with *nja:n* is *-ffa*, diachronically *-fu* (adverbial suffix) + *-ja* (topic marker):

ku-nu ja:ja ka-nu ja:juzsa taka-ftu az
 this-GEN house-TOP that-GEN house-COMP tall-ADVR be.NPST
 ‘This house is taller than that one’;

nnja zo:-ftu az
 already good-ADVR be.NPST
 ‘I’ve had enough/I’m full’ (lit. ‘now it’s good’);

ui-nn-a ngi-ffa nja:n
 that-DAT-TOP alike-ADVR be.NEG.NPST
 ‘It does not resemble that’;

fo:-bus-ffa nja:-ddam-dara=ja:
 eat-DES-ADVR be.NEG-PST-IRR=EMP
 ‘I think he didn’t want to eat’.

4.4. Noun phrase

A construction which deserves separate mentioning here is that of a noun phrase consisting of the bare adjective root form in the modifier slot and the function noun *munu*, lexically ‘thing’, as the head. This construction has been observed to be exclusively used as a nominal predicate. The bare root form cannot by itself function as a predicate⁷, so it needs the function noun as an auxiliary:

ku-nu pana o: munu
 this-GEN flower blue thing
 ‘This flower is blue’;

⁷ Nominal predicates in Miyakoan are realized with the assistance of copular verbs *ja:z* (topic copula) and *da:z/ du:z* (focus copula). In the unmarked environment, i.e. in non-past affirmative non-emphatic sentences, the topic copula is obligatorily omitted, which is the reason the first of the above examples with *munu* ends with *munu* and not the copula.

du:du mtsɣ-nu jana munu=ja:sɣ
 quite road-NOM awful thing=COP.EMP
 ‘The road is quite awful’;

kju:-ja du:du atsɣ munu=ja:sɣ
 today-TOP quite hot thing=COP.EMP
 ‘It’s really hot today!’.

In examples where the phrase with *munu* does not function as the predicate, it appears that *munu* is not an auxiliary and instead it retains its lexical meaning of ‘thing, something’:

ku-nu sakss-a kari:na munu: fi:-samai: du:du pukarass-a: ɛ-u:z
 this-GEN lately-TOP wonderful thing.ACC give-HON.MED quite grateful-TOP do-PROG.
 NPST
 ‘I am very grateful about that last occasion, when you kindly gave me something wonderful’.

5. Adjectives in other Japonic languages

A range of the strategies discussed in sections 3–4 are considered endemic/limited only to Miyakoan in the scale of the Ryukyus. Reduplicated adjectives are reported not to be found anywhere outside Miyako, and the same applies to the **-kaɣ* type of verbalization (Karimata 2015: 137), a clear cognate of the Old Japanese *-ku ari* analytic conjugation pattern (Frellesvig 2010: 90). One can therefore hypothesize that reduplication is a Miyakoan innovation, while the **-kaɣ* verbalization is a proto-language retention.

In Japanese, there are two morphologically distinct classes that are often collectively called “adjectives”: *keiyōshi* or “predicative adjectives”, which inflect for tense and can function as a predicate and are therefore a subcategory of verbs, and *keiyōdōshi* or “non-predicative adjectives”, which can be interpreted either as inflected for case or as non-inflected nominal modifiers, in the first case becoming a subcategory of nominals and in the latter an entirely separate lexical class distinct from both verbs and nominals. Functionally, therefore, *keiyōshi* can be considered an equivalent of Miyakoan verbalized adjectives, and *keiyōdōshi* as a category somewhat similar to reduplicated adjectives/adjectival nominals.

Bare root forms in their form and function bear a close resemblance to Old Japanese adjectival stems (Frellesvig 2010: 79–80), a single essential

difference being that reportedly the Old Japanese stems were syntactically more independent and even could be used as a predicate, at least in exclamatory utterances (ibid.).

Japanese nominalization strategy also involves attaching the suffix *-sa*; in Japanese, however, this derivation serves the lexical purpose of abstract noun formation, and such derivatives do not participate in syntactic operations such as predication or noun/verb phrase modification.

In Shuri-Okinawan, which is a closer relative of Miyakoan than Japanese, the overall system of adjectives and their derivatives is in essence bears a lot of resemblance to Miyakoan⁸. Like Miyakoan, Okinawan also has root forms of questionable independent word status, which serve solely the purpose of noun modification (noun compounding, if one interprets bare roots as dependent lexical morphemes), as in *kufa mutei* ‘hard rice cake’. There is also the *-sa* nominalization strategy; like in Tarama, the *-sa* derivatives serve as the basis for verbalization, which occurs by a further fusional attachment of the existential verb *aN*: *teura* ‘beauty’ > *teurasa* ‘being beautiful’⁹ > *teurasaN* ‘to be beautiful’.

Okinawan verbalized adjectives have a full inflection pattern for tense, politeness (a conjugation dimension absent from Miyakoan), and polarity. Negative forms are created by attaching the suffix *-ko:*, etymologically *-ku-ja* (adverbial suffix plus topic marker), a cognate of Miyakoan *-ffa* (4.3.), followed by the auxiliary *ne:n*, lexically ‘not exist’: *teurako: ne:n* ‘not to be beautiful’. These negative forms are symmetrical with Miyakoan *-ffa nja:n* negative forms of verbalized adjectives.

Finally, there is also a more analytic “verbalization” strategy in Okinawan which involves the use of nominalized adjectives and the verb *sun* ‘to do’: *fusa-sun* ‘to want’ (lit. ‘to do wanting’), *hi:sa-sun* ‘to be cold’ (lit. ‘to do the cold’). These expressions all refer to mental or internal states of the subject and apparently their usage is limited to third-person only with a strong component of evidentiality, much like Japanese subjective verbalizer *-garu*.

6. Conclusions

The following table summarizes the discussion from the present paper. It involves the described forms of adjectives and their derivatives, their lexi-

⁸ Information on adjectival categories in Okinawa has been synthesized from Miyara (2000: 48–53).

⁹ It is unclear at this point if Okinawan *-sa* can also derive abstract nouns, like *-sa* in Japanese, or if it has a purely grammatical function, like *-sa* in Miyakoan.

cal classes, syntactic functions and syntactic limitations.

Form	Lexical category	Noun modification	Verb modification	Predication	Remarks
bare root	adjective	yes	no	no	–
reduplicated/ adjective nominal	nominal	yes	yes	possibly	hypothetical predication with existential verbs
verbalized	verb	yes	yes	yes	dynamic meaning of the negative
nominalized	nominal	yes	limited	no	–
adverbialized	adverb	no	yes	yes	predication with existential verbs; topicalized or focalized function of affirmative <i>az</i> , stative meaning of negative <i>nja:n</i>
<i>munu</i> phrase	noun phrase	no	no	yes	predication with copula

Of the six discussed strategies, four are suited for nominal modification, which matches the prototypical cross-linguistic syntactic function of an adjective and justifies the label for this category of Miyakoan lexicon. Symmetrically, however, four strategies can be applied in a verb phrase, although it appears that the function of a verb modifier is mostly associated with the categories by their definition associated with the verb phrase, meaning verbs and adverbs derived from adjectives.

Also four strategies can be used for predication, each having its specific characteristics and limitations: verbalized adjectives are unmarked for information structure in the affirmative and have a dynamic meaning in the negative; adverbialized adjectives function as predicates with existential verbs only, incorporating information structure markedness in the affirmative and a stative meaning in the negative; *munu* phrases function as a typical nominal predicate with a copula (obligatorily omitted in non-past affirmative sentences); reduplicated adjectives may be combined with existential verbs for hypothetical predication, but even if one opts for such interpretation (cf. 3.2.), their occurrence in this function is only marginal.

More data and more in-depth analysis of actual patterns of usage of the discussed forms will be needed for a more accurate description of adjecti-

val behavior in Miyakoan. This kind of a follow-up study should specify the distribution of all six strategies and define their functions in more detail, allowing for an answer to the question as to why there is such a number them. In other words, it is expected that a further study will explain if there are functional reasons for differentiating between these six types of morphosyntactic variation on the adjective, other than those already covered by Shimoji (2008) (the axis of distinction between analytic and synthetic strategies of affirmative adjectival predication being information structure, and dynamic ‘to become’ versus stative ‘to be’ meanings constituting a defining distinction between analytic and synthetic negative adjectival predication).

A working hypothesis is that different strategies might display yet different properties of mood, evidentiality, or veridical force, and as such may place different limitations on the grammatical person of the subject, or the identity of the speaker. This would allow for interpreting Miyakoan adjective-related constructions on par with analogical constructions in Okinawan or Japanese, resulting in an overall more systemic, more consistent description of the Japonic notion of adjective.

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Abbreviations

1	first person	COP	copula	GER	gerund	NOM	nominative
3	second person	DAT	dative	HON	honorific	NPST	non-past
ACC	accusative	DES	desiderative	IMP	imperative	QUOT	quotative
ADVR	adverbializer	DIR	directive	INC	inclusive	PROG	progressive
COM	comitative	EMP	emphatic	IRR	<i>irrealis</i>	PROV	provisional
COMP	comparative	EXH	exhortative	MED	medial	PST	past
COND	conditional	FOC	focus	NEG	negative	TOP	topic
CONJ	conjecture	GEN	genitive	NMN	nominalizer	VRB	verbalizer

Adjectives and adjectival derivates in Miyako-Ryukyuan

SUMMARY

The present paper discusses the category of adjectives and its multiple derivates in Miyako-Ryukyuan (Miyakoan), an endangered Japonic language from the Sakishima-Ryukyuan subgroup. The analysis is centered on the Hirara regiolect and is based on examples retrieved from Nikolay Nevskiy's handwritten lexicographic field notes (Nevskiy 2013; Jarosz 2015), supported and supplemented by modern research on a number of Miyakoan regiolects (such as Shimoji 2008 and 2011, or Aoi 2015). For reasons listed in the paper, Miyakoan adjectives are identified here as the bare root forms, even though their morphosyntactic independence may be considered disputable. Their main derivates are reduplicated adjectives, here also called adjectival nominals due to their morphosyntactically nominal characteristics. Four other lexical class-changing derivates are subsequently discussed. These are: verbalized adjectives, nominalized adjectives, adverbialized adjectives, and phrases with function noun *munu*. Examples of each of these classes are presented with a focus on their syntactic properties. The description is followed by a brief contrastive discussion of adjectival categories in two largest relatives of Miyakoan, Japanese and Okinawan. The paper concludes with a comparison of the described adjective-derived classes, considering both their discrepancies and overlap areas. Citing Shimoji (2008), in certain instances differences in information structure marking or in semantics – dynamic versus stative – are considered relevant. Not all classes, however, can be clearly explained in terms of functional differentiation as of now. It is hypothesized that like in the cousin languages of Japanese or Okinawan, these distinctions may be motivated by grammaticalized dimensions such as mood or evidentiality.

Key words: Miyakoan, Ryukyuan, Japonic, adjective, reduplication, nominalization, verbalization.

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