Today's topic:

- **History of Japanese: Phonology**

Background preparation:

- *(none)*

0. Today's objectives

After today's class, you should be able to:

- Discuss ways of investigating the pronunciation of older forms of a language
- Find evidence for the pronunciation of Early Modern Japanese from Portuguese missionary materials
- Use multiple sources of evidence to reconstruct older pronunciations of the *h*-row kana sounds
- (If time:) Discuss how the *man'yoogana* writing system uniquely provides evidence about vowel categories in Old Japanese

1. Studying historical phonology

- What **sources of information** do we have available about the sound system or pronunciation of older forms of a language (before audio recordings)?

1. Studying historical phonology

- Sometimes we have **written records**
  - But how were older forms of the language actually **pronounced**?

- Suppose English were a dead language. How would we determine the pronunciation of the word *light*?
  - Does it help if we know that Japanese borrowed this word as ライト <raito>?
  - Does it help if we know that there is a variant spelling, *lite*?

1. Studying historical phonology

- Other ways to **reconstruct** the history of a language
  - **Dialect comparison** — doing comparative reconstruction (see below) on dialects of a language to reconstruct a point of origin
  - **Internal reconstruction** — trying to simplify the reconstructed older form of a language
    - This works on the **assumption** that morphemes which alternate today had one consistent form in an earlier stage
    - Can look a lot like phonological analysis!

1. Studying historical phonology

- **Comparative reconstruction** — Developing hypotheses about the ancestor of a set of related languages — what was their starting point?
  - Question: What is Japanese related to, if anything? (we'll come back to this later)

2. Chronology and terminology

- **Classical Japanese** — 文語 ***bungo*** 'literary language'
  - In use since approximately the Nara period (710)
  - Survived as a **literary** language into the modern period (19th/20th centuries)
    - The **spoken** language changed over this long period
  - Compare the role of Latin vs. Romance vernaculars in the medieval period

2. Chronology and terminology

- Quick summary chronology
  (other language names, etc., are also used)

	Language name	Roughly corresponding historical period	
bungo 文語 ‘classical J.’	Old J. Early Middle J.	Nara Heian	710-794 794-1185
	(Late) Middle J.	Muromachi/ Kamakura	1185-1603
	Early Modern J.	Edo	1603-1868
gendaigo 現代語 ‘modern J.’	Modern J.	Meiji-present	1868–

3. Portuguese missionary materials

- Japanese-language texts written in **romanization** (based on Portuguese orthography); 16th century

- João Rodrigues and other Portuguese missionaries
  - Dictionary and grammar of Japanese
  - Collection of *Aesop's Fables*

3. Portuguese missionary materials

- These texts provide evidence for:
  - Dialect differences, word usage, etc.
  - Oldest attested written examples of many Japanese words
  - (Indirect) evidence for **pronunciation**
    - Vowel length not systematically represented (except <ô>)
    - Distinction between <o> and <ô> — evidence for the midpoint of a **sound change** that is not directly represented in kana:
      /a+u/ → [ɔː] (later → [oː])

3. Portuguese missionary materials

Work groups

- Data set - Portuguese missionary materials: ESOPO NO FABVLAS
  - Try to answer the questions in the box at the top
  - What evidence can we uncover about the pronunciation of the time?

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

There are many unusual things about the "*h*-row" kana sounds 「はひふへほ」

- **Internal reconstruction**: Look at morpheme alternations
  - Rendaku — what happens to /h/?
  - What usually happens to Sino-Japanese /h/ when it follows a nasal?

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

- The kana chart consonant order is linguistically motivated — *except for h*

  (based on Sanskrit tradition)

  k s t n “h” m | y r w

  - What sound classes are before and after the | ?
  - Within each half, what is the organizing principle (if we leave out “h”)?
  - What would make “h” fit this organizing principle?

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

- Riddle from the 16th century
  (transliterated according to <u>modern</u> pronunciation)

ははは（母）には		二度	あひたれども
haha	ni-wa	ni-do	a-i.ta r-e do mo
mother	*NI*-TOP	2-times	meet-PAST(?)-although

ちち（父）には		一度も	あはず
titi	ni-wa	iti-do mo	aw-az-u
father	*NI*-TOP	1-time even	meet-NEG-NONPAST

- Answer:

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

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father *NI*-TOP	1-time even	meet-NEG-NONPAST

- Answer: The lips! — **Why**? *What was the 16c. pronunciation like in order for this joke to work?*

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

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?a**?**a	ni-wa	ni-do	a-i.ta r-e do mo
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titi	ni-wa	iti-do mo	aw-az-u
father	*NI*-TOP	1-time even	meet-NEG-NONPAST

- Answer: The lips! — Why? | は had a **labial** consonant

  haha(-)ni-wa…au would usually mean ‘meet mother’, but *ni* is ambiguous; this can also mean ‘meet <u>in</u> [the word] mother’

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

- How are the *h*-row kana transliterated in Portuguese missionary materials? (see above)

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

- Some case markers and postpositions are written with “irregular” kana spellings

TOPIC [wa] は <ha>

GOAL [e] へ <he>

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

- Post-WWII spelling reform changed how certain verbs are spelled in kana:

  Verb ‘to meet’ (the character 会 is read [a] here)

“Historical” spelling	会ふ	会はない	会へば	会ひます
Post-war spelling	会う	会わない	会えば	会います
Modern pronunc.	[aɯ]	[awanai]	[aeba]	[aimasɯ̟]

  - What analysis did we develop for the root-final consonant of verbs of this type?

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

- Putting it all together, what historical **sound changes** affected the consonants originally spelled by the kana in the は row?
  - What was the **original consonant** in the syllables spelled「はひふへほ」?
  - What happened to this consonant in **word-initial position**?
  - What happened to this consonant in **word-internal position** (including “particles”)?

4. The history of the *h*-row kana sounds

- Putting it all together, what historical **sound changes** affected the consonants originally spelled by the kana in the は row?
  - What was the **original consonant** in the syllables spelled「はひふへほ」? | something labial ([p]?)
  - What happened to this consonant in **word-initial position**? | became [h]
  - What happened to this consonant in **word-internal position** (including “particles”)? | became [w], and therefore sometimes deleted

5. More historical phonology (time permitting)

- Handout - Historical linguistics: Phonology (part 2)
  - Man’yoogana and the Old Japanese vowel system
  - Final vowel alternations