Analysis of Assumption Adverbs in Japanese
Tabun, *Osoraku*, *Moshikashitara*, and *Hyottoshite*

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ABSTRACT

This study departs from one of the phenomena of foreign language learning. It is regarded as critical, particularly in this modern age to have a foreign language proficiency, and understanding a wide range of new vocabularies in the language being studied is undeniably one of the most fundamental aspects of learning it. However, students commonly struggle to distinguish the meaning of those diverse vocabularies in a foreign language when attempting to memorize them. The purpose of this study is to determine the similarities and differences in adverbs that express assumptions in Japanese, thus the collected data was analyzed qualitatively in addition to using the substitution technique. Based on the analysis, the assumptions adverbs namely *tabun*, *osoraku*, *moshikashitara*, and *hyottoshite*, were frequently used at the beginning of a sentence to directly indicate whether the speaker's prediction is from their point of view or the point of view of their interlocutor as well. Furthermore, if the speaker does not clearly describe or mention a subject, the four adverbs can be used because the speaker expects their prediction to be the same as their interlocutors assumed. It was also discovered that if the subject is explicitly mentioned by the speaker, it is preferable to use self-referential adverbs, such as *tabun* and *moshikashitara*, because it emphasizes that the speaker is the one who has the guesswork or conjecture being expressed.

Keywords: *Adverb, Assumption, Contrastive.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language skills are among the most important skills, particularly in this age of globalization. Language skills are limited not only by mastery of the language we use every day or our mother tongue, but also by mastery of foreign languages. We can enter the global world society and use our foreign language skills to absorb various knowledge from other countries (Santoso, 2014). Everyone must have their own goals in learning foreign languages, which forces the learners to reconsider what language skills they want to acquire and what methods must be used to acquire them (Atsuko, 2004). Furthermore, when learning a foreign language, we may encounter various similarities and differences with the language we use in our daily lives. Knowledge of our main language or mother tongue is very important and efficient in learning foreign languages because we learn how to use the language in childhood while learning the language (Ozeki, 2010).

One of the first fundamental aspects of learning a language, especially a foreign language, is the word. They typically spend a significant amount of time memorizing word lists from the second language using their bilingual dictionary as a source to better understand the foreign language (Alqahtani, 2015). The adverb is one type of word in a language that must be considered. Because it appears frequently in sentences. It can explain other word classes and the adverbs themselves in a sentence (Wouthuyzen, 2021).

Adverbs, or *fukushi* in Japanese, can be a source of confusion among the students in learning the language. According to a previous study conducted by Nursanti and Supriatnaningsih (2019), the use of *fukushi* such as the words *kitto*, *zettai ni*, and *zehi* by Japanese language learners at the university level still has errors, which are influenced by a lack of understanding of the meaning of each of these words and the pattern of sentences that follow these words, so the context of understanding the sentence becomes less. As in this study, the author wishes to investigate the various types of *fukushi* that are associated with when we want to state an assumption or possibility of something such as *tabun*, *osoraku*, *moshikashitara*, and *hyottoshite*. These words are expressed in everyday conversations as well as in

varieties of media including news, Japanese animation or anime, drama, novels, and so on.

This kind of phenomenon sparks attention, especially for students and educators involved in the Japanese language learning process in Indonesia. Educators can assist learners in minimizing grammatical errors when carrying out the learning process, and educators can also gain an understanding of the meaning of words that are the material of this learning material as a reference to determine the level of difficulty of the available learning materials. This is very useful given that one of the factors causing students' lack of interest in learning Japanese, particularly in Indonesia, is the difficulty of learning materials in Japanese (Yamashita, 2020).

The Japanese adverb studied by the researcher is classified as *chinjutsu no fukushi*. According to Kudo (1982), the adverbs related to a statement must at least contain three things regarding the speaker's attitude of judgment and emotion in an utterance, namely *johou* or modality (how it is delivered), *hyouka* (judgment/emotionality of the speaker), and *toritate* (focusing on the topic being said). Adverbs that express assumption are classified into four types in Japanese: *tabun*, *osoraku*, *moshikashitara*, and *hyottoshite*, and these adverbs are identified as *johou no fukushi* or modality according to the study conducted by Na (2019). Nitta (2003), in agreement with this viewpoint, classify these adverb words as modality adverbs, each with its function. Meanwhile, they assert that modality adverbs that function to show the degree of one's belief are expressed through the use of the adverbs *kitto*, *tabun*, and *osoraku*, whereas modality adverbs that function to show when a sentence is a possibility are expressed through the use of the adverbs *moshikashitara* and *hyottosuruto*.

2. METHOD

The research method chosen in this study is qualitative. It focuses on the meaning, differences, and similarities found in the various types of adverb words used to express assumptions in Japanese. The method that is appropriate for gaining a better understanding of the study is to explain the adverb that is the subject of the study. This is also supported by Basrowi and Kelvin's (2008) explanation that qualitative research is conducted to understand what is hidden behind a phenomenon that can be difficult to know or understand.

The research data used in this study came from informational media such as internet newspapers and entertainment media such as animations, films, and novels, and the data obtained for this study ranged from 2013-2022. And the obtained Japanese adverb data were then classified into functions of the meaning contained in them by looking at the functions possessed by each adverb so that it could be contrasted with the other Japanese assumption adverb's meaning.

First, the data was analyzed by categorizing each word and analyzing the role. The substitution technique was then applied to determine the acceptability of the meaning of the adverbs as well as to contrast the adverbs.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

The author analyzed the research data in the form of Japanese sentences containing the assumption adverbs that were studied, and then listed in Table 1.

Table 1. The data of adverbs analysed in this study

| Data | Other Assumption Adverbs | | | |
	Tabun	Osoraku	Hyotto shite	Moshika shitara
Tabun, paafomansu o suru tsumori deshou (Bakuman, Ep 23)	√	√	√	√
Da ga Yukihira, aji wa ore no hou ga ! **Tabun…** (Shokugeki no Soma, Ep 9)	√	–	√	√
Osoraku jinsei saigo ni naru de arou ninshi kikan (Abema Times)	√	√	√	√
Osoraku kanojo wa kotowatte kuru darou (Weblio.com)	√	√	√	√
Hyottoshite ninshishou ?Machi chuu de mayotte iru hito o mikaketara (Asahi Shinbun, 2021)	√	√	√	√
Hyottoshite, futsuu no e hon jyanai kamo shirenai (NHK, 2021)	√	√	√	√
Moshikashitara nani ka no rikuesuto no bangou toka (Detective Conan Ep 973)	√	√	√	√
"Moshikatara jibun mo" to omotte shimai, fuan ni naru no desu (Asahi Shinbun, 2022)	√	-	√	√

3.1.1. Tabun *Adverb and the Other Adverb Equivalent*

<u>*Data 1*</u>

Tabun, *paafomansu o suru tsumori deshou*
Tabun (Adv), *paafomansu* (V) *o sono tsumori* (N) *deshou*
(**Maybe** she intends to do that kind of performance)

The Japanese sentence containing this tabun adverb in data (1) appears to follow the adverb-verb-noun sentence pattern. The subject of the sentence is not explicitly stated here, but it is clear from the animation that the character named Azuki, who is the subject of this sentence, will perform a performance, namely voice acting. The tabun adverb used by the speaker in this sentence refers to an assumption made by the speaker himself about the activities performed by the Azuki character. It is strengthened further by the use of the deshou expression, which means to assume in Japanese whether the speaker asks for confirmation from the speech partner or not.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows:

(1.1) ***Osoraku***, *paafomansu o sono tsumori deshou*
(**Probably** she intends to do that kind of performance)

(1.2) ***Hyottoshite***, *paafomansu o sono tsumori deshou*
(**Possibly** she intends to do that kind of performance)

(1.3) ***Moshikashitara***, *paafomansu o sono tsumori deshou*
(**Maybe** she intends to do that kind of performance)

The meaning of sentence (1.1) can be accepted because the speaker expresses his judgment and belief to his interlocutor and is confident that his assessment will be the same as that of the speech partner. Sentences (1.2) and (1.3) are also acceptable because they demonstrate that the speaker makes a temporary guess about what will happen after the sentence is said, or in this case, the activity that Azuki will perform.

<u>*Data 2*</u>

*Da ga Yukihira, aji wa ore no hou ga ! **Tabun**..*
Da ga Yukihira (S), *aji wa* (N) *ore no hou ga ! **Tabun**...* (Adv)
(But just wait Yukihira, mine will taste better! **I think**…)

The Japanese sentence containing this *tabun* adverb in data (2) follows a subject-adverb-noun-verb sentence pattern. The speaker explicitly mentions the subject in the sentence, and the *tabun* adverb used by the speaker named Aldini in the animation refers to his own belief that the taste of his food is superior to the subject he mentions named Yukihira.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows:

(2.1) *Da ga Yukihira, aji wa ore no hou ga! **Osoraku**…*
(But just wait Yukihira, mine will taste better! **probably**…)

(2.2) *Da ga Yukihira, aji wa ore no hou ga! **Hyottoshite**…*
(But just wait Yukihira, mine will taste better! … **possibly**…)

(2.3) *Da ga Yukihira, aji wa ore no hou ga! **Moshikashitara**…*
(But just wait Yukihira, mine will taste better! … **maybe**…)

The meaning in sentence (2.1) is unacceptable because subjective thoughts from the speaker's interlocutor are required, whereas here there is the subject '*ore*', which means 'I,' emphasizing that the speaker does not seek confirmation from the speech partner. Sentences (2.2) and (2.3) are acceptable because they demonstrate that the speaker makes a preliminary guess about the taste of the subject which is the dish that he makes in the sentence.

3.1.2. Osoraku *Adverb and the Other Adverb Equivalent*

<u>*Data 3*</u>

Osoraku *jinsei saigo ni naru de arou ninshi kikan*
Osoraku (Adv) *jinsei* (N) *saigo ni* (Adv) *naru* (V) *de arou ninshi kikan* (N)
(**Probably** this will be the last period of pregnancy in the entire life)

In data (3), the Japanese sentence containing the adverb *osoraku* has the sentence pattern Adverb-Noun-Adverb-Verb-Noun. The subject is not explicitly stated by the speaker in this sentence, but if we take a look at the context, it is a sentence uttered by the speaker herself, and here the speaker uses the adverb *osoraku*, which refers to the approximate time expressed by the speaker. In the sentence, the speaker believes that her audience as the communication partner will share her belief or assumption.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows.

(3.1) ***Tabun*** *jinsei saigo ni naru de arou ninshi kikan*
(**Maybe** this will be the last period of pregnancy in the entire life)

(3.2) ***Hyottoshite*** *jinsei saigo ni naru de arou ninshi kikan*
(**Possibly** this will be the last period of pregnancy in the entire life)

(3.3) ***Moshikashitara*** *jinsei saigo ni naru de arou ninshi kikan*

(**Maybe** this will be the last period of pregnancy
 in the entire life)

The meaning of sentence (5.1) is acceptable because it reflects the speaker's subjective thoughts. Sentences (5.2) and (5.3) are also acceptable because they demonstrate that the speaker makes a speculative guess about the activities to be performed by the subject, namely herself, in the sentence.

Data 4

Osoraku kanojo wa kotowatte kuru darou
Osoraku (Adv) *kanojo wa* (S) *kotowatte kuru* (V) *darou*
(**Probably** she will refuse it)

The Japanese sentence in data (4) with the adverb *osoraku* follows the adverb-subject-verb sentence pattern. The subject is explicitly mentioned by the speaker, and the speaker's use of the adverb *osoraku* refers to the speaker's belief or assume about the possibility that the subject they mention will do something, namely, refuse. In this case, the speaker believes that his interlocutor shares their own beliefs or assumptions.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows.

(4.1) *Tabun kanojo wa kotowatte kuru darou*
 (**Maybe** she will refuse it)

(4.2) *Hyottoshite kanojo wa kotowatte kuru darou*
 (**Possibly** she will refuse it)

(4.3) *Moshikashitara kanojo wa kotowatte kuru darou*
 (**Maybe** she will refuse it)

The meaning in sentence (4.1) is acceptable because it reflects the speaker's subjective thoughts. Sentences (4.2) and (4.3) are also acceptable because they demonstrate that the speaker makes a temporary guess about the activities that the subject in the sentence will perform.

3.1.3. Hyottoshite *Adverb and the Other Adverb Equivalent*

Data 5

Hyottoshite ninshishou?Machi chuu de mayotte iru hito o mikaketara
Hyottoshite (Adv) *ninshishou* (N)*?Machi chuu* (N) *de mayotte iru* (V) *hito* (S) *o mikaketara* (V)
(**Maybe** dementia? If you see someone lost in the street)

The Japanese sentence containing the *hyottoshite* adverb in data (5) has the following sentence pattern: Adverb-Noun-Noun-Verb-Subject-Verb. The speaker explicitly mentions the subject here, and the use of the adverb *hyottoshite* refers to the speaker's tentative

assumption about the possibility of the subject suffering from dementia. Because this sentence is a narrative intended to pique the listener's or audience's interest, the speaker hopes that the listener or audience will make the same guess that they did.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows.

(5.1) *Tabun ninshishou?Machi chuu de mayotte iru hito o mikaketara*
 (**Maybe** dementia? If you see someone lost in the Street)

(5.2) *Osoraku ninshishou?Machi chuu de mayotte iru hito o mikaketara*
 (**Probably** dementia? If you see someone lost in the street

(5.3) *Moshikashitara ninshishou?Machi chuu de mayotte iru hito o mikaketara*
 (Maybe **dementia**? If you see someone lost in the Street)

The meaning of sentence (5.1) is acceptable because it reflects the speaker's subjective thoughts. Sentence (5.2) is also acceptable because it demonstrates that the speaker is confident that what they believe is also what their interlocutor believes, and sentence (5.3) is also acceptable because it demonstrates that the speaker makes a temporary guess about the conditions experienced by the subject in the sentence.

Data 6

Hyottoshite, futsuu no e hon jyanai kamo shirenai
Hyottoshite (Adv)*, futsuu no* (Adj) *e hon* (N) *jyanai kamo shirenai* (Adv)
(**Maybe** it's not a normal picture book)

The Japanese sentence containing the *hyottoshite* adverb in data (6) follows the adverb-adjective-noun-adverb sentence pattern. The speaker does not explicitly mention the subject, and the use of the adverb *hyottoshite* refers to the speaker's tentative assumption that the object or book mentioned has unusual properties. In this sentence, the speaker intends to provide the information he has to the audience member who is the speech partner, with the context that the speaker hopes the speech partner has the same provisional guess as they did.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows.

(6.1) *Tabun, futsuu no e hon jyanai kamo shirenai*
 (**Maybe** it's not a normal picture book)

(6.2) *Osoraku, futsuu no e hon jyanai kamo shirenai*
 (**Probably** it's not a normal picture book)

(6.3) *Moshikashitara, futsuu no e hon jyanai kamo shirenai*
 (**Maybe** it's not a normal picture book)

The meaning of the sentence (6.1) is acceptable because it reflects the speaker's subjective thoughts. Sentence (6.2) is also acceptable because it demonstrates that the speaker is confident that what he believes is also what the interlocutor believes, and sentence (6.3) is also acceptable because it demonstrates that the speaker makes a temporary guess about the nature of the object contained in the sentence.

3.1.4. Moshikashitara Adverb and the Other Adverb Equivalent

Data 7

Moshikashitara *nani ka no rikuesuto no bangou toka*
Moshikashitara (Adv) *nani ka* (N) *no rikuesuto no bangou* (N) *toka*
(**Maybe** it's the request number for the song)

The Japanese sentence containing the adverb moshikashitara in data (7) follows the Adverb-Noun-Noun sentence pattern. The speaker does not explicitly mention the subject here. Because the animation shows the speaker, Miwako, conveying her opinion to her colleagues, the use of the adverb *moshikashitara* in this sentence refers to the speaker's temporary conjecture. Here, the speaker expresses his own belief in her suspicions, specifically whether what the speaker and her colleagues are attempting to determine is a song request or not. Even in the context of the sentence, the speaker is unconcerned about whether or not the interlocutor will make the same guess as her.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows.

(7.1) ***Tabun*** *nani ka no rikuesuto no bangou toka*
(**Maybe** it's the request number for the song)

(7.2) ***Osoraku*** *nani ka no rikuesuto no bangou toka*
(**Probably** it's the request number for the song)

(7.3) ***Hyottoshite*** *nani ka no rikuesuto no bangou toka*
(**Maybe** it's the request number for the song)

The meaning of the sentence (7.1) is acceptable because it reflects the speaker's subjective thoughts. Sentence (7.2) is acceptable because it shows that the speaker is confident that what he believes is also what her interlocutor believes, and sentence (7.3) is also acceptable because it shows that the speaker makes a temporary guess about what she is looking for.

Data 8

*"**Moshikatara** jibun mo" to omotte shimai, fuan ni naru no desu*
*"**Moshikatara*** (Adv) *jibun* (S) *mo" to omotte* (V) *shimai, fuan* (Adj) *ni naru no desu*
(I think, "**Maybe** I am, too," and become anxious)

The Japanese sentence in data (8) with the adverb *moshikashitara* follows the adverb-subject-verb-adjective sentence pattern. The speaker explicitly mentions the subject here, namely themself. The use of the adverb *moshikashitara* in this sentence refers to the speaker's temporary assumption that there is a thought that will make the speaker's nature feel uncomfortable. This is clarified by the use of '*jibun*,' which has the meaning 'self', where the speaker expresses their suspicion without regard for whether their interlocutor shares their suspicion or not.

If the adverb in the sentence is substituted with another adverb, it will be as follows.

(8.1) *"**Tabun** jibun mo" to omotte shimai, fuan ni naru no desu*
(I think, "**Maybe** I am, too," and become anxious)

(8.2) *"**Osoraku** jibun mo" to omotte shimai, fuan ni naru no desu*
(I think, "**Probably** I am, too," and become anxious)

(8.3) *"**Hyottoshite** jibun mo" to omotte shimai, fuan ni naru no desu*
(I think, "**Maybe** I am, too," and become anxious)

The meaning in the sentence (8.1) is acceptable because it reflects the speaker's subjective thoughts. Sentence (8.2) is not acceptable because the speaker must be confident that other people or her interlocutor will have the same guess as them, while it is clear that there is the word '*jibun*' which refers to oneself, so it will be more oriented to subjective thoughts from oneself, and sentence (8.3) is acceptable because it shows that the speaker makes a temporary guess about the nature that will be experienced by them contained in the sentence.

3.2. Discussion

The analysis of the data shows that the four adverbs that express this assumption have distinct characteristics, depending on the speaker of the sentence. A sentence that includes the adverb "*tabun*" can be interpreted as the speaker assuming the subject of the sentence. If the subject is oneself, as in '*jibun*' or '*watashi*,' or some other self-designation, then this will be made clearer. This is in accordance with Maebo's (2012) finding, that *tabun* adverb can be used to express or show a feeling, to guess or think based on the subjective view of the speaker, and is usually used to predict good or desirable things. It has also been noted by Nitta (2003) that the use of tabun adverbs can convey an individual's assurance in what they are saying. The strong belief value of an item or evaluation expressed with *tabun* is clarified by Chino (1992). When facing ambiguity, this adverb can be read as a suggestion or a plan (Jang, 2001).

Data that make use of adverbs in addition to 'tabun' is understood to mean that the speaker is conveying the assumptions in the sentence. The adverb osoraku, on the other hand, is more commonly used when the sentence's focus is on information delivery. This is done so that the speaker's beliefs and those of his listener are consistent, though it does not always include a self-referential subject. In line with the findings of Maebo's (2012) study, which classified osoraku as equivalent to the tabun, and can describe subjective assumption, both from the speaker and from the interlocutor.

Unlike the data that contained hyottoshite, which derives from the word hyotto, the meaning of this adverb is to indicate a temporary hypothesis or conjecture as well as a possibility that can occur. This term has been in use since the early 1700s. As for the word, it gradually changed shape and meaning over time, so in modern Japanese, we can use the word hyottosuruto or hyottoshite to express the possibility of something happening (Kawase, 2021). There's also moshikashitara, which is derived from the word moshi and was originally meant to indicate the existence of a hypothesis or provisional conjecture, or the possibility of something happening. However, times have changed, and moshikasuruto is now used to express the possibility of something occurring (Kawase, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the research data, there are several similarities and differences between adverbs used to express assumptions in Japanese. When we examine the pattern and structure of the sentence, we will notice that these adverbs have something in common: they are frequently used at the beginning of a sentence to directly indicate whether the speaker's prediction is from their point of view or the point of view of their interlocutor as well. Furthermore, if the speaker does not clearly describe or mention a subject, the four adverbs can be used because the speaker can expect that what they predict will be the same assumption as their interlocutor. In this study, it is also found that if the subject is explicitly mentioned by the speaker, it is preferable to use self-referential adverbs, such as tabun and moshikashitara, because it emphasizes that the speaker is the one who has the guesswork or conjecture being expressed.

The author recognizes that there are still boundaries in the research conducted, therefore as a suggestion for future research, an analysis of adverbs can be performed that states this assumption by using data derived from a direct speech delivered by native speakers. Furthermore, the analysis may be conducted not only from one standpoint or in one language, but also through comparisons of differences and similarities between languages.

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