



The Process of Japanese Compound Word Formation

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Abstract. The process of forming a Japanese word is called *gokeisei*. *Gokeisei* consists of 4 kinds, namely *haseigo* (派生語), *karikomi* or *shouryaku* (刈り込み・省略), *toujigo* (頭字語) and *fukugougou/gouseigo* (複合語・合成語). This study aims to identify changes in phonemes in the process of *gouseigo* formation. In this study, the data were analyzed by identifying vocabulary in the form of *gouseigo*, making a list of *gouseigo*, interpreting the data according to theory, then discussing the results of data processing. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, namely data on Japanese compound words (*gouseigo*) are analyzed and presented according to existing circumstances or phenomena as they are. The data collection technique in this study was carried out by collecting data and information sourced from literature books related to *gouseigo*. Based on the results of this study, it is hoped that it can be useful for Japanese language learners so that they can understand and form Japanese compound words correctly. The formation of the Japanese compound word (*gouseigo*) can be grouped into: 1) *meishi* + *meishi*, 2) *meishi* + *doushi*, 3) *doushi* + *meishi*, 4) *doushi* + *doushi*. *Gouseigo* vocabulary can be categorized according to *the changes in onso* that occur in the process of forming the word.

Keywords: formation · word · *gouseigo* · morphophonemic · phoneme alteration

1 Introduction

One of the foreign languages that many learn today is Japanese [1]. Japanese is in great demand because people want to go to Japan with various motivations and reasons. In order to be able to communicate in Japanese, it is important for learners or anyone interested in The Japanese language to understand or at least know the linguistics of the Japanese language.

The Japanese linguistic term is known as *nihongogaku* (日本語学). So, all things about the Japanese language are learned in *nihongogaku* [2]–[4]. In *nihongogaku*, things that can be studied, namely in the form of sounds of speech, words, sentences, even to the people who use the language. Thus, *nihongogaku* encompasses all branches of linguistics, namely *onseigaku* (音声学) ‘phonetics’, *on-in-ron* (音韻論) ‘phonology’, *keitairon* (形態論) ‘morphology’, *tougoron/sintakusu* (統語論・シンタクス) ‘syntax’,

imiron (意味論) ‘semantics’, *goyouron* (語用論) ‘pragmatic’, *shakai gengogaku* (社会言語学) ‘socio-linguistics’ and so on (Sutedi, 2003: 6).

Language as a means of interaction in speech events, formed from the wording. Therefore, the word is one of the important elements in the formation of sentences. The Japanese word term is called *tango* (単語). According to [5, 6] a word is a unit or form of “free” in speech. The “free” form is morphetically a stand-alone form, meaning that it does not require any other form to be merged with it, and can be separated from other “free” forms in front of and behind it, in speech. From this opinion, it can be concluded that the word is a single entity that can stand alone and can form sentences.

Every language has word formation rules, as does Japanese. The process of forming a Japanese word is called *gokaisei*. *Gokaisei* consists of 4 kinds, namely *haseigo* (派生語), *karikomi* or *shouryaku* (刈り込み・省略), *toujigo* (頭字語) and *fukugougougoiseigo* (複合語・合成語) [7, 8].

Research on *gokaisei* has been carried out by several researchers, namely [7, 9, 10]. In 2003 Matheos had conducted a study on *haseigo* under the title “The Study of Prefixes and Suffixes in Japanese”. Research on *shouryaku* and *toujigo* has been carried out by another study. Aror’s research was limited to the process of compound word formation in *doushi*. So researchers feel the need to do research in terms of morphophonemics about *gouseigo*.

Gouseigo is a word formed from a combination of several content morphemes. In the following the author will present some examples of *gouseigo*.

1. *Ame* (雨) ‘rain’ + *gauze* (傘) ‘umbrella’ = *amagasa* (雨傘) ‘rain umbrella’
2. *Hon* (本) ‘book’ + *tana* (棚) ‘shelf’ = *hondana* (本棚) ‘bookshelf’
3. *Yama* (山) ‘mountain’ + *michi* (道) ‘road’ = *yama-michi* (山道) ‘mountain road’
4. *ke* (毛) ‘fur’ + *ito* (糸) ‘yarn’ = *keito* (毛糸) ‘woolen yarn’.

From some of the examples above, it can be known that there are compound words that undergo changes and there are also those that do not undergo phoneme changes. The problem lies in the example of *the word amagasa* and *the word hondana*. In the word *amagasa* there has been a change of *onso* (音素) ‘phoneme’, namely *onso* /e/ to /a/ and *onso* /k/ to /g/, while in *the word hondana* there has been a change in *onso* /t/ to /d/. Based on this, the author is interested in researching how phoneme changes occur in the process of *formation of gouseigo*.

2 Theoretical Foundations

Morphology is one of the branches of linguistics. The morphological term in Japanese is called *keitairon* (形態論). According to [11] morphology is a branch of linguistics that identifies the basic units of language as grammatical units. The object of study is words and morphemes. The morphemem term in Japanese is called *keitaiso* (形態素). Morphemes are the smallest units of language that have meanings and cannot be broken down into even smaller units of meaning [12].

The morphological process in Japanese is called *gokaisei* (語形成). According to [13] morphological processes are a way of forming words by connecting one morphememe

with another. According to [12] the result of the formation of Japanese words is at least four kinds, namely *haseigo* (派生語), *karikomi/shouryaku* (刈り込み・省略), *toujigo* (頭字語) and *fukugougolgouseigo* (複合語・合成語).

Haseigo is a word formed from the merger of *naiyou keitaiso* (内容形態素) ‘morpheme isi’ with *setsuji* (接辞) ‘affixion’ [11]. *Karikomi* or also known as *shouryaku* is an acronym in the form of a syllable (silabis) of the original vocabulary [12]. While *toujigo* is an abbreviation of the first letter expressed in the letters of the Alphabet (Sutedi, 2003: 46).

According to [14] *gouseigo* or also known as *fukugougo* is 自由形の語もしくはその異形態とが相互に結びついてできた語. ‘*Jiyuukei no go moshiku wa sono ikeitai to ga sougo ni musubi tsuite dekita go de aru.*’ Compound words are words that can combine with each other between words that are free morphemes or with their allomorphs.

Then, according to [15] *gouseigo* is a word formed as a result of combining several content morphemes. Sutedi put forward an example of the formation of *gouseigo* as follows.

- a. Two contents morphemes.
Nomina + *nomina amagasa* (雨傘) ‘rain umbrella’.
ondana (本棚) ‘bookshelf’
- b. Fill morpheme + *setsuji*.
Nomina + *higaeri* verb (日帰り) ‘go home that day’
Toukyou-iki (東京行き) ‘towards Tokyo’
Verb + nomina *tabemono* (食べ物) ‘food’
yakiniku (焼肉) ‘grilled meat’
Verb + verb = verb *toridasu* (取り出す) ‘take’
urikiru (売り切る) ‘sold out’
Verb + verb = noun *ikikaeri* (行き帰り) ‘round trip’.

In this study, the author examined a compound word consisting of two content morphemes, namely nomina + nomina. In the drying of nouns in Japanese there are those that undergo morphophonemic processes.

The morphophonemic term in Japanese is called *keitai-on'inron* (形態音韻論). [16] says that morphophonemics, also called morphonic, morphonological, or morphonological, or morphomic deformation events in a morphological process. Later, Samsuri gave morphophonemic limitations, that is, the study of changes in phonemes caused by the relationship of two or more morphemes as well as the giving of their signs. So, it can be concluded that morphophonemics is a branch of linguistics that studies about the change of phonemes in a morphological process.

If two morphemes are put together, it results in an adjustment between the two morphemes. According to Koizumi (1993: 105–107) adjustments between the two morphemes can occur by:

1. *Fuka* (付加) ‘addition’
2. *Sakujo* (削除) ‘erasure’
3. *Chian* (置換) ‘replacement’
4. *Zero setsuji* (ゼロ接辞) ‘empty morpheme’
5. *Juufuku* (重複 複複重複)

3 Research Methods

The research method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. Thus, in this study the data regarding *gouseigo* were analyzed and presented according to the circumstances or phenomena that exist as they are.

The technique used in this study is a literature study. So, the collection of data and information is sourced from literature books that have to do with *gouseigo*.

The source of data in the study is written materials. The data that will be taken is data from reading books, including Japanese textbooks, magazines or Japanese-language newspapers related to *gouseigo*. These data will then be verified by *native speakers* or experts.

The data analysis in this study is as follows:

1. Identify the vocabulary in the form of *gouseigo*.
2. Make a list of *gouseigo*.
3. Interpreting data according to theory.
4. Discuss the results of data processing.

4 Result and Discussions

In this study, the authors have collected 378 compound words of Japanese. From the above data, it was found that the formation of the Japanese compound word (*gouseigo*) can be grouped into:

1. *Meishi + meishi*
2. *Meishi + doushi*
3. *Doushi + meishi*
4. *Doushi + doushi*

To find out how *the onso* changes that occur in the process of *forming gouseigo*, it is discussed based on how it is formed.

4.1 Meishi + Meishi

Based on the data that has been collected, in the process of forming a Compound Word in Japanese (*gouseigo*) for nouns + nouns can be divided into two types of word formation, namely:

4.1.1 Merger I, i.e. The Merger of Two Nouns of an MD Nature (Explained, Explained). So, One Noun Describes the Other Noun. Examples:

1. *Saka* (坂) 'climb' + *michi* (道) 'road' = *sakamichi* (坂道) 'ramp'
2. *Sawa* (沢) 'swamp' + *mizu* (水) 'water' = *sawamizu* (沢水) 'swamp water'
3. *Takara* (宝) 'treasure' + *shima* (島) 'island' = *takarajima* (宝島) 'treasure island'

4.1.2 *Merger II, That is, the Merger of Two Nouns that Form a New Meaning*

1. *Mado* (窓) 'window' + *kuchi* (口) 'mouth' = *madoguchi* (窓口) 'counter'
2. *Hana* (鼻) 'nose' + *chi* (血) 'blood' = *hanaji* (鼻血) 'nosebleeds'

At the merger of the two words, both the merging of I and the merging of II, shows that some of the words *gouseigo* undergo morphophonemic processes. The process of changing phonemes that occur in nouns + nouns can be classified into:

4.1.3 *Change of Phonemes at the Beginning of the Second Word*

1. *Kuchi* (口) 'mouth' + *fue* (笛) 'flute' = *kuchibue* (口笛) 'whistling'
2. *hi* (灰) 'ash' + *sara* (皿) 'plate' = *haizara* (灰皿) 'ashtray'

4.1.4 *Change of Phonemes at the End of the First Word*

1. *Ame* (雨) 'rain' + *mizu* (水) 'water' = *amamizu* (雨水) 'rainwater'
2. *Kane* (金) 'money' + *mono* (物) 'goods' = *kanamono* (金物) 'ironware'

4.1.5 *Change of Phonemes at the End of the First Word and the Beginning of the Second Word*

1. *Ame* (雨) 'rain' + *gauze* (傘) 'umbrella' = *amagasa* (雨傘) 'rain umbrella'
2. *Ame* (雨) 'rain' + *kumo* (雲) 'cloud' = *amagumo* (雨雲) 'rain-containing cloud'

4.1.6 *The Emergence of Onso /s/*

1. *Left* (霧) 'fog' + *ame* (雨) 'rain' = *kirisame* (霧雨) 'drizzle'
2. *hi* (ice) + *ame* (雨) 'rain' = *hisame* (氷雨) 'hail in summer'

4.2 *Meishi + Doushi*

Based on the data that has been collected, in the process of forming a Compound Word of Japanese (*gouseigo*) for nouns + verbs can be divided into two types of word formation, namely:

4.2.1 *Meishi + Doushi = Meishi*

1. *Ha* (葉) 'leaf' + *stiff* (書く) 'writing' = *hagaki* (葉書) 'postcard'
2. *Tsuna* (綱) 'rope' + *hiku* (引く) 'interesting' = *tsunabiki* (綱引き) 'tug of war competition'
3. *Kami* (紙) 'paper' + *tsutsumu* (包む) 'wrapping' = *kamizutsumi* (紙包み) 'paper pack'

4.2.2 Meishi + Doushi = Doushi

1. *Ura* (裏) 'back' + *kiru* (切る) 'cut' = *uragiru* (裏切る) 'treasonous'
2. *Me* (芽) 'shoot' + *haeru* (生える) 'grow' = *mebaeru* (芽生える) 'sprout'
3. *Mono* (物) 'goods' + *kataru* (語る) 'storytelling' = *monogataru* (物語る) 'telling'

In both of the above formations, there is a morphophonemic process, that is, a change in phonemes at the beginning of a verb. In addition to the above formations, there are also mergers that do not cause phoneme changes. The result of such formation can be *meishi* and *doushi*.

Examples of formations that produce *meishi*:

1. *Kane* (金) 'money' + *motsu* (持つ) 'have' = *kanemochi* (金持ち) 'rich man'
2. *Mono* (物) 'goods' + *imu* (忌む) 'fasting' = *monoimi* (物忌み) 'fasting'

Whereas, an example of formation that produces *doushi*:

1. *Se* (背) 'back' + *ou* (負う) 'bear' = *seou* (背負う) 'bear'
2. *Yubi* (指) 'finger' + *sasu* (差す) 'pointing' = *yubisasu* (指差す) 'pointing'

4.3 Doushi + Meishi

Based on the data that has been collected, in the process of forming a Compound Word of Japanese (*gouseigo*) for verbs + nouns can be divided into two types of changes, namely:

- a. The early *meishi* tribe underwent a change to a dakuon phoneme
 1. *Naku* (泣く) 'cry' + *koe* (声) 'voice' = *nakigoe* (泣き声) 'crying voice'
 2. *Roar* (出る) 'out' + *fune* (船) 'ship' = *debune* (出船) 'out ship'
 3. *The roar* (出る) 'out' + *kuchi* (口) 'mouth' = *deguchi* (出口) 'exit'
 4. *I* (空く) 'empty' + *heya* (部屋) 'room' = *akibeya* (空き部屋) 'empty room'
- b. Merger of *doushi* + *meishi* resulting in the appearance of a double consonant

Kiru (切る) 'cut' + *te* (手) 'hand' = *kitte* (切手) 'stamp'

4.4 Doushi + Doushi

The result of combining verbs is mostly the result of their formation in the form of verbs. Examples:

1. *Tateru* (建てる) 'build' + *naosu* (直す) 'repair' = *tatenaosu* (建て直す) 'rebuild'
2. *Omou* (思う) 'think' + *dasu* (出す) 'expel' = *omoidasu* (思い出す) 'remembered'
3. *Shiru* (知る) 'knowing' + *au* (合う) 'fit' = *shiriau* (知り合う) 'know each other'

But there are also mergers that do not form verbs. Examples:

1. *Miru* (見る) 'see' + *dasu* (出す) 'issue' = *midashi* (見出し) 'title'
2. *Ueru* (餓える) 'hungry' + *shinu* (死ぬ) 'dead' = *uejini* (餓え死に) 'starved to death'
3. *Ukeru* (受ける) 'receive' + *tsukeru* (付ける) 'install' = *ukestsuke* (受け付け) 'receptionist'

At this merger the first verb turns into *renyouukei*, that is, the basic continuative form.

Based on the data that has been collected, in the process of forming a Japanese compound word (*gouseigo*) for verbs + verbs can be grouped into two, namely:

- a. mergers that result in changes in the scope of the *dakuon*
 1. *Waru* (割る) 'divide' + *hiku* (引く) 'attractive' = *waribiki* (割り引き) 'rebate'
 2. *Tsukuru* (作る) 'make' + *hanasu* (話す) 'storytelling' = *tsukuribanashi* (作り話) 'fiction'
- b. merging in which there is a change in phonemes giving rise to two of the same consonants in the process of their merging
 1. *Hiku* (引く) 'interest' + *kakaru* (掛かる) 'depend' = *hikkakari* (引っ掛かり) 'relation'
 2. *Hiku* (引く) 'interest' + *komu* (込む) 'full' = *hikkomu* (引っ込む) 'drawing in'

From the data that has been collected, the vocabulary above can be categorized according to the changes in the onso that occur in the process of forming the word. Here is a list of those changes.

- a. *onso* /k/ /g/
- b. *onso* /h/ /b/
- c. *onso* /f/ /b/
- d. *onso* /t/ /d/
- e. *onso* /s/, /ts/ /z/
- f. *onso* /ch/ /j/
- g. *onso* /sh/ /j/
- h. *onso* /e/ /a/
- i. emergence *onso* /s/
- j. double consonant

5 Conclusion

The formation of the Japanese compound word (*gouseigo*) can be grouped into:

1. *Meishi* + *meishi*, 2. *Meishi* + *doushi*, 3. *Doushi* + *meishi*, 4. *Doushi* + *doushi*. From the data that has been collected, the vocabulary of *gouseigo* can be categorized according to the changes in onso that occur in the process of forming the word. The following is a list of onso changes that occur in the process of forming *gouseigo*. a. *onso* /k/ /g/, b. *onso* /h/ /b/, c. *onso* /f/ /b/, d. *onso* /t/ /d/, e. *onso* /s/, /ts/ /z/, f. *onso* /ch/ /j/, g. *onso* /sh/ /j/, h. *onso* /e/ /a/, i. emergence *onso* /s/, j. double consonants.

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